Challenges Faced by Female Teachers and Students of High School in Teaching and Learning National Social Studies Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

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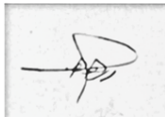Institute of Education

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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Abbreviations

CBAM	Concern-based Adoption Model
CSV	Comma-Separated Values
GCC	GCC- Gulf Cooperation Council
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MoE	Ministry of Education
NSS	National Social Studies Curriculum
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
SCPTT	Specialised Centre for Professional Training of Teachers
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TP	Tatweer Project
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Abstract

Challenges Faced by Female Teachers and Students of High School in Teaching and Learning National Social Studies Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

Zahwah Alanazi

The purpose of the study is to assess the challenges faced by female teachers and students of high school in teaching and learning the national social studies (NSS) curriculum in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Conducting this study is informed by curricular change in KSA, as a way of addressing labour market demand and economic development. It is also driven by the challenges inherent within the NSS curriculum. The current phase of curricular change in KSA began in 2011. However, there are still challenges in regard to curriculum change and implementation process. In this study, a mixed-methods approach was used to collect the data needed to answer the research questions. Both questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from female teachers and students. Questionnaire data was analysed using SPSS software while interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings showed that the changes in the NSS curriculum have affected the content, material, activities and evaluation used in teaching and learning, and that the public school sector is struggling with the implementation of the new curriculum. Public schools do not have an adequate level of support and resources required to effectively implement the curriculum. The area of the new curriculum that did rank highly was the evaluation method in the curriculum because of the inclusion of formative evaluation in the overall performance assessment. The activities recommended in the curriculum, teaching methods employed and the recognised text-books also ranked high according to this study. The high issues were resource availability, time limitation, repetition of content and class environment. These have an observable negative effect on the implementation of the NSS curriculum. The researcher suggests recommendations to alleviate these challenges.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Across the world, education is considered a key tool for reducing inequality and poverty (Ogundari and Awokuse, 2018). It is also important for laying a foundation for economic growth. With increased globalisation, countries are in constant competition to attract Foreign Direct Investment, tourism, and human capital. To survive in this competitive environment, states are trying to position themselves as ideal destinations for investment. This is achieved via a range of factors such as raw materials and most importantly, human capital. The latter is built gradually by having in place an education system with clear policies and structures to meet this objective. According to Nowak and Dahal (2016), individuals and countries consider education an important tool not only for creating knowledge but also spreading it. Improving the quality of education at all levels from primary, high school to tertiary is needed because it leads creation of a robust human capital for economic development. It also calls for constant research in this field to raise quality standards of education across all levels, inform policy makers, and also push reforms aimed at making the best out of a country's education system.

Trends across the globe show that in the past decade focus has been on basic and primary education with little focus on secondary education, especially in the developing world. High school education is increasingly becoming an important step as well for economic and social roles along with preparing young people for the job market. High school education is important for young people so that they can gain skills for the labour market. Nevertheless, in the developing countries, high education continues to face a number of challenges, ranging from the design of the curriculum itself, resources (both physical and human) as well as other issues in the political and socio-cultural arena (Nowak and Dahal, 2016).

According to Hanushek and Woessmann (2020), the quality of education depends on the ability to build systems, which offer effective teaching and learning. On the other hand, successful education reforms need a strong political environment, good policy design and effective implementation initiative. In developing countries like Saudi Arabia, this is usually

quite challenging. The main struggle in developing countries is striking a balance between the use of resources and increased education spending. More often, this does not translate to more learning and improved human capital in the education sector. In order to overcome these challenges, there is a need for all stakeholders in the education sector to work closely at all levels. The recommendations by Hanushek and Woessmann (2020) is that the ministries of education in developing countries need to devise mechanisms of attracting the best talent in curriculum design and implementation. This team must be able to design and implement country-specific and evidence-based programs. More often, such expertise lacks in the developing countries, occasioning serious challenges in the management of education in those countries. Furthermore, where such expertise exists, there are often challenges (particularly relating to politics and culture) which negatively influence effective implementation of particular national curricula.

Curriculum change is a process that requires collective effort from stakeholders in the education sector (Mula et al., 2017). Preston-Shoot (2004) argues that curricula are not static; they change to respond to the demands in a society, this requires stakeholders to remain vigilant and realign the objectives of the education to respond to those of the country. Walker (2002) emphasises that the process of curriculum development requires the application of systematic approaches, high level planning and research to ensure that curriculum content, methods and tools produced can be effectively applied to produce learners who are functional in society, are well-rounded and have knowledge that can be applied to solve real life problems. Thus, curriculum change requires broad consultation and strategic management of the interests of the various stakeholders involved within the sector (Preston-Shoot, 2004). The interest of these stakeholder may vary, additionally, some have more influence over the curriculum design process that others. Carl (2009) states that this should not be interpreted to mean that that the most powerful stakeholders should be given ultimate control. Teachers and learners are at the core of the process, and despite not holding positions or authority to make decisions that ultimately determine the course of their lives or the development of their careers, their needs and comfort should be considered the most.

Social Studies involve providing learners with an understanding of their physical environment, historical and current affairs, climate, weather, economy, and other

components in their immediate location and at the international level. Social Studies enables learners to understand what role they can contribute to the growth, development, and conservation of resources around them. Additionally, Social Studies also ensures that learners have a clear understanding of past events and how those events have affected present decisions and events. The choice of what to include in Social Studies is almost entirely based on the government's policy of what is considered relevant for their civilians to acquaint themselves with. Social Studies tends to be subjective in the content provided. Methods of teaching and learning also vary, while some are theoretical, others require practical demonstration for effective learning to occur. The content of the subject varies from country to country, sometimes even from region to region. This is because of the uniqueness and diversity of the physical, social, political, historical, and economic attributes of every region and sub region.

1.2 The Context of Education in Kingdom in Saudi Arabia

Figure 1.1 Map of Saudi Arabia (Britannica, 2020).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia borders Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait to the North, United Arab Emirates to the East and, Bahrain and Qatar, and Oman and Yemen to the South. As shown

in Figure 1.1, to the Western border is the expansive Red Sea. Other water bodies accessible to the KSA are the Arab Gulf region and Suez Canal on the north-western end. The location of Saudi Arabia is said to be not only strategic but also advantageous for economic growth (Alkhathlan, 2013). The country covers a land mass of approximately 830,000 square miles. This is equivalent to 2,150,000km square. In the Arabia Peninsula, the Kingdom has a fair share of importance. It is considered a home to the sacred place of Islamic worship- Mecca (Culture and Information Ministry, 2006).

The increase in the demand for education is Saudi Arabia is attributed to economic growth witnessed in the past decade (Koyame-Marsh, 2016). Because of economic growth and prosperity, the Kingdom has seen demand for workers. Expatriates had dominated the country's labour force but the situation is slowly changing with the introduction of the concept of "Saudisation". The aim of Saudisation is to increase the number of Saudis in the labour and cut down the over-reliance on expatriates. The idea of Saudisation was developed by the Saudi government plan of 2001-2004. The other goal of this project was to minimise the problem of regional unemployment. However, in the course of solving this issue, a number of more specific problems were identified in the Kingdom. Several other problems needed attention. For example, a significant number of Saudis were unqualified. The government also found out that the qualification of the workers was related to the quality of education they have attained. In response to these challenges, there was need for not only adequate graduates but also qualified ones to meet in the labour market demand. This context has influenced many aspects of the entire national curriculum, as shall be explained in this thesis, among other factors (Koyame-Marsh, 2016).

1.3 History of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The history of formal education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia traces back to the early 1920s when elementary education began in The Kingdom. Secondary education was introduced in the early 1940s while higher education commenced 1953. In 1961, the Kingdom introduced technical and vocational education. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, education is free for all people and comprises of three main levels; elementary, intermediate and secondary. According to Alturki (2016) a huge chunk of the education system in Saudi

Arabia is dedicated to religious studies and at secondary level, students can pursue either religious or technical education. In addition to both elementary and secondary education, tertiary education has expanded rapidly in the past few decades due to a rising demand for higher education and education reforms aimed at improving the quality of education for the expanding labour market. Data shows that a significant number of colleges and universities have been formed since 2000. Some of the main universities in Saudi Arabia include the King Saud University, which was founded in 1957, the Islamic University at Medina, which was founded in 1961, and the King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah founded in 1967. The rest of the universities in The Kingdom focus on military studies, sciences, technology, medicine and religion.

According to Alsuwaida (2016), education in Saudi Arabia has been synonymous with religious education and is seen as a vehicle for enhancing the teaching of Islam. However, education in The Kingdom has slowly undergone transformation with the recent attempts to modernise education. Alsuwaida (2016) further noted that the Saudi government initially promoted an education system that most critics considered 'medieval' and outdated. Modernisation of the education system in Saudi Arabia has been made effective through two main phases; the so-called 'Smart Model' (Tatweer schools) and the 'school development model' (Tatweer Schools: Phase 2). The first phase (or Smart Model) provided schools with a new choice to change from their traditional school to a smart learning model. This meant that the school would shift from being the only place of education to an environment where learners explore different topics including educational technology. The government affirmed its commitment to employing the most qualified teachers to help facilitate the learning process by using the safest and most appropriate teaching methods (Tayan, 2017). The best teachers would be selected based on merit, experience in the teaching profession, and performance. This separation means that some teachers would feel demoralised. In addition, it denied them an equal chance to take part in the process of curriculum implementation. The mere fact that the government is considered the best option to handpick teachers reflects weak trade union practices in KSA that have failed to strongly advocate for the issues teachers face.

The apparent preference for expatriate teachers although in line with the vision 2030 goals of the education sector in the region, did not outline local capacity building (Maroun et al., 2008). According to Maroun et al., (2008) the sudden introduction and implementation of the curriculum provided no opportunity for local teachers to acquire the requisite skills that would enable them to efficiently apply the technological requirements of the changes proposed in the curriculum. This meant that local teachers were not given the adequate support and opportunities they required to advance their craft by increasing the effectiveness of the methods they use. The issue has never been their competence, but rather the gap is in their ability to utilise the methods proposed by the curriculum (Thompson, 2020). Maroun et al. (2008) argues that this gap can be addressed through engagement, training and effective partnerships between teachers and the government. For female teachers, who are the main area of concern in this study, efforts to further their education or enhance their skill is complicated further due to the patriarchal nature of the Saudi society. The opportunities for enhancing skills may be there but women are generally left out because of very little practical support offered by administrations, governments and within their families.

Consequently, the government and private institutions leaned heavily on foreign teachers who already have the technological skills to take charge or training of other teachers and take control of the roll out of the curriculum Maroun et al., (2008). Tayan (2017) states that the move to hire more foreigners was interpreted as discriminatory by local teachers who were not offered prime opportunities to drive the educational reforms in the region. The situation is worsened by the lack of organised teachers' unions that allow for organised engagement between them and the government without the fear of consequences such as loss of jobs, withholding of salaries or hostile work environment. Constructive engagement between governments and unions in raising education quality is the norm in other regions of the world because it helps teachers improve their public image as effective civil society actors striving to improve teaching quality, and also consolidate their position to claim better work conditions (Ghaus-Pasha, 2005). Brixi et al. (2015) argue that the absence of a teacher's union in the country has been a result of the antagonistic relationship between teachers and the government, which has not left adequate room for constructive, objective, and participatory developments between teachers and the government. Local teachers have

rejected the curriculum privately, further straining their relationship with the government (Morgan, 2017). In countries where there is healthy cooperation between teachers and the government, instead of opposing the curriculum entirely, it would be preferable for teachers to point out what is wrong with the reforms and make critical recommendations.

The Smart Model was a complete opposite from the traditional approach to education in The Kingdom (Alyami, R.H., 2014). The Smart Model departs from the traditional approach by giving schools relative freedom to modernise the learning experiences. According to Alshehri (2014) while this model was considered effective at the beginning, it was criticised for being rather costly and would not be generalizable to all the Saudi schools. The reasons for this criticism was due to the general lack of infrastructure provided in public schools at the deployment of the curriculum, the approach adopted for implementation and inadequate training of teachers (Alyami, 2014). Additionally, public schools were allocated fewer teachers despite the fact that the teaching methods proposed in the smart model needed more. Alyami adds that public high schools were especially affected due to limited class capacity and lack of education material. Unlike private schools, public schools had limited finances to supplement what little was provided by the government. The curriculum was also criticised for not being considerate of rural schools that were yet to have electricity or internet connectivity for some of the activities recommended in the curriculum (Alyami, 2014). Consequently, the model was considered too expensive and unachievable in public schools (Alyami, 2014; Alshehri, 2012). On a more positive note, the smart model is hailed for setting the pace for subsequent changes in the education system based on the challenges observed by the government during its implementation (Alharbi, 2015).

The government proceeded to introduce the Tatweer Schools Phase Two, which was implemented in 2011. In this model, schools have to plan and develop self-evaluation and planning schemes. This model was based on the following set of principles (Alyami, 2014).

Excellence for all: The government aimed at ensuring that every student excels in their studies to achieve maximum capacity. The model focuses on making the best out of teachers so that they deliver quality teaching.

Commitment from Everybody: The model envisages a situation where the school employees are committed to the mission, vision and dedicated to the objectives, regulations and policies.

Accountability from Everybody: In this model, every school is held responsible for their performance. Therefore, it must ensure that it uses both negative and positive reinforcement to improve the quality of performance by each employee in the school.

Professionalism from Everyone: Professionalism is the other principle of this model. The practices of the employees of the school should be driven by professionalism. In effect, they should apply evidence-based decisions and reliable knowledge.

Transparency and clarity by Everyone: Transparency and clarity in the curriculum implementation means showing performance levels and showing results.

According to Alghamdi (2019), education reforms are essential for development of a country's education system. However, mere implementation of new innovative programs does not mean it will be effective. One needs to ask questions relating to whether the programs were actually implemented. If they were implemented, the next question is whether the process of implementation of the new innovative program actually maintained its purpose and integrity. Most importantly, there is a need to assess the extent to which the new model has had a positive impact on the students. Successful implementation is if the new model implements the objectives it intended to achieve and that students were positively impacted by the programme. In Saudi Arabia, there is limited analysis of the new education reforms, if they have actually met their purpose, the challenges they are facing, and the extent to which they have positively impacted on the students' learning (Alghamdi, 2019)

The differences between programme one and two were portrayed in various elements (Alyami 2014). The first was the model for supervision; the initial model a lot of the responsibility for supervision was allocated to education experts who were required to visit schools on a weekly basis. The number of schools was based on administrative units. After the challenges faced during the implementation, the units Tatweer Units comprising 9 schools were established with nine officials who provide consistent support (Alharbi, 2011).

The initial phase had a more centralised approach while the second phase adopts a more decentralised approach. Alharbi (2011) also added a third element, which is the difference in cost. The initial project was extremely costly. In programme one schools were supplied with advanced technology while in programme 2 this was not the case. Schools were encouraged in the second programme to be self-reliant thus reducing the burden on the central government.

1.4 Models of Policy and Curricular Change

There are a number of studies investigating how curriculum change can be effective and successful. In addition to this, there are a number of models and approaches, which can be used to illustrate how curriculum change can be effective. The meaning of curriculum can be different among different scholars. However, there is consensus that curriculum change is the set of planned activities aimed at enhancing both learning and teaching (Clarke, 2018). Thus, it looks at how best teachers can teach and how the learners can learn. Given that, the focus of this study is both at the school and national level, the literature will explore the antecedents of successful or effective curriculum change in both the school and national contexts. To understand the drivers of successful curriculum change, it is important to look at the aim of curriculum change and development. According to Clarke (2018), the main purpose of curriculum change is to maximise the effectiveness of learning and teaching through a change in the content, planned activities and arrangement of the educational processes. If this line of thought is accepted, then the concept of curriculum effectiveness is introduced. Thus, there is a need to understand why and how a curriculum can be effective for teaching and learning.

Cheng's (1994) studies on curriculum change effectiveness provided useful insights that can be applied in the educational reforms introduced in the country over the last two decades. Cheng argues that the educational environment constantly changes because of the diverse educational needs of students and the high expectations from the public. Therefore, educational reforms should not only result in educational change but also lead to improvements in the educational system in local and international contexts. As shown in Figure 1.2, Cheng proposes that curriculum change is effective if it can interact well with

the competence of the teacher and facilitate teacher performance, enables students to access learning experience, which match their characteristics to meet the national aims of education. This model of curriculum effectiveness focuses on teachers' competence and performance and how that enables learners to learn, better in a manner that fits their characteristics. In relation to Cheng's structure, an evaluation of the effectiveness of curriculum includes both process and outcome criteria like student learning experience, teacher performance and outcomes. The variables that can be developed, changed, or manipulated to improve students' experience, outcomes and teacher performance are the teachers' competence and the curriculum (Cheng, 1994).

According to the studies conducted by Cheng, the effectiveness of curriculum change is dependent on the interaction of various variables. Cheng indicates that curriculum evaluation should be guided by teachers' performance while implementing the existing curriculum content. Teachers used methods and tools provided in the existing curriculums to instil knowledge into students. During these interactions with students, teachers are able to point out what is missing in the curriculum or what aspects need to be reinforced further to enhance understanding. The other element according to this study is the student learning experience. Students are the recipients of curriculum content, based on their experience with any curriculum; students provide useful insight into the general performance of a curriculum. This covers the nature of information provided, how the information is packaged, the resources and materials used, and the activities recommended. The evaluation and assessment methods used can be analyses based on feedback given by students (Carl, 2009).

Educational outcomes also influence the modification of curriculums, education outcomes are determined by the society and the institutional culture (Cheng. 1994). At the societal level, countries through respective regulatory bodies set design curriculums to respond to the skill demands in the country, the resources available, the culture of the country and international demands among other factors. On the other hand, at the institutional level, schools implement the curriculum in ways that best capture the vision and missions of the institution (Carl, 2009). Even though they may not deviate from the curriculum content, institutions influence the teaching methods used by their teachers, evaluation techniques and resource allocation for various subjects and courses taught by the institutions. Cheng also

explains that the student experience and educational outcomes are partly influenced by student characteristics as illustrated in figure 1.2.
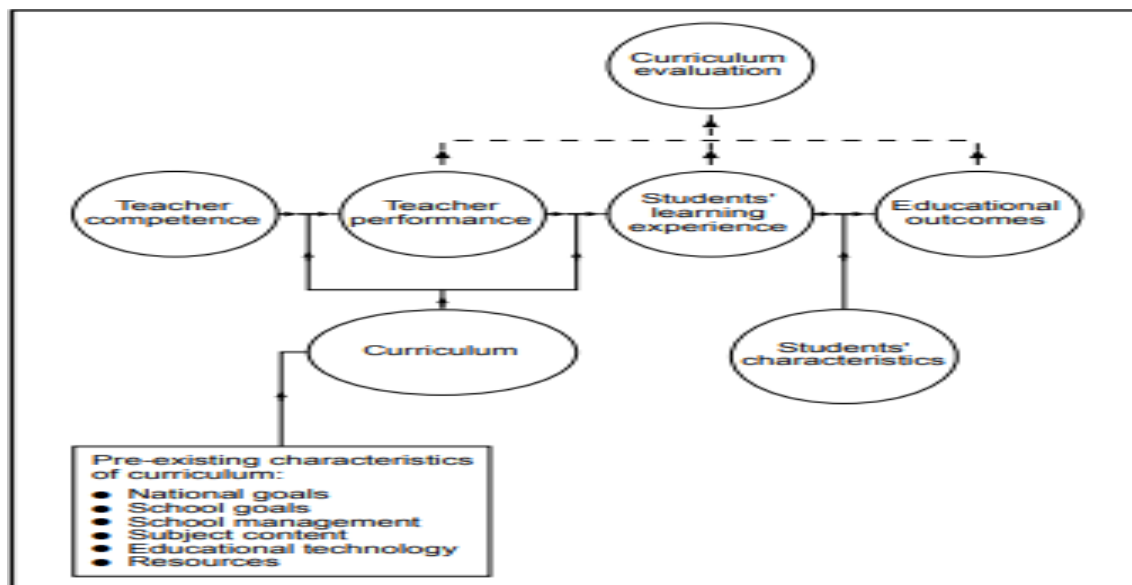
Figure 1.2 Structure of Curriculum Effectiveness (Cheng, 1994)

Cheng's conception of curriculum change leads to the categorisation of three main approaches to curriculum change. To maximise on the effectiveness of curriculum change, thus leading to successful curriculum implementation, the following approaches can be applied: (1) Simplistic curriculum change approach; (2) Teacher competence development approach; (3) Dynamic curriculum change approach.

1. Simplistic Curriculum Change Approach

In this model of curriculum change, it is argued that the curriculum needs to be developed or transformed at the individual level, the school level, or the programme level. It is argued that there is a need to ensure that the changes made are in tandem with teacher competence and the characteristics of the student. This approach proposes that curriculum change or development should be approached from an individual, school or programme level. The approach emphasises that changes to the curriculum should be made to meet the competencies of teachers. This is in addition to being consistent with the national goals of education. The application of this approach is based on the assumption that teachers are

passive and have static competencies that cannot or should not be enhanced, and that curriculum change can be planned and effectively implemented by external experts and administrators (Hughes and Tan, 2017).

2. Teacher Competence Development Approach

In this approach the argument is that teachers' skills are not stagnant, they can be improved to meet the needs of the curriculum as opposed to transforming the entire curriculum to match the competencies of teachers. In this assumption, curriculum change is imposed by the external experts and administrators. Consequently, the competence of the teachers can easily be developed to meet the needs of the changed curriculum. The role of the teacher is therefore to acquire the necessary skills through training to effectively implement the vision held by the external experts in the education sector (Hughes and Tan, 2017).

3. Dynamic Curriculum Change Approach (change and implementation)

In relation to this approach of curriculum development, both the teacher and the curriculum need to be developed for change for the curriculum to be effective in facilitating the teaching and learning process. There are four main assumptions of this model. One of them is that curriculum effectiveness is a concept that is dynamic, evolves over time and is a cyclic process of developing the competence of the teacher. The second assumption is that the curriculum can only be developed and changed effectively only if the implementers (teachers) are involved. The third assumption made by the implementers is that it developed to meet the demands of the current curriculum in a manner that fits the characteristics of the learners. The fourth and most important assumption is that the teachers have a central role in curriculum change. Consequently, they need to be involved in the process of curriculum planning and decision-making. In essence, this model criticises over-reliance on the external experts and administrators in the process of curriculum planning and decision-making (Hughes and Tan, 2017).

A comparison of the three approaches to curriculum change shows that the first two approaches are very short-term oriented and use a mechanical perspective to curriculum change and implementation. One critic of this model, in the studies of Hughes and Tan (2017), is that it ignores the dynamic nature of curriculum change. Worse still, it does not recognise the critical role of the teacher, their commitment and professional development, as well as the dynamic nature of curriculum development and change. The two approaches also completely disregard the input of teachers in the change process. As a result, the approaches eliminate the contribution of teachers in terms of skill and experience that are key in the planning and implementation of changes to curriculums. Most relation to these weaknesses, it is unlikely that the first two approaches will lead to long-term effectiveness to learning and teaching. It is likely to lead to resistance and sabotage from the teachers, apathy, protest, and slowdown.

Table 1-1 Comparison of the Approaches to Curriculum Change

	Simplistic curriculum change approach	Teacher competence development approach	Dynamic curriculum change approach
Nature of change	One-way change	One-way change	Two-way change, dynamic
Focus of change	Curriculum	Teacher competence	Curriculum and teacher competence
Ways of maximizing effectiveness	Curriculum adapts to teachers and students	Teachers adapts to the changed curriculum	Both curriculum and teachers should be developed
Initiator of change	Change planned by administrators or external	Change imposed by administrators or external	Teacher participation in planning change
Teachers role	Passive implementer	Passive implementer	Active implementer and planner
Time framework	Short-term	Short-term	Long-term, continuous, cyclic

The third model, dynamic curriculum change, is praised because it focuses on the long-term perspective. In addition, it is consistent with the current dynamic nature of the curriculum. According to Mikser, Kärner and Krull (2016), the active role of teachers in curriculum change is effective in ensuring effective teaching and learning. Thus, there is a need to focus on both the curriculum and the competence of the teachers. Nevertheless, there are still questions that remain unanswered in connection with the dynamic approach. One of the questions is how to effectively initiate and maintain effective teaching and learning for attainment of the planned school goals. Curriculum change is most instances happens in a complex organisational context including the school culture, organisational structure, leadership, group norms and even teachers' personal factors. Thus, it is important to examine how all these factors hinder or promote curriculum change or implementation.

1.5 The Role of Teachers in Curriculum Development

The role of teachers in curriculum reform is an ongoing debate that has generated a lot of interest among curriculum researchers (McKernan, 2013; Barth and Rieckmann, 2012; Carl, 2009). The participation of teachers in the planning, design and implementation of curriculum change through partnerships with other stakeholders promises more effective, sustainable, and long-term results (Fullan, 1999). According to McKernan (2013) curriculum development in countries where governments majorly manage education usually leaves little room provided for teachers to participate effectively in the design, planning, and evaluation processes. The irony in this is that despite their lack of direct involvement, any curriculum developed determined the course of the development of the career of teachers (Rieckmann, 2012). Curriculums change or developments also affect the manner in which teachers are meant to perform in their careers. Therefore, it makes no sense for teachers to be set aside during the development process of the any curriculum because they can offer a lot of input, which could positively influence implementation (Carl, 2009).

Carl, 2009 states that generally, many curriculum development initiatives adopt a top to bottom approach. However, in some implementation models, as will be discussed in subsequent sections, teachers are given authority to determine teaching methods that can be used for greater impact to be achieved among learners. Teachers in some contexts are also

allowed to determine which materials can be added to those recommended by curriculums to make the learning process easier. Not all teachers enjoy this freedom because it requires a lot of good will from educational institutions where teaching occurs, as well as from the government. Bernstein (1990) proposes that teachers should hold an authoritative voice and be positioned as partners in curriculum reform. The authority teachers hold is based on their in-depth knowledge of the recipients of educational content, their day-to-day experience in local contexts, and particularly, their knowledge of their students, available resources, and the obdurate practicalities of their work.

Power relations that exist in any collaborative processes is also exhibited in partnerships in the education sector as with regard to which party has control over what areas of the curriculum development process (Carl, 2009). There are numerous stakeholders in the education sector, some of these stakeholders according to Beerkens and Udam (2017) include the government that is mandated to offer the overall direction of the education sector and the role education should play in the growth and development of a country. Secondly, there are private investors who directly or indirectly inject capital into the sector for profit or in pursuit of other private goals. Private investors in the education sector are private school owners, development partners of the government, local companies, and multinational corporations among several others. There are also non-governmental organisations whose involvement in the education sector is to support the achievement of certain social outcomes in society (Jongbloed et al., 2008). These corporations seek the support of the government through the education sector to implement certain curriculum content in the interest of the locals. Learners are the other stakeholders who enrol in educational facilities to acquire knowledge that enables them to fit into society whilst also equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge that will allow them to earn a living. Parents and guardians are the other stakeholders, as they enrol their children into educational facilities and offer material and monetary support where necessary. For this group, education should enhance or complement the values they hold at the family level. The other stakeholders that can be mentioned in the sector are religions groups, which are keen on the moral directions adopted by the education sector. This group is interested in ensuring that educational content does not erode the moral identity of children (Jongbloed et al., 2008).

The stakeholders as demonstrated vary in the education sector; each of these stakeholders invests in different ways in the sector to ensure the outcomes of educational content furthers their interests (Fullan, 1999). The challenge in the curriculum development is balancing the interest of each of these groups because in the end, they are all required to ensure the functionality and responsiveness of this sector to realities outside school environments (Jongbloed et al., 2008). In addition, these stakeholders are partly responsible for learning processes outside school environments and are interested in ensuring that what is taught in schools does not conflict with what learners are exposed to outside schools. The argument remains that teachers spend a lot of time with learners and are in direct contact with students, therefore they are better placed to understand the specific needs of students, along with the challenges encountered in the learning processes and which resources or methods can be adopted to make learning easier (Jongbloed et al., 2008). Therefore, curriculum change should incorporate their views because they have the authority to offer valid input that can promote their support for the implementation process which then translates to effective implementation.

1.6 Overview of the Educational System and Curricula in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

In 2007, the government launched a $2.4 billion under the stewardship of King Abdullah commonly referred to as Tatweer. The aim of this Public Education Development Project was to improve the educational competence of the Saudi population in order to create a productive and efficient workforce within a dynamic and innovative economy (Tatweer, 2010). The Tatweer education reforms were based on neoliberal principles and led to a new context of education delivery in Saudi Arabia (Wiseman, Astiz, & Baker, 2013). Education is also compulsory for school-going children aged between 6 and 15 years. The school system is divided into three tiers. The primary stage is meant for children aged 6 to 11, and it is made up of grade 1 to grade 6.

The second category is the intermediate stage with three grades from the 7th to the 9th grade. The third and last tier is the secondary stage which also has 3 grades (AlGhamidi, 2008; Alnahdi, 2014; AlNofaie, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2007). All the primary, intermediate,

and secondary stages are day schools and last for two semesters per academic year. Learners are subjected to a final semester exam with a certificate, which validates their promotion to the next grade, or stage (AlGamidi, 2008; AlNofaie, 2010; International Bureau of Education, 2011). The academic year lasts between September and June and it has two semesters made up of a total of 38 weeks inclusive of the examination period.

Additionally, the government initiative to change the curriculum aims at inculcating technology in teaching to develop the learners' soft, analytical and critical skills to enable them to deal with modern-day world requirements. The education system in Saudi Arabia has witnessed the emergence and exponential growth of private schools (Alnahdi, 2014).

Saudi Arabia

2018
Provisional

Theoretical starting age

ISCED	Age
ISCED 8	25
ISCED 7	22
ISCED 6	
ISCED 5	18
ISCED 3	15
ISCED 2	12
ISCED 1	11 / 6
ISCED 020	5 / 3
ISCED 010	0

Special needs education

Doctorate
Year 3
Year 2
Year 1

Master's
Higher diploma
Year 2
Year 1
Year 2
Year 1

Bachelor's
Higher health diploma
Health diploma
Technical diploma
Post-secondary technical diploma

Year 4 / Year 3 / Year 2 / Year 1 — University, College
Year 3 / Year 2 / Year 1 — Health college
Year 2.5 / Year 2 / Year 1 — Health institute
Year 2.5 / Year 2 / Year 1 — Technical college
Year 2 / Year 1 — Technical / Vocational institute

12th / 11th / 10th — Secondary general education
12th / 11th / 10th — Trade / Industrial / Technical secondary education
11th / 10th — Programmes at Technical / Vocational institute

9th / 8th / 7th — Intermediate general education
8th / 7th — Intermediate vocational education
7th — One year vocational education

6th / 5th / 4th / 3rd / 2nd / 1st — Elementary school

Preparatory class

Kindergarten / Religious pre-primary school

Early childhood education

© Education GPS

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Key

⇧/△ Starting/ending age of compulsory education

▲ Recognized exit point of the education system

↑ Typical student flow

⇡ Transfer from a programme to another

☐ (red) Programme designed for part-time attendance

☐ (blue) Vocational/Professional orientation
(according to national definition at the tertiary level)

☐ Single structure education (integrated ISCED levels)

┊ May be provided within one school structure

⊤ Transfer at crossing lines is not possible

Diploma Name of diploma, degree or certificate

2018 Reference year (school year 2017/2018
in the northern hemisphere)

Figure 1.3 Educational System Paradigm in Saudi Arabia (MoE, 2020)

Figure 1.3 shows the educational system program in Saudi Arabia. As shown, the new system has the pre-school stage in which kindergartens offer education for pre-school children aged between 3 and 5. The Kindergarten level is also called the religious pre-primary school. However, pre-school is not a formal education stage as it is not a requirement for a child to enter grade 1 of primary stage. Nevertheless, most of the public schools have started kindergartens and nurseries, which may receive technical and financial support from the government (Ministry of Education, 2019).

After pre-school at the age of 6, children move to elementary school for six years. In elementary school, there are six grades. Upon passing their final exam, learners will progress to the Intermediate stage. The duration for intermediate education is three years (that is from grades 7 to 9. Similar subjects to secondary education are taught such as Islamic studies, history, geography, Arabic, mathematics, computers, science, physical and health education, and English. Progress to the next level depends on continuous assessment and exams which come at the end of the month. When students meet these requirements, they earn the Education Certificate (*shahadat al-kafa'at al-mutawassita*), a requirement for progressing into secondary education.

As shown in Figure 1.3, there are three stages of secondary education (grades 10 to 12). This is offered in different specialisation streams: technical-vocational, religious, and general. Students pursuing the general stream have a core curriculum in grade 10 but they concentrate later in science or liberal arts in the final two grades. Some of the subjects studied include Islamic studies, geography, Arabic, Mathematics, Information Technology, health and physical education, chemistry, computer, geology, and physics. Assessment is done at the end of each semester. The graduation certificate at the end of grade 12 is called General Secondary Education Certificate (*shahadat al-thanawiyyah al-'aama or shahadat al-marhalat al-thanawiyyat*) (Almogbel, 2015; International Bureau of Education, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2019).

Assessment refers to the process of examining and providing feedback on skills, knowledge, attitudes, and work products in order to elevate or raise future learning outcomes and performances (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir (2014) add that

evaluation, on the other hand, aims at determining the level of performance, quality or outcome, and facilitates decision making according to the level of quality exhibited. Thus, Salvia et al. (2012) adds that while assessment improves future performance qualities, evaluation determines the quality attributed to the current performance. These two processes are important in the education system and complement each other. The overall objective is to determine the level of understanding of various concepts, for teachers this is an opportunity to identify the areas of weakness among students so that they know which students are struggling which contents of their lessons. Some countries have adopted the application of both national and internal assessment procedures. At some stages, learners are assessed internally, while in others they are subjected to national examinations.

The purpose of assessment is to measure learning, which helps teachers to understand students' skill level, strengths and weaknesses, how much knowledge they have retained, and the individual abilities of each student through feedback collected through assessment tools (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). Because of this, assessment is an important and beneficial part of the education process. There are various forms of assessment. The main forms of assessment include summative, norm-referenced tests, evaluation and accountability tests, diagnostic assessments, and formative assessments. The most commonly used are summative (given at the end of the course) and normative (frequently occurring interactive assessment in class) (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). Assessments that are well designed have the ability and characteristics that set clear expectations. They clearly identify a reasonable workload, offer students the opportunity to rehearse, self-monitor, practice and get feedback. It is therefore vital that education systems adopt effective assessments methods to analyse the educational experiences of learners.

The biggest disadvantage of national examinations is the cost, the resources required for the distribution and marking of these examinations, their failure to take into consideration the individual differences and challenges among students and the general lack of contact between those marking the examinations and the students examined (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). The advantage of national examinations is they can be used to analyse the general performance of students in a given level nationally. They also encourage competition, in instances where institutions are ranked, that can lead to increased

performance nationally. Local assessment procedures are preferred in many countries because they are continuous, easier to apply, offer opportunity for direct feedback and contact with learners and only examine what has been taught. The main modes of assessment in Saudi Arabia are written assessments and structured oral assessments. In high schools, the pass mark for science and social subjects is a minimum of 40% while for other subjects the pass mark is 50% (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014).

In the current curriculum in Saudi Arabia, the objective of assessment is learning about students and progress (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). Leaners are subjected to internal examinations at the end of every term with the school year having two terms.   This examination system is the only system of assessment used as recommended by the current curriculum. The results are used to assess progression to the next grade by combining 50% of each term's grades. This assessment approach is used to examine all subjects in all years of education from primary, intermediate to high school. Internal exams make up the remaining assessments and are set by teachers, who design their own assessments, within the constraints of resources available to them within their school. Those learners who perform exemplary well are likely to get university admissions. The secondary stage has significantly benefited from the improvement and development of the education curriculum (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). Such enhancement is attributed to the Curriculum Development government initiative. This program seeks to improve learner skills as a way of achieving human resource development. For instance, the program aims at improving the technical skills of learners. In addition, the program intends to incorporate a change from the teacher centred to learner centred methods of teaching.

The teachers have the responsibility to set and conduct examinations whose results guarantee learners' entry into higher education (Almogbel, 2015). Assessments processes among learners differs from country to country, in some countries there are central examination bodies that subject learners to standardised examinations to determine their level of understanding. These examinations are usually given to learners during specified periods or stages of their learning journey and determine whether or not they proceed to the next stage of learning. Assessment is an essential component of teaching and learning programmes and help shape individual learning. However, the approach use in evaluation of learners can

sometimes motivate learners; in other instances, evaluation can demoralise learners (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). Assessment can also be continuous at school level where examinations and tests are given to students to determine their level of understanding. This assessment focuses on what the respective teachers consider necessary based on their coverage of the syllabus

Learners who successfully complete and pass their final secondary examination progress to higher education offered by private and state universities and colleges for an approximate period of four years. Students who pursue undergraduate studies are awarded with a Bachelor's degree in their respective field of study (Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir, 2014). However, those who study in such fields as Dentistry, Engineering, or Medicine may have to spend an additional one or two years. Students may also enrol in post-secondary vocational training offered by vocational training institutes. Such training lasts for two years after which learners are honoured with a diploma degree. Learners might be interested in enrolling for post-graduate studies. Here, learners may opt for higher education programs such as Diploma or certificate teaching, or Masters, or Doctoral degrees. Diploma or certificate teaching programs may last for a year or more depending on the dictates of the ministry. Masters and Doctoral degree programs last for two and three years respectively, as advised by the Ministry of Higher Education (2020).

1.7 Curricular Change in Saudi Arabia

There are limited studies on how education policies work and match the practices in the wider Middle East Region and specifically in Saudi Arabia (Aljughaiman and Grigorenko, 2013). According to Elyas and Picard (2013), curricular change is complex and entails a number of issues and actors interacting with each other. Currently, curriculum development in The Kingdom follows a top-down approach as was discussed before on page 10. It is basically a one-way curriculum development model, which has been criticised for being less inclusive, very structured, and technical (Kelly, 2009). The curricular change in The Kingdom can be traced back to 2011 when the Tatweer Project was introduced. The major changes to curriculum commenced in 2007 and targeted the growing social diversity and national interests. With Saudisation (a call to increase the number of Saudi locals in active

employment), the demand for a Saudi-driven labour force was necessary. Thus, changes were effected in the education sector, aimed at creating an educated, trained and qualified Saudi labour force. The government began taking a more active role in the provision of education. There was an increase in resource allocation, teacher training and policy changes aimed at increasing the number of graduates to serve the labour market. However, one challenge that arose was increased government control in curriculum development and implementation at the detriment of the teachers' involvement in the process. The government made a declaration and subsequent commitment towards the education sector. The Saudi Ministry of Education recognised "the critical role of human capital in transforming the quality of education services" by establishing reference points to "countries with higher performing education systems measured by the TIMSS or PISA results" (Tatweer, 2014b, p. 5). According to Wiseman (2010), the Tatweer Program is a representation of the government's commitment to transform the education sector to make it more global.

The Ministry of Education controls the curriculum and publishes all textbooks for every grade, whereas in other countries, textbook production is in the hands of private business. The national government through the Ministry of Education ensures that textbooks are given for free to Saudi public schools. Since the school year consists of two semesters, there are separate textbooks for individual semesters. Often, there are school grades in which the textbooks vary based on the learner's gender. This implies that the textbooks meant for girls have differentiated content as compared to those meant for boys. Such difference is clearly indicated on the outer cover of the textbooks (AlGhamdi, 2008; Elyas & Picard, 2010).

It is the role of the Educational Development Centre (EDC) to develop the education curricula based on the directions given by relevant committees and authorities. Such direct authority comes from the Supreme Committee for Programs and Curricula, which is headed by the Ministry of Education. The authority ensures coordination and cooperation as well as assessing the outcomes of work done by other committees. These committees are made up of the General Directorate of Curricula educational supervisors within the EDC, university professors, experienced teachers, field supervisors, and material writing experts (International Bureau of Education, 2011). These committee members are held to task to offer recommendations regarding the preparation of textbooks to enable the application and

piloting of revised or new textbooks in selected schools. When there is need to revise or develop textbooks to define the curriculum to be used in providing technical and vocational education, the General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational Training must consult with the private sector in order to identify the skills necessary for a given profession (International Bureau of Education, 2011; Alnahdi, 2014).

Hopmann's (1990) three basic features of the social process in centralised curriculum-making can be used to evaluate curricular change in Saudi Arabia. These three features include licensing, compartmentalisation, and segmentation. Licensing enables the teachers to have a sense of ownership. In essence, it entails delegating some powers such as freedom to choose the instructional methods to teach. In effect, it enables those who make the curriculum to avoid the responsibility of the outcome of the curriculum implementation at the classroom level. In reference to the Saudi Arabian context, there is no licensing because teachers are given little room to be creative in curriculum implementation. With regard to compartmentalisation and segmentation, there is need for more research to assess the extent to which they are being implemented.

1.8 Statement of the Problem

As a high school history teacher, the researcher noted that students and teachers faced problems and challenges in dealing with the National social studies curriculum after merging the two separate subjects history and geography, and updating it to this name. This curriculum is merged only in the first year of high school, and the subjects are once again taught separately for the remaining 2 years. This development in curriculum began gradually from primary to middle and high school. This update resulted in challenges and difficulties faced by both teacher and student in terms of content and school environment .

The challenges facing the delivery of the National Social Studies curriculum relate to nature of the top-down approach to curriculum change, simplistic approach to curricular change and lack of licensing (as envisioned by Hopmann's (1990) three basic features of the social process) .

Bearing these curricular change models in mind, the critical role of teachers in curricular change and limited research in Saudi Arabia, this study aims to fill this gap by specifically examining the challenges faced by female teachers and students of high schools in teaching and learning National Social Studies Curriculum. Ideally, the study would focus on the views of all the stakeholders (i.e., both males and females). However, this study focuses on the female teachers' and students' only. The choice of females in this study is based on the fact that school education in Saudi Arabia is not gender-mixed, and thus there is no opportunity of reaching the male schools. (AlBakr, 2005; AlManea, 2007). The researcher used the mixed method to reach the results in-depth and in detail.

1.9 Research Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to assess the challenges faced by female teachers and students of high schools in teaching and learning National Social Studies Curriculum in Saudi Arabia. The female teachers and students were chosen because, due to cultural constraints, this was the only sample that was accessible to the researcher.

1. To investigate the challenges that face the teaching and learning of National Social Studies at Saudi high schools from the perspective of both the course teachers and students.
2. To critically examine the students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which the given challenges (i.e., school environment, activities and exercises, the academic content, teachers and teaching, and evaluation methods) impact the teaching and learning of National Social Studies at the Saudi high schools.
3. To evaluate curricular change in Saudi Arabia, teachers' ownership of the curricular and its impact on the effectiveness of delivery of the National Social Studies Curriculum.

1.10 Research Questions

1. What are the challenges that face the teaching and learning of National Social Studies at Saudi high schools from the perspective of both the course teachers and students?
2. What are the students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which the given challenges (i.e., school environment, activities and exercises, the academic content, teachers and teaching, and evaluation methods) impact the teaching and learning of National Social Studies at the Saudi high schools?
3. How does curricular change in Saudi Arabia, teachers' ownership of the curricular impact on the effectiveness of delivery of the National Social Studies Curriculum?

Students:

Q1: How much is the impact of school environment (classroom style, comfort, resources, internet) on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point of view of female students in Saudi Arabia? (1= little or no impact, 5 = very strong impact)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference impact of school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference impact of school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' year of study.

Q2: What is the impact of activities and exercises (fieldtrips, hands-on practical activities, puzzles, quizzes) on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female students in Saudi Arabia? (1= little or no impact, 5 = very strong impact)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' year of study.

Q3: what is the impact of academic content (the type, number of topics and their depth of treatment) on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female students in Saudi Arabia. (1= little or no impact, 5 = very strong impact)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of academic content on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of academic content on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' year of study.

Q4: What is the impact of teachers (teaching style, discipline, interactivity) and teaching methods (explanations, definitions, powerpoints, tests) on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female students in Saudi Arabia? (1= little or no impact, 5 = very strong impact)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of teaching methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of teaching methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' year of study.

Q5: what is the impact of evaluation methods (Terminal examination, Homework, Workbook, Assignments) on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female students in Saudi Arabia? (1= little or no impact, 5 = very strong impact)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference impact of evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of students' year of study?

Teachers:

How many years of experience? ☐ 1-5   ☐ 6-10   ☐ 11-15   ☐ >15

Qualification ☐ bachelor's degree   ☐ master's degree   ☐ doctoral degree   ☐ teaching diploma / certificate

School type: ☐ private, ☐ public

Q6: What is the impact of school environment (digital technology: access to internet, projector, specialized websites, a safe and clean environment, access to the outside, suitable books for the students to access, size of the classroom) on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female teachers in Saudi Arabia? How important do you feel the physical school environment is to the teaching and learning of NSS? (1 = least important, 5 = most important)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be significant difference in impact of school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level.

Q7: What is the impact of activities and exercises (Use of the textbook, use of the exercise book; formal assessment; engaging in practical activities: debates, discussion, physical geographical activities in high school level from the point view of female teachers in Saudi Arabia? (1 = least impact, 5 = greatest impact)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' year of experience.

Hypothesis 3: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' qualification.

Q8: what is the impact of academic content on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female teachers in Saudi Arabia?

(1 = not well, 5 = very well)

How would you rate the scope of the NSS course: ☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

How would you rate the balance between history and geography in NSS □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5

How would you rate the depth of treatment of the topics in NSS □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of academic content on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of academic content on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' year of experience.

Hypothesis 3: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of academic content on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' qualification.

Q9: What is the impact of evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of female teachers in Saudi Arabia?

How would you rate the usefulness with regards teaching and learning of following evaluation methods in NSS?

Terminal examination

Homework

Workbook

Assignments

Hypothesis 1: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' school type.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' year of experience.

Hypothesis 3: stated that there will be no significant difference in impact of evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level from the point view of teachers' qualification.

1.11 Operational Terms

Curriculum: The process of selecting content or courses of a study. In the context of this study, the word curriculum is used to either describe or prescribe both goals and content for formal instruction.

Stakeholders: Those whose interests and directly affected by the Saudi education curriculum or have power to influence or stop the curriculum. They include high school students studying the NSS curriculum, parents, teachers, school administrators, the public, ministry of education, among others who have interest and power to influence implementation of NSS curriculum.

The National Social Studies Curriculum: A course of study in high school in Saudi. It has multiple majors; history whose focus is enriching and enhancing the student memory; geography, taught to ensure that students understand the processes that affect the physical world.

Evaluation of the Curriculum: An ongoing process involving collecting and analysing information to help understand what learners know and can do.

Assessment: Monitoring performance of the students against set of objectives or targets.

1.12 Contributions of the Study

This study will provide the following contributions:

1. The study will contribute to the theoretical knowledge on the challenges facing the teaching and learning of NSS. The in-depth exploration of these challenges will help academicians and practitioners the challenges involved in the study of NSS and the possible ways through which these challenges can be overcome.

2. The study also expands the debate on the educational challenges in Saudi Arabia. There are a limited number of studies studying the NSS. Furthermore, the studies looking at the challenges of education in Saudi Arabia are also few. This study will not only fill the gap but also expand the debates around this subject.

3. There are also methodological contributions. Unlike other studies, the current study benefits from the use of a multi-method approach (use of questionnaires and interviews). In addition, a larger sample size consisting of both teachers and students has been used. Given that most studies have not used such a methodological approach, this study will be making an important contribution to the methodology.

4. Lastly, the study is significant for practitioners in the management of education in Saudi Arabia. An exploration of this subject will generate findings that the decision makers, teachers, and officials in the Ministry of Education can use to improve the teaching of NSS.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Understanding Curriculum Development

The word "curriculum" as it is defined from its early Latin origins means literally "to run a course (Richards, 2001). The type of race described in the education sector by nature is comprehensive because learners are exposed to a variety of experiences and lessons which may be intellectual, social, moral, spiritual, or physical that they are gradually exposed to as they progress in their learning journey (Alsubaie, 2016). The content of the educational experience can be formal or informal, planned or accidental. The education curriculum refers to the lessons and academic content taught in schools or in various institutions of learning. Educational curriculum is generally understood as the plan, instruction guide or blueprint document that is used for teaching and learning to bring about positive and desirable learner behaviour change (Richards, 2001).

Richards (2001) adds that the concept is broadly understood as the subject and materials utilised by educational institutions including the content, educational experience offered and the skills and abilities which as identified as the learning outcomes in any given program. The curriculum adopted in educational institutions can either be independently designed or in could be designed by regulatory bodies for implementation in a certain region or level of education (Chatterton & Goddard, 2000.). Countries have different policies that determine the educational content, teaching methods and resources used in educational facilities. This is driven by the policies of the country itself, international events, characteristics of the recipients of educational material and level of education (Richards, 2001).

According to Rogan and Grayson (2003) there are various types of curricula used in the education sector in different institutions across the globe, the first is overt, explicit, or written curriculum. This is what is common in state and locally produced educational guidelines that set the standards and provide distinct instructions on content and activities of given courses. It may refer to a curriculum document, texts, films, and supportive teaching materials that are overtly chosen to support the intentional instructional agenda of a school. This written guideline is usually then shared to institutions within a given jurisdiction for implementation.

The second is societal curricula which are defined by Cortes (1981) as the ongoing informal learning and knowledge sharing process in social groups in the community such as family units, peer groups, churches, organisations, mass media, and other mass sharing forums in the society that provide various knowledge sharing opportunities. The most notable example in this era is social media platforms that not only enable users to create perspectives but they also help to share informative content, in addition to public and individual opinions and experiences.

The third is the hidden curriculum, sometimes called the covert curriculum. Longstreet and Shane (1993) propose that this is the lessons students derive from the nature, design, culture and structure of institutions they attend. This refers to all the unspoken expectations in a specific place which guides different behaviour in different settings among humans. Humans are behavioural beings who use behaviour to communicate and evaluate each other. Hidden curriculum leads to the establishment of the unspoken rules in institutions, which guide how members of the institution are expected to behave. These are rules that are unique in the educational facility a student attends that guide factors such as time management, language use, response to figures of authority, and courtesy, among other elements. The lessons can be positive or negative depending on the educational centre a student is a part of. The content of this curriculum is implied in the actions, physical arrangement and use of space. The fourth is the null curriculum which as explained by Eisner (1985, 1994) refers to the lessons that are not taught in educational facilities of contexts of formal learning, somehow somewhere, individuals learn concepts that are not taught in written curriculums. Eisner argues that the written curriculum is based on a decision on what is considered important enough to be taught in class contexts; somehow what is written is as important as what is not written according to this author. Written curriculums emphasise on certain events, historical aspects, cultures, phenomenon, or items in society and leave out others which somehow provide an opportunity for learners to critically discern for themselves the hidden messages. Raging debates on religious studies, sex education, war and peace studies have elicited a lot of attention in curriculum design spheres due to the various approaches adopted by different facilities (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). Learners despite not having some concepts written or

provided in formal learning environments find ways of accessing the missing bits and pieces of information.

The fifth curriculum is referred to as the phantom curriculum which is prevalent through exposure to various types of media. As stated by Wilson (2004) the content of these media determines the Meta culture of students and the generational characteristics. Concomitant curriculum is the sixth curriculum, which is passed on within family contexts. They determine the ethical and moral values, religious beliefs, and model behaviour based on family preferences. There are other subcategories such as Rhetorical curriculum, electronic curriculum, curriculum in use, received curriculum and internal curriculum that have also been identified by different authors but all describe the source or content of curriculum differently but still somehow describe the six types already mentioned (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

2.2 Curriculum Development Process

Ivowi (1994) states that curriculum development is the process through which the material that facilitates learning is identified and arranged. Ivowi explains that curriculum development as a process that includes planning or development, implementation and evaluation of contents that guides and frames the content of educational material. To aid students and encourage them to create progressively more complex knowledge structures, it is essential for us to gradually scaffold their thinking. When developing curriculum, a number of factors are considered. These factors include the learners who are the recipients of the content of educational curriculums (curriculum recipients), the teachers who are the implementers, and then there is consideration for the society and culture where learners come from and where they are expected to live after their education experience and the learning environments of students. Stakeholders in the education sector in a region or country mainly do this. Curriculum development approaches are strategies used to organise content and learning activities learners are exposed to.

2.2.1 The Four-Step Approach

Giles, McCutchen and Zechiel (1942) developed this approach. The four steps are prescribed in this method include the identification of objectives, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning experiences and evaluation. Their understanding of curriculum development is a process that includes the selection of objectives, selection of learning experiences followed by the organisation of learning experiences, and finally, there is evaluation. Their understanding of the approach to curriculum development is that it is a linear process. Kerr's (1968) work also identified four steps in curriculum development. According to Kerr (1968), the steps included selection of objectives, selection of the content, and selection of experience then finally evaluation. Kerr is however criticised by Tyler (1975) for failing to mention organisation of learning, which he states that influences the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. Tyler's (1975) addition to the literature on four-step approach indicated that the four stages identified were interconnected and interdependent. Tyler reiterated that the approach to curriculum development should be guided by four key questions: the first being the educational purposes schools seek to attain: the second is the educational experience schools aim to offer students to ensure they attain the purposes identified: third is how to organise the educational experiences in the most effective manner then finally putting measures in place to determine whether the educational purposes are being attained with the experience put in place.

2.2.2 The Five-Step Approach

Nicholls and Nicholls (1978) recommended five crucial steps in curriculum development. According to these scholars, other than the four steps also identified in curriculum development, situational analysis should also be factored. Nicholls and Nicholls (1978) argue that this component seeks to establish the needs of the society and ensure that the educational curriculum developed is responsive to these needs. These authors recommended for the objectives to mirror the needs of the society as far as what education was expected to achieve was concerned. Thus, this five-step approach includes situational analysis, selection of objectives, and selection of content, methods, and evaluation. Unlike the four-step approach that used the term 'learning experience', this approach used the term 'methods' to

describe the selection and arrangement of material provided to learners and organisations towards the effective implementation of curriculums. Wheeler's (1980) also supported the work of Nicholls and Nicholls (1978) the author however reiterated that the processes is cyclic and flexible which he argued meant that curriculum development could begin at any of the five stages. Wheeler also emphasised that curriculum development is a continuous process that should be reviewed constantly and adjusted to ensure what has been adopted is effective. According to this author, society is very dynamic and any curriculum developed should also be dynamic to ensure it produces functional members of the society.

2.2.3 The Seven-Step Approach

Taba (1962) developed a model that provides that the approach to curriculum development should have seven components. This author merged the work of Nicholls and Nicholls and Wheeler who each introduced different elements to the curriculum development process. This approach is cyclic and includes the following activities; Situational analysis which is the analysis puts into consideration the nature of the society which act as environmental influencers, followed by selection of objectives that best fulfil or meet the gaps and demands identified in the society, selection of learning experiences follows as the stage that factors in the learners and teachers characteristics, selection of content is the education material and tools, organization of learning experiences put into consideration the methods applied for teaching and learning, organization of content is the next stage and finally there is evaluation.

2.2.4 John Hopkins University Approach

 John Hopkins University Approach developed in 1998 has been applied more widely in recent years compared to the earlier approaches such as the four, five and seven step approaches. According to this approach, curriculum development is logical, systematic, dynamic, and interactive (Thomas et al., 2016). The process identified six steps that can be applied in the development of curriculums.

Problem Identification Approach

This is the first step in curriculum development. According to this approach, the main aim of education is to produce individuals who are functional and productive members of society. It is therefore vital that curriculums implemented address problems in the society to equip learners with the relevant skills, knowledge and experience that enable them to tackle these problems. The approach emphasises that the problems in the society are not static; therefore educational curriculum should be reviewed constantly to come up with the most recent problems that need to be addressed through education content (Thomas et al., 2016).

Needs Assessment of Targeted Learners

This process allows stakeholders in curriculum development to identify what currently exists and what is missing that needs to be addressed. Learners are divided into groups based off certain characteristics and according to their environments. This process allows stakeholders to base curriculum development on the needs of all students. It allows them to apply learning theory and cognitive psychology on how students learn, identify what determines developmental readiness or developmental appropriateness, be cognisant of the current expectations of the field, be considerate of the knowledge of and readiness for change among teachers, establish the availability of resources required for implementation, identify the role and availability of information and technology resources, establish the most effective methods and purposes of assessments, and finally identify competency gaps among teachers and therefore invest in professional development (Van Tassel-Baska, 2000).

Identification of Goals and Objectives

Goals in the education sector are the broad outcomes that institutions aim to achieve through education. They are usually not measurable, nor do they describe actual activities that can be implemented. The specific measurable intentions are described through the objectives, which are stated in actionable terms. This stage is guided by the problem and target group analysis. The objectives selected in the education sector during curriculum development are based on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviours. Once the objectives are identified, they guide all activities prescribed for curriculum development. The goals and

objectives are important because direct the choice of curricular content, suggest the most effective learning methods, prescribe the most appropriate evaluation methods and communicate what the curriculum aims to achieve them (Van Tassel-Baska, 2000).

Educational Strategies

This stage provides the means that should be adopted to facilitate learning. The educational strategies adopted should aid in the fulfilment of the goals that have been identified. Some of these strategies involve the manipulation of learning environment to motivate learners. Today, interactive strategies such as collaboration, cooperation, learner autonomy, use of songs, small group activities and drama are encouraged (Van Tassel-Baska, 2000).

Implementation

The strategies identified to fulfil the goals of education content are put into action through this process. This processes pools together the efforts of teachers, learners, and other stakeholders to ensure curriculums are put into action effectively. The implementation of curriculums occurs in classroom environments through interactions between teachers and learners as well as amongst learners. The success of any curriculum is heavily dependent on the implementation process, which should be approached very methodically. Stakeholders should ensure that resources are supplied in adequate proportions; there are sufficient funds for implementations, political goodwill, and community support. Many curriculums are developed on a top to bottom approach. However, the success of a curriculum is mostly attributed to its performance at the lowest level (Van Tassel-Baska, 2000).

Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluation and feedback activities close the loop in the curriculum development cycle. This step allows for the measurement of the level of attainment of stated objectives. The information gathered in this process allows stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. This process establishes what learners have adopted and highlights the gaps that have been filled with the knowledge or content of a curriculum. It also allows for the identification of existing challenges that prevent learning, which should

be improved on. Additionally, the processes established the effectiveness of the teaching and learning methods utilised in enhancing the learning process. The information gathered both positive and negative is what is considered feedback. The feedback informs the curriculum developer about the next action to embark on. To collected valid feedback, evaluation can be done both internally and by external parties. Part of the evaluation process should also include constant monitoring to ensure minor issues are not allowed to fester and grow into more significant inhibitors that may have been addresses earlier on. This is why Wheeler sees curriculum development as a cyclic activity, which has no end as the feedback, is taken back to the entire process for improvement. John Hopkins University Approach seems like the ideal approach because it is more effective in attracting and ensuring the acceptance and support of all stakeholders (Thomas et al., 2016).

2.3 Curriculum Design Principles

According to Biggs' (2003) 3P (Presage, Process and Product) model of learning and teaching, there are five principles that guide curriculum design development. Presage refers to the students' prior knowledge and teaching context (like the climate, institutional procedures, and climate) process entails the activities focused on learning and the product is the outcome of the learning and teaching process. These principles should be applied to ensure the quality of learning outcomes among students. Biggs recognises that the components of curriculum design are connected and form a system that works a whole. Failing to give adequate consideration for one component significantly impacts other components. Stakeholders in curriculum development should strive to ensure teaching and learning materials, tasks and resources are designed following these principles to ensure the curriculums are effective. Biggs argues that curriculums should be designed to motivate, prepare learners for the future, conserve values of a society and enhance personal growth. These attributes are fulfilled when this set of principles are followed. The first principle is that the design should be responsive to real world issues; this means that it should be relevant and authentic to the needs of a given population. Education is meant to push society towards progress in a given direction; every society is faced with different challenges that should guide the direction adopted for the content and methods applied in a curriculum. This explains why curriculums cannot and should not be universal because of the dynamic nature

of the global system. Curriculums should also not stagnate for too long because they tend to produce learners with skills that are redundant in the work environment or apply methods that are obsolete. The second principle is that the elements of a curriculum should be constructive, sequential and interlinked. The activities that form part of the design processes should not be done randomly; stakeholders should apply methods and techniques that lead to consistent and reliable results. The third principle is that curriculums should promote universality of education especially if the design to be implemented is for a given region. The fourth principle is that curriculums should contain truthful concepts that are a realistic representation of learners and teachers. Education contributes heavily to the moral, social and political character adopted by a generation, therefore the content, methods, tools and activities should be a reflection of the achievable resources that can be accessed by learners and teachers or have outcomes that do not extremely contradict the cultural, moral, social or political attributes of a society. Additionally, curriculums should be child centred and allow for the development of all rounded individuals who are adequately prepared to function in society. This means the content of curriculums should be applicable, well balanced, practical, and reflective of the society. By being child centred curriculums developed should also give due consideration to the individual differences among learners. Finally, curriculums should also be forward looking, which means they should be designed to address the immediate and future problems in a society. The curriculum should be flexible enough to allow for the use of modern methods and tools that enhance teaching and learning processes.

2.4 Curriculum Change

Education change or reforms is a long, tedious, involving and expensive process. Countries and institutions invest in the process despite the cost and time involved because of the rewards learners and teachers stand to gain from such modifications. As already discussed, the trends and demands in society influence curriculum design and content included. Additionally, curriculums are meant to be flexible and responsive to the needs and gaps in society. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) states that the first aspect that can lead to the change of curriculum design, methods or the content of a curriculum is innovation and inconsistency. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) argue that technology is one of the greatest elements that have inspired modification of curriculums. The other factor than can lead to

changes in the curriculum is global trends. Countries organise their education system to ensure the skills available among civilians is compatible with international demands to attract investors while also providing them with a competitive edge in the job market. Curriculums can also change because of pressure from or through the support of non-government entities and religious groups (Hargreaves & Shirley 2009). These groups are capable of exerting pressure to fund changes to curriculum in a given direction in support of a given course.

Saudi Arabia's process is now currently modelled around the five different dimensions highlighted by Fullan and Pomfert (1977). These dimensions include material elements, structural issues, behavioural attributes, knowledge and understanding, and finally, value internalisation.TP was intended to address all the identified 5 dimensions. The problems in this study will also be connected to these dimensions.

Table 2-1 Five Dimensions of Implementation and the TP

Material	Structure	Behaviour / Role	Knowledge and understanding	Value internalisation
Electronic resources, introduced applied science and laboratory lessons, introduced new science subjects, increased the substance of scientific subjects, Introduced module system at secondary level	Targeted the introduction of new facilities for teachers, the process of curriculum change cycle (from policy-makers to the students)	Aimed at providing training to teachers, Teacher and Principal participation, Teaching pedagogy	Promoted creative thinking, knowledge application, civil education	It is not clear how well the Tatweer is internalised. This research explores this.

Source: Adapted from Fullan and Pomfert (1977)

As can be seen from the Table 2-1, bringing about a curriculum change is not an event but a process (Fullan, 1991) that requires time, effort, resources and a change in behaviour. A number of issues have to be dealt with and this takes place in different phases- namely adoption, implementation and institutionalisation. The adoption phase resolves around the application of the proposed change. It is affected by the attitude, level of information

available to persuade a shift in attitude and the incentives available to promote a swift and efficient adoption. As highlighted earlier, the implementation phase entails dedicating effort, resources, and time into putting the reform into practice. In the last phase, institutionalisation, the change established as part of the norm or fails to do so and is abandoned. Scholars that have criticised the Fullan approach, including Marsh (2009) who contends that the Fullan model (1991) which focuses on three phases only, takes a very simplified approach towards innovation citing that dividing the dimensions of innovation so simply can be difficult due to the complexity of curriculum deployment. It can be argued that the three dimensions, once combined and with the absence of simple division, can assess the efficiency of the entire system. My study will make use of Fullan's (1991) model given that it captures everything involved in the implementation of the TP.

2.5 Curriculum Innovation Models

Different approaches can be adapted to effect educational change with a view to understanding the approach that was used and what alternatives might have been employed for the successful implementation of the Tatweer Programe. Studies dedicated to curriculum development indicate that several approaches exist, these include: 1) the social-interaction model, 2) the linkage model, 3) research, development and diffusion model, 4) centre-periphery model and 5) the problem-solving model (Havelock, 1970). The subsequent literature briefly expounds on the alternative models approaches listed in this section.

2.5.1 The Research, Development and Diffusion Model

This model assumes a straight sequence in the application of innovation. The model processes a linear approach of dissemination of innovation from the core to the periphery (Malhotra, Schmidt, and Huenteler, 2019). The sequence involves the core, which constitutes experts who conduct a research and identify a (problem if any), then in the process narrow down on the causes of the said problem. The next phase is to develop solutions that address the problem. This involves designing creative problem-solving mechanisms that lead to innovation of a system (Alnefaie, 2016). The final stage is to implement the developed solution. The experts in this process create awareness of their proposed solution that involves

active campaigns and distribution for replications of the solution to be enforced at the periphery by the users. The pitfalls in this model are the assumptions that solutions have to progress in a linear manner, it is a big scale solution that is time consuming, it is labour intensive with a lot of labour division, it is costly, and finally, the intended users are considered passive. Fullan (1972) maintains that there is a weakness in this model because the innovation becomes an end rather than a replaceable means to an end. The role and contribution of the user is also restricted in this model.

2.5.2 The Social Interaction Orientation Model

Havelock (1970) explains this model to be a more natural way of diffusing innovation. The Social Interaction Model is based on teacher initiative for dissemination of innovation, which occurs in a periphery-to-periphery context through the social interactions and social influence. In this model, the innovation is still produced at the core, but the implementation is based more on peer influence systems. The core provides tools such as guidelines and sets clear illustrations of the expected outcomes but trusts the teachers to competently translate and effectively implement the curriculum in the intended way in class contexts (Havelock, 1971; Eden & Tamir, 1979). According to Havelock (1971), the Social Interaction Model makes some generalizations about how innovation diffusion occurs. Teachers are organised in groups or unions so they constantly interact. Their network of social relations enables them to share ideas and thoughts where they can storm and debate on new ideas and challenge each other's views and thus can persuade or dissuade each other in a given direction (Hargreaves, 1975). Finally, the innovation does not get to every location and teacher at the same time, there is a multi-level progression of innovation. Fullan (2003) argues that in order for innovation to be implemented, a formal intervention helps create urgency and people taking change seriously. Whereas informal interactions are important in making sense after the introduction of change. The disadvantages of this model could be its overemphasis on informal interactions, it is prone to a lot of distortions because of the potential of misinterpretation, it is highly affected by user attitude, it is also time consuming, and finally, it can be very costly because there is no clear timeline for events (Marsh, 2009).

2.5.3 The Problem-Solving Model

According to Havelock (1970), this model begins with the user when he /she identifies a problem and innovation is the result of seeking a solution. This model is different from the other models because it is bottom-up, the user comes up with a solution for a problem they interact with. This model is also what Kelly (2004) refers to as the school-based curriculum. Unlike the centre- periphery models, in this model the teacher is not a passive user but the most vital element that innovates solutions. The policy makers' role in this context is to vet the proposed innovation by teachers to ensure consistency with required standards and the support teachers in any ways necessary for implementation to occur in the best interest of the students then transmit it (Ariav, 1988). The downside of this way of introducing a curriculum innovation is that teachers may not find it easy to implement an innovation that is not compatible with their own expectations. Bloomer (1997) who says represents the views of many educators categorically:

> *"Curriculum development can no longer proceed on the assumption that prescriptions count for all and that teachers and students are little more than technicians and consumers in the process; rather, curriculum must be planned in full recognition of the essential contributions which teachers and students make to their final constructions. They must be planned around those contributions (p.188)".*

2.5.4 Concern-based Adoption Model (CBAM)

Hall and Lock (1978) categorised how people adopt innovation at various levels of change. This model aims to help people and the management to find out the appropriate strategies by assessing how individuals adapt to change. The model focuses on teachers and how they respond at individual level to change. The model highlights that change is a very personal process to individual teachers that involves developmental growth of feelings and skills. The model identifies stages of concern, how these stages are manifested, and the typical behaviour in each stage to determine the rate of diffusion of innovation (Nieveen and Plomp, 2017). Individuals then proceed to rate themselves on a questionnaire called Stages of Concern and develop a profile. Once the profiles are made, a suitable strategy is developed

to suit the needs of the individuals.The advantage of this particular model is that it assesses the acceptability of change at the individual level, however it can also prove disadvantageous as a predesigned questionnaire may not be able to fully measure or assess context-based user acceptability (Marsh, 2009).

2.5.5 Mutual Adaptation Model

McLaughlin (2004) created this model as a response to the concept of 'adoption' innovation that separate models address. McLaughlin (2004) argues that education policy and educational organisations must work together in a process, which is mutually beneficial. They must adapt to each other, and the implementation process should include all relevant actors. Fullan (2002/2003) believes that this particular model is the most successful for curriculum development. The benefits, along with the downsides of this model have been addresses in the bottom-up, top-down and partnership curriculum change implementation strategies. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) believe that certain countries (such as the US and UK) utilise this model, which has proven to be quiet promising in the development of education. Additionally, Alnahdi (2014) has argued that the Saudi Arabian public school system along with the government must search for methods of mutual adaptation and devote funds towards the development of the public education system. Clearly, mutually beneficial initiatives can make a big difference, as the parties will work towards achieving their goals, thereby sustaining the innovation.

The models that have been discussed outline how differently educational change and innovation can occur. There is no one absolute or fool-proof model for educational innovation. Fullan's (1972) model considers the user the foundation of innovation and assumes a complete bottom-up innovation, this has been met with criticisms by authorities who believe that users could lack the necessary expertise to generate the desired changes. Some of the models, such as the diffusion model and the social-interaction models, place emphasis on the human capital and the role of social interactions in promoting and institutionalising innovations. Arguably, the mutual adaptation model is rather successful and has potential to positively change education in different ways. As can be seen from the

description of different curriculum innovation models, a choice has to be made of the most appropriate approach to affect the educational change at hand.

Based on the approach adopted in the first phase of the Tatweer Programe, the government adopted the research development and diffusion model. The implementation challenges identified in the initial phase were based on the general lack of support for the changes introduced mostly due to teachers feeling left out in the planning process, which resulted in challenges that could have been avoided in the very beginning. The government also took up more than it could achieve especially with regard to taking a central role in training, resource provision and evaluation. The second phase has exhibited numerous attributes associated with the Mutual adaptation model (Wiseman, 2010). This is mostly due to the increased engagement of teachers in the planning of the curriculum. The concerns raised by teachers were partially addressed in the second phase. Additionally, teachers have also been provided with the role of doing the assessment and selection-teaching methods deemed appropriate in ensuring effective learning. Finally, the Tatweer units that aid in the continuous assessment has also empowered teachers in the curriculum implementation cycle to ensure that they have room to make recommendations that can improve the performance of the curriculum. Based on these challenges faced in the Tatweer Programme, and in consideration of the challenges facing NSS, the model recommended is the Mutual Adaptation Model. The model advocates for collaboration between education policy makers and educational organisations. They must adapt to each other and the implementation process should include all relevant actors. Therefore, it will ensure that there is innovation and collaboration among all the stakeholders.

2.5.6 Choice and Justification for the Mutual Adaptation Model

While the social interactions model is important in making sense once curriculum change has been initiated, it has its disadvantages when compared with the Mutual Adaptation Model, which is recommended for this study. For example, in the context of change of the NSS curriculum, the model could overemphasise on informal interactions. Thus, it is prone to a lot of distortions because of the potential of misinterpretation, it is highly affected by user attitude, it is also time consuming, and finally, it can be very costly because there is no

clear timeline for events (Marsh, 2009). Similarly, the Problem Solving Model was left out. Unlike the centre- periphery models, in this model the teacher is not a passive user but the most vital element that innovates solutions. The policy makers in this case have the role of evaluating the innovations suggested by teachers to ensure consistency with required standards and the support teachers in any ways necessary for implementation to occur in the best interest of the students then transmit it (Ariav, 1988). Nevertheless, the main problem with this model (in relation to the NSS curriculum) is that teachers may not find it easy to implement an innovation that is not compatible with their own expectations. The relevance and application of the Concern-based Adoption Model (CBAM) has to be considered. As evident in the discussion, this model focuses on teachers and how they respond at individual level to change. It affirms the centrality of the teachers in the process of curriculum change (Nieveen & Plomp, 2017). Teachers evaluate themselves throughout the stages of concern using a questionnaire. While the application of this model makes it easy to measure change acceptability, there is no evidence to show that a pre-designed questionnaire can gauge context-based user acceptability (Marsh, 2009).

2.6 Challenges faced by Schools in Saudi Arabia

If current trends are anything to go by, the future of the female generation in Saudi Arabia has never been better. This is not to say it is perfect, but the presence of the female population in academic institutions in the country is more noticeable. The historical and cultural background of women (as will be discussed in subsequent sections) has not always been rosy. It did not come easy but the efforts and campaigns championing for formal education of the girls are slowly starting to pay off. The challenges of the female population in the country stem from a combination of complex contexts and beliefs that have been passed from one generation to another and have negatively affected the female population. The work environments, the cultural limitations, position of women, the attitude of society, and the administrative structure all together have made it difficult for women to access and work in the education sector.

The history of formal education for the female child in Saudi Arabia is not as rich as that of their male counterparts simply because they were not granted opportunities to experience

formal education until the Dar al-Hanan and Nassif private schools for girls were opened in the city of Jeddah in the year 1957 (Al Rawaf & Simmons, 1991). This was because of active campaigns of Her Royal Highness (HRH) Princess Iffat Al Thunayanthe, wife of His Majesty Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the reigning king at the time. HRH Princess Iffat is widely celebrated for her dedication to promoting education for female child up until her passing in the year 2000 (Aljabreen and Lash, 2016). She started her campaign in 1943 when, because of her influence, the first boarding school that catered only to the royals and their extended family members was established for girls. She would later donate money and enrol one of her daughters in the first female only private school in 1955 open to the public.

Over the years, the female population in Saudi Arabia has incrementally acquired formal education across various education centres across Saudi Arabia and as a result the literacy rates between the 1970s and 2012 have increased dramatically. The literacy rates of female youth between the ages of 10 and 15 was 2 percent in the 1970s (Hamdan, 2005). This increased to 97 percent in 2011 (UNICEF, 2013). The trends show substantial progress, but the journey has not been without major pitfalls. The government of the oil rich nation continues to invest in setting up education centres across the country; and the ratio of female to male children in high schools continues to 'close in'.

A close look at the existing literature on the challenged in the education sector dominantly mention the slow uptake of the norm of educating the female population as a major 'bottleneck' and a reason why a lot of attention still needs to be focused on encouraging parents to enrol their children in formal institutions of learning (Sani, 2018). Efforts to educate girls were met with a lot of resistance. Religious conservatives were sceptical about what the effect education would have on the flow and norm of society. They proposed that women instead be exposed to religious teachings and not the same mathematical and scientific content their male counterparts were being taught.

The growing popularity and growth of the education sector especially with regards to education of the female child was not directly proportionate to shifts in cultural beliefs and practices. Saudi Arabia is still largely a very patriarchal society. The position of Saudi women is a complex and controversial topic that often displays contradictions (Islam, 2014).

HRH Princess Iffat's efforts over the years and her influence on the administration at the time led to the widening and deepening of the education opportunities for the female population right from primary level to the tertiary level. The other challenge that presented itself at the time when educating the female child was that it was an expense that many parents in the region preferred to avoid all together. The implication was that more of the male population acquired formal education compared to their female counterparts. In return, development agendas were driven and dominated by the males and tended to take a very male perfective.

Women were assigned a role in society with specific duties set aside for them. What they were learning and how that would affect their ability to be wholesome wives became a real issue. A significant section of the Saudi Arabia was not opposed to the education of the girl; they just preferred the education content to be more religious in nature and tailored to prepare them for marriage and child rearing (Sani, 2018). Educating the female child meant they would be viable to compete for formal employment opportunities with the males and how this would affect the family unit was a valid concern to those opposed to the developments in the education sector.

Prophet Mohammed says "acquisition of knowledge is binding on all Muslims (both men and women without any discrimination)"[1]. Research and large consultations on the stand of the Islamic faith suggests that Islamic teachings do not exclude females from the public sphere or economic development (Alselaimi, 2014). Looking at the Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) teachings, he encouraged female participation, education, and respect. From the teachings of Prophet Mohammed, it is evident that the Quran includes the spirit of equality for all, including access to education by both male and female. In Islam, education for all is considered very important. In fact, the first word revealed of the Quran is a command for everyone to read. However, this command does not differentiate between male and female but addresses all believers. Indeed, Khadeeja, first wife of the Prophet Muhammad, was a

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[1] Narrated by Ibn Maja in al-Sunan, 1:81 §224.

highly educated and successful businessperson. In multiple instances, the prophet is quoted saying: "How splendid were the women of the *Ansar*; shame did not prevent them from becoming learned in the faith." Thus, education for all is something that the teachings of Islam.

 Like all other aspects of the society, the education sector is a reflection of the financial capabilities of Saudi citizens. Although education in Saudi Arabia is free, it is still compulsory. Limited resources affect priorities, considerations such as house chores, although dominantly an oil producer, some sections of its population depend on production of dates, wheat, and cattle rearing. Parents often tend to prioritise the education of their sons over that of their daughters (Almuneef, 2019) as would have been the case in other countries before the provision of free education in many countries. High unemployment rates especially among women have crippled efforts to encourage higher enrolment rates for the female child.

Child marriage in Saudi Arabia continues to pose a challenge to the Saudi government. Most of it is driven by poverty (Almuneef, 2019). Parents see their daughters who are still of school going age as an opportunity to uplift their financial status through the culture of dowry payment. Statistics on the rates of early marriages are not easy to come by because of the general acceptance of the culture in Saudi Arabian citizens, which leads to a reluctance to report cases of forced child marriages. Until as late as 2017, the government did not have a firm stand on the issues of child marriage. Saudi Arabia's Shura Council, a 150-member advisory body declared that children below 15 years should not be married off, those between 15-18 years can only do so with the consent of parents. The council went further to cap the age limit of the intended spouse to not exceed double that of the intended bride (Augusto, & Marrick, 2017).

The motivation to acquire formal education is largely driven by a desire to acquire knowledge to be able to contribute to personal and state development. To accumulate and spend 18 years' worth of education is useless if in the end you are not able to secure a job or start a thriving business. Most families, surprisingly even those composed of relatively educated members, still remain hesitant to allow their sisters or wives to work more so in

mixed gender environments. In general, society in Saudi Arabia is weary of non-family members of opposite genders being in constant close proximity. This for the girl child means her destiny has almost been determined before they advance academically. What are left are the medical, education, retail, beauty, and food industries. It seems almost unacceptable to have interest in fields such as engineering because it is still considered a male industry (Almuneef, 2019).

2.7 Challenges faced by Female Teachers

The culture is Saudi Arabia to date still respects the need to separate sexes in society according to the notion "Beliefs affect behaviour,", as John Dewey (1997) famously stated. The education sector has not been spared. There are education facilities for each gender to be taught strictly by members of the same gender. This basically means, female teachers teach female students and the same applies to the male populations Where there is a deficit the most suitable solution is complimenting the numbers with expatriate teachers from neighbouring countries (Hamdan, 2005). Over the years the government has invested in building institutions of learning for females across the country the more the schools built the more female teachers employed. This separation of genders and administrative processes has positively affected the rates of enrolment and the level employment of the female population (Fallatah and Syed, 2018).

The employment trends in the country are not demonstrative of transition rates from tertiary institutions for both genders (Scheeren, Werfhorst & Bol, 2018). According to the World Bank, female students account for 58 percent of the total number of Saudi students in Saudi universities (Islam, 2014) this is not in any way represented in the formal work force in the country. While a good number of women have graduated from universities and colleges. Women are still generally considered homemakers. Recent statistics indicate that female graduates from university out-numbered men in all major fields except agriculture and engineering and this is simply because there are no institutions offering these courses for women in the two fields (Alabbasi, 2017).

Many men welcome women's economic contribution in the development of Saudi Arabia, but it is socially unacceptable for women to work in fields other than teaching and medicine (Mobaraki and Söderfeldt, 2010). The education and medical sectors are where the opportunities lie for most women who pursue formal education. Female teachers, doctors and nurses have managed to set the pace for the younger generations normalising the image of a working female to them (Lotherington, Obstfelder and Halford, 2017). Female teachers have performed impressively especially with the introduction of the use of technology in the education sector as expressed by the education ministry. The segregation of the genders has not impacted the quality of education in any significant ways (Banks, & Banks, 2019). The number of qualified female teachers is not adequate, so the ministry and private schools often hire foreign teachers to bridge the gap.

Teaching teenage girls in the country is not an easy task, not because of the presumed difficulty posed by the behavioural characteristics of teenagers but the problem in Saudi Arabia for the teachers mostly stems from the position of women in their society (Sani, 2018). If there is a need to discuss the progress of a child, they can only access female parents for meetings- most of whom are either uneducated or are not in a position to make any substantial decisions to influence the problem at hand in any significant way. Cases of teachers who have been punished by employers and society in general for being whistle blowers concerning children who are subjected to early marriages are widespread (Al-Hakami and McLaughlin, 2016). Despite teachers earning the trust and respect of their students for them to be valuable confidants, the teachers are limited on the options to help affected children. Hence, the current scenario in most academic institutions is that teachers come to the class, teach, and then leave.

Women's movement is still limited in Saudi Arabia, to date it is difficult for women to move or access some services without written consent from their male guardians. For a married woman, it is her husband and in the case of the husband's death, it is her own son. In case a woman has no father, brother, husband or son, the guardian will be any male guardian she has (Mobaraki & Söderfeldt, 2015). Until 2017 there were no female drivers allowed to drive

in Saudi Arabia by law. Therefore, in a situation where students are required to travel for an academic excursion, the logistics involved in getting the necessary consent from guardians to organise transportation just makes it unbelievably difficult for these teachers to include such programs in curriculum. This practice of seeking approval from male guardians is ingrained in the fibres of the Saudi Arabian society that officials often ask for written permissions even if there is no law or guideline requiring it (Al Lily, 2011).

The obvious question would be why women working in the education sector could not work together to make changes that would make their work easier. The answer to this lies in the distribution of power and authority between genders in the country. Despite the separation of female education centres, with separate administrative structures and physical facilities, the administrative functions are still in the same ministry. Top ranking officials who are responsible for making major decisions on matters regarding the ministry are male.

The limitations on movement and limited access to adult education hampers the ability of many women to pursue further education or training. Teachers are not sufficient as it is, so taking academic leave is not a convenience that can be extended to many teachers. The other alternative is going for evening and night classes which is complicated because women are not expected in general to be moving about at night alone. Male companions who are often required to escort them are highly inconvenienced because they have to sit and wait somewhere for the duration of the class on a routine basis. If it is a married woman, it means sometimes both parents have to be away at night leaving the children. Such complications require a lot of support from both the immediate and extended families, something often lacking in the society in Saudi Arabia (Lamnina, and Chase, 2019).

This section has highlighted the challenges faced by female teachers in Saudi Arabia. In relation to the current study, it can be argued that similar challenges are likely to be manifested in the implementation of the NSS curriculum. In the implementation of the NSS curriculum, there are challenges within and outside the school that impact on successful implementation of the curriculum. For example, given that the majority of the decision makers in the ministry are male, female concerns and perspectives are likely to be left out. In addition, there is also a limited number of female teachers to serve the separate schools

for female students given that they do not mix. This has a direct consequence on the student/ teacher ratio in the teaching of NSS. This problem is further complicated by limitations on movement and limited access to adult education hampers the ability of many women to pursue further education or training. For this reason, women constitute a significant variable for this study hence the need to discuss their challenges in this section.

2.8 Comparative Analysis of Pedagogical and Education Policies among the Gulf Cooperative Council Nation

Curriculum change in KSA can be contextualised within GCC. KSA falls in the wider Middle East region and countries within this region have witnessed significant changes. One distinct element of the education system in all the GCC countries is the nationalization of education. Here, the nations have employed different policies that all target managing the education system. The Saudi Arabia Kingdom has the Tatweer, a project that seeks to decentralise the education system and involve local decision-makers in developing pedagogical and educational policies that are learner-centred. In common with Saudi is the UAE, a nation that is also decentralising its education system. On the contrary, Oman, Kuwait, and Bahrain all use centralized education systems. For Qatar, the nation had initially rolled out a decentralised system but is shifting to a centralised system informed by the challenges in improving the quality of education using devolved decision points. This section conducts a comparative analysis of education policies among the GCC nations with a view to contextualising the challenges and opportunities that Saudi Arabia has (Romanowski and Du, 2020).

Qatar

The Qatari education system centres on two pillars: basic and higher education (Nasser, 2017). Ranked 22nd on the ratio of teachers to students in primary education and 6th in critical thinking among teachers in the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report by the World Economic Forum [WEF] (2019), the nation's basic education system comprises 12 years split between pre-school, primary, and high school. The higher education system encompasses undergraduate and postgraduate courses. The school's segmentation includes independent,

international, private, and international institutions. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education runs the Qatari education system (Nasser, 2017). There are two distinct models of education frameworks: decentralised and centralised (Romanowski and Du, 2020). In the centralised model, a nation's central government, through the Ministry of Education, runs all education functions and policy development. In contrast, in a decentralised education structure, the central government transfers all the educational practices and functions to the local levels through the local governments or the regional authorities and schools (Romanowski and Du, 2020). The community-level decentralization achieved by giving power to local authorities is a model few of the countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council have embraced. As such, there reside differences in how these nations operate using the two models.

As Romanowski and Du (2020) provide, Qatar adopted and implemented the decentralised education system using the *Education for a New Era* reform developed by the government. The reform had three phases, with the initial commencing in the fall of 2002, and the last beginning in 2007. The reform majored on a decentralised education model where the government-funded schools were customised to fit the community level model. As such, the initiative's premise lay on four pillars: autonomy from the central government, freedom of choice for parents, a variety of schools for diverse student needs, and accountability on the part of the schools given the independence (Nasser, 2017; Romanowski and Amatullah, 2016).

The decentralization proved a shift in teaching practices. According to Nasser (2017), guided by the autonomy principle of the reforms, teachers were allowed to develop the instructional content. The new shift allowed for independent experimental practices in curriculum development, besides the development of resources for learners on a professional level. Yet, as Said (2016) shows, the shifts experienced at this level and the lack of professional guidance therein created professional conflict arising from a shortage of expertise. The supply of teachers equipped with the right skills for the new educational model proved challenging, with the labour market lacking instructors with the critical skills and training

vital for the new model. Identifying these challenges, the Qatari Education Ministry developed multiple development programs, such as project-based learning, to professionally equip the teacher to work within the new models (Nasser, 2017).

However, the project-based learning developed by the Qatari Education Ministry, a centralised educational model in nature, limited the teachers' autonomy in developing innovative instructional practices (Nasser, 2017). Through the Education Ministry's policies, several reforms emerged to guide the teachers. These reforms went against the decentralization principle, with teachers lacking independence on how to deliver curriculum to students. By 2017, the government had initiated several reforms, including forcing project-based learning sessions' implementation by each teacher, following a government guideline. This was the beginning of education centralization in Qatar (Romanowski and Du, 2020).

As Abou-El-Kheir (2017) shows, several challenges in the decentralization process informed the government's intervention. First, stakeholder dissatisfaction with the new model, in addition to the negligible progress in the education sector based on decentralization, led to a rethinking of the education model. As Romanowski and Du (2020) add, there was increased criticism of the teacher-led education models. Furthermore, the clash in culture due to the policy borrowing much from western education models, besides language challenges, created a strong ground for governmental intervention. Thus, as studies show, the current Qatari education system is currently centralised.

Kuwait

Ranked 2nd on the ratio of teachers to students in primary education, and 60th on the critical thinking ranking of teachers in the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report by the World Economic Forum (2019), Kuwait follows a K-12 education system that comprises 5 years of elementary, 4 years of primary, and 3 years of high school education. Governed by the Ministry of Education and with support from the National Centre for Educational Development, the education system in Kuwait is centralised (Ghaleb, 2017).

According to Alhouti (2020), given its lower ranking among the Gulf Cooperation Council nations in education, Kuwait currently implements several policies to ensure a radical shift in the quality of its education. The government established a body to develop the quality of education in Kuwait. The National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance (NBAQ) is an institution responsible for ensuring that higher education institutions meet the required standards (NBAQ, n.d.). Further, the institution has the responsibility of actualizing government principles, practices, and programs that will enhance the quality of education in the country.

One major policy from the centralised education system that focuses on the improvement of instructional processes, however, is the General Strategy of General Education in Kuwait 2005–2025 (Alshebou, 2018). The strategy's goals include aligning the Kuwaiti culture to the independence of thought of learners using advancement in education, supporting a democratic life through sound education, and stimulating wealth production whilst protecting the environment. Other goals include championing the implementation of minimum requirements in curricula in schools, enhance institutional reforms towards quality education, and finally, bridging the gap in pedagogy by manipulating current technology in instructional processes (Alshebou, 2018).

Yet, the study by Alshebou (2018) shows that the current education system has failed in providing professional competence in instructor education to facilitate the achievement of these goals. As such, the centralization of education is a source of major decision challenges in the education system in Kuwait. Alhouti (2020) shows that major policies on teachers' instructional organization, educational resources management, teacher's management, educational structures, and planning have to be communicated by district leaders to school heads in the regions. Quality standards allowed by education policies are subject to the synergy created between the district leaders and school heads in Kuwait. Yet, the centralization of decision making, besides the lack of coordination, have created huge hurdles in the education policy implementation (Aldaihani, 2017). One challenge that has exposed the centralised system in the region is the inability of the government, through the ministry of education, to actualise online learning in schools. Education has stalled in Kuwait because of the COVID19 pandemic, with insufficient leadership and an unequipped

educational infrastructure to sustainably support online learning (Alhouti, 2020). A study by Al-Awidi and Aldhafeeri (2017) further shows that teachers in Kuwait lack sufficient preparation in terms of pedagogy and technical ability in the implementation of the digital curriculum.

Oman

The Global Competitiveness Report 2019 shows that Oman ranks 7th on the student teacher's ratio in primary education and 15th on the critical thinking ranking in instructions (WEF, 2019). The education system divides the K-12 basic system into three levels: preschool, primary, secondary. This is a replacement for the general education system, with the ministry of education managing the country's basic education system. For higher education, Oman's Ministry of Higher Education provides leadership (Nasser, 2019).

As the study by Al'Abri (2016) provides, the education sector in Oman is centralised. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education make all major decisions on the personnel, planning, structures, and resource allocation for public schools. This is besides education policies for private institutions. To ensure that all learning institutions meet the Sultanate set standards, the Oman government created the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority. This institution is tasked with ensuring all learning institutions meet international education standards (Nasser, 2019).

Employing a top-bottom approach in education policy development, curricula, and education system evaluation is the role of the education ministries (Khan and Fernandez-Carag, 2016). The authors further show that the school system resource requirement and distribution is at the discretion of the centralised system. Al Abri (2018) indicates that a lack of a devolved decision-making functions at the local and school level limits the ability of teachers and school management to play a part in educational policy development. The only crucial part both parties play is the implementation of decisions and policies developed at the local level. Among the centralised policies implemented by the national government on education is the professional development of teachers. Al Jabri, Silvennoinen, and Griffiths (2018) show that until the intervention, educators in Oman capitalised on a cascade approach to training. In

the cascade approach, one generation of teachers receives training on specific subjects. Upon qualification, the teachers turn into trainers and impart the same knowledge to other teachers in the second generation, with the cycle repeating itself (Karalis, 2016).

Yet, due to its insufficiency, the ministries developed the Specialised Centre for Professional Training of Teachers (SCPTT), an organization tasked with ensuring that all Omani teachers receive in-service professional development training. The organization planned, organized, and provided systematically trained while monitoring all the development projects' outcomes (Al Jabri et al., 2018). The goals of the organization include the development of comprehensive, integrated, sustained, supported, and accredited educators' programs. The objectives of these programs include enhancing the quality of education while improving student academic performance. As Al Shabibi and Silvennoinen (2018) show, the educational policies in Oman focuses on improvement of learners' competence, school equality, region educational equality, and provision of a comprehensive curriculum. Furthermore, the educational policy shift focuses on gender equality, quality of assessment, instructional methods, instructor preparation, the teaching profession enhancement, and gender competence equity.

 According to Al Jabri et al. (2018), SCPTT offers teacher development programs at different levels. First, the institution provides programs to senior teachers, targeting one from each learning institution in Oman. Skills imparted include updated learning, instructional, teacher development, and evaluation skills. Second, SCPTT offers an Arabic experts' program. This targets experienced grades 1 to 4 educators in the Sultanate. Third, the institution provides a training program to experienced grade 5 to 10 mathematics educators. The goal is to impart evidence-based methods of learning and mathematical concept application in the instruction process (Al Jabri et al., 2018).

Another program, as Al Jabri et al. (2018) shows, targets grades 5 to 10 science educators with experience on the topic, informing them on research methods and how to utilise scientific concepts in the instructional process. Fifth, SCPTT provides supervisors with expert programs to improve their supervisory and educator development skills. This program targets a third of educators concerned with educational subjects. Sixth, the organization

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provides a program that targets school leaders in all government schools. These are school heads and deputies, updating and enhancing their leadership skills. Finally, SCPTT offers a training program for new teachers. These are recruits in government institutions in need of support skills (Al Jabri et al., 2018).

Another key policy developed is the requirement of each teacher in Oman to dedicate 10% of the time at work to developing professionally (Al Jabri et al., 2018). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education requires that all teachers practice responsibility for professional development. This is through a long-term step by step teacher development using diverse interventions, including the development of learning communities (Al Shabibi and Silvennoinen, 2018).

Bahrain

As one of the GCC members, Bahrain's basic education comprises of learning institutions that are based on gender segregation (Bukamal, 2018). With education free for national public schools, basic education is compulsory in Bahrain. The education system in the nation is centralised, with the Ministry of Education managing the system. Based on the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report, Bahrain ranks 33rd on teaching critical thinking and 28th on the student-teacher ratio in primary education (WEF, 2019). The Bahraini Ministry of Education formed the Quality Assurance Authority to review educational institutions, develop, and adopt a national evaluation system that focuses on improving the quality of education in the country to international standards (Al-Aali, 2019). Over time, several educational policies have stood out in shaping the existing educational system in Bahrain. The policies include the achieving Excellence Together Policy of 2012, the 2014 National Higher Education Strategy, and the 2015 National Research Strategy (Hayes and Findlow, 2020).

The education reforms have footing from recommendations proposed to the Ministry of Education in Bahrain by McKinney & Co. Among the policy changes included was the teacher development and partnership between institutions and the Ministry of Education (Lightfoot, 2014). Yet, for the success of these initiatives, teachers' buy-in is critical. A study

by Razzak (2016) indicated that allocation and the provision of a support system are key elements of the policy implementation by the ministry to ensure that instructors are well equipped to achieve the strategic plans.

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) (n.d.), one of the leading education hubs in GCC, ranks 8th on critical thinking teaching and 92nd on student-teacher in basic education in the Global Competitive Index report of 2019 (WEF, 2019). Education in public schools uses Arabic curricula in the K-12 system. For private institutions, the government allows for the development and teaching of curricula using other languages other than Arabic. Education in UAE is under the oversight of the Ministry of Education (UAE, n.d.). One critical policy developed by the ministry is the Ministry of Education Strategy 2010 –2020. In this policy, the government sets several objectives for the organization to achieve. Among the objectives include curricula of high quality and exceptional instructional processes for excellent student outcomes (UAE, n.d.). Another objective is to enhance student school life by providing an enabling environment that will minimise the school dropout rate. Through an integrated assessment and affordable education, the third objective is achieving equality in education. The involvement of society and the pursuit of national identity in the instructional process allow for student-citizens involvement in curriculum design. The final objective is ensuring regional and national educational support services are provided efficiently for the effectiveness of the administration (UAE, n.d.).

Initially, under a centralised education system, the ministry developed policies and guidelines for all private and public learning institutions in the nation. As such, the ministry split the governance role of two institutions. As for Dubai, UAE (n.d.)., the Dubai Education Council and the Knowledge and Human Development Authority oversee the region's education- while the Abu Dhabi Education Council oversees Abu Dhabi regional education. With a target 98% secondary graduation rate, UAE (n.d.) has developed public-private partnerships (PPP) with local and international players. The Ministry of Education has embarked on implementing strategies to decentralise the education system using the PPP. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[UNESCO] (2016), UAE, through the Dubai and Abu Dhabi education agencies, has decentralised education, in addition to capitalizing on the support offered by the PPP. As such, the education advancement plans are done at a local level using private partners and regional bodies.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ranks 27th on critical thinking teaching and 20th on student-teacher in basic education in the Global Competitive Index report of 2019 (WEF, 2019). Offering free education at the K-12 level, learning is offered by private and public institutions. Governed by the Education Ministry, Saudi Arabia has the Public Education Evaluation Commission that develops policies to evaluate and regulate the education system. The Education Ministry has multiple agencies and public administration departments that collaborate to develop education in the nation (Dakhiel, 2017).

Alabdulaziz (2019) states that the education system in Saudi Arabia has, for a long time, been centralised. However, through the launch of the Tatweer project, the Education Ministry focused on decentralizing the education system. The goal was to give autonomy to schools and other local education leaders to develop approaches to meet the demands of the changing instructional field. As Alabdulaziz (2019) further shows, Tatweer adopts an instructional approach that centres on the learners for policy development, besides pursuing professional development initiatives for instructors and overhauling the learning infrastructure to facilitate education in the 21st century.

Alyami (2014) also shows how the Tatweer has allowed for a decentralised education system, a major Saudi Arabia educational policy transformation towards collaboration with local and regional stakeholders in achieving vision 2030 (Alghamdi and Holland, 2020) educational goals. Alghamdi and Holland (2020) provide that the assimilation of technology in the instructional processes has been guided by several reforms, with the latest being the 10th Saudi National Development Plan (2015–2019) and National Transformation Program (2016–2020). The former policy provided 24 priority objectives for the integration of

technology in learning and the development of teachers' skills in leveraging technology in the instructional process. The latter guided skill development using technology and charting a curriculum change that integrated ICT in education (Alghamdi and Holland, 2020).

2.8.1 Comparative Analysis Conclusion

One distinct element of the education system in all the GCC countries is the nationalization of education. Here, the nations have employed different policies that all target managing the education system. The Saudi Arabia Kingdom has the Tatweer, a project that seeks to decentralise the education system and involve local decision-makers in developing pedagogical and educational policies that are learner-centred. In common with Saudi is the UAE, a nation that is also decentralising its education system. On the contrary, Oman, Kuwait, and Bahrain all use centralized education systems. For Qatar, the nation had initially rolled out a decentralised system but is shifting to a centralised system informed by the challenges in improving the quality of education using devolved decision points.

On ICT, all the nations in GCC have developed policy shifts that focus on capitalising on technology in teaching on all levels of education. Yet, all of these nations have varying levels of success in the assimilation process. The analysis shows that besides Kuwait, the other GCC nations have varying success rates in integrating technology in pedagogy. As such, Kuwait has failed in manipulating technology in the education process. Education stakeholders have given teacher professional development in Saudi Arabia much emphasis, with an allocation of resources to improve the quality of the instructional process and materials. Likewise, all the other nations in the GCC have implemented custom strategies for teacher professional development, with Oman going further to facilitate learning communities. However, the degree of support for the development varies, with Kuwait getting suboptimal results from the efforts due to lack of adequate resource allocation, teacher management, and development planning.

2.9 Challenges in Teaching and Learning Other Subjects in Saudi Arabia

2.9.1 English in Saudi Arabia High Schools

Alrabai (2016) supports this assertion, stating that the inadequately trained teachers on the English language contribute to the low performance in the subject in Saudi Arabia. The author argues that there are no certifications for foreign language instruction for trainers, thus contributing to the lack of capitalizing on diverse instructional techniques in the English subject. Of importance to the instructional process is the provision of ideal pedagogical technology and equipment. Yet, as Al-Nasser (2015) posits, the English instructors are poorly equipped to deliver the lessons adequately. Lack of tools such as pedagogical aids, videos, and learning labs constrain the ability of instructors to meet the teaching expectation of learners. The introduction of computer technology in high schools to help in learning the English language has received positive reviews from learners. However, the lack of equipment, the motivational challenges, and the shortage of computer skills among learners have constrained the ability to use technology in learning the language (Sabti and Chaichan, 2014).

Teachers lack key communication tools, besides a lack of enabling technology to keep up to date with the changes in the pedagogy of English (Sabti and Chaichan, 2014). A key prerequisite for learning is the proper means of communication between the instructor and the students. Findings in a study conducted by Al-Tamimi (2019) show that the learners in Saudi institutions are not satisfied with the level of English instructional process. However, the lack of an open system of communicating with the teachers, which can be enhanced through options such as online discussion boards, leads students to suppress their objection to the instructional process.

In Saudi Arabia, teachers play a passive role in the curriculum development process (Al-Kathiri, 2016). This means that their contribution to development is negligible. The designers are devoid of critical data in the syllabus development process. With the exclusion of teachers from the process, a centralised approach of curriculum development locks out any vital changes that can enhance the teaching of the English language. Alnefaie (2016)

also supports this view, stating that the teachers are marginalised in the role they play in curriculum development. With the Ministry of Education's view of the teachers' status as that of enforcers, such marginalization has created boundaries of engagement. These boundaries limit teachers' professional creativity (Alnefaie, 2016). The teachers' perception created from the marginalisation in syllabus updating leads to low motivation. The recipient status, besides the low morale, leads to concrete challenges in imparting English to secondary school learners in Saudi Arabia.

As Elyas and Badawood (2016) show, through Tatweer policy, the Saudi education stakeholders pay key attention to the modernizing of the country's education. Yet, the English curriculum does not reflect this goal. The current curriculum focuses on achieving outdated policies (Alnefaie, 2016). This calls for an overhaul in the policy on curriculum revision and updating.

On the other hand, the study by Alkahtani (2017) investigated the challenges facing the integration of ICT in education in the Saudi high schools. The findings of the study showed that the integration of ICT presents two major challenges: lack of equipment and training. In addition, it was also discovered that there is lack of understanding both the students and the teachers on how the ICT equipment works, problems with repairs or timeliness of them a lack of mastery of ICT teaching techniques. On the basis of this study, it is apparent that both resource training and the equipment present serious challenges to the use of ICT in teaching and learning of other subjects. As such, it was recommended that an expanded decision-making process would ensure that the program works effectively. This entails including all the stakeholders in the decision-making process to ensure that their views are taken into consideration. Similarly, it was suggested that teachers, principals, and managers need to take lead in problem solving (Alkahtani, 2017).

2.10 National Social Studies Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

The NSS curriculum has multiple   majors; history whose focus is enriching and enhancing the student memory; geography, taught to ensure that students understand the processes that affect the physical world. In addition to this, economics and government are taught for

students to understand how the government is run and making of civic decision. It also aims at improving citizen culture and responsible. Thus, one can say that the aim of social studies is to explain and clarify the cultural, historical and economic events. It also intends to build civic competence and strengthen the national personality, (Ross, 2014).

History

This is one of the subjects taught within the NSS curriculum. Students study things such as inscriptions, artwork, traditions, inscriptions, blogs and analysing those using historical methods. The material for history also it includes elements of history such as the history of Middle East in the 12th century and its civilisation over time. A significant section of the materials has features of Islamic history. Students are taught principles and values of KSA. An interaction with the course content for history also students develop analysis, evaluation, higher thinking skills and creativity (Ministry of Education, 2021).

Geography

As a subject in the NSS curriculum, social studies links the various earth sciences. It helps expound on the relationship between learners and their environment. The geography book has most of the essential fields to help students master and acknowledge for the service of humanity and their coexistence. It also provides them a chance to meditate and contemplate the divine creativity in Allah (Ministry of Education, 2021).

The structure and goals of the NSS in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reflect the integration and connectivity between the diverse elements to attain responsible citizenship. From the NSS curriculum, one identifies three main dimensions of this curriculum;

I.   The focus of the first dimension is the entire concepts of thinking for the social studies and includes aspects such as cause and consequence, significance, interrelationships and perspectives, patterns and trends as well as continuity and change. All these concepts reflect an overall framework that ties skills, knowledge, and understanding practices together. Nevertheless, these concepts merely represent a general framework for illustrating the relationship between these concepts (Ministry of Education, 2021).

II.   The second dimension has three main themes. The first one deals with knowledge and understanding and this outlines the key content areas for social studies and its branches (geography, citizenship, sociology, education, economics history and psychology). The second theme is concerned with the skills and practices that learners ought to engage in for them to attain the desired skills. In the third theme, there are trends and values related to the field of social studies.

III.   The third dimension is termed as responsible citizenship. As evident in the NSS curriculum, the objective the curriculum is to enhance responsible citizenship. This entails values such as belonging to KSA, its leadership, appreciation of state symbols and national unity. For responsible citizenship to be achieved, there is need for the learner to interact with others and strengthen values of acceptance of others, mutual respect, tolerance and understanding of others' cultural values (Ministry of Education, 2021).

Al-Thubaiti pointed out that the social studies curriculum, in particular, bears the most significant role in achieving real citizenship, focusing on the nation's prominence and position on the world map and highlighting the prominent role played by its wise leadership in serving the Arab and Islamic nations. Al-Thubaiti and others (2021) confirm that we should not reduce the concept of social studies to history only, as it extends to cover more areas, including geography, sociology, planning, dialogue, civic education, and others. Accordingly, social studies are not just about studying the past; we are proud of and extracting its cultural and civilizational heritage. However, it forms a connection between the civilizational and cultural heritage and the present with its achievements and challenges. Consequently, while seeking to include everything that would enhance the national identity and the values of loyalty and belonging in the hearts of Saudi students, the curriculum planners in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were keen to pay attention to the development of social studies curricula.

Indeed, the researcher encounters a problem when editing the term social studies. In Arabic education, the terminology used for social studies varies. This issue has arisen when dealing with social studies courses in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Tracing the stages that the social studies _or the social subjects as they were called_ curricula went through, leads to the fact that these curricula were presented to the student in the form of separate subjects (history, geography, national education). This method receives a great deal of criticism, the most

significant of which are: It divides and fragments the facts and knowledge of social materials. As a result, they lose the ability to achieve their educational goals, represented in achieving the comprehensive and integrated growth of the student's personality. Thus, the need to develop social studies curricula to achieve the desired goals has arisen. The researchers came up with recommendations in this regard, as two researchers highly recommended "reconsider the social studies curricula and methods of teaching them so that they become an effective tool in building and forming the mind and conscience of the learner (Al-Thuba,2021).

Al-Thubaiti (2021): Curriculum planners in the Ministry of Education have set their sights on developing social studies courses. They consider it one of the main cornerstones on which the comprehensive curriculum development project, approved by the Ministry in 1998, depends. This national project aims to develop all curriculum elements according to the latest contemporary educational and scientific theories and methods. In association with consulting firms, educational institutions, and the national governmental and private academy, the Ministry of Education undertakes the project's planning, implementation, and evaluation processes, Al-Thubaiti.(2021)

In Saudi Arabia, the Social Studies curriculum provides guidelines for the content students should be introduced to in the course of their studies (Almogbel, 2015). The content includes history, geography, and civil education. The duration allocated for each class session is also stipulated in the national curriculum, which goes as far as recommending the activities that should be included during class and out of class activities that can enhance the understanding of learners. Teachers are provided with instruction materials while the students have textbooks with the appropriate material (Almogbel, 2015). According to Alwagait et al. (2015), the syllabus recommends for both the learners to teachers to seek internet material that supplements the information and activities conducted in class. The time allocated for each subject is based on the Ministry of education's analysis of the working hours, syllabus requirements and student attention span (Rugh, 2002). All subjects are allocated the same amount of time; however, institutions design timetables to accommodate all subjects balanced with co-curricular activities. The national government in state owned institutions should provide the teaching and learning materials.

The Saudi Social Studies curriculum has both local and international content in the Tatweer program (Almogbel, 2015). Most of the content in the primary and lower levels are emphasised on national affairs. At secondary level, the curriculum gradually introduces more advanced international content while also building on some national issues. According to (Almogbel, 2015) the content includes concepts such as globalization, international trade, evolution, international history, the principle of accepting and respecting others, climate change, Human Rights, leadership, religious tolerance, peace values, democracy values, multiculturalism and the rejection of racism, disarmament and multiculturalism, international communication, nationalism and patriotism, and accepting difference and diversity. The National Social Studies Curriculum included Nationality and citizenship, sustainability, national history, the arms of the government, weather and climate, and economic activities.

According to Almogbel, (2015) the objective of Social Studies at the secondary level is to direct the awareness of learners to how human qualities are interconnected at the national and international level. It is also structured to ensure maximum exposure to as much content as possible in Social Studies. The activities recommended to Social Studies also aid in encouraging critical thinking among the learners and practical application of the knowledge acquired. The syllabus generally engages the students in class sessions, based on the interactive teaching methods proposed for implementation (Almogbel, 2015). Finally, just like the other subjects, the assessment role has been given to teachers who are required to adopt the ideal methods of assessment suitable for the topic being addresses plus the mandatory end of term final examination.

2.11 Teachers' Ownership of the Curriculum

According to Nguyen (2014), the process of curriculum design and implementation is complex and needs the involvement of multiple stakeholders. This process is not only thought provoking and painstaking but also cognitively demanding. In most instances, the curriculum developers leave the task of coming up with the curriculum to the experts like the program directors, leaders in the ministries of education or textbook makers. Even though the experts can be considered effective in the process of curriculum design and

implementation, Nguyen (2014), notes that it eliminates the power of instructors/ teachers in this important process. As seen in the studies by Onderwijsraad (2014), the role of the teachers cannot be ignored in the process of curriculum design and implementation. This is attributed to the fact that teachers possess pedagogical artistry, the ability to address the needs of the specific students and content knowledge. All these three attributes of the teachers are necessary for successful curriculum implementation. Because of this, many studies have tried to explore ways through which teachers can be supported to take an active role in curriculum design and implementation.

 In his study, Fullan (2007) noted that, despite the best intentions and ambitions, most of the curriculum changes end up being partially implemented or fall short of the goals. The main reason for this is lack of involvement of the principle stakeholders: the teachers. As indicated by Van den Akker (2010), changes in the curriculum depend on what the teachers do or think. Therefore, curriculum change in any context is likely to fail if teachers are considered just as practitioners who only   implement the plans of other people. For the curriculum to meet its goals, it must involve the teachers and make them own the whole process. Their involvement has to start from the early stages of the curriculum, all the way to the end. A review of the current studies shows that involvement and consequent ownership of the curriculum by the teachers is becoming an issue of concern. In most of the countries in Europe, the current literature shows that there is greater involvement of the teachers in the process of curriculum design and implementation. For example, in the Netherlands, there is a great deal of autonomy given to the teachers to shape their curriculum (Nieveen & Kuiper, 2012; Nieveen, Van den Akker, & Resink, 2010). Most of these studies have reported a positive association between teacher ownership and involvement and curriculum development (Onderwijsraad, 2014, VO-Raad, 2014).

The need to ensure support, involvement and ownership of the teachers to the curriculum is a growing concern, as reflected in most studies (Huizinga et al., 2013; You, 2011). Huizinga et al. (2013) used an exploratory study to investigate the role and gaps in teachers' involvement in curriculum design. The findings of this study arrived at the conclusion that there is a positive association between teachers' involvement and ownership in curriculum design and success in curriculum implementation. In addition to this, the authors identified

some of the key gaps in teachers' involvement. The first gap is related to curriculum design expertise. The second one is concerned with the pedagogical content knowledge while the third one is concerned with curricular consistency expertise. The other conclusion of this study is that, offering customised support for the teachers and quality design materials significantly influences the outcome of the curriculum implementation. Thus, there is cognisance that teachers from different schools, situations, level of experience and location have unique needs. For example, while some of them might have limited knowledge and understanding about the new curriculum, others may have limited experience in teaching or other issues. It justifies the need to understand the needs of the particular teacher and then develop a mechanism to support them.

On the other hand, You (2011) sought to find out the main problems associated with curriculum change, particularly in South Korea's physical education curriculum. The author used self-study to evaluate the experiences of the instructors in implementing the curriculum changes. A number of obstacles to curriculum change were identified and they include: personal obstacles encountered by the instructors, environmental factors, professional factors related to lack of innovative ideas and institutionalised obstacles. Similar to Huizinga et al. (2013), You (2011) established that the extent to which the teachers are supported and involved in the process of curriculum change determines success or failure of the change process. From these studies, there is emphasis on the need to make the teachers own the curriculum. Besides, it is also evident that factors enhancing curriculum ownership and involvement fall within and outside the teachers. There are personal factors such as their own experience, knowledge and expertise and environmental and institutional factors to consider.

Mikser, Kärner and Krull (2016) have explored the concept of teachers' ownership of the curriculum. Their definition of the concept of ownership stems from Pierce, Kostova, and Dirks's (2003) definition of psychological ownership, as 'the state in which individuals feel as though the target of ownership or a piece of that target is "theirs". In reference to the context of curriculum change, ownership is seen as the feelings that teachers have about it. It is much more of a psychological type of ownership that a legal one. It is argued that, when teacher own the curriculum, as opposed to countries where curriculum change is centralised

is effective. In the traditional setups, decisions on curriculum implementation and change are made outside the school, with limited input from the teachers, who are considered key in driving the whole process (Nieveen & Kuiper., 2012). According to Kennedy (2010), curriculum ownership is vital for "freeing the energy" needed for effective problem solving during change management. It is also necessary for ensuring that there is collaboration among the teachers for effective curriculum implementation and change.

In nearly most of the literature discussed, there is agreement that teachers' curriculum ownership is an important feature in curriculum change. This makes the employees feel entitled to make the decisions and solve problems concerning the curricular change (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008). The feeling of entitlement is tied to nearly all levels of decision-making in curriculum change. Westbury (2008) identifies some of the major decisions that are made in relation to curricular change. These include how decisions about the society and education are made (*institutional curriculum*), the selection of programs of study (*institutional curriculum*), and the ways in which the curriculum is delivered in the classroom (*classroom curriculum*). Thus, this means than curriculum ownership for teachers implies making them developers of the curriculum.

In the context of curriculum ownership, important literature has emerged in recent times about curriculum development delegation and decentralisation. The idea of delegation entails allowing diverse groups to make decisions concerning the curriculum development process. It highly achievable in both compartmentalisation and segmentation where there is a chance for decentralised decision-making. In most of the countries, a centralised mechanism has failed to lead to instructional changes and take into account the cultural and social factors, which shape curriculum implementation. This type of research practice has remained key in most of the countries. Nevertheless, it continues to attract backlashes related to loosely assessed curriculum and poor resource allocation. The major backlash of the centralised decision making model in curriculum change has been   lack of willingness among the teachers to take up more ownership of the curriculum. The state-based approach to curricular change is more common in the West. However, in the majority of the countries in Asia, Northern Europe and Middle East, the centralised model is not seen as an obstacle to teachers' ownership of the curriculum (Molstad, 2015).

In the study by Molstad (2015), there is evidence to support that governments need to support and facilitate teachers' ownership of the curriculum. The study explores how the state, in both Finland and Norway have designed curricula that offer different policy conditions to support teachers' ownership of the curriculum. Molstad (2015) used a qualitative approach by interviewing educational administrators from both countries. The author arrived at the conclusion that a state-based approach offers a platform for control. For example, in Finland, the local authorities were able to come up with a pedagogical process in the local curriculum. On the other hand, in Norway, an effective mechanism was developed which enhanced curriculum delivery. The authorities in both countries designed a national curriculum but gave policy conditions for the local work in schools and municipalities. In Norway, there was teacher autonomy and licensing, as evident in the policies guiding creation of materials for teaching and learning.

Dale, Engelsen, and Karseth (2011), recognise the significance of state curriculum development. However, they also recommend the need for local curriculum because it is often a product of the national curriculum offering an opportunity for local adaptation. This is particularly key in a heterogeneous society. Thus, it is assumed that the local players, including the teachers, have adequate professional experience to make effective changes and implement them. This is tied to the concept of licensing, introduced in the first chapter. In the process of local adaptation, one finds the local adaptation of the curricular (Dale, Engelsen, and Karseth, 2011). The idea of local adaption of the curriculum often refers to finding the 'right' understanding of the curriculum within the local context. According to Dale et al. (2011), this offers focus for delivering the national curriculum. Therefore, on this basis, Gerrard and Farrell (2013) point out that it offers a platform to not only define but also constrain the work of the teachers. In the process of implementing a new curricular or any other changes associated with it, the role of the teachers is a necessity. Constraining the work of the teachers is just but a constraint to the success of the change implementation process. Thus, it is evident that there is a possibility that the teachers' work can either be constrained or extended. For example, when teachers are given more autonomy to be innovative and creative in curriculum delivery, it creates room for legitimisation and motivation of their

actions. The contrary is also true. As indicated in the study by Wermke & Höstfält (2014), restricting autonomy negatively affects the motivation of the teachers.

Teachers' ownership of the curriculum is an important area of research, especially in the state-run curriculum changes. The latter are often initiated by the state and involve large-scale implementation of the new curriculum. The theory relevant to this study is that suggested by Hopmann (1990): the social differentiation theory. Hopmann argued that, in addition to the state-run curriculum change and implementation (a common model in Northern and Central Europe), such processes were applied almost immediately through a social process. This process involves dividing the curriculum into smaller processes and units where each of them regulates itself. There are three main aspects of the social processes: compartmentalisation, licensing, and segmentation.

2.11.1 Compartmentalisation

This is one of the mechanisms for enhancing teachers' ownership of the curriculum especially during the implementation stage (Fleer, 2002). In curricular change, the curricular is broken down into smaller and manageable pieces. For example, this involves having different syllabi for different subjects and types of schools. This means that no one can be held accountable for the whole. In essence, the tasks and issues are differentiated in a manner that the diverse components of the state's administrative framework around school management and governance are insulated from each other. The major focus of differentiation in this case is what might be taught, and probably how that can be taught in the different schools. Most importantly, the curriculum does not specify the resources to be used in delivery of the curriculum. This implies that it does not restrain the autonomy of the teacher and the school environment to be innovative and creative and develop resources for curriculum delivery. The school administration is also not restricted in terms of looking for funds to facilitate learning and teaching of the new curriculum. Schools have the freedom to look for funds to support the teaching of new curricula. One important thing to note from compartmentalisation is decentralised decision-making. Unlike the traditional approach to curriculum change where decision-making is decentralising, compartmentalisation allows the major stakeholder- the teacher, to take an active role in implementing the new

curriculum. There is also increased autonomy on the part of the teachers to decide what types of resources they can use for curriculum change, the topics they can teach at the different levels and issues surrounding teacher education. It is a holistic approach, which ensure that all the stakeholders are involved in the implementation (Mikser, Kärner, and Krull, 2016).

Despite the numerous advantages of compartmentalisation, the approach faces many challenges. For example, Mikser, Kärner, and Krull (2016) note that there are no accountability structures to ensure that the intended form of curriculum is implemented. Also, there is lack of a managerial framework for the whole process of curricular change. Even though decision making is decentralised, an array of issues are left uncoordinated, discrete, and disorganised. Consequently, the decision to teach a particular subject by the government can lose its impact if there is no qualified teacher to teach the subject. This is largely attributed to the fact that sourcing the funds and resources is left to the school, without any coordinated framework on how it should be done (Kennedy, 2010).

2.11.2 Segmentation

Hopmann (1990) defines segmentation as the separation of the diverse elements of the discourse communities (professional, public and political) in decision-making and solving complex tasks in curriculum development. Segmentation is considered essential in satisfying and reconciling the different interest groups who expect to have a role in decision-making concerning curricular matter. It is viewed as the product of stretching work of a commission in the formal groups. The curriculum is referred to as work which is then divided into discourse communities. The working groups, each with their own members share common frames of references. They work together but more in isolation from the working groups. Thus, in the process of curriculum design and development, one group in isolation can do the materials for the subject while a different group develops other components of the syllabi. Such form of segmentation allows the administration to open consultations around the curriculum. In a way, the diverse discourses are divided but still open to consultation. The leaders then coordinate the input of the different groups. Given that the input of the different stakeholders is taken into consideration, there is an impression that all the key stakeholders are engaged. The latter has an effect on motivation of the teachers and attitude towards

curriculum change and innovation. Segmentation, as noted by Kennedy (2010), is a necessary component in driving teachers' ownership of the curriculum. Just like compartmentalisation, it engenders involvement of the key stakeholders in the design and implementation process. This is because the decision-making process is decentralised, allowing for greater autonomy, commitment, and engagement to the curriculum change process. It is particularly important in countries where teachers' ownership has not been considered because the decision-making process is centralised (Brennan, 2011).

2.11.3 Licensing

Licensing is the third tool to look at when analysing the concept of teachers' ownership of the curriculum. According to Hopmann (1990), licensing helps the teachers to have a sense of ownership. It entails delegating some powers such as freedom to choose the instructional methods to teachers. In effect, it enables those who make the curriculum to avoid the responsibility of the outcome of the curriculum implementation at the classroom level. On the other hand, Hopmann (1990) notes that it gives the teachers a distinguished professional status owing to their methodological abilities. The idea of licensing borrows from the principle of 'freedom of instruction'. It is taken from the German concept of 'Lehrfreiheit', which advocates that the teacher should have freedom of instruction. While they are compelled to cover the expected content, they have the liberty to teach in a manner they deem necessary. That depends on the situation or context they are teaching. In other words, it takes into consideration the social differentiation process in state-run curriculum changes where room is given to local adaptation. Some localities, though within the same territory, present differing contexts, which can influence the teaching and learning of the same subject. Such situations demand for relative freedom of instruction so that the teachers can adapt the national curriculum to the needs of the learners and local communities in which they come from.

According to Hopmann (1990), licensing minimises the stakes in the curriculum making process, in terms of the extent to which the teacher can interpret the curriculum, the schools, school owners, the community and the parents. In a way, it delinks the school management from taking responsibility for curriculum implementation. Instead, it allocates utmost

responsibility to the teachers who have been given freedom to instruct. The teachers are also held accountable for the outcomes of the curriculum. The main benefit of this approach is that it gives teachers authority to decide what content to cover and how to deliver the content. In addition, the curriculum decision-making process is decentralised. As discussed earlier, a decentralised system entails significant freedom to the teachers: a recipe for increased commitment and engagement. There is also increased motivation on the part of the teachers, which has a positive impact on their motivation and ownership of the curriculum. Despite these advantages, the extant literature shows that licensing does not hold the school management accountable and responsible for implementation and the outcomes. Most of the responsibility is on the teacher, ignoring the fact that the teachers work within a school environment with a management system and resources which can determine either success or failure of the curriculum implementation process. Even though the teacher is solely held responsible, the need for a conducive school environment for successful curriculum implementation cannot be ignored.

2.12 Involvement of the Teachers in Curriculum Implementation

The current literature emphasises that the teacher has a critical role to play in driving curriculum change. Nevertheless, a debate remains on how teachers can be involved to an extent they own the curriculum or feel motivated enough to implement it successfully. Several researchers argue differently. For example, Alsubaie (2016) affirms that there is not curriculum change without training and development of the teachers. Oloruntegbe (2011) confirms this assertion by indicating that curriculum is about professional development of the teachers. A good number of the current studies focus on empowering the teachers through professional development. Professional development aims to equip the teachers with the right skills, knowledge and attitude to enable them gain a deeper understanding of the new curriculum and how to manage it. On the other hand, development has a positive impact on the teachers' motivation, and consequently increases the likelihood of successful curricular change.

The study by Alsubaie (2016) explored the antecedents of successful curriculum implementation. In this study, the author established a clear demarcation between schools

that were successful and those that were not. The criteria for demarcating the two types of schools were based on the extent to which the teaching staff in those schools was collective, thoughtful and effective. Schools that were unsuccessful had staff that were powerless, isolated and unreflective. The study also arrived at the conclusion that instructional improvement occurred when the teachers were able to improve their teaching, learning of the curriculum knowledge and decision making about the students. It was further established that experienced teachers had a higher likelihood of understanding and implementing instructional and curricular innovations. The latter was possible if only such teachers had the ability to link the innovations with their experiences and expertise. Thus, for innovations in the curriculum to be effective, the teachers must be experienced in teaching. Other studies have also established that professional development activity positively correlates with teacher efficacy (Alsubaie, 2016). Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that the real test of teacher efficacy is not theoretical because it deals with change in general. A teacher's efficacy is tested by how best they implement the curriculum, which, in turn, increases student learning.

A number of studies have affirmed that teacher quality has the greatest effect on student learning. Mouraz, Leite and Fernandes (2013) agree that the key factor influencing student achievement is the quality of the teaching. The quality of the teacher is twice as important as any other variable. Measures of teacher quality in the context of certification and preparation had the strongest impact on student academic success than any other form of investment like overall spending on education, teacher salaries and class size. Thus, professional development of the teachers is an important step towards enhancing their capacity to take an active role in curriculum implementation (Mouraz, Leite and Fernandes, 2013). Empowering the teachers enhances their decision-making ability and in turn improves their ability to deliver results. An improvement in decision-making ability is key for innovations and skills needed to implement the new curriculum. Teachers have an essential role to play in curriculum planning. At the initial stage of curriculum development, entail a lot decision-making and teachers initiate outcomes, teaching methods and curriculum content. In these processes, teachers need to have room to make their input by generating views, opinions and ideas on what they think needs to be done (Carl, 2009).

Through internalising the curriculum reforms, teachers experience professional growth. They also attain knowledge that is necessary for new curriculum implementation. Thus, allowing teachers to take an active role in the process of curriculum planning is an important tool for their professional growth and development. The other way to involve teachers is by making them part of the change initiatives. According to Balyer et al. (2017), this empowers them to make better decisions and have a positive impact on curriculum implementation. Empowerment has a role in transforming the teachers to work hard to attain the objectives of the school.

One study that has investigated the connection between teachers' professional development and efficacy in curriculum   implementation is that of Tronsmo and Nerland (2018). The authors reveal that there is a positive connection between professional development and the teachers' ability to implement the curriculum successfully. Through training and development, teachers are able to materialise their experience, grow their knowledge and expertise. In effect, they are better placed to design and implement a systematic curriculum. It was clear from the studies that professional development offered to the teachers materialised their experience and improved their teaching methods. On the other hand, Albilehi et al. (2013) investigated the influence of in-service professional development programs on curriculum implementation. The study arrived at the conclusion that teachers who went through the in-service programs were more prepared to face the challenges of curriculum implementation than those without. In addition to this, the teacher felt much more empowered, knowledgeable, and confident about their ability to implement the new curriculum. In addition, the teachers who took part in the in-service programs expressed that they enriched their understanding of their curriculum. In effect, they would apply the knowledge they acquired from the training to develop better lesson plans and other materials related to the new curriculum. However, the same studies noted that, besides in-service training, experience of the teachers is important. Rich experience makes the teachers have a deeper understanding and boosts the teachers' confidence in the curriculum. During professional development, teachers experience both personal and professional growth (Mikser et al., 2016). Mikser et al. (2016) further notes that teachers gain an opportunity to

reflect on their understanding of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning process. In the process, they get to understand their work, their strengths and weaknesses and how best they can use their competence to improve delivery of the curriculum (Balyer et al., 2017). This justifies the need for professional development of the teachers for effective curriculum delivery.

When the teachers are not empowered through training and development, the impact is that they create the perception that the curriculum is imposed on them. In addition, their implementation of the curriculum may be limited by either centralised control or limited knowledge of the curriculum (Erss et al., 2016). There is also a chance that the teachers will not have the confidence to implement the new curriculum. This can come either because of low qualification or because of lack of knowledge, experience and understanding of the new curriculum. Consequently, it implies that if the teachers do not have adequate training, they will not be motivated enough to successfully implement the new curriculum. In terms of knowledge, they do not have the necessary capacity to make an informed decision about the curriculum. The teachers also need to collaborate with the rest of the people involved in curriculum design. Such an opportunity allows them to view content from an interdisciplinary point of view.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that the process of involving teachers is not without challenges. One of the most common problems identified is lack of resources for teachers' professional development (Alsubaie, 2016). In most of the countries, the education sectors are underfunded which negatively impacts on the ability of the relevant ministry to support professional development. Thus, teachers are not adequately equipped with the type of training needed for them to handle the new curriculum. The whole idea of professional development requires resources (both human and finances). Financial resources are required to facilitate in-service trainings needed to equip the teachers with the right knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. The next challenge is lack of clear clarification of what needs to be done to engage the teachers. In most countries, there is no defined approach concerning the manner in which teacher involvement can be done. Without a defined approach, it is difficult to estimate the resources needed to make the process effective. Handler (2010) suggest that there is need for major advances in teachers' professional

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development. This will be important for the teachers and other stakeholders to reflect on the society's needs at every stage of the curriculum development. Therefore, professional development is an important tool for contributing to success of any curricular change.

According to Vela (2020) educators and practitioners should have a shared vision of key issues and collaborate on curriculum development. The curriculum taught in schools at any level of education is designed to meet specific agendas in society, as argued by Mian *et al*., (2020). Any product or aspect of the education system in a country needs to be responsive to the challenges and opportunities in the context within which it is applied. Sustainability is also an important factor that has been advocated for by Vela, (2020). This simplistic curriculum change approach has been criticised by scholars such as Hughes and Tan (2017) who argue that the simplistic approach fails to accommodate the input of vital stakeholders in the curriculum development process. Teachers are at the bottom of the hierarchy in this approach and are quite often excluded in the design phase even though they are the grassroots, implementation stakeholders.

In particular, it was noted that there is currently less involvement of the teachers in the process of curriculum design and development. The findings confirm previous studies explored in the literature which affirm that curriculum development in countries where governments majorly manage education generally have little room for teachers to participate effectively in the design, planning, and evaluation process (McKernan, 2013). This is the situation in Saudi Arabia where there is little room for involvement of the teachers. However, it is important to note that, even if they are not directly involved in any curriculum development, there is a degree of choice in the course of the development of the career of teachers (Rieckmann, 2012). Most importantly, curriculum change also affects the manner in which teachers are meant to perform in their careers. Therefore, it makes no sense for teachers to be set aside during the development process of any curriculum because they can offer a lot of input, which could positively influence implementation (Carl, 2009).

2.13 Student-Centred Learning

The need for student-centred learning is considered to fall within the wider neo-liberal agenda for inclusive and market driven education for all. One main aspect of neo-liberalism is that rationality, individuality and competition ought to drive the market (Weimer, 2002). Consequently, when applied to education policy, the nexus between teaching and learning is conceptualised as a contract between a buyer and a seller. This emphasises on the experience of the student. In effect, student-centred has become an integral element of the neo-liberal school polic (Weimer, 2002). For the purposes of this study, student-centred learning is defined as:

…ways of thinking and learning that emphasize student responsibility and activity in learning rather than what the teachers are doing. Essentially student-centred learning has student responsibility and activity at its heart, in contrast to a strong emphasis on teacher control and coverage of academic content in much conventional, didactic teaching (Newbie, 2000, p. 16).

Starkey (2019) identifies three dimensions in the extant literature, which define the concept of student-centred education- agentic, humanistic and cognitive. The cognitive dimensions emphasizes on the role of the student's learning progress or cognitive development. On the other hand, the agentic dimension focuses on the development of student agency while the third one concentrates on knowing and responding to the students as individuals. According to Starkey (2019) each of these three dimensions is a way of taking into account the a student-centred approach which are not mutually exclusive.
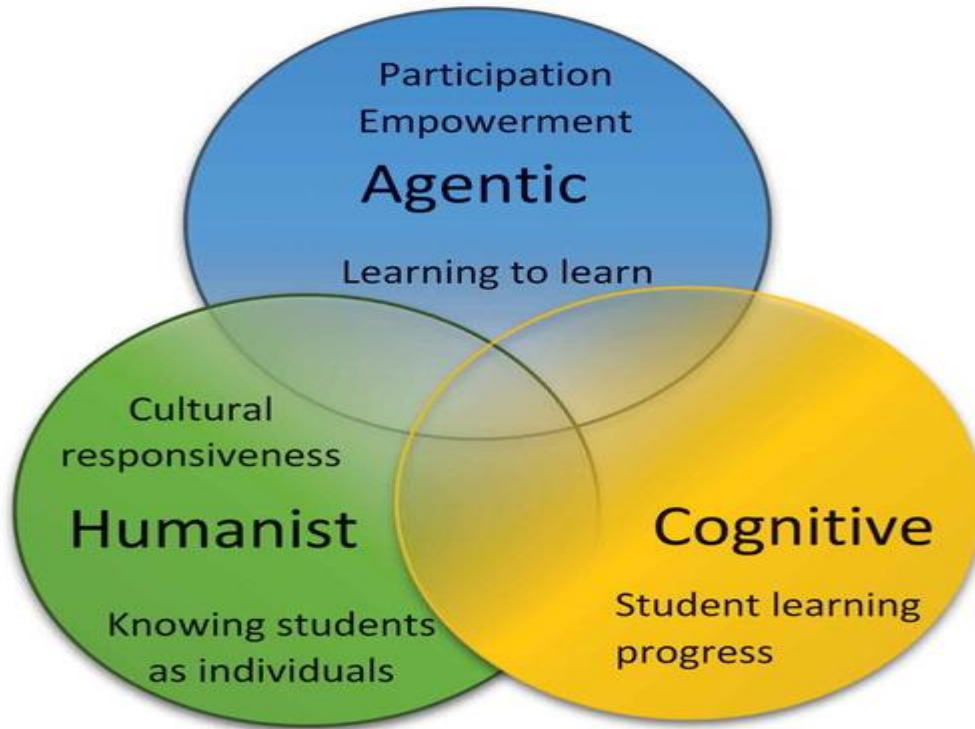
Figure 2.1 Student Learning Approach

2.13.1 Cognitive

This dimension of the student-centred approach focuses on the student learning process. It is based on the constructivist idea that affirms that the learner derives understanding or meaning. Given that the focus of the cognitive approach focuses on the cognitive development of the learner, the teaching and learning interventions to ensure that the student achieves their academic goals. This implies teachers assessing the student's skills and knowledge for them to prepare the relevant learning experiences. Teachers develop learning experiences which help the students to build on their prior or existing knowledge.

2.13.2 Student Agency

As indicated, this dimension focuses in empowering the student. According to Starkey (2019), giving students greater agency means two things in the current literature- the

constructivist notion and the behavioural ideal. The behavioural ideal indicates that students who do not get adequate agency in school risk becoming disconnected from learning. In addition, they are more likely to engage in misconduct, non-compliance; some form of violence to others and the staff as well as truanting. Tangney (2014) argues that this dimension focuses on giving the students an opportunity to be active instead of being passive participants in school. Some of the methods cited to improve this approach include; project-based learning, case-based learning, discovery learning and collaborative learning.

The constructivist aspect of the agency dimension has similarities with the behaviorial ideal. However, it focuses on the need for students to actively take part in and be aware of cognitive development. It can achieved through the methods suggested by Bandura (1986) such as self-regulation, self-reflection, goal-setting and intention. Therefore, a student-centred approach to education entails students to be agentic in learning. On the other hand, the ideal level of student agency remains largely contested in the current literature. It is considered as a more radical because it involves a democratic community of learnings. In this case, both teachers and learners enjoy equal status and learners have the choice on how and what they want to learn. This is captured in personalised learning agenda. A student-centred approach in this context means that there should be increased student responsibility (Tangney,2014).

2.13.3 Humanist

The humanistic dimension of the student-centered approach entails viewing students as individual humans. This approach has its underpinning in the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau who held the view that educational practices because they stifle the learners' inquisitiveness and creativity. The humanist aspect entails three main things; individual development of children, being human and social and cultural locatedness. Traditional education has been criticized for treating all the students the same and are taught using an inflexible curriculum which does not allow for individual learning abilities. Student-centred approach is the complete opposite of this and recognizes individual abilities, creativity and cultural diversity.

According to Starkey (2019), each student has their unique set of cognitive tools which underscores the need for acknowledging individual and group differences in the teaching and learning process. This concept has extended over time to include the need to identify

the interests of each learner, aspirations to inform teaching and enthusiasms. Accordingly, the humanist dimension can include coming up with learning experiences that align with the individual interests, cognitive abilities and aspirations.

In his study, Kurtz (2007) notes that the humanist dimensions overlap the agency ideal in ensuring a student-centred approach. The key idea in the humanist philosophy is the view that no one has predetermined fate. Rather, it is the human actions, agency that determines future events. Kurtz (2007) further suggests that student-centered approach to learning and teaching includes creating awareness of the responsibility and opportunities that students have in the learning process. This is said to take into consideration the emotional, personal and social developments of the learner. In effect, it ends up leading to positive self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation by exploring topics that students find interesting.

Gay (2010) points out that culturally responsive pedagogy are teaching 'to and through the learners' cultural and personal strengths, their prior experiences, accomplishments and intellectual capabilities. In addition, this approach to learning can integrate ways of learning and knowing into the learning environment and the pedagogical practices.

2.14 Conclusion

This chapter covers the literature related to the subject of this dissertation. The initial sections begin with the curriculum development models. These lay a foundation into the context of the NSS curriculum change and the challenges it is facing so far in Saudi Arabia. The next sections explore the challenges that schools in Saudi face in education. Some of the challenges are tied to the whole system and the school environment while some are teacher-specific. There are broad challenges identified (those tied to the ministry and education management, the school and the environment, the teachers, and the students). The literature further examines in-depth the concept of teachers' ownership of the curriculum. Three aspects have been discussed (compartmentalisation, segmentation and licensing). As shown in the literature, there is a gap concerning specific challenges facing the NSS curriculum.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 1 and 2 the researcher discussed the background to the study and the literature respectively. Having done so, this chapter sets out to examine the methodology used to collect the data required to meet the objectives of this study. The chapter begins by outlining the key research paradigms, approaches, methods of data collection and analysis, as well as the key ethical considerations for this study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

In the social sciences, research paradigms are perceived or understood through the main epistemological and ontological assumptions that come from major worldviews. Any type of research is conducted within a research paradigm, whether it is explicitly stated so or not. Nevertheless, there is agreement among scholars on the classification of the major research paradigms (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020). Kasi (2009) defines a research paradigm as the broad view of something and in the context of a research process, paradigm reveals the manner in which the research process will be guided. On the other hand, it is viewed as the belief system or theory establishing a set of practice. It guides the researcher to make decisions and conduct research in a manner that is logical and consistent. According to Denzin (2010), a paradigm can also be considered as the pattern used to illustrate the theories, processes and procedures.

A research paradigm is the main frame of reference guiding the researcher in this research (Sefotho, 2015). There are three main features of any research paradigm- i) ontology, ii) epistemology, and iii) methodology.

The ontological perspective is concerned with what exists (Klakegg and Pasian, 2016). In modern scientific studies, it is usually accepted that the description is limited to energy and physical objects (Klakegg and Pasian, 2016). The major debate in ontology is whether reality exists in human experience and consciousness (Klakegg and Pasian, 2016). It also raises questions about whether reality exists independently in human consciousness or something

that has been constructed by human beings. In the modern ontology, a further class of existence has been admitted, private mental consciousness or constructs. This study is based on the assessment of the perceptions of female teachers and students about the NSS Curriculum. The study of female students' and teachers' perceptions involves mental constructs.

3.2.1 Positivism

As opposed to ontology, epistemology is concerned with knowledge: how knowledge is created, advances and its reliability. It is also concerned about the independence of our knowledge from ours. Essentially, the paradigm is concerned with understanding and explaining what one knows and how they know it. In other words, it looks at the relationship between knowledge and the knower by asking the question "how do I know the world?" (Hansen, 2010). In the epistemological there are related but distinguished research philosophies applicable to this study. One of them is positivism which emerges as a set of ideas about epistemology and oncology (Sefotho, 2015).

One of the philosophies of research in general is positivism which emerges as a set of ideas about epistemology and oncology (Sefotho, 2015). Now, I review positivism, and its apparent opposite, interpretivism with a view to demonstrate the intersection of the two opposing philosophies. That being critical realism, which is the underlying philosophy of this thesis.

A positivist approach informs the choice of quantitative methods of data collection. In part, the researcher holds the view that the research is effective if the subject under study, the challenges facing education in Saudi Arabia, can be quantified. There are many issues surrounding the students' and teachers' perceptions of the challenges facing education in Saudi Arabia. These include the school environment, activities and exercises, the academic content, teachers and teaching, and evaluation methods. From the lenses of positivism, these variables can be quantified and then their correlation examined in relation to their impact on teaching and learning of social studies at Saudi high schools (Sefotho, 2015).

3.2.2 Interpretivism (Social Constructivism)

 As opposed to positivism, interpretivism is the view that there are multiple truths and diverse realities. According to Leitch et al. (2010) it is a non-positivist approach to research which discourages researchers from sticking to narrow and binary worldviews, evident in positivism and post-positivism. Unlike positivism, post-positivism is pluralist paradigm that integrates both interpretivist and positivist approaches. This is a flexible approach whereby a researcher has freedom to use many methods to conduct the research in line with the nature of the research questions. In effect, this paradigm introduces a number of other paradigms which address the issue of multiple realities such as the disability paradigm, feminist paradigm and the indigenous paradigm among others (Hart 2010). In his study De Villiers (2005: 12) argues that interpretivism comes from humanities and social sciences and notes that it aims at "…to find new interpretations or underlying meaning from multiple realities'. The assumption made by De Villiers (2005) is that meaning is socially constructed making it possible to show hidden aspects of the culture and worldview. In relation to the current study, the assumption made is that the different stakeholders in the education system in Saudi Arabia have different perceptions about the challenges. This is because, as shown in the interpretivist research paradigm, meaning is socially constructed. The perceptions about the challenges as well as the impact of those challenges are constructed differently. Also, in the interpretivist research paradigm it is held that the researcher is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world as well as how it should be studied and understood. Of course, this is rooted in the belief that knowledge depends on the historical, cultural, temporal and subjective contexts and thrives in many forms and representations of reality. This is how the different people interpret it.

The philosophical underpinning adopted in this study is critical realism, which has elements of both interpretivism and positivism. As demonstrated in the previous discussion, both positivism and interpretivism have been considered (Sefotho, 2015). Thus, critical realism fits well into this study because it involves consideration of multiple realities and viewpoints. On the other hand, Sefotho (2015) notes that critical realism is concerned with the nature of agency, causation, relations and explicit or implicit ontologies. In relation to the current study, there is an element of causation between the students' and teachers' perceptions of

the extent to which the given challenges (i.e., school environment, activities and exercises, the academic content, teachers and teaching, and evaluation methods) impact the teaching and learning of social studies at the Saudi high schools. In addition, there is also an aspect of causation between curricular change in Saudi Arabia, teachers' ownership of the curricular and the effectiveness of delivery of the National Social Studies Curriculum. The main objective of critical realism is how social reality is mapped. This is the reality that can be produced through facts and experiences that are empirically examined. By saying that researchers using this paradigm guide their research do not reject either interpretivism or positivism. Rather, they combine elements of the both of them to explain and interpret data.

3.2.3 Application of Critical Realism to the Study

The first step in applying critical realism to this study is defining the research question. Essentially, one begins with the research question or problem which is guided by theory (Easton, 2010). The research questions for this study were prompted by the gaps in the existing research on the curricular change in Saudi Arabia. The literature explored the existing models on curricular change and where Saudi Arabia fits in. In the discussion, it was noted that there is limited research on the critical role of teachers in curricular change. Thus, the study aims to fill this gap by specifically examining the challenges faced by female teachers and students of high schools in teaching and learning the National Social Studies Curriculum. Ideally, the study would focus on the views of all the stakeholders (as in both males and females). Although research exists on topics such as curricular change and perceptions of stakeholders on education, there is little research drawing a causal connection between these curricular changes and perceptions on teaching and learning of social studies in KSA. Bearing this in mind, the following research questions were identified:

1. What are the challenges that face the teaching and learning of national social studies at Saudi high schools from the perceptions of both the course teachers and students?
2. What are the students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which the given challenges (i.e., school environment, activities and exercises, the academic content, teachers and teaching, and evaluation methods) impact the teaching and learning of national social studies at the Saudi high schools?

3. How does curricular change in Saudi Arabia, teachers' ownership of the curricular impact on the effectiveness of delivery of the National Social Studies Curriculum?

3.3 Data Collection

Data collection is the next area to look at in relation to the application of the critical realism paradigm. In critical realism, the process begins with empirical data. This means that events are observed at the empirical level using two main types: extensive (such as statistical data) and intensive (i.e. in-depth interpretative data collected from interviews etc.). These two types helped the researcher identify the demi-regularities for further analysis. In the current study, extensive data was collected, n=98 female students and n=79 female teacher's questionnaires. The choice of female teachers in this study is based on the fact that school education in Saudi Arabia is not gender-mixed, and thus there is no opportunity of reaching the males' schools. The intensive data collection phase began with interviews with n=30 female students and n=15 female teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used to allow flexibility needed to explore the relationship between perceptions and learning and teaching of National Social Studies.

3.4 Research Design

A research design is defined as the procedure for data collection, analysis and interpretation. In essence, a design represents different models for conducting a particular research and all these models have unique procedures and names associated with them. For the current study, the researcher understands the need for a rigorous research design in meeting the objectives of this study. In addition, they are necessary because they guide the decision-making process of the methods to be used in data collection and analysis. A mixed methods (Creswell and Clark, 2017) approach is adopted for this study. Therefore, there is a need to select the best research design to address the research problem. There were four major research designs in consideration before one of them was chosen. These are: i) The Embedded Design, ii) Triangulation Design, iii) the Explanatory Design and iv) The Exploratory Design. The embedded design is a mixed-methods design where one data set offers a supportive role to the primary data. The rationale behind this design is that one form of data is not enough and

that each question needs a different type of data. This method is more inclined to experimental or correlational design, thus not appropriate for the current study. In Triangulation, a researcher uses two methods (qualitative and quantitative), giving them equal weight and timeframe. It is also called 'concurrent triangulation design'. Even though ideal, this method is viewed as one of the most challenging and time-consuming of all the four. A lot of expertise is needed for concurrent data collection. The exploratory design is two-phases. The main goal is that the results from the first method (qualitative) inform or help develop the second method (quantitative). One reason why this method was not used in this study is that it needs a considerable amount of time which was not available.

3.4.1 The Explanatory Design

In the explanatory research design in mixed methods, it is assumed that the overall purpose is to use qualitative data to help explain and build upon initial quantitative results (Creswell, 2017). According to Creswell (2017) this design is suited for a study where one needs to collect qualitative data to explain nonsignificant or significant results, surprising or outlier results. On the other hand, the design can be used when one wants to form groups based on quantitative results and then make a follow up through qualitative research. In the current study, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used. The data from the questionnaires was analysed to generate patterns and then qualitative interviews used to generate data needed to expound on the inferences drawn from the initial data collection exercise. The researcher collected extensive data from N=98 female students and n=79 female teachers using questionnaires. The intensive data collection phase began with interviews with n=30 female students and n=15 female teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used to allow flexibility needed to explore the relationship between perceptions and learning and teaching of national social studies.

In data collection, there are two main phases in the explanatory research design. The first one is collecting and analysing quantitative data. The second phase is collecting and analysing qualitative data. Given that design starts quantitatively, the researcher usually starts with a greater focus on the quantitative methods and then progresses to qualitative

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methods. In the current study, the researcher started with collecting quantitative data and then progressed to qualitative data.

According to Subedi (2016), there are two variants in the explanatory design: the participant selection model and the follow-up explanations model. Both models have an initial quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. The only difference between the two models is the connection of the two phases. One of them focuses on results to be examined in more detail, while the other focuses on selection of the appropriate participants for the study. There is also a difference in the relative emphasis placed on each of the two phases. In this study, a follow-up explanations model was used. In this model, the researcher identified certain quantitative findings requiring additional explanation. Following the quantitative data collection, the researcher designed semi-structured interviews to collect data from the participants. The semi-structure offered flexibility to interrogate a number of issues that needed explanation from the data in the questionnaires.
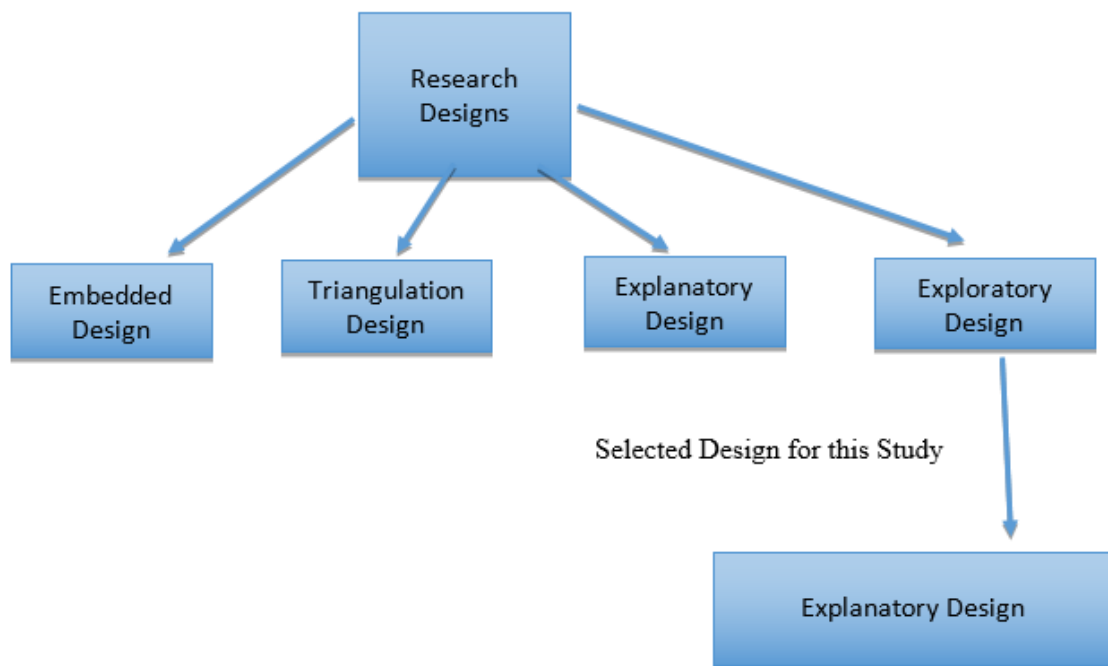
Figure 3.1 Research Design

3.4.2 Strengths of the Explanatory Design for the Study

The explanatory design is considered a straightforward mixed-methods design. One advantage of this method is that the two-phase structure makes it easy to implement given that the researcher can conduct research using the two separate phases and collect one type of data (Rahi, 2017). In this current study, the researcher was able to first collect data from questionnaires and then use that to design semi-structured interviews for an in-depth study on the same topic. Once the data was collected, it was then written in two phases making it clear to the readers. The other reason for the choice of this method is that it leads to multiphase investigations. It is necessary for a research on curricular change which is expansive. Furthermore, the design has a strong quantitative orientation (Rahi, 2017).

Despite the strengths of the design, there are also challenges facing the use of this design in this study. For example, it needs a lengthy amount of time to implement the two phases. In order to overcome this challenge, the researcher made sure there is sufficient time for data collection and analysis. The qualitative phase took more time than the quantitative phase because of the length of time taken to collect and analyse interview data. In order to save on time taken to conduct the research, the researcher opted to use the same respondents to collect qualitative data. This minimised the time taken to reach the respondents and plan for interviews. Nevertheless, the researcher acknowledged the need for proper budgeting and planning for the data collection phase (Rahi, 2017).

This section has described the various research designs and the one used for this study. In the next section, the author discusses the methods of data collection used in the study.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

This section discusses the methods of data collection, the options available and the reasons why these particular tools were used.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The main methods of data collection in this study were questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires are a popular means of collecting data in many fields (Creswell and 2016). However, the designing of the questionnaires is challenging and needed careful construction before its finalisation. The most important issue during the data collection process was choosing the right tools for data collection. To plan for this process, the author had to look at the right questions to be answered. In addition, they had to reflect on how the data will be organised, collected and interpreted and then reported to various audiences to finalise the questionnaires. The researcher chose certain questions in order to achieve explanations for some of the research questions. Questionnaires were essential in answering the first research question: What are the challenges that face the teaching and learning of social studies at Saudi high schools from the perceptions of both the course teachers and students? Secondly, they helped collect data in relation the second research question: What are the students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which the given challenges (i.e., school environment, activities and exercises, the academic content, teachers and teaching, and evaluation methods) impact the teaching and learning of national social studies at the Saudi high schools?

The use of questionnaires is based on the several advantages they present to this study. According to Creswell and Poth (2017), one of the advantages is that questionnaires have great potentialities when properly used. Through the use of questionnaires, the researcher was able to collect sufficient data which enabled them to answer the research questions. This is because this tool enabled the researcher access to a large population and sample which provided the information required by the researcher. A total of 177 respondents were sampled for the study. This is a fairly large sample which enabled the researcher to collect an adequate amount of data, which is also generalisable to the whole population of both female teachers and students in Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, questionnaires were effective in this study because the majority of the female students and teachers were scattered all over the Tabuk region in KSA (Walliman, 2017). Using any other method for this large sample would have been not only time consuming but also costly for the researcher. Thus, by using questionnaires, the researcher saved a lot of time and money for the research

process. Questionnaires also proved easy to plan and adapt for this study. Furthermore, having identified the key research questions and variables to be investigated in the study, it was easy for the researcher to design an effective tool for collecting the data required to meet the objectives of the study. Most importantly, the data collected in this study was done in a manner that is much more standardised than interviews (Walliman, 2017).

Despite the numerous advantages of questionnaires for this study, there were certain challenges that it brought, which needed to be addressed. One of them is that it results in limited responses to questions as the respondents have limited experience/education. In order to overcome any challenges related to the inability of the respondents to effectively providing the responses needed, the researcher selected the sample carefully. Female teachers and students' level of education was an added advantage. This sample is as to be able to read and write and responses appropriately. In addition, to ensure maximum response rates, timing of the release of the questionnaire was carefully thought out so that respondents do not hurry, and in the process provide limited responses (Walliman, 2017).

The other challenge associated with the use of questionnaires in the current study is lack of personal contact between the researcher and the respondents. In the current study, the researcher distributed the questionnaires with the link of the questionnaires to the respondents who then completed the questionnaires on their own. According to Walliman (2017) such a scenario makes the researcher unable to establish an effective personal relationship with the respondent. Thus, if the respondent does not understand a question, they may not be able to seek clarification. In their study, Saunders et al. (2016) have identified how issues arising from lack of personal contact can be addressed. One of them is through a pilot study, discussed in-depth in other sections of this study.   A pilot study was conducted with the aim of identifying the key challenges that a respondent would face while completing the survey(s). The purpose of the pilot study is to identify any issues related to ambiguity, clarity and language of the questionnaires.

At the beginning of the research plan, the researcher recognised that the use of questionnaires is associated with and could result in a low response rate. In a study by Walliman (2017) the researcher investigated some of the reasons for low return rates and found out that the

following can affect response rates: size of the questionnaire, the kind of respondents chosen for the research, inducement for a response, and layout of the questionnaire. Issues, for example those involving layout, were tackled and resolved by appointing a graphic designer to assist with problems.. In terms of size and number of responses, the researcher was guided by the literature review. There were many questionnaires in the initial draft and the questionnaire. However, these have been trimmed in the final draft so that it does not take too much time to complete the questionnaire. In addition to this, the researcher relied on experts (experienced researchers in education) for guidance on the process of questionnaire design. The objective was to design an effective research instrument to enable the researcher collect adequate data to answer the objectives of the research.

Even if the questionnaires enabled the researcher to collect as much data from a large sample, Walliman (2017) notes that questionnaires are prone to incomplete entries. The main cause of incomplete entries is either when the questionnaire is too long or poorly written. As a result, researcher ensured that the questionnaire is well-written and that it is not too long. Some of the questions were summarised into Likert five-item scale dimensions and the respondents were asked to tick where appropriate. This condensed the responses into just a few statements making it easy for the respondents to complete the questionnaire.

3.5.2 Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

Various steps were taken to ensure that the questionnaire resulted in the relevant and appropriate answers to the research questions. The following variables were of interest to the researcher: school environment, activities and exercises, academic content, teaching methods and evaluation methods) on teaching and learning national social studies (NSS) in high school level from the point view of students and the teachers. Most of the questions were designed using Likert's scale. This is a five or seven-point scale used to allow individuals to express the extent to which they agree or disagree to the different statements of the social studies curricular and education in general.

The Likert scale assumes that intensity or strength of an attitude towards, for example, the school environment, content or teachers is on a continuum from strongly disagreeing to

agreeing. It implies that attitudes can be measured. The questions were closed-ended, and they were chosen because they give the respondent an easy way of indicating their answer. They do not have to think about how to answer but the answers are readily available options given. The Likert scale also helped prompt respondents to rely less on their memory to answer the questions.
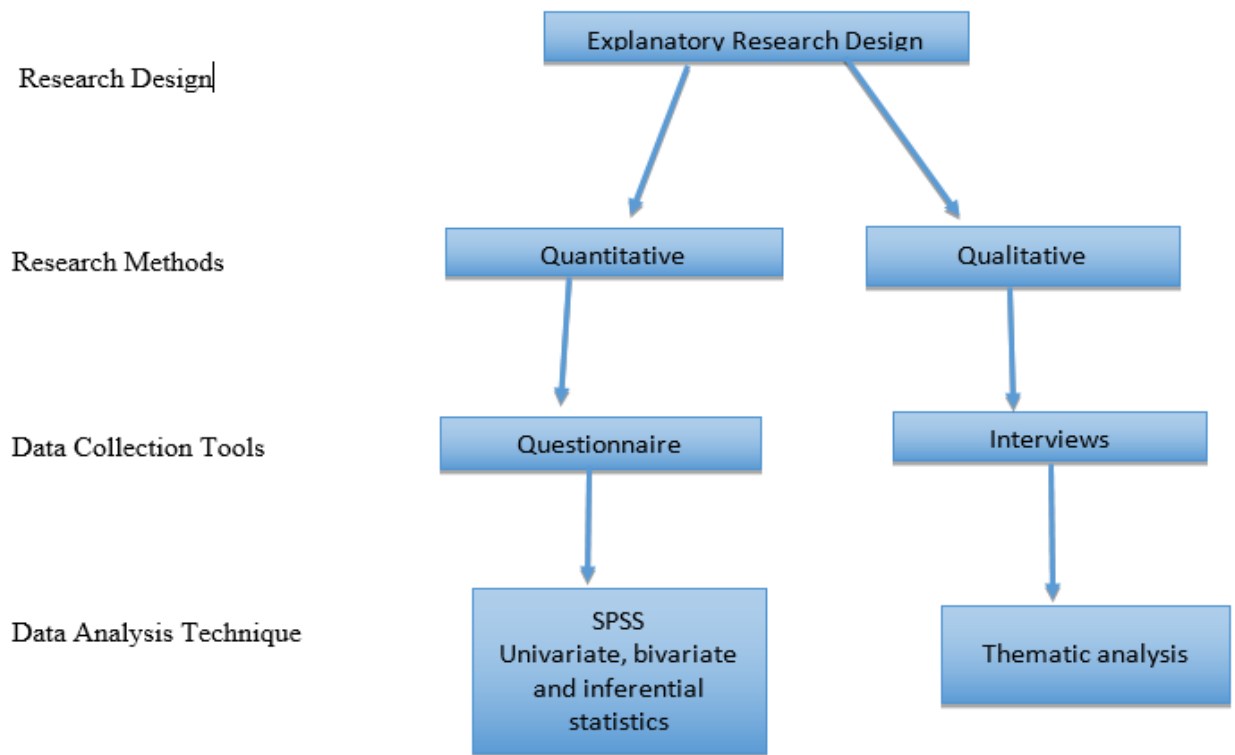
Figure 3.2 Flow of the Research Design

3.5.3 Pilot Study and Data Collection

A pilot study was necessary to help in the design of the final questionnaire. The journey of collecting data began through several stages, including approval from the Ministry of Education branch in Tabuk region see Appendix F, as well as getting support from my works headquarter to provide me with all the facilities and cover the academic trip for three months from 21/11/2017 to 21 February 2018. The researcher chose to focus on secondary school due to my experience in teaching the national social studies curriculum in middle and high school for almost ten years. The number of female students that participated in the survey

was thirty. Twenty students from public schools, and 10 students from private schools. As for teachers, 10 were from public schools, and 5 from private schools. 4 of the schools were private and 10 were public.

The sample was selected through convenience sampling, where the researcher picked respondents based on their accessibility. It is also necessary to note that high school female students, because of the education policy in Saudi Arabia , are separated from males. Thus, female respondents were chosen because it is the best practical option for me. The data was collected from private and public schools in the Tabuk region, where I faced several challenges such as including the long distances to schools from my home.

In the first part of questionnaire distribution, questionnaires were sent to the female teachers online via Google Drive. In the second part, I visited the female teachers in their schools, distributed the questionnaire, and then collected it manually. For the female students, the questionnaires were distributed and then collected back from them. Some questions were taken from Arabic studies, and some were taken from the title of the research. In the data collection process, one of the challenges was when visiting some schools; some female teachers refused to fill out the questionnaire and be interviewed for lack of time. It was also noted that some of them are not serious in filling out the questionnaire and answering the interviews' questions. In some schools, the researcher was denied entry into the schools because it would interrupt on ongoing examinations. In addition, some of the students were afraid, and their answers almost fully consisted of only yes or no. This prompted the researcher to clarify the purpose of the research and issues of anonymity. After this, they felt comfortable to give responses.

From the challenges identified in the pilot study, a number of lessons were taken into consideration to improve the design of the final questionnaire. The first challenge is that of incomplete entries. The main cause of incomplete entries is either when the questionnaire is too long or poorly written. This problem would be solved through a redesign of the questionnaire to limit the number of questions for the teachers and high school students, without compromising their effectiveness in answering the research objectives. Some of the questions were summarised into the Likert five scales dimensions and the respondents asked

to tick where appropriate. This condensed the responses into just a few statements making it easy for the respondents to complete the questionnaire. Secondly, it is important to establish contact with key respondents in the target schools. The key contacts will help the researcher work on logistics such as when to collect the data, place and time. Furthermore, it will be essential in clarifying issues such as anonymity and the purpose of the research so as to prepare the respondents mentally. Part of the reason why some were unwilling to take part in the study is because they were uncomfortable and not prepared.

3.5.4 Interviews

In addition to the questionnaires, the researcher also used interviews. This was the second stage of intensive data collection which consisted of semi-structured interviews among 30 female students and 15 female teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used to allow flexibility needed to explore the relationship between perceptions and learning and teaching of social studies. The intention of using interviews was to gather data so as to determine the impact of activities, school environment, teaching methods and evaluation. As well as the academic content on the teaching and learning of National Social Studies in high school level. The use of qualitative methods is a common method in the field of education and learning, as shown in the study by Divan et al. (2017). According to Rowland and Myatt (2014), while the hypothetical population and rationale postulations may be different, and to a large extent, incomparable to technological or science research, its application to the current study is essential. The qualitative approaches are widely used in education and other social sciences, for multiple reasons. The conception of interviews helps understand the rationale for their choice in this study. Kitwood (1977), as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013, pg 389) notes that:

> *"The first conception is that of a potential means of pure information transfer. He explains that if the interviewer does his job well (establishes rapport, asks questions in an acceptable manner, etc.), and if the respondent is sincere and well-motivated, accurate data may be obtained. Of course all*

kinds of bias are liable to creep in, but with skill these can largely be eliminated. In its fullest expression, this view accords closely with that of the psychometricians, who apparently believe that there is a relatively permanent, consistent, 'core' to the personality, about which a person will give information under certain conditions. Such features as lying, or the tendency to give a socially desirable response, are to be eliminated where possible" (Kitwood 1977, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2013: 389)

The above understanding of interviews affirms the essential role of both the interviewer and the interviewee in the research process. The interviewer, and the researcher in this context, must do their job well. However, success also depends on whether the respondent is honest and well-motivated to provide truthful and accurate data. Thus, if the interviewer understands their job, they are bound to collect as much data as possible to facilitate attainment of the research objectives.

Kitwood (1977), as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013), identifies a second conception which confirms the critical need for interviews in any study. In this second conception, it is noted that "'each participant in an interview will define the situation in a particular way. This fact can be best handled by building controls into the research design, for example by having a range of interviewers with different biases' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2013 pg. 389). In relation to this, an interviewer (in the context of the research, the researcher) is known in terms of the theory of motivation. In the latter, there is a range of non-rational factors known to influence or govern human behaviour such as unconscious needs, interpersonal influences, or emotions. These are key features common to interpersonal transactions and have potential to be obstacles to the research. Where possible, they need to be removed. Thus, despite the benefits, the researcher understood the obstacles to successful interviewing.

The choice of qualitative interviews in this study was also informed by the fact qualitative studies enable the research gain in-depth understanding of issues (Creswell and Poth, 2016). For example, the questions for the interviews were semi-structured and the researcher had room to probe for more information where they thought the respondent provided insufficient

data. On the other hand, as noted, a qualitative researcher is able to understand people and their social and cultural contexts. In this study, the researcher was interested in understanding, in-depth, the challenges facing the implementation of the National Social Studies curriculum and perceptions of the female teachers and students concerning the same. The use of questionnaires only provided opinions and views without further interrogating the reasons behind the same. Also, the researcher was able, through interviews, to explore the relationship between the three main research questions for the study. The in-depth study offered a good understanding of the challenges facing teaching and learning of social studies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The researcher was also able to gain details and insights on the experiences of female students and teachers concerning the challenges they face and their perceptions about those challenges.

3.5.5 Interview Questions Design

The design of the interview questions was an important process in the entire data collection process. In education research, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013) notes that the format of the questions is essential in determining success of the interviewing process. The researcher paid attention to the manner in which the interview questions are organised or phrased. There are four formats that the researcher drew from. One of them is whether the questions are direct or indirect. As shown in appendix A, most of the interview questions are indirect. For example, as shown below, instead of the researcher asking the respondents what they do not like about the content in social studies, they were asked the following set of questions. The responses to these questions indicate their attitude towards the content of the social studies curriculum. It is upon the researcher to interpret the data and state whether the respondents' attitude are negative or positive.

Sample indirect questions taken from interview questions, Appendix B.

Q14: Are the hours specified in the educational plan enough to cover the topics of the books?

Q15: What do you think of the contents of the book? Are they compatible with the students' intellectual level? Do you think this book takes into consideration the fact that students have divergent skills?

Q16: Are there spelling, linguistic, or academic mistakes? Does it repeat itself?

Q17: What are your opinions of having history and geography in one book?

Q18: Do the contents help teachers adopt interesting methodologies that the students can enjoy?

3.5.6 Data Collection

A convenience sampling approach was also used in this study (Farrokhi, and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). In a convenience sampling technique, the researcher visited High Schools, met the teachers who were teaching national social studies subject and their students. The interviews were through recording audio and also writing their answers on paper for fear of losing the recording. There are a number of techniques that the researcher used to ensure effective interviewing and collection of sufficient data to answer the research questions. Creswel (2017) provides a 6-point scale of "directiveness" used in this study to guide the interviewing process.

I. Making noises that are encouraging. The researcher demonstrated interest by making sounds to agree or encourage the respondents to provide more information.

II. Reflection on remarks made by the respondent. This was the other way that the researcher used to encourage the respondents to keep on talking. By reflecting and making short notes, the researcher found ways to probe the respondents further.

III. Probing on the last remark made by the informant. This technique was used by the respondent to seek for more information from the respondents.

IV. Probe the idea preceding the last remark by the informant.

V. Probe an idea expressed earlier in the interview.

VI. Introducing a new topic. The introduction of a new idea is usually guided by the interview schedule.

In short, the methods of data collection have been discussed. There are two main tools for data collection- interviews and questionnaires. In the next section, the author discusses how the data collected using these methods is analysed.

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Quantitative Data

This section represents analysis of data collected from the questionnaires. This study adopted an in-depth online questionnaire as a method of collecting data to answer the research questions. The data collected was edited by checking through completed questionnaires. The objective of editing was to itemise the information collected to outline the subjects in the data and subsequently evaluate the relationship between different components. Editing also helped in checking errors and omissions and indicating areas where corrections were required. Additionally, it helped to reduce the large volume of data collected to ensure it draws out various themes and patterns to make sure it is readily accessible (Creswell, 2009).

Upon verification and data cleaning, the next step for the researcher was to import and enter the data collected to the SPSS software for further coding and analysis. The questionnaires filled on Google forms were easy to upload on SPSS. This data was downloaded as a csv file and then imported to the SPSS software for further coding and analysis to generate tables for discussion. The advantage of using SPSS is that it is easy to use for data coding and analysis. In addition, it saves a lot of time one could use, for example, entering data in Excel a questionnaire at a time. Creswel (2009)'s four main stages of quantitative data analysis were used in the study:

I.   Questionnaire Checking/Data preparation
II. In quantitative data analysis, this is the first step and it involved checking whether all the questionnaires were returned from the field. Incomplete questionnaires or those with glaring errors were not accepted for further analysis. The criterion for exclusion in the final analysis was based on whether the questionnaires had a significant part incomplete, such as one or two whole pages missing. Also, a questionnaire received after the cut-off date was excluded from analysis.
III. Coding
IV. Coding entails giving the name to each possible response to a give question. This was done for all the questions in the questionnaires.

V. Cleaning the Data

VI. Data cleaning was the third stage in quantitative data analysis. Given that some of the questionnaires had some Arabic, this featured in the data imported to SPSS. Thus, the researcher had to clean the Arabic characters in the data coded so that it does not affect data analysis and findings.

VII. Applying relevant tools for Analysis

VIII. In this step, the researcher applied the relevant tools to conduct further analysis and interpretation of the findings. One of the tools used is cross-tabulation of students' perceptions v. teachers' perceptions, public schools v. private schools on a range of variables and interview v. questionnaire data. The major variables tested in the study include school environment, activities and exercises, academic content, teaching methods and evaluation methods.

In addition to this, arithmetic means such as central tendency and standard deviations were calculated. Furthermore, an arbitrary level was identified (high, medium, low) based on the following equation:

$$\frac{The\ Scales\ highest\ value - The\ scales\ lowest\ value}{Number\ of\ levels} = \frac{5-1}{3} = 1.33$$

This formula above was used to summarise data to provide a simple indication of the level of the means associated with each response. Using these intervals of 1.33, we can define 3.67 to 5.00 as a "high impact", 2.34 to 3.67 as a "medium impact" and any value below 2.34 to 1.33 as a "low impact" and if the arithmetic mean is less than 1.33 it means "impact never occurs": this is summarised in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1Scales value

Scales Value	Satisfaction Level
1.33 to 2.33	Low
2.34 to 3.67	Medium
3.68 to 5.00	High

3.6.2 Thematic Analysis

The data from the interviews was recorded and then transcribed for analysis. The method of analysis used in this study is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of data analysis that emerged in the past few decades, within the social sciences field. Thematic analysis defines as the process of identifying trends or themes in data. The researcher reads and re-reads the data with a view to identifying the main themes that emerge from the data collected. The researchers concerned with this method of data collection claim that is a widely used method of qualitative data analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The main strategy in this approach to data analysis is for the researcher to engage with the data, often derived from interviews or written texts and in so doing, come up with patterns or themes. In some circumstances, the process of coming with themes and patterns in the data occurs naturally. However, in other instances, the search for themes or patterns is intentional and deliberate. In this study, the primary sets of themes have been derived from the literature on the challenges facing curricular change in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The following themes were generated:

Level Appropriate Competency 1

Level appropriate Difficulty 2

Infrastructure 3

Unavailability of Resources 4

Teacher Competency 5

Quality Teaching Resource 6

Curriculum Integration 7

Teaching Methodologies 8

Formative Assessments 9

The rationale for the choice of this method is based on the fact that it provides the core skills useful in conducting many other forms of data analysis. The other advantage of this method is that it is a method and not a technique (Tracy, 2010). Consequently, the flexibility of this approach offers an edge in data analysis. The other advantage for this method is that a rigorous thematic analysis can lead to insightful and trustworthy findings. Nevertheless, there is no agreement yet on how researchers can rigorously apply this method of data analysis (Nowell et al., 17). On the other hand, thematic analysis does not need technological or detailed knowledge of the other qualitative approaches. One only needs to learn how to read and re-read the data and identify the major themes or patterns. Furthermore, in some cases, the themes are already developed from the literature. Thus, the work of the researcher is to identify these themes as they appear in the literature (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Given that I have limited understanding of most of the approaches to qualitative data analysis, I found this method easy to use. Also, through the use of thematic analysis, I was able to get insight into the perceptions of the different research participants better.

Braun and Clarkes' six steps of thematic analysis were used in analysis of the interview data. In the first step, the researcher read and re-read the interviews to become familiar with the responses given by the respondents. Given that the researcher transcribed the interviews themselves, they were relatively familiar with it. Nevertheless, the initial reading gave insights into the data, and the patterns and themes emerging. The second stage involved creating the initial codes. The researcher, based on the criteria for themes set from the literature review, began coding. Third, the researcher began to search for themes in the interview transcripts. In the fourth stage, the researcher began to review the themes, defined them in the fifth stage and then analysed them in the write-up in the sixth stage (Braun and Clarke, 2006).
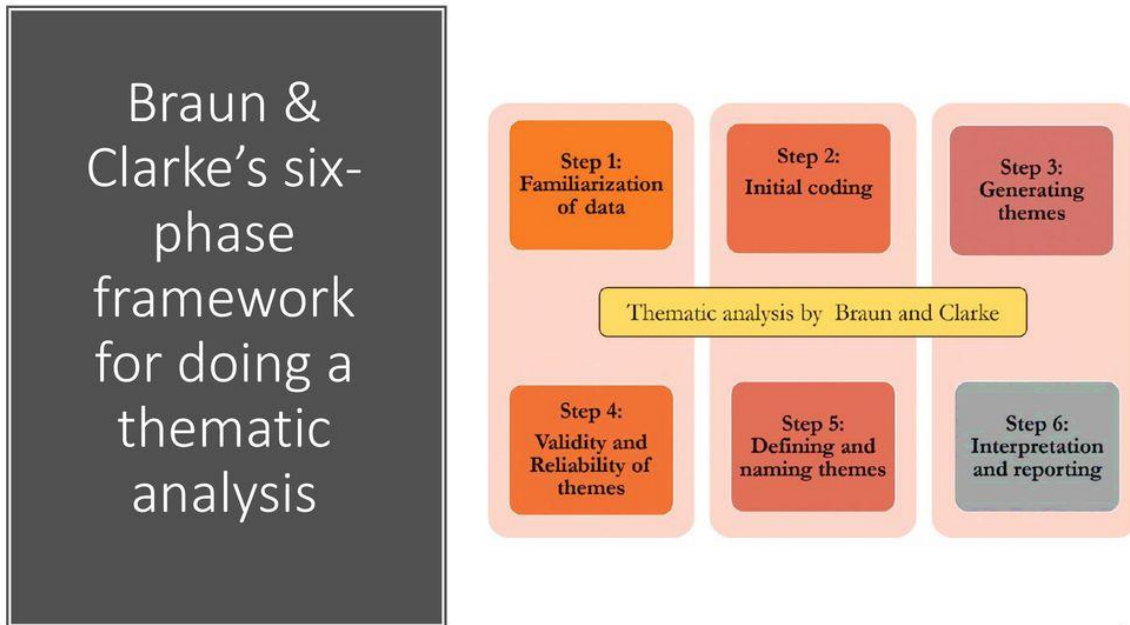
Figure 3.3 Braun and Clarke's six phase steps of Thematic Analysis

3.7 Target Population and Sampling

The target population for this study were high school female teachers and students in Saudi Arabia's Tabuk region. I chose high school due to my experience in teaching the national social studies curriculum in middle and high school for almost ten years. It should be noted that the study did not include male students or male teachers, because of the education policy in Saudi Arabia which separates males from females at all levels of education up to the university stage. Because the project is not about the policies associated with single gender schooling, it was okay for the study to only use female respondents and institutions as this is the best practical option for the study.

A convenience sampling technique was used for both the interviews and questionnaires. This gave rise to N=98 female students and N=79 female teachers questionnaires. For the interviews, N=30 female students and N=15 female teachers were sampled.

3.8 Evaluation of the Research Process

It is important for a researcher to make an effort to assess the research process, tools and method used in order to ensure the process preferred is the most ideal to fulfil the objectives of their study. Cai & Zhu (2015) state that evaluation of a study's 'accuracy' and 'consistency' is an important aspect of the quality of a research. Pauwels and Matthyssens (2004) also add that the quality of qualitative research and its validation have to be built into the research design and process. The quality of study is not only determined by the data collection and analysis process but by the whole research process put together. A researcher thus is required to remain conscious of the quality of their output right from the crafting stage of the research design.

As explained in the previous section the evaluation of a research design includes the literature review, methodology, tools of data collection, analysis of data, and comparison with extant theories. When put together all these aspects should be selected and presented in a theme that remains consistent with the research objectives and reflect the main aim of a study. Errors made in any of the aspects mentioned compromise the quality of the subsequent sections and affect the overall quality of a study. Consequently, each phase of the research must be systematically reported throughout the study, in order to assist the reader to evaluate the quality of the research (Kirk & Miller, 1988).

The research process adopted for the study started off from the identification of a problem. It is advisable to pick a topic familiar or that is interesting to a researcher (Hockey, 1993). The researcher's experience and daily surrounding motivated the identification of the study problem. This is because the topic was familiar given that the researcher has experience in teaching the national social studies curriculum in middle and high school for almost ten years in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The researcher has interacted with the issue at hand and understands that curriculum development and implementation is a challenge that teachers and students have struggled with in the country. The next stage was to conduct a thorough review of peer reviewed literature. The study focused a lot on journals and dissertations regarding the problem at hand. Then, after review of literature the study narrowed down the purpose of the study. Then, as a result came up with the objectives, questions, and scope of

the study. The next stage was the data collection processes, the method and tools to be used were then selected, guided by the study objectives. The journey of data collection went through several stages that included seeking approval from the Ministry of Education branch in Tabuk region.

The study sample should be representative of the entire population (Sharma, 2017). The data was collected from private and public schools in the Tabuk region from teachers and students who use the national curriculum. The study sample included 30 female students: Twenty students from public schools, and Fifteen students from private schools. While the teachers: 10 teachers from public schools, and 5 teachers from private schools. The number of schools in the study was Fourteen. Four of which were private schools, and ten were public schools. The study chose high school female students who are using the national social studies curriculum and their teachers.

The tools used for data collections were questionnaires and interview guides. The thematic areas in the questionnaire borrowed heavily from Arabic studies, and some were guided from literature review from credible secondary sources and finally the theoretical framework also played a role in the design of the tools used. The study then proceeded to put measures to ensure the process and results were valid and reliable through consultation with experts and peers. The first part of distribution of the questionnaires was done online via Google Drive. Then the researcher visited the female teachers in their schools, distributed the questionnaires and then collected them manually. For the female students, the questionnaire was distributed and then collected back from them physically. The interviews were conducted in an organised way where the researcher visited the High Schools, met the teachers who were teaching national social studies subject and their students with the prerequisite authorization interviewed a section of the teachers and students. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The data collected from questionnaires was then analysed using SPSS software and reviewed for quality and to eliminate system errors. The research process adopted was suitable for the study because the data collected covered all the identified objectives. Finally, the research design, method, tools, and procedure allowed the researcher to comfortably draw data and analyse to fulfil the objectives of the study.

3.9 Reliability and Validity of Findings

3.9.1 Reliability

Reliability involves whether the research process, if repeated by another researcher, would produce the same results (Yin, 2003). It focuses on replicability and consistency of certain measurements of a study. Joppe (2000) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under a study. The concern here is if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. The contention in this is that qualitative data is very subjective thus even with the same sample it is not a guarantee that the same tool will obtain the same feedback at a later time. The test-retest method which would be very useful in a purely quantitative study is not sufficient here.

Healy and Perry (2000) propose that the quality of a study in each paradigm should be judged by its own paradigm's terms. This study utilised a mixed method, so a combination of mechanisms to ensure reliability and validity were utilised. According to Healy and Perry (2000) the terms Reliability and Validity are more applicable terms in reference to quality in quantitative paradigms. For qualitative studies, the authors propose terms such as credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are to be the essential criteria for quality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The respondents of the study were unknown to the researcher before they were subjected to the study. The researcher did not influence or lead the respondents to provide feedback in any particular way. The tools used for the study were peer reviewed and presented to experts in the education research sphere to ensure they provided truthful insights into the phenomenon being tested. The data collected from the interview process was tape-recorded, and transcribed. Finally, in the data analysis stage the researcher made an effort to collect secondary information and compare primary with secondary data. The data collected shows consistency with similar studies conducted by other researchers on the same problem. The findings are not entirely unique to this study but provide evidence of a general trend in the field being researched.

3.9.2 Validity

To ensure validity of the study, the researcher was guided by the mixed method approach. Some of the validity concerns were addressed within the quantitative research method paradigm while others were approached from a qualitative research outlook. The goal was to ensure all the information that was extracted in this research study were from the valid sources. Validity is basically whether your study measures what it is supposed to measure and whether it does so in the right way. And in the end, the findings are a truthful and accurate representation of information in relation to the topic at hand (Cypress, 2017).

In this study, the researcher included a theoretical framework that clearly defined the unit of analysis and then proceeded to define the explanatory dimensions. This explanatory framework was systematically translated into a research design, topics in the case study protocol and ultimately into questions in the interview guide. All this was incorporated in the research design to ensure the method adopted was effective for the nature of data and process involved in answering the objectives of the study.

External validity which is the extent to which the findings on the study can be generalised to other populations. With regard to external validity assessment, case study research cannot provide 'statistical generalisation'. However, it can provide 'analytical generalisation' (Pauwels & Matthyssens, 2004), which involves generalising a particular set of results to some broader theory (Yin, 2003). The study was conducted in a specific region and information gathered from a small group in the region, the findings may not be generalised for the whole country but provides analytical generalisation.

As with regard to validity of the qualitative aspects of the study, the researcher utilised several methods. Validity of qualitative data is affected by bias. There are 3 types of bias, all three are categorised according to the source of the bias. The three include: responder bias, researcher bias, and finally, reactivity bias (Cypress, 2017). Responder bias refers to any reasons that can make respondents not provide accurate or truthful information. It refers to factors that prevent respondents from answering questions truthfully. Reasons for this vary, some respondents may not know the answer, are afraid of potential consequences or have

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been intimidated into silence or withholding information by external factors. Additionally, it can occur when the data collection tool is not framed correctly, such as when there are not enough options provided in the answers list.

The biggest challenge in this study was gaining the confidence of the students. Some students were afraid of responding to the researcher, their answers were very vague and provided no real insight into their subjective truths that were necessary for the study. However, after constant reassurance that the processes were confidential and no real names or identity markers would be reported back to their teachers or guardians more of the students opened up. The other measures employed by the researcher to minimise the effect of this bias on the study included: questions in the data collection tools were kept short and clear in the Arabic language, as respondents are generally intimidated by long questions. The researcher also avoided using leading questions in the interview process and in questionnaires. The other measure was to ensure all concepts were properly explained and broken down into smaller related units in the data collection process for better clarity to the respondents, additionally the researcher used interval questions which enhanced the quality of analysis. Other than the methods already mentioned the researcher also framed the questions with the target audience in mind and finally structured the tools of the study to appropriately flow through all the relevant topics.

The next type is researcher bias which includes the influence of previous assumptions, experience or feelings of the researcher towards the topic at hand that can influence the way and type of data collected (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). This is a very risky factor that can compromise the validity of a study. There are three forms of this bias; they include information bias, selection bias, and confounding. Information bias results from flawed definitions of study variables (Tracy, 2019). It results from erroneous classification of subjects with regard to exposure and/ or outcomes. It can also be referred to as misclassification. Then there is selection bias, this occurs when the selection of individuals, groups, or data to participate in a study is interfered with in such a way that proper randomisation is not achieved- thus rendering the data collected unrepresentative of the intended population or concept. To prevent any bias in the process, the researcher explained all operational terms in writing in the questionnaires. Also, the researcher did not influence

or change the feedback provided by respondents. Original data obtained was analysed using software, but all original copies maintained. Interview feedback was also recorded and transcribed for analysis and copies have been stored. The sampling method utilised provided no room for selection bias. During the interview process, the researcher refrained from rephrasing questions at all times. The language used was familiar, simple and direct.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The pilot study conducted by the researcher was instrumental in preparation for the actual data collection process. The researcher was able to test the efficiency of the method and tools collected as well as the data analysis approach used. Issues that arose, especially with the tools, were addressed ahead of the data collection process. However, it is not possible to entirely eliminate all possible challenges especially when dealing with human subjects. The first were challenges faced in the sampling process. The researcher experienced a general lack of willingness among some institutions, especially private schools. The researcher however maintained the number of private to public schools to be consistent with the overall allocation in the region.

In some schools some of the teachers and students were uncooperative. Some teachers and students refused to fill out questionnaires and some even refused to be interviewed. The reason provided was they could not spare time to do so. Some did not understand the level of seriousness involved in the project and returned forms that were not completely filled or filled with irrelevant information. Some schools refused to participate despite head teachers giving initial approval citing changes in the timetable that could not allow them to participate. Unfortunately, many were not willing to reschedule to later times.

Also, some of the students were afraid and provided yes or no answers during the interview process, which apart from being frustrating did not offer adequate insight and information needed for the study. After explaining in detail the purpose of the study, what information was required and that all responses would remain confidential, some of the students eventually opened up. Except a few who despite this reassurance remained distant. The

researcher witnessed this more in interviews where the students seemed intimidated by their teachers.

Additionally, limitation of time was the other challenge experienced by the researcher. Despite obtaining three months leave from work to conduct the study, the time available still felt short considering all the arrangements that needed to be made. Some of the aspects that delayed some stages could not be controlled by the researcher such as the process of getting approvals from authorities to conduct the study. During the data collection process, the researcher also had to wait for the consent forms to be delivered back from parents and guardians before data collection was done. Also, the time slotted for data collection was to ensure very minimal disruption was made to the routine of both students and teachers. A lot of the processes had to be planned around breaks which significantly reduced active data collection time utilised in the 3-month period.

The final one was the limitation of language. The researcher went through an additional hardship duplicating all documents in English and the national language Arabic. One set was used for the actual study while another set has been used in the preparation of this dissertation. Although a hardship, the researcher tried to minimise as much as possible the challenges associated with translation from one language to another. The data collected also had to be translated from Arabic to English. This was a big challenge especially for the data collected through interviews.

3.11 Research Ethics

Ethics, in the research study, refers to the way of doing things (Kimmel, 2007). It regards the considerations made to protect the integrity of a study and protect the respondents as much as possible. Ethical considerations in research strive to protect the dignity and integrity of a study. Moreover, ethics is important to keep validity, reliability, authenticity, and originality of the research work. In this research, ethical considerations or issues relevant to the primary and secondary data collection methods have been considered to assure the ethical aspects and an approval from Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee was

granted, see Appendix E. In the context of primary data collection, various ethical concerns are vital to consider, these may include:

a) Voluntary Consent: Voluntary consent of the participants is the primary concern in this research study. On this ground, a consent letter along with the information sheet is sent to the participants prior conducting the survey and interview with them. This helped get approval from participants to willingly participate in the study. This assures that there is no state of demand and pressure to do something on the participants for the completion of survey and interview processes (Kimmel, 2007).

b) Providing incentives: Although in some situations cash or in-kind benefits are permissible, they should be made known to the subject (Roberts, 2002). This is however given to compensate for time and effort but should not be used to imply coercion to participate in a study. The financial, educational or community benefit should be given to all participants if any is availed by the researcher. The researcher did not offer any incentives to the respondents. This was made known to all respondents who chose to take part in the study.

c) Confidentiality or Information Secrecy: This is another major ethical concern that directly harms the participant's interests. Harm to confidentiality or personal information may cause a threat to an individual's life, thereby information secrecy collected during primary methodology must be maintained. In this research, confidentiality or information secrecy has been secured by accumulating the collected information in the password protected documents (Kimmel, 2007). In order to keep information secrecy, a state of being anonymous is strictly followed in this research. For anonymity, participants' personal information like age, years of experience, the name of the company and designation are protected or saved in the alphanumeric or alphabetic form. Besides that, personalised questions are totally avoided during the collection of primary data. Overall, the participants are assured of not sharing primary information of the research with their party.

d) Personal Biases: Issue of personal biases or involvement is considered in this research study as an important ethical consideration. Personal biases in the research reflect partiality during the selection of participants that ultimately raises the question

of the data authenticity. Due to this ethical issue, data authenticity has been affected to a high extent as the selection of participants is done on the basis of personal interests (Gregory, 2003). To avoid such issues, the selection of participants is done using random sampling so as to give equal chance of selection to all participants. Judgmental sampling is followed to target participants according to the project nature or subject. Under this study, consideration to the biases issue contributes to keeping the validity of the information. Other forms of bias can be presented in handling of data, this can occur in the form of manipulation of data collected to fulfil a person or donor agenda if a study is sponsored. In this study, the data collection process and analysis were handled with the approach indicated that is peer reviewed and approved by the institution as appropriate. The original data collected from correspondents has been stored appropriately in case verification is required.

e) Special populations: Informed consent should be sought from persons legally authorised from subjects considered incapable of doing so. This includes vulnerable groups such as children and intellectually impaired persons. Some of the respondents in the study were children; the researcher got the necessary authorisation before the students were involved in the study. Through the teachers, the parents and legal guardians were made aware and provided with the necessary forms before interviews were conducted. Some of the parents allowed the teachers to sign the forms on their behalf.

In addition to the ethical aspects related to the primary data collection, certain ethical considerations undertaken for the secondary data collection are depicted as follows:

1. Originality: All the secondary information related to the curriculum implementation in Saudi Arabia was referenced and original authors acknowledged accordingly. Manipulation of information as per the research aim and objectives were avoided under this research so as to sustain information authenticity.

2. Plagiarism: Secondary data collected in this research is presented in own language to develop a conceptual framework and to underpin the real or experience-based information. This research work is entirely new, that is, not copied from any existing information or any other researchers' theses. The university has also put in place

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mechanisms to prevent this vice and thus the researcher made sure to adhere with the requisite plagiarism policies set in place to deal with misconduct.

3. Credibility: In the presentation of secondary information, credibility is also maintained through providing in-text citation and referencing for the information retrieved to develop a conceptual model. Facts generalised in this research context are presented with evidence, which in turn sustain authenticity of the research project (Gregory, 2003). The secondary sources utilised in the study were all peer reviewed to ensure credibility of the information presented in them. The researcher only obtained information form credible journals and publications as with regard to the topic.

4. Legal issues pertaining to regulatory bodies: Various regulatory bodies have been constituted to uphold the safety of subjects involved in research. Such bodies vary from region to region. Standard requirements for the process also vary. The researcher obtained a formal introduction letter formally introducing the topic, objectives and intended subjects for the study from the niversity and approval from the Ministry of Education branch in Tabuk region where the study was conducted. This letter was presented to the administrative authorities who were the heads of the institutions involved in the study before the researcher engaged the respondents. The research reported complies with the ethical norms to prevent subsequent harm to human health and emotions in accordance with the requirements of the Ethics Committee for the University.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research methodology of this dissertation. The chapter starts with outlining the research paradigm, design and then progresses to discuss the methods of data collection, analysis, issues of validity and reliability, research limitations, and ethical considerations for the study. In the next section, the author will present the results from the primary data collection.

Chapter 4. Quantitative Data Analysis of Primary Data

4.1 Introduction

 Previously, the author has outlined the methodology for the study. The chapter outlines the research philosophy, approach, design, methods of data collection and analysis used for the study. Both interviews and questionnaires were used to collect the data needed for the study. In this chapter, the author presents analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires.

One of the two methods of data collection was the use of questionnaires. As explained in chapter three, n = 98 students and n = 79 teachers were sampled using a convenience sampling technique to fill in the questionnaires. The data was collected from private and public schools in the Tabuk region of Saudi Arabia (Refer to Figure 4.1). The first part of the distribution of the questionnaires was done online via Google Drive. Then the researcher visited the teachers in their schools, distributed the questionnaires and then collected them manually. For the students, the questionnaire was distributed and then collected back from them physically. The questionnaires filled on Google forms were downloaded as comma-separated values (CSV) files and then imported to the SPSS software for further coding and analysis to generate tables for discussion (Saunders et al., 2016). This section presents the data analysed through SPSS software.
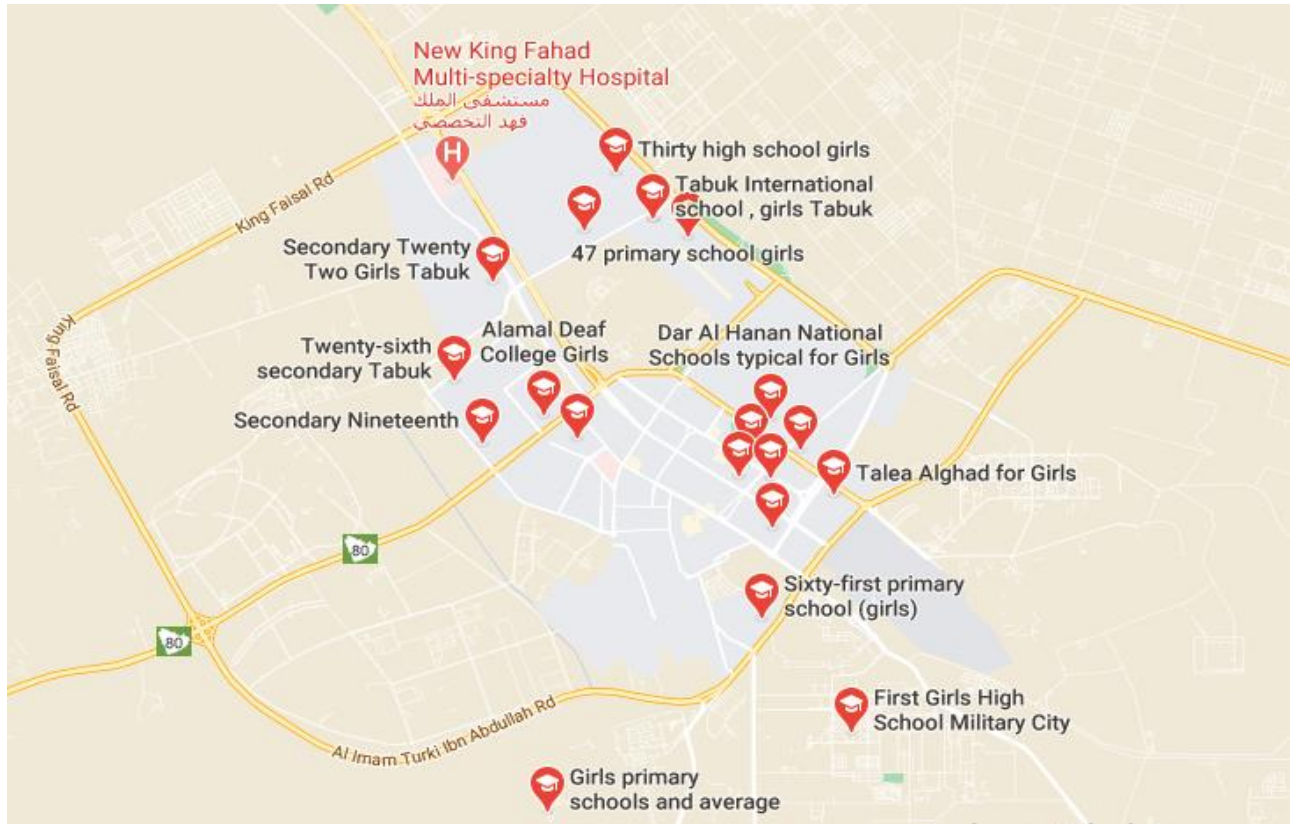
Figure 4.1 Map of Tabuk Region, Saudi Arabia showing some of the Girls' schools surveyed ((Source: Google Maps, 2020)

4.2 Data Analysis

In order to determine the impact level of the variables under consideration (school environment, activities and exercises, academic content, teaching methods and evaluation methods) on teaching and learning national social studies (NSS) in high school level from the point view of students, arithmetical means, as an indicator of central tendency, and standard deviations were calculated. Furthermore, an arbitrary level was identified (high, medium, low) based on the following equation (Saunders et al., 2016) [1]:

$$\frac{The\ Scales\ highest\ value - The\ scales\ lowest\ value}{Number\ of\ levels} = \frac{5-1}{3} = 1.33$$

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Formula [1] is used to summarise data to provide a simple indication of the level of the means associated with each response. Using these intervals of 1.33 (refer to Table 4-1), we can define 3.67 to 5.00 as a "high impact", 2.34 to 3.67 as a "medium impact" and any value below 2.34-1.33 as a "low impact" and if the arithmetic means is less than 1.33 it means "low impact never occurs". This is summarised in Table 4-1

Table 4-1 Scales value

Scales value	Satisfaction level
1.33 to 2.33	Low
2.34 to 3.67	Medium
3.68 to 5.00	High

Using the scales values in Table 4-1, the researcher rated the level to which the respondents are satisfied with the various variables. As shown in Table 4-2, no variables exhibit a High satisfaction level. Nearly all of them have a Medium satisfaction level. The variable most indicative of dissatisfaction is the appropriateness of the sources and references to serve the subject. In the context of this study, the subject is national social studies curriculum. This factor scored a value of 2.14. Most of the other factors such as suitability of the classrooms for the number of students, the role of the number of students in helping implement teaching modern techniques, and functioning of the equipment such as the projector have a medium score. This means that the respondents are satisfied with them.

Table 4-2 Students' school environment, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Satisfaction Level
1	The classrooms are suitable with the number of students.	2.88	1.39	57.6	3	Medium
2	The number of students in the classroom help implementing teaching modern techniques.	2.95	1.36	59.0	1	Medium
3	The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms.	2.66	1.49	53.2	5	Medium
4	The school environment helps in implementing teaching modern techniques.	2.78	1.46	55.6	4	Medium
5	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum	2.46	1.41	49.2	6	Medium
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projector works efficiently.	2.89	1.37	57.8	2	Medium
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject.	2.14	1.33	42.8	7	Low
		2.68	1.41	53.6		Medium

The overall means of the factors analysed under the variable- school environment is 2.68, a standard deviation of 1.41, and percentage of 53.6; which, according to the scale of level of

satisfaction, is medium. It may be concluded therefore that there is a "medium" impact of the school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia.

Table 4-3 Frequencies and Distributions of Students (n=98) on School Environment

Item		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
	N	14	41	4	21	18	98
01	%	14.3%	41.8%	4.1%	21.4%	18.4%	100.0%
	N	12	39	7	22	18	98
02	%	12.2%	39.8%	7.1%	22.4%	18.4%	100.0%
	N	26	34	3	17	18	98
03	%	26.5%	34.7%	3.1%	17.3%	18.4%	100.0%
	N	24	30	3	26	15	98
04	%	24.5%	30.6%	3.1%	26.5%	15.3%	100.0%
	N	31	34	1	21	11	98
05	%	31.6%	34.7%	1.0%	21.4%	11.2%	100.0%
	N	18	29	12	24	15	98
06	%	18.4%	29.6%	12.2%	24.5%	15.3%	100.0%
	N	45	22	10	14	7	98
07	%	45.9%	22.4%	10.2%	14.3%	7.1%	100.0%

SD= Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Table 4-3 shows frequencies and distributions of students (n=98) in the school environment. The students were asked to state the level to which they agree or disagree with a range of statements on the impact of the school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school level. This gave insight into their perceptions about the school

environment in Saudi Arabia. As shown in Table 4-3, on item 01, which stated, "The classrooms are suitable with the number of the students" a majority (56.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (39.8%) indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with it, and only (4.1%) indicating neutrality. Since more than half the number strongly disagreed or disagreed, the statement was not generally favoured by the students.

On item 02, which stated, "The number of students in the classroom help implementing teaching modern techniques" majority (52.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while (40.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, and less than one-tenth (7.1%) indicating neutrality, the statement was not generally favoured by the participants.

Either on item 03, which stated, "The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms" a majority (61.2%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while more than one-third (35.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while and (3.1%) indicating neutrality.

On item 04, which stated, "The school environment helps in implementing teaching modern techniques" a majority (55.1%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while less than one-third (31.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it and a very small number (3.1%) indicating neutrality.

On item 05, which stated, "The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum" a large number (66.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while a third (33.6%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, and only (1.0%) indicating neutrality.

On item 06, which stated, "Equipment inside the classroom such as projector work efficiently" mostly half of the participants (48.0%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, while a very small number (39.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, while less than one-sixth (12.2%) indicating neutrality.

On item 07, which stated, "The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject" large majority (72.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement,

while a minority (21.4%) either agreed or strongly agreed with it, and more one-tenth (10.2%) indicating neutrality.

From the data analysed in Table 4-3, there are a number of conclusions drawn about the different factors under the impact of the school environment on the teaching of National Social Studies in Saudi Arabia. In 6/7 items, the majority of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed. This implies that the numbers in the classrooms, the teaching methods used, the school environment, and the equipment in the classroom such as the projector are not suitable, and that the library sources and references are not the methods for learning National Social Studies. The school environment does not help in implementing teaching using modern techniques. Furthermore, the sources and references used in the library do not serve the purpose. This comes at a time when the Saudi government is undergoing curriculum change. One of the critics of the old curricular is rigidity of the traditional methods of teaching which focus on memorisation. Despite the efforts made to change the curriculum from 2011, it is evident from the data collected in this study that the school environment is not supportive of the intended curriculum changes in KSA.

Table 4-4 Students' activities and exercises, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other.	4.14	.908	82.8	1	High
2	The activities taken in class are relevant to the lesson's objectives.	3.91	.985	78.2	4	High
3	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.	2.42	1.392	48.4	9	Medium
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.	3.88	.841	77.6	5	High
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material.	3.80	.837	76	6	High
6	The activities equipped the students with problem solving skills.	4.23	.715	84.6	2	High
7	The activities are written in a in a clear and accessible language.	4.08	.620	81.6	3	High
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing mental skills.	3.21	1.318	64.2	7	Medium
9	The activities are related to the student environment.	3.12	1.246	62.4	8	Medium
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate.	1.88	.998	37.6	10	Low
		3.46	0.98	69.3		Medium

Table 4-4 shows the results associated with the impact of students' activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that there is the 'Medium' impact of students' activities and exercises on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 3.46, standard deviation of 0.98, and percentage of 69.3. The result also shows that students activities and exercises have medium impact on students teaching and learning because the statements "The activities help students cooperate with each other", "The activities taken in class are relevant to the lesson's objectives", "The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.", "The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material", "The activities equipped the student with the skills of solving problem", "The activities are written in a clear and accessible language" are high with an arithmetic means 4.14, 3.91, 3.88, 3.80, 4.23, and 4.08, with standard deviations of 0.90, 0.98, 0.84, 0.83, 0.71, and 0.62 respectively. The results also show that there are three statements that had medium impact: "The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities", "The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing the mental skills", "The activities are related student environment", with arithmetic means 2.42, 3.21, and 3.12 with standard deviations of 1.39, 1.31 and 1.24 respectively, and only one statement has low impact "The time allotted for the activities is appropriate"' with an arithmetic means 1.88 and standard deviation of 0.99. With these results once can conclude that there is a medium impact of activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia.

This ranges from the way the activities are designed to help students cooperate with each other, provide them with new information, help them relate to the lesson's scientific subject, consolidate the scientific material, enable them develop problem solving skills, as well as the clarity of language with which they are written. This shows an attempt to modernise curriculum delivery. However, it is important to note that the time allocated for the activities is not appropriate, implying that it has to be looked at. From the data collected in the study, it is evident that the activities are well-designed and implemented but the time designated for these activities is limited. To improve this aspect of learning and teaching NSS, more time can be allocated to the activities so that learners get more time to practice these activities for better learning.

Table 4-5 Students' academic contents, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The textbook content is suitable for the students' mental capacity	2.76	1.309	55.2	6	Medium
2	The content is suitable for all individual differences.	2.71	1.193	54.2	7	Medium
3	The new content helps the student learn new strategies.	3.64	1.048	72.8	3	Medium
4	The content is free of scientific, linguistic, and spelling errors.	4.28	1.013	85.6	1	High
5	Contains new experiences for the students.	3.65	1.066	73	2	Medium
6	The content lacks repetitive information.	1.47	.840	29.4	8	Low
7	The content encourages interaction inside the classroom.	3.51	1.077	70.2	5	Medium
8	There is variation in presenting the class lesson.	3.57	1.149	71.4	4	Medium
		3.19	1.08	63.9		Medium

Table 4-5 shows the results associated with the impact of students' academic contents on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that there is the 'Medium' impact of students' academic contents on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 3.19, standard deviation of 1.08, and percentage of 63.9. The result also shows that students' academic contents have medium impact on students teaching and learning because these statements "The content is free of scientific, linguistic and spelling errors", is high with an arithmetic mean 4.28 and standard deviation 1.01. The results also show that are six statements that have medium impact; "The textbook content is suitable for the students' mental capacity", "The content is suitable for all individual differences", "The new content helps the student to learn new strategies", "Contains new experiences for the students", "The content encourage interaction inside the classroom", "There is variation in presenting the class lesson" with arithmetic means 2.76, 2.71, 3.64, 6.65, 3.51 and 3.57 with standard deviations of 1.30, 1.19, 1.04, 1.06, 1.07 and 1.14 respectively. Only one statement has low impact: "The contents lack of repetitive information", with an arithmetic means of 1.47 and standard deviation of 0.84. With these results we can conclude that there is a medium impact of academic contents on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia.

The conclusion drawn from this data is that the textbook content differs substantially from one grade to another and does not take into account all individual differences and students' mental capacity. In addition, it presents students with an opportunity to learn new strategies and contains new experiences for the students. In relation to curricular change in Saudi Arabia, one infers that there are attempts to modernise the content that learners get access to.

Table 4-6 Students' teaching methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently.	3.90	1.180	77.8	3	High
2	The teachers focus on the important points of the lesson.	4.02	1.166	80.4	2	High
3	The teachers take into account the individual differences between students.	3.80	1.121	75.8	5	High
4	The teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom	4.12	1.105	82.4	1	High
5	The teachers use multiple teaching methods	3.55	1.253	71	7	Medium
6	The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom.	3.85	1.125	76.8	4	High
7	The teachers use educational methods during the lesson.	3.61	1.273	72.2	6	Medium
		3.83	1.17	76.6		High

Table 4-6 shows the results associated with the impact of students' teaching methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that the three is 'High' impact of students' teaching methods on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 3.83, standard deviation of 1.17, and percentage of 76.6. The result also shows that teachers' teaching methods have high impact on students teaching and learning because these statements "The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently", "The teachers focus on the important points of the lesson", "The teachers take into account the individual differences between students", "The teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom", and "The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom" are high with an arithmetic means of 3.90, 4.02, 3.80, 4.12, 3.85 and standard deviation 1.18, 1.16, 1.12, 1.10 and 1.12 respectively. Only two statement have medium impact, these are "Teachers use multiple teaching methods", and "The teachers use educational methods during the lesson", with an arithmetic means 3.55, 3.61 and standard deviation of 1.25 and 1.27. With these results we can conclude that there is a high impact of teaching methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia

Table 4-7 Students' evaluation methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The evaluation methods are clear and concise.	3.98	.941	79.6	1	High
2	Exam questions relate to the course	3.88	1.087	77.6	2	High
3	The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient	3.88	1.105	77.6	2	High
4	Evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe.	3.66	1.139	73.2	5	Medium
5	The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps with answering the questions.	3.70	1.151	74	4	High
6	Test questions range from easy to difficult	3.81	1.090	76.2	3	High
		3.81	1.08	71.0		High

Table 4-7 shows the results associated with impact of students' evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that there is 'High' impact of students' evaluation methods on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 3.81, standard deviation of 1.08, and percentage of 71.0. The results also show that students' evaluation methods have high impact on students teaching and learning because these statements "The evaluation methods are clear and concise", "Exam questions relate to the course", "The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient", "The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps with answering the questions", and "Test questions range from easy to difficult" are high with an arithmetic means of 3.98, 3.88, 3.88, 3.70, 3.81 and standard deviation of 0.94, 1.08, 1.10, 1.15 and 1.09 respectively. Only one statement has medium impact, which is

"Evaluation results are given within a suitable time frame" with an arithmetic means of 3.66 and standard deviation of 1.13. With these results we can conclude that evaluation methods used when teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia produce a high impact.

Table 4-8 Teachers' school environment, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale
Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The classrooms are suitable with the number of the students.	3.14	1.27	62.8	1	Medium
2	The school provide appropriate learning methods.	2.59	1.44	51.8	6	Medium
3	The school environment helps with implementing modern teaching techniques.	2.73	1.54	54.6	3	Medium
4	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum	2.68	1.42	53.6	4	Medium
5	The class is suitable for dividing students into groups.	2.68	1.44	53.6	5	Medium
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently.	2.77	1.46	55.4	2	Medium
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references.	2.35	1.41	47	7	Medium
		2.70	1.42	54.1		Medium

Table 4-8 shows the results associated with the impact of teachers' school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that there is 'Medium' impact of teachers' school environment on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 2.70, standard deviation of 1.42, and percentage of 54.1. The result also shows that the school environment has a medium impact on teachers' teaching and learning because "The classrooms are suitable with the number of the students", "The school provide the appropriate learning methods", "The school environment helps with implementing modern teaching techniques", "The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum", "The class is suitable for dividing students into groups", "Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently" and "The library has the appropriate sources and references" all are medium level with an arithmetic mean of 3.14, 2.59, 2.73, 2.68, 2.68, 2.77, 2.35 and standard deviation 1.27, 1.44, 1.54, 1.42, 1.44, 1.46, and 1.41 respectively. Therefore, we can conclude that the teachers' school environment when teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia has medium impact.

Table 4-9 Teachers' activities and exercises, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other	3.76	1.077	75.2	1	High
2	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.	2.29	1.312	45.8	10	Low
3	There are clear instructions for activities.	2.77	1.208	55.4	9	Medium
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.	3.29	1.052	65.8	6	Medium
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material.	3.67	1.059	73.4	4	Medium
6	The activities equipped the students with problem solving skills.	3.53	1.119	70.6	5	Medium
7	The activities are written in a clear and accessible language.	3.71	1.002	74.2	2	High
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing mental skills.	3.67	1.009	73.4	3	Medium
9	The activities are related to student environment.	2.99	1.266	59.8	7	High
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate.	2.92	1.289	58.4	8	Medium
		3.26	1.139	65.2		Medium

Table 4-9 shows the results associated with the impact of teachers' activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that the three is 'Medium' impact of teachers' activities and exercises on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 3.26, standard deviation of 1.13, and percentage of 65.2. The result also shows that teachers activities and exercises have medium impact on students' teaching and learning because the statements "The activities help students cooperate with each other", "The activities are written in a clear language and common to students", "The activities are related to student environment" all have high score with an arithmetic means 3.76, 3.71 and 2.99 as well as with standard deviations of 1.07, 1.00 and 1.26 respectively. The results also show that there six statements have medium impact, these are "There are clear instructions for activities", "The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.", "The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material", "The activities equipped the students with problem solving skills.", "The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing mental skills" and "The time allotted for the activities is appropriate" with arithmetic means 2.77, 3.29, 3.67, 3.53, 3.67 and 2.92 with standard deviations of 1.20, 1.05, 1.05, 1.19, 1.00 and 1.28 respectively. Only one statement has low impact: "The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities", with an arithmetic means 2.29 and standard deviation of 1.31. With these results we can conclude that there is a medium impact of teachers' activities and exercises on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia

Table 4-10 Teachers' academic contents, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The book's content is in proportion with the number of hours allocated in the school curriculum.	1.96	1.091	39.2	9	Low
2	The textbook content is suitable for students' mental capacity	3.32	1.150	66.4	4	Medium
3	The content is suitable for individual differences.	3.16	1.126	63.2	6	Medium
4	The new content helps student to learn new strategies and learning methods.	3.49	1.048	69.8	2	Medium
5	Contains new experiences for the students.	3.52	1.024	70.4	1	Medium
6	The content is exciting and interesting.	3.05	1.073	61.0	7	Medium
7	The content lacks repetitive information.	2.37	1.351	47.4	8	Medium
8	The content encourages interaction inside the classroom.	3.25	.980	65.0	5	Medium
9	The educational content allows for varied teaching methods.	3.37	1.002	67.4	4	Medium
		3.05	1.09	61.08		Medium

Table 4-10 shows the results associated with the impact of teachers' academic contents on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that there is 'Medium' impact of teachers' academic contents on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 3.05, standard deviation of 1.09, and percentage of 61.08 The result also shows that academic contents have medium impact on teachers teaching and learning because the results shows that eight statements have medium impact. These are: "The textbook content is suitable for students' mental capacity", "The content is suitable for all individual differences", "The new content helps the student to learn new strategies", "Contains new experiences for the students", "The content is exciting and interesting", "The contents lack of repetitive information", "The content encourages interaction inside the classroom", "The content helps variation in presenting" with arithmetic means 3.32, 3.16, 3.49, 3.52, 3.05, 2.37, 3.25 and 3.37 with standard deviations of 1.15, 1.12, 1.04, 1.02, 1.07, 1.35, 0.98 and 1.00 respectively. Only one statement has low impact, which is "The book theme is in proportion with the number of hours allocated in school curriculum", with an arithmetic means 1.96 and standard deviation of 1.09. With these results one can conclude that there is a medium impact of teachers' academic contents on teaching and learning national social studies.

Table 4-11 Teachers' evaluation methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The exam questions cover the curriculum.	4.19	.878	83.8	4	High
2	The time is adequate and appropriate to answer the exam questions.	4.35	.734	87.0	2	High
3	The students receive the assessment result in a timely manner.	4.14	.888	82.8	5	High
4	The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps the student answer the questions.	4.24	.851	84.8	3	High
5	The exam questions range from easy to difficult.	4.37	.787	87.4	1	High
6	The teacher has the choice to select the methods of students' assessment.	3.99	1.104	79.8	6	High
		4.21	0.87	84.2		High

The Table 4-11 shows the results associated with the impact of teachers' evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia. It is notable from the table that there is 'High' impact of teachers' evaluation methods on teaching and learning on students with an overall arithmetic means 4.21, standard deviation of 0.87, and percentage of 84.2. The result also shows that students' evaluation methods have high impact on teachers' teaching and learning because the statements "The exam questions cover the curriculum", "The time is adequate and appropriate to answer the exam questions", "The students receive the assessment result in a timely manner", "The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps the student answer the questions", "The exam questions range from easy to difficult " and "The teacher has the choice to select the methods of students' assessment" are high with an arithmetic means of 4.19, 4.35, 4.14, 4.24, 4.37, 3.99 and standard deviation 0.87, 0.73, 0.88, 0.85, 0.78 and 1.10 respectively. With these results we can conclude that there is a high impact of teachers evaluation methods on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia.

4.3 Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School Type

 In the sections that follow, the author compares the means, standard deviation, percentage, and scale level by school type. There are two types of schools compared- private and public. A comparison between these two types of schools provides an idea of how the student perceive the diverse components of the teaching and learning NSS. For example, using the means, as shown in Table 4-12, one can tell who is more satisfied/ dissatisfied with an element such as the suitability of the classrooms for the teaching and learning of NSS.

Table 4-12 Students' School Environment, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type:

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The classrooms are suitable for the number of students.	Public	2.03	.856	40.6	3	Low
		Private	4.27	.902	85.4	1	High
2	The number of students in the classroom help implementing teaching modern techniques.	Public	2.16	.952	43.2	1	Low
		Private	4.24	.863	84.8	2	High
3	The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms.	Public	1.75	.869	35.0	5	Low
		Private	4.16	1.014	83.2	4	High
4	The school environment helps in implementing teaching modern techniques.	Public	1.92	.988	38.4	4	Low
		Private	4.19	.908	83.8	3	High
5	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum	Public	1.54	.673	30.8	6	Low
		Private	3.97	.928	79.4	6	High
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently.	Public	2.15	1.046	43.0	2	Low
		Private	4.11	.906	82.2	5	High
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject.	Public	1.41	.739	28.2	7	Low
		Private	3.35	1.207	67.0	7	Medium
Overall		Public	1.85	0.87	37.0		Low
		Private	4.04	0.96	80.8		High

Table 4-12 shows the results associated with impact of students' school environment on teaching and learning national social studies in high school in Saudi Arabia, and the variations between public and private school. On a number of items, there are variations on the level of impact. On the item "The classrooms are suitable for the number of students", public schools had low impact (indicative of low satisfaction level) while private schools recorded high impact (indicative of high satisfaction). The same trend was recorded for subsequent items in the questionnaires, "The number of students in the classroom help implementing teaching modern techniques", "The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms", "The school environment helps in implementing teaching modern techniques", "Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently". The item, "The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject" scored low impact in the public schools but medium in the private schools. This implies that there is high satisfaction amongst the private school students with the school environment and low satisfaction among the public schools' students.

In general, teaching private schools in Saudi Arabia are better than of public schools. In terms of the school environment, private schools rank higher than public. For example, the appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms, implying that the teachers are better trained on the new methodology compared to their counterparts in the public schools. In addition, equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently. This reveals that there is more funding for the private schools towards resources and equipment for teaching of the new curriculum (Alahmari and Kyei-Blankson, 2018).

Table 4-13 Students' activities and exercise, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type:

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other.	Public	4.26	0.728	85.2	1	High
		Private	3.95	1.129	79.0	4	High
2	Class activities are relevant to the subject's curriculum.	Public	3.85	0.997	77.0	5	High
		Private	4.00	0.972	80.0	3	High
3	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.	Public	1.69	1.025	33.8	10	Low
		Private	3.62	1.037	72.4	8	Medium
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.	Public	3.89	0.877	77.8	4	High
		Private	3.86	0.787	77.2	5	High
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material	Public	3.82	0.764	76.4	6	High
		Private	3.76	0.955	75.2	7	High
6	The activities equip the student with problem solving skills.	Public	4.18	0.764	83.6	2	High
		Private	4.32	0.626	86.4	1	High
7	The activities are written in a clear and accessible language.	Public	4.07	0.655	81.4	3	High
		Private	4.11	0.567	82.2	2	High
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing their mental skills.	Public	3.13	1.431	62.6	7	Medium
		Private	3.35	1.111	67.0	8	Medium
9	The activities are related to the student environment.	Public	3.11	1.318	62.2	8	Medium
		Private	3.14	1.134	62.8	9	Medium
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate	Public	1.7	0.882	34.0	9	Low

		Private	2.16	1.118	43.2	10	Low
Overall		Public	3.37	0.94	67.4	Medium	
		Private	3.62	.0.94	72.54	Medium	

Table 4-13 summarises the data on the differences in perception of the students from both public and private students concerning activities and exercises. As shown in Table 4-12, there are minimal variations in the satisfaction levels in the two sets of respondents. For example, in the items that stated, "The activities help students cooperate with each other", "The activities taken in class are relevant to the lesson's objectives", "The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.", "The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material", "The activities equipped the student with the skills of solving problem" and "The activities are written in a clear and accessible language." recorded high impact in both private and public schools. There was a medium impact of three items, "The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing the mental skills" and "The activities are related student environment" but low impact for "The time allotted for the activities is appropriate". The average arithmetic means of the all the items mentioned above under exercises and activities for public schools is 3.37 and 3.62 for private schools, falling within the medium range. From this data, one concludes that the majority of the students in both schools are satisfied with exercises and activities used for teaching and learning of National Social Studies in Saudi Arabia high schools.

Table 4-14 Students' academic contents, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type:

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The textbook content is suitable for the students' mental capacity	Public	2.74	1.425	54.8	6	Medium
		Private	2.78	1.109	55.6	7	Medium
2	The content is suitable for all individual differences.	Public	2.54	1.177	50.8	7	Medium
		Private	3.00	1.179	60	6	Medium
3	The new content helps the student to learn new strategies.	Public	3.72	1.097	74.4	3	High
		Private	3.51	.961	70.2	5	Medium
4	The content is free of scientific, linguistic and spelling errors.	Public	4.30	.989	86	1	High
		Private	4.24	1.065	84.8	1	High
5	Contains new experiences for the students.	Public	3.74	.982	74.8	2	High
		Private	3.51	1.193	70.2	4	Medium
6	The content lacks repetitive information.	Public	1.43	.865	28.6	8	Low
		Private	1.54	.803	30.8	8	Low
7	The content encourages interaction inside the classroom.	Public	3.49	1.059	69.8	4	Medium
		Private	3.54	1.120	70.8	3	Medium
8	There is variation in presenting the class lesson.	Public	3.46	1.246	69.2	5	Medium
		Private	3.76	.955	75.2	2	Medium
Overall		Public	3.17	1.10	63.5		Medium
		Private	3.23	1.04	64.7		Medium

Table 4-14 presents the data on the perceptions of both the students and the teachers concerning the academic content of National Social Studies subject in Saudi Arabia. It is only one item that recorded a high impact on both types of schools, which stated that "The content is free of scientific, linguistic and spelling errors". This is indicative of high satisfaction with the content's clarity, spelling and error free nature. For the items stating "The textbook content is suitable for the students' mental level", "The content is suitable for all individual differences", "The content encourages interaction inside the classroom" and "There is variation in presenting the class lesson" had a medium impact in both public and private schools. The only item that recorded the lowest impact in both public and private schools is the one that stated that, "The contents lack of repetitive information". Given the average medium score of both public and private schools, 3.17 and 3.23 respectively, one concludes that students are satisfied with the academic content in National Social Studies udies in Saudi Arabia. However, curriculum developers need to look at the repetitive information in the content that was noted from students from both private and public schools. This can be approached through   continuous consultation among all the stakeholders to identify where the problem is and locate the repetitive content. In addition, given that it is the students who pointed out that there are repetitions in the curriculum, conducting survey among these students will help collect the necessary information needed to understand how best to eliminate these repetitions.

Table 4-15 Students' teaching methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently.	Public	3.52	1.312	70.4	4	Medium
		Private	4.51	.507	90.2	1	High
2	The teachers focus on the important points of the lesson.	Public	3.72	1.343	74.4	2	High
		Private	4.51	.507	90.2	2	High
3	The teachers take into account the individual differences between students.	Public	3.52	1.233	70.4	5	Medium
		Private	4.24	.723	84.8	5	High
4	The teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom	Public	3.97	1.303	79.4	1	High
		Private	4.38	.594	87.6	3	High
5	Teachers use multiple teaching methods	Public	3.18	1.372	63.6	7	Medium
		Private	4.16	.688	83.2	7	High
6	The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom.	Public	3.57	1.217	71.4	3	Medium
		Private	4.30	.777	86	4	High
7	The teachers use educational methods during the lesson.	Public	3.23	1.419	64.6	6	Medium
		Private	4.24	.597	84.8	6	High
	Overall	Public	3.53	1.31	70.6	Medium	
		Private	4.33	0.62	86.6	High	

The data in Table 4-15 shows the perceptions of students in both public and private schools concerning teachers and teaching methods. This data has been summarised using arithmetic

means, standard deviation, percentage, and scale of level of impact as explained in Table 4-1. The item stating "The teachers focus on the important points of the lesson" recorded a high impact on both students from public and private school implying that the students are highly satisfied with the fact that the teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom. The rest of the items, which state, "The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently", "The teachers take into account the individual differences between students", "Teachers use multiple teaching methods", "The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom" and "The teachers use educational methods during the lesson" had a medium and high satisfaction level in public and private schools respectively. Overall, this variable had a medium level of satisfaction in public schools and high a level of satisfaction in private ones. This led to the conclusion that the students in both private and public schools are satisfied with the teachers and methods. There are a number of items on the students' teaching methods that show variations between the experience in public schools and private ones. The four items in which private schools recorded a high impact and the public ones a medium one reveal this variation. Essentially, this component assesses the quality and effectiveness of the teaching methods. Evidently, there is a variation regarding the effectiveness and quality of teaching in the institutions, whose cause needs to be examined.

Table 4-16 Students' Evaluation methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The evaluation methods are clear and concise.	Public	4.08	.881	81.6	1	Medium
		Private	3.81	1.023	76.2	4	High
2	Exam questions relate to the course	Public	4.00	.876	80	2	High
		Private	3.68	1.355	73.6	5	High
3	The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient	Public	3.90	1.044	78	3	Medium
		Private	3.84	1.214	76.8	2	High
4	Evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe.	Public	3.56	1.191	71.2	6	High
		Private	3.84	1.041	76.8	3	High
5	The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps with answering the questions.	Public	3.72	1.127	74.4	5	Medium
		Private	3.68	1.203	73.6	6	High
6	Test questions range from easy to difficult	Public	3.77	1.039	75.4	4	Medium
		Private	3.86	1.182	77.2	1	High
	Overall	Public	3.83	1.02	76.7	Medium	
		Private	3.78	1.16	75.7	High	

In relation to Table 4-16, the researcher gave the students a series of statements in which they indicated the level to which they agreed or disagreed. The results were then analysed to generate an arithmetic means, standard deviation and then tell the satisfaction level based on the scales values explained earlier. Two out of the six items analysed, stated as "Exam questions relate to the course" and "Evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe" had high satisfaction level in both public and private schools. This satisfaction level indicates that the exam set in national social studies relates to the course and the evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe. The rest of the items stated as "The evaluation methods are clear and concise", "The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient", "The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps answering the questions" and "Test questions range from easy to difficult" had a medium and high impact respectively among students from public and private schools. In summary, there is a medium level of satisfaction in the public schools and a high level of satisfaction in the private schools. This leads to the conclusion that there is general satisfaction among the high school students concerning the evaluation methods used for national social studies.

4.4 Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by Students Year of study

In the tables that follow, the chapter presents an analysis of the findings in relation to the responses given by students in both schools concerning the key variables (school environment, activities and exercises, academic content, teaching methods and evaluation methods). The analysis in this section focuses on the variations of the responses according to one's year of study (First Year, Second Year and Third Year) in Saudi high school.

Table 4-17 Students' Environment, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by Students Year of study

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The classrooms are suitable for the number of students.	First	2.67	1.404	53.4	3	Medium
		Second	2.82	1.402	56.4	3	Medium
		Third	3.00	1.400	60.0	1	Medium
2	The number of students in the classroom helps with implementing and teaching modern techniques.	First	2.83	1.308	56.6	1	Medium
		Second	3.18	1.296	63.6	1	Medium
		Third	2.90	1.432	58.0	3	Medium
3	The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms.	First	2.50	1.532	50.0	5	Medium
		Second	2.50	1.439	50.0	5	Medium
		Third	2.81	1.509	56.2	5	Medium
4	The school environment helps with implementing and teaching modern techniques.	First	2.54	1.503	50.8	4	Medium
		Second	2.86	1.390	57.2	2	Medium
		Third	2.85	1.487	57.0	4	Medium
5		First	2.29	1.398	45.8	6	Low

	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum	Second	2.18	1.220	43.6	6	Low
		Third	2.65	1.494	53.0	6	Medium
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently.	First	2.75	1.482	55.0	2	Medium
		Second	2.77	1.307	55.4	4	Medium
		Third	3.00	1.372	60.0	2	Medium
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject.	First	2.25	1.511	45.0	7	Low
		Second	2.09	1.411	41.8	7	Low
		Third	2.12	1.231	42.4	7	Low
Overall		First	2.54	1.44	50.9	Medium	
		Second	2.62	1.35	52.5	Medium	
		Third	2.76	1.41	55.2	Medium	

In Table 4-17, the data compares the perceptions of the students concerning the school environment across the 10th, 11th and 12th grades in high school. The items stating that "The classrooms are suitable for the number of the students", "The number of students in the classroom helps with implementing teaching modern techniques", "The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms", "The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum" and "Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently" have medium impact satisfaction level across all the years in the Saudi high schools. As to whether the school environment help in implementing teaching modern techniques, 1st and 2nd Years recorded low satisfaction level and 3rd years, medium. One item under the school environment variable, "The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject" had low satisfaction levels across the high school years. There are no significant variations in the level to which high school students are satisfied with the school environment in relation to the teaching and learning of national social studies.

Table 4-18 Students' Activity, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by Students Year of Study

No.	Item	Year of Study	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other.	First	4.13	1.116	82.6	1	High
		Second	4	0.816	80	3	High
		Third	4.21	0.848	84.2	2	High
2	The activities taken in class are relevant to the lesson's objectives	First	3.67	1.049	73.4	6	Medium
		Second	3.64	0.902	72.8	6	Medium
		Third	4.13	0.95	82.6	3	High
3	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.	First	2.21	1.532	44.2	9	Low
		Second	2.86	1.246	57.2	9	Medium
		Third	2.33	1.368	46.6	9	Low
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.	First	3.92	0.717	78.4	4	High
		Second	3.77	0.813	75.4	5	High
		Third	3.9	0.913	78	5	High
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material	First	3.88	0.612	77.6	5	High
		Second	3.86	0.71	77.2	4	High
		Third	3.73	0.972	74.6	6	High
6	The activities equipped the student with problem solving skills.	First	4.08	0.83	81.6	2	High
		Second	4.09	0.684	81.8	2	High
		Third	4.37	0.658	87.4	1	High

7	The activities are written in a clear and accessible language.	First	4.04	0.464	80.8	3	High
		Second	4.14	0.351	82.8	1	High
		Third	4.08	0.763	81.6	4	High
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing their mental skills.	First	3.17	1.523	63.4	7	Medium
		Second	3.14	1.246	62.8	7	Medium
		Third	3.27	1.27	65.4	7	Medium
9	The activities are related to the student environment.	First	2.88	1.262	57.6	8	Medium
		Second	3.14	1.167	62.8	8	Medium
		Third	3.23	1.277	64.6	9	Medium
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate	First	2.08	1.018	41.6	10	Low
		Second	2.05	1.09	41	10	Low
		Third	1.71	0.936	34.2	10	Low
Overall		First	3.40	0.971	68.1		Medium
		Second	3.46	0.90	69.2		Medium
		Third	3.49	0.99	69.8		Medium

In relation to exercise and activities for teaching and learning national social studies, there is an overall medium impact in all the grades in high school. The average arithmetic means for 1st year is 3.40, 3.46 for 2nd Year and 3.49 for 3rd Year. As shown in Table 4-18, there is high satisfaction level   in all the years for the items stated as "The activities help students cooperate with each other", "The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.", "The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material", "The activities equipped the student with problem solving skills" and "The activities are written

in a clear and accessible language". Those with medium score for all the three years are stated as "The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities" and "The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing their mental skills". However, in all the years, it was noted that there is Low satisfaction in relation to the statement, "The time allotted for the activities is appropriate". In conclusion, one can see that the time allocated for the activities for all grades most is not appropriate. It needs to be evaluated and an appropriate time frame given.

Table 4-19 Students' Academic contents, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by Students Year of study

No.	Item	Year of Study	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The textbook content is suitable for the students' mental capacity	First	2.92	1.349	58.4	7	Medium
		Second	3.05	1.430	61	6	Medium
		Third	2.56	1.227	51.2	6	Medium
2	The content is suitable for all individual differences.	First	3.17	1.090	63.4	6	Medium
		Second	2.95	.785	59	7	Medium
		Third	2.40	1.302	48	7	Medium
3	The new content helps the student to learn new strategies.	First	4.13	.680	82.6	2	High
		Second	3.45	.912	69	4	Medium
		Third	3.50	1.180	70	4	Medium
4	The content is free of scientific, linguistic and spelling errors.	First	4.42	.929	88.4	1	High
		Second	4.23	.922	84.6	1	High
		Third	4.23	1.096	84.6	1	High
5		First	3.83	.917	76.6	3	High

#	Statement	Year	Mean	SD	%	Rank	Level
	Contains new experiences for the students.	Second	3.41	1.054	68.2	5	Medium
		Third	3.67	1.133	73.4	2	Medium
6	The content lacks repetitive information.	First	1.79	1.179	35.8	8	Low
		Second	1.64	.953	32.8	8	Low
		Third	1.25	.480	25	8	Low
7	The content encourages interaction inside the classroom.	First	3.67	.963	73.4	4	Medium
		Second	3.68	.780	73.6	2	High
		Third	3.37	1.221	67.4	5	Medium
8	There is variation in presenting the class lesson.	First	3.63	1.173	72.6	5	Medium
		Second	3.55	.963	71	3	Medium
		Third	3.56	1.227	71.2	4	Medium
Overall		First	3.44	1.035	68.9		Medium
		Second	3.24	0.974	64.9		Medium
		Third	3.06	1.108	61.35		Medium

In Table 4-19, the data relates to the comparison of the various items under the variable "textbook content". In regard to the items that stated, "The content is free of scientific, linguistic and spelling errors" there is a high satisfaction level across all the years, meaning that the students in all the grades agree that the textbook content is free of technical errors. Only once did it occur that low satisfaction levels across all grades in Saudi high schools were evident, this was with regarding to this statement: "The content lacks repetitive information". The average arithmetic means for all the 8 items compared falls within the Medium level of satisfaction at 3.44 for First Year, 3.24 for Second Year and 3.06 for Third Year. If one compares the scores within the Medium levels of satisfaction, it is evident that the level of satisfaction with the textbook content falls from Year 1 to Year 3. The First

Years appear to the most satisfied with the textbook content while the Third Years the least. The item with least satisfaction across all the years, among the 8 items, is "The content lacks repetitive information".

Table 4-20 Students' Teaching Methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by Students Year of study

No.	Item	Year of Study	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently.	First	4.04	0.908	80.8	1	High
		Second	3.55	1.143	71	5	Medium
		Third	3.98	1.291	79.6	3	High
2	The teachers focus on the important points of the lesson.	First	3.71	1.301	74.2	5	High
		Second	4.14	1.037	82.8	1	High
		Third	4.12	1.149	82.4	2	High
3	The teachers take into account the individual differences between students.	First	3.75	1.189	75	4	High
		Second	4.00	0.976	80	3	High
		Third	3.73	1.157	74.6	5	High
4	The teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom	First	4.04	1.083	80.8	2	High
		Second	4.09	1.019	81.8	2	High
		Third	4.17	1.167	83.4	1	High
5	Teachers use multiple teaching methods	First	3.42	1.139	68.4	7	Medium
		Second	3.55	1.262	71	6	Medium
		Third	3.62	1.316	72.4	7	Medium
6	The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom.	First	3.92	1.018	78.4	3	High
		Second	3.5	1.058	70	7	Medium
		Third	3.96	1.188	79.2	4	High
7		First	3.58	1.283	71.6	6	Medium

The teachers use educational methods during the lesson.	Second	3.59	1.26	71.8	4	Medium
	Third	3.63	1.299	72.6	6	Medium
Overall	First	3.78	1.131571	75.6		High
	Second	3.77	1.107	75.4		High
	Third	3.88	1.223	77.7		High

As shown in Table 4-20, there are major significant differences across the years in relation to their perceptions about the teachers and the teaching methods. In the six items stated as "The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently", "The teachers focus on the important points of the lesson", "The teachers take into account the individual differences between students", "The teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom", "Teachers use multiple teaching methods" and "The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom" have a High satisfaction level in first, second and third years. High satisfaction levels with the teachers and their teaching methods are recorded among the 3rd years students with an arithmetic means of 3.88, followed by 1st Years, which have a means of 3.88 and finally, Second Year students with a means of 3.77. The conclusion drawn from this set of data is that students in all the grades are satisfied with the teachers and the teaching methods for national social studies in KSA.

Table 4-21 Students' Evaluation methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by Students Year of study

No.	Item	Year of Study	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The evaluation methods are clear and concise.	First	3.96	0.999	79.2	3	High
		Second	4.18	0.733	83.6	1	High
		Third	3.90	0.995	78	1	High
2	Exam questions relate to the course	First	4.00	0.933	80	2	High
		Second	3.91	0.921	78.2	3	High
		Third	3.81	1.221	76.2	4	High
3	The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient	First	4.17	0.917	83.4	1	High
		Second	3.64	1.136	72.8	5	Medium
		Third	3.85	1.161	77	2	High
4	Evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe.	First	3.46	1.285	69.2	6	Medium
		Second	3.68	1.171	73.6	4	High
		Third	3.75	1.064	75	5	High
5	The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps with answering the questions.	First	3.92	1.1	78.4	4	High
		Second	3.45	0.739	69	6	Medium
		Third	3.71	1.304	74.2	6	High
6	Test questions range from easy to difficult	First	3.63	1.173	72.6	5	Medium
		Second	3.95	0.785	79	2	High
		Third	3.83	1.167	76.6	3	High
Overall		First	3.85	1.067	77.1	High	
		Second	3.80	0.914	76.0	High	
		Third	3.80	1.152	76.1	High	

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Table 4-21 presents the results of the perceptions of the students concerning the evaluation methods used for social studies. The results in the table also compared the views provided across all grades in the Saudi high schools. The items stated as "The evaluation methods are clear and concise", "Exam questions relate to the course", "The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient" have High satisfaction levels in all grades. This indicates that the students in all grades are highly satisfied with the clarity and conciseness of the evaluation methods, relevance of the questions asked, and the time given for the exams. The item under the evaluation variable that stated that, "Evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe" had medium impact among the First Years, High in both the Second and 3rd Years. On the other hand, the data shows that the First Years and 3rd Years are highly satisfied with the statement regarding the comfort of the exam environment while the 2nd Years are moderately satisfied. Similar results were reported about the statement, "The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps with answering the questions", a High impact level among the 1st level students, Medium among the 2nd Years and the High among the 3rd Years. In overall, this variable recorded high satisfaction. This means that the evaluation methods used are effective for teaching and learning of national social studies in high school.

Table 4-22 Teachers' school environment, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type:

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The classrooms are suitable for the number of the students.	Public	3.07	1.286	61.4	1	Medium
		Private	4.2	0.447	84	2	High
2	The school provides the appropriate learning methods.	Public	2.53	1.445	50.6	6	Medium
		Private	3.6	1.14	72	7	Medium
3	The school environment helps with implementing teaching modern techniques.	Public	2.62	1.523	52.4	3	Medium
		Private	4.4	0.548	88	1	High
4	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum	Public	2.59	1.433	51.8	4	Medium
		Private	4	0	80	6	High
5	The class is suitable for dividing student into groups.	Public	2.58	1.434	51.6	5	Medium
		Private	4.2	0.447	84	3	High
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently.	Public	2.68	1.463	53.6	5	Medium
		Private	4.2	0.447	84	4	High
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references.	Public	2.23	1.37	44.6	7	Low
		Private	4.2	0.447	84	5	High
Overall		Public	2.61	1.422	52.2	Medium	
		Private	3.92	0.612	78.5	High	

In regard to the items presented in Table 4-22, the researcher looked at the items under the variable of school environment, which had significant variation between the two types of schools. As noted in the table, there is a low satisfaction level with the item stating that "The library has the appropriate sources and references" in the public schools but high in the private schools. The conclusion that one draws from this variation is that the private school libraries are well-stocked with the most appropriate resources and references for teaching and learning national social studies in Saudi. The overall satisfaction value for the school environment in the public school is medium but high in the private schools with an average arithmetic means of 2.61 and 3.92 respectively.

Table 4-23 Teachers' activities and exercises, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type:

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other.	Public	3.77	1.08	75.4	1	High
		Private	3.6	1.14	72	7	Medium
2	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.	Public	2.24	1.322	44.8	10	Low
		Private	3	1	60	10	Medium
3	There are clear instructions for activities.	Public	2.76	1.225	55.2	9	Medium
		Private	3	1	60	9	Medium
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.	Public	3.26	1.061	65.2	6	High
		Private	3.8	0.837	76	6	High
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material.	Public	3.62	1.069	72.4	4	Medium
		Private	4.4	0.548	88	1	High
6		Public	3.53	1.101	70.6	5	Medium

	The activities equipped the student with problem solving skills.	Private	3.6	1.517	72	7	Medium
7	The activities are written in a clear and accessible language.	Public	3.69	1.019	73.8	2	High
		Private	4	0.707	80	3	High
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing their mental skills.	Public	3.64	1.028	72.8	3	Medium
		Private	4.2	0.447	84	2	High
9	The activities are related to student environment.	Public	2.93	1.275	58.6	7	Medium
		Private	3.8	0.837	76	4	High
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate.	Public	2.86	1.275	57.2	8	Medium
		Private	3.8	1.304	76	5	High
Overall		Public	3.23	1.145	64.6	Medium	
		Private	3.67	.0.95	73.5	Medium	

As shown in Table 4-23, the perceptions of the teachers about the activities and exercises do not have a significant variation between the public and private schools. A remarkable variation was noted in the item that stated that "The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities" where the responses by the public-school teachers fall in the Low impact level and those from the private schools fall in the Medium impact level. The conclusion from this item is that there is a lack of required materials to carry out the activities in public schools. Private schools are not heavily impacted by this challenge. The arithmetic means for this variable is 3.23 for public schools and 3.67 for private schools. Just like in other variables, the satisfaction level among teachers in the public school is lower than that of teachers from private schools.

Table 4-24 Teachers' academic contents, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type:

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The book theme is in proportion with the number of hours allocated in school curriculum.	Public	1.91	1.075	75.4	9	Low
		Private	2.80	1.095	72	9	Medium
2	The textbook content is suitable for students' mental capacity.	Public	3.26	1.147	44.8	4	Medium
		Private	4.20	.837	60	1	High
3	The content is suitable for individual differences.	Public	3.11	1.130	55.2	6	Medium
		Private	4.00	.707	60	2	High
4	The new content helps student to learn new strategies and learning methods.	Public	3.47	1.050	65.2	2	Medium
		Private	3.80	1.095	76	3	High
5	Contains new experiences for the students.	Public	3.51	1.024	72.4	1	Medium
		Private	3.60	1.140	88	6	Medium
6	The content is exciting and interesting.	Public	3.01	1.079	70.6	7	Medium
		Private	3.60	.894	72	7	Medium
7	The content lacks repetitive information.	Public	2.30	1.311	73.8	8	Low
		Private	3.40	1.673	80	8	Medium
8	The content encourage interaction inside the classroom.	Public	3.22	.983	72.8	5	Medium
		Private	3.80	.837	84	4	High
9	The content helps variation in presenting.	Public	3.34	1.011	58.6	3	Medium
		Private	3.80	.837	76	5	High
Overall		Public	3.01	1.09	54.26		Medium
		Private	3.60	1.02	64.9		Medium

Table 4-24 shows the diverse items analysed in relation to the textbooks and content. Both the public and private schools use the same textbook. The two items stating "The book theme is in proportion with the number of hours allocated in school curriculum" and "The contents lack of repetitive information" have a Low satisfaction level among the public school teachers and Medium Satisfaction among the private schools. This could means that problem of repetition of information and book theme is more notable in the public schools than in the private ones. Several other items registered Medium and High levels in the public and private schools respectively. These include: "The textbook content is suitable for students' mental capacity", "The content is suitable for individual differences" and "The new content helps student to learn new strategies and learning methods". The statements, "contains new experiences for the students" and "contains new experiences for the students" had the same level of satisfaction among the teachers in both public and private. The overall means falls within the Medium level. This shows there is moderate levels of satisfaction from teachers from both private and public schools with the textbooks and their content.

Table 4-25 Teachers' evaluation methods, Means, Standard Deviation, Percentage and Scale Level by School type

No.	Item	School Type	Means	Std. Deviation	Percentage	Rank	Level
1	The exam questions cover the curriculum.	Public	4.20	.876	84	4	High
		Private	4.00	1.000	80	6	High
2	The time is adequate and appropriate to answer the exam questions.	Public	4.36	.713	87.2	1	High
		Private	4.20	1.095	84	4	High
3	The students receive the assessment result in a timely manner.	Public	4.14	.881	82.8	5	High
		Private	4.20	1.095	84	4	High
4	The exam environment is quite and comfortable, and helps the student answer the questions.	Public	4.23	.853	84.6	3	High
		Private	4.40	.894	88	2	High
5	The exam questions range from easy to difficult.	Public	4.35	.801	87	2	High
		Private	4.60	.548	92	1	High
6	The teacher has the choice to select the methods of students' assessment.	Public	3.96	1.116	79.2	6	High
		Private	4.40	.894	88	3	High
Overall		Public	4.2	0.87	84.1	High	
		Private	4.3	0.921	86.0	High	

Finally, Table 4-25 shows the perceptions of the teachers concerning the evaluation methods used. In all the items assessed, there is high satisfaction level, which is indicative of the fact that teachers in both types of schools are satisfied with the evaluation methods used. Again, when analysed further higher satisfaction is among the private school teachers. The conclusion drawn is that the teachers believe that the evaluation methods are effective in assessing the learning of national social studies in Saudi Arabia.

4.5 Conclusion

In overall, this chapter explores the perceptions of both the teachers and the students concerning the NSS. An assessment was done of the impact level of the variables under consideration (school environment, activities and exercises, academic content, teaching methods and evaluation methods) on teaching and learning national social studies overall high school level from the point view of students and teachers. As demonstrated in the descriptive analysis done in this chapter, the students do not think that the school environment is favourable for learning. This implies that the numbers in the classrooms, the teaching methods used, the school environment, and the equipment in the classroom such as the projector are not suitable, and that the library sources and references do not adequately cover the methods for learning National Social Studies. However, there was high levels of satisfaction among the private school students with the school environment and low satisfaction among the public schools' students. There was also moderate satisfaction by teachers from both private and public schools with the textbooks and their content. In both types of schools, there was satisfaction with the content in the textbooks, as well as the exercises and activities for teaching and learning National Social Studies in Saudi Arabian high schools. A conclusion was also drawn that the teachers believe that the evaluation methods are effective in assessing the learning of national social studies in Saudi Arabia.   In light of the conclusions drawn, there is a need to relook at the time allocated for the activities, the environment in the public schools, the resources used for teaching and learning of NSS as well as teacher training and development are in line with the demands of the new curriculum. It needs to be evaluated and an appropriate period given. This chapter offer just a descriptive analysis of the primary data collected from questionnaires. In the next chapter, the author presents a thematic analysis of the qualitative data collected.

Chapter 5. Qualitative Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This section presents an analysis of the qualitative data collected. A sample of both female teachers and students took part in the interviews. The number of interviewed students were 20 students from public schools and 10 from private schools. All of them are aged between 14 and 19. 15 teachers were interviewed, 10 from government schools and the other 5 from private schools. For both female teachers and students, semi-structured interviews were used (refer to Appendix B and C). The questions were open-ended and semi-structured to allow the respondents greater flexibility to give as much responses as needed to answer the research questions. The interviews were conducted in person, recorded, and then transcribed for analysis. Specifically, thematic analysis was used. During analysis, the researcher read and re-read the data with the intention to identify the main themes that emerge from the transcripts (Braun and Clarke, 2006). A number of themes were generated from the data and they included the following:

- Level Appropriate Competency
- Level appropriate Difficulty
- Unavailability of Resources
- Teacher Competency
- Quality Teaching Resource
- Curriculum Integration
- Teaching Methodologies
- Formative Assessments

The presentation of the results in this chapter is done under the aforementioned themes. For the purposes of confidentiality and anonymity, the interviewees have been given unique codes that will be used in this discussion. Teachers in public schools assumed the code TGOV (teacher in government school) followed by a numerical digit assigned is in based on the order of the interview. E.g., TGOV4 is a teacher in a public school who was the fourth to be interviewed among other teachers in public schools. Private school teachers were

assigned the prefix TPS (teacher private school) followed by a numerical digit. Following this log, students in public schools shall be assigned prefix SGOV, those in private schools shall use SPS.

5.2 Demographics

Table 1 summarises the key demographics for the (female) teachers who took part in the study. As demonstrated, the majority (10) of them were from government schools, while the other 5 are from private schools. In terms of experience, the researcher calculated the means in column three and established an average means of 10.7 years. This shows that the majority of them have a substantive amount of experience in the teaching of national social studies in the Saudi high schools. Besides, the majority have taught across all levels of high school. For example, TGOVO01 is the first public school teacher to be interviewed. TGOV stands for government teacher and the number tells the order in which they were interviewed. The code TPS has been assigned to private school teachers as shown in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1 Teachers, Types of Schools, Years of Experience and Grade

Teacher	Type of School	Years of Experience	Grade Taken
TGOV01	Government school	11	All secondary levels
TGOV02	Government school	14	All secondary levels
TGOV03	Government school	15	All secondary levels
TGOV04	Government school	10	Grade 11 and 12
TGOV05	Government school	7	All secondary levels
TGOV06	Government school	11	All secondary levels
TGOV07	Government school	17	All secondary levels
TGOV08	Government school	16	Grade 11 and 12
TGOV09	Government school	17	All secondary levels
TGOV10	Government school	15	All secondary levels
TPS011	Private School	7	All secondary levels
TPS012	Private School	6	All secondary levels
TPS013	Private School	5	All secondary levels
TPS014	Private School	4	All secondary levels
TPS015	Private School	5	All secondary levels
Total Government schools = 10 Total Private Schools = 5		Means = 10.7	Total all sec. levels= 12 Grade 11 and 12 only= 2

The number of interviewed students were 20 students from public schools and 10 from private schools, aged between 14 and 19. In the 10th grade, national and social studies become one integrated subject of history and geography and is taught in one semester. In the 11th grade, history is taught in one semester, and in the 12th grade geography is taught in one semester (this applies to both public and private schools). Additionally, the subject is taught 5 times per week at all grade levels.

For grade 11and 12 of high school, students study the subject according to the school plan. For example, if the school has planned in the first semester, the student must study history,

in the following year student study geography in the first semester, and vice versa, depending on the school plan.

5.3 Analysis

The findings of the study are arranged according to the aforementioned thematic areas.

5.3.1 Level Appropriate Competency

According to the findings of the study, as with regard to the competency level among students, feedback received differed within the different groups interviewed. To determine the level of competency, performance in NSS was used as the indicator. This performance was based on the performance of the students through the various evaluation methods used in the different institutions. Although the researcher was not given the actual results, the opinion of the teachers, who have experience in teaching, was relied upon. Based on the findings collected from public schools, the respondents who teach in these institutions separate the age groups, the study established that 10th grade category were considered very well while the 11th and 12th grade categories were not performing satisfactorily. TGOV6 indicated that:

> *"The level of female students varies from a grade to another. In 10th grade is above average level, while in 11th and 12th grades decrease due to complexity and repetition of information."*

Their counterparts in private schools indicated that the performance of their students was appropriate (positive) with the introduction of the new curriculum and they considered the curriculum level appropriate for each grade. TPS11responded that:

> *"My student performance level is very good in all years of secondary school. Based on my assessment, the students are doing well."*

Students in public institutions on the other hand indicated that their performance in NSS was average thus a positive feedback. The students in private schools indicated their performance was good which also positive feedback. The following table presents a summary of the

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feedback generated from each category of respondents as with regard to the competency level.

Table 5-2 Level of competency summary

Respondent Category	Average assessment of performance	Code (positive/negative)
Public school teachers	Grade 10- above average Grades 11 and 12 -below average	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
Private school teachers	Above Average	POSITIVE
Public school students	Average	POSITIVE
Private school students	Above average	POSITIVE

Based on the findings in this section, private schools seem to be relatively more comfortable and knowledgeable with the new curriculum as compared to their counterparts in public schools.

5.3.2 Difficulty Level Appropriacy

The researcher sought to determine the respondent's assessment on the difficulty level of the content of the curriculum. The feedback again varied across the different groups of respondents. Public school teachers in general gave very negative feedback, they indicated that the curriculum is difficult in that it is too complex for the stipulated grades, also, it has a lot of repeated information. According to TGOV15,

"It is a difficult curriculum and above students' capabilities, with a lot of repeated information."

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TGOV09 who was another respondent in agreement with the sentiments on the general difficulty of the syllabus indicated that:

> "*The curriculum needs to be modified with re-formulations of new topics that have not been previously studied by students. I would also like to request from the ministry to curate suitable content for this integration, with courses manifested to prepare teachers and help them to link lessons and deliver information to students in fun and exciting methods.*"

Respondent TGOV7 stated that:

> "*Topics in the textbook do not match the number of hours allocated in the curriculum.*
>
> *It is also not suitable for students' understanding and is not sensitive to individual differences.*"

Private schools on the other hand provided mixed feedback on their assessment of the content of the new curriculum. Unlike the other groups, this group was almost split in the middle as with regard to the level of difficulty of the content. According to the respondents who found the curriculum appropriate, those interviewed indicated that the content is appropriate and comprehensive enough for the respective grade levels. TPS 3 stated:

> "*I find it very good because unlike the previous curriculum it covers a wide range of topics.*"

However, those in this group who provided negative feedback decried the short time allocated for class sessions and repetitions in the curriculum especially for grades 11 and 12. TPS11 indicated that:

> "*Widespread information compared to the allocated time is not suitable for the content, this affects the understanding of the student and the experience of the test time…*"

Students were also interviewed to establish their assessment on the level of difficulty of the curriculum. According to the findings, public school students gave very negative feedback on the level of ease of the curriculum. SGOV 9 indicated that:

> *"I face challenges in my studies because I find the subject very difficult subject, has too much repetitive information. I think history is easy but I find geography difficult, I don't understand why they are placed together."*

Students in private school on the other hand, also provided negative feedback on the content of the curriculum. According to SPS13,

> *"One of the problems and challenges that I face in social and national studies, history, and geography subject is that the lessons are too long and I cannot summarise the information, especially during the time of studying, which leads to boredom so I don't like the subject. It is quite lengthy, difficult and dry."*

Table 5-3 Summary of the Assessment of level of difficulty

Respondent Category	Assessment of the level of difficulty	Code (positive/negative)
Public school teachers	Difficult, too complex, repetitive, not considerate of differences among students and time allocated is too short.	Negative
Private school teachers	Appropriate and comprehensive	Mixed
Public school students	Difficult and repetitive	Negative
Private school students	Difficult, lengthy, and complex	Negative

Table 5-3 summarises the findings of the study as with regard to the level of difficulty. Of all the respondents, only a small section the teachers in private schools seem to find the curriculum slightly appropriate and provide a few recommendations in ways of improving it as opposed to more drastic reforms recommended by others. The rest of the respondents did not endorse the content of the curriculum.

5.3.3 Resources

The study sought to establish whether the respondents felt they had been furnished with adequate resources to fulfil the requirements stipulated by the curriculum. The term 'resources' has been used in this study to cover physical space and teaching materials. According to the public-school teachers interviewed, the classroom in relation to student population was not adequate. The general observation was that the public-school system is ill prepared for the new curriculum, and the student teacher ratio is too high, thus limiting the amount of time allocated for direct interaction with each student as is required in the curriculum. The facilities provided in public school systems also do not allow some certain activities that are instrumental in the teaching of the new curriculum. The books recommended for use in the new curriculum are also in short supply in public schools. According to TGOV2,

> "*Classrooms are small and inappropriate with the number of students. The school environment is not prepared for the new curriculum, as there is no equipment, neither references nor resources provided in the library to serve the curriculum.*"

The teachers also indicated that the tools required for class activities are not accessible to their students, some needed to be purchased which is challenging given the economic background of some of the students. TGOV6 stated that:

"Materials and tools are not available to carry out these activities in our school. We usually rely on own personal resources to aid in teaching. I carry my own laptop sometimes to share videos I have downloaded and saved that are relevant to the topic being taught."

The teachers in public schools also lamented over the limited time allocated for class activities. According TGOV8,

"Time is not appropriate and it gets difficult with repetition of information again and again. Topics in the textbook do not match the number of hours allocated in the curriculum."

The teaching staff in private institutions were also asked to provide feedback on the quantity of resource available to them to be used in the NSS curriculum. According to the respondents, the private sector was better equipped with the required facilities to teach the new curriculum. At time of the roll out of the curriculum private schools invested in purchasing the recommended material that were recommended by the ministry. TPS2 stated that,

"Classes are very convenient for teachers and students in terms of space and the appropriate number, all the resources are available in the classroom that serve the teacher and the student. The management has been very supportive, when we ask for resources, they often purchase them for us"

TPS5 added that:

"The school environment prepared for the new curriculum. Required books were added to the library. We also increased the number of computers in the library to enable students to access materials online."

As with regard to the time allocated for class activities, the respondents like their counter parts in public schools lamented that the time allocated for classes is generally not adequate to meet the objectives of each class session. TPS1 stated that:

"Time is a big constraint; the allocated time is not enough to solve these activities. Especially if we have to do reinforcement of previous topics, and then teach the new topic. It is more challenging when one has to conduct activities for the new topic."

The students when asked to provide insight on their assessment on the resources available to them, those in public schools seemed to be disadvantaged. According to these students, they have to make do with congested classes, they also cannot access materials sometimes needed for study sessions and books as libraries are also limited. Hence, they must share what ever little is available to them most times. SGOV 18 stated that:

> *"Our school was not ready for the new curriculum. There are no laptops or Wi-Fi connection in the classroom, and if any, it is usually provided by the teacher herself; personal efforts."*

As far as the resources on the library go, SGOV 19 added that:

> *"There are no appropriate sources and references for the subject in the library. Our library is not updated, the older books are the ones that are mostly available. We have very few computers in the library most of which are used by the teachers only"*

As with regard to the time allocated for class sessions, the students in public schools also indicated that it is not always enough for them to complete a topic under the guidance of their teachers. Part of the work is then given to them as homework which they find difficult to complete because lack of access to resources such as computers to enable them conduct proper research. SGOV 3 stated that,

> *"Time allocated to activities is not adequate. Some of the activities take long because we share the resources. We don't have a computer at home so I cannot watch videos when the teacher asks us to do so. I don't have older siblings who can guide me at home and my parents are busy when I get home."*

Students in private schools indicated that the facilities provided to them at their respective schools were adequate, their libraries were also well furnished with books and electronic resources to help them understand various topics. Additionally, the students indicated that they have access to laptops that they can use at home to carry out research. When asked to

bring items for class in school, most indicated that their parents almost always provided them with these materials. SPS 13 stated that:

> "*There are appropriate sources and references for the subject at the library. We can research in our computer lab as very good videos that help me understand things that I sometimes fail to understand in class. At home I can use my father's laptop to also study.*"

Like all other respondents interviewed, these students also indicated that the time allocated for class activities was not adequate to cover some topics.

Table 5-4 Summary of resource availability

Respondent Category	Resource type	Code (positive/negative)
Public school teachers	Time allocated	Negative
	Library resources and books	Negative
	Classroom size	Negative
	Access to study material	Negative
	Access to electronic material	Negative
Private school teachers	Time allocated	Negative
	Library resources and books	Positive
	Classroom size	Positive
	Access to study material	Positive
	Access to electronic material	Positive
Public school students	Time allocated	Negative
	Library resources and books	Negative
	Classroom size	Negative
	Access to study material	Negative
	Access to electronic material	Negative
Private school students	Time allocated	Negative
	Library resources and books	Positive
	Classroom size	Positive
	Access to study material	Positive
	Access to electronic material	Positive

According to the summary of the findings shown in table 5-4, all respondents find the time allocated for class activities inadequate. As with regard to the other resources, in private schools both teachers and students have access to the rest of the resources required. In contrast, the public schools seem ill prepared for the curriculum, the classes are too small or too populated, they cannot access tools necessary for class activities which means teachers

use their own money most of the time to purchase the equipment and finally a large majority cannot access electronic material.

5.3.4 Teacher Competency

This aspect was studied to establish whether teachers are well informed on the curriculum and can successfully teach it. This was done to determine whether adequate training was conducted before the curriculum was rolled out to ensure teachers had the necessary knowledge to teach this content. To determine competency, the study required teachers and students to assess the quality of output given in class contexts in terms of ensuring topics are made clear and well elaborated using the necessary recommended tools. The respective groups were interviewed separately. The findings as with regard to teacher competency in public schools, indicated that teachers have received some training to enable them to enhance student understanding. However, according to them this training was too broad and hasty, which has made them rely on personal experience and understanding as opposed to the recommended guidance provided by the curriculum. TGOV 1 states that:

> *"Teachers mainly rely on their experience. Professional development courses need to be organised in order to be more efficient, teaching and learning environment."*

Interviewed teachers in private schools indicated that they received training but have been able to build on the knowledge acquired at that time through training resources available through electronic sources. TPS15 stated that,

> *"Our school management organised for more intense training before the curriculum was rolled out, we have consultative meeting periodically within the department to discuss issues relating to teaching methods, tools and overall experience that allows us to constantly improve out methods and techniques. "*

Student groups in private and public facilities indicated that they were satisfied with the way their teachers taught NSS. Both groups agreed that their teachers were positive, knowledgeable, and very helpful. SPS 13 indicated that:

"Teachers are helpful and put in extra effort. We can ask them about any topic and they are ready to help."

According to the students in public schools much of their positive experience with the curriculum is because of the dedication their teachers have towards ensuring they have productive class sessions. The teachers make personal sacrifices such as using their laptops, using their own internet connection, purchasing learning materials and creating time outside class hours to ensure they learn as much as possible. SGOV 20 stated that,

"My teacher has been very helpful. When we have questions, they answer us all the time. My teacher always comes with the materials for conducting experiments and makes sure that all of us have chance to see the actual experiment. This teacher also comes with videos that help us understand topics being taught."

5.3.5 Quality Teaching Resource

This section sought to determine the assessment of teachers and students as with regard to the quality of the resources recommended for teaching, their accessibility and effectiveness. The study looked at the content of the curriculum, the availability of the tools recommended and the suitability of the tools to meeting the objectives of each topic.

As with regard to the content, the study established that a majority of the teachers interviewed, both in private and public schools indicated that the content was repetitive especially for grades 11 and 12. TGOV 10 stated that,

"Content of this curriculum is not suitable for students understanding, and is not sensitive to individual differences."

When asked about the quality of the content of the material the study found that the respondents found the grammar of the material satisfactory, however the most mentioned error was the repetition of content. Also, the information provided in the recommended material was considered factually accurate by the respondents interviewed. According to TPS 4,

"Yes, the content is free of spelling and scientific errors, but not free from repetitive information."

The teachers also indicated that the activities recommended can be very difficult to perform within the recommended class duration. Some of them are especially difficult to conduct in large class contexts. Some of the instructions provided for the activities were also considered a bit vague. Private schools had a relatively better outlook of these activities because they have access to materials that can be used in class contexts. Public schools have a challenge in transmitting audio -visual content because of the accessibility issues, however they agreed that the resources provided are generally helpful. According TGOV8:

"The government should provide more resources to the public schools to be directed towards the purchase of facilities and equipment that are required in the teaching process. We should not be made to rely on our own money. Time allocated for activities is also not enough."

When asked whether the activities enhanced student understanding, public school teachers had a negative feedback. According to TGOV4,

"... no added value to students, even though it receives good response and active participation by students. Students are more intimidated with the length of their course... they are not very excited about activities."

TPS 2 adds that:

'*Some activities are related to the material and most activities are not related to the student environment. We have to create a classroom environment to do subject related activities."*

According to the findings of the study, all the student respondents also indicated that the content of the study is free of grammatical errors. Their issue however what that it was too lengthy. According to SPS13,

> "*Some lessons are incomplete and unclear; I cannot understand them. I hated national and social studies, which makes me bored during the class. Due to that I have gotten low results in the national and social studies.*"

The respondents also decried that the content of the study, stating that it was repetitive especially for the higher grades, so they were forced to repeat so many things they had learnt in grade 10. According to SGOV 15,

> "*One of the problems I face in the subject is that the information is repeated and extensive. I feel distracted while studying but I also think it is helpful towards growing my skills.*"

SPS1 added that,

> "*One of the challenges that I faced in social and national studies, history, and geography subject is that the lessons are too long and I find it challenging to summarise the information, especially during the time of studying, which leads to boredom and I don't like this subject.*"

According to the students, some of the activities enhance their understanding of given topics, but the time allocated is too short so teachers sometimes rush through these activities. Also, the students indicated that some of the activities need to be simplified. Some of them were considered too complex thus the students could not make a connection between the activity and the concept being taught. Some activities the students were required to carry out on their own did not have clear instructions that could be understood without the guidance of their teachers. Consequently, the students are mostly reliant on their teachers to provide guidance on activities that are meanst to be conducted independently. According to SPS2,

> "*My teachers simplify activities by utilising modern teaching strategies, using the path of dialogue in the class and iPads with some of the difficult lessons. This help helped understand a lot during class*"

Table 5-5 Summary of the quality of teaching resources

Respondent Category	Teaching Resource	Code (positive/negative)
Public school teachers	Content quality	Negative
	Activities quality	Negative
	Availability of resources for activities	Negative
	Level of involvement	Positive
Private school teachers	Content quality	Negative
	Activities quality	Negative
	Availability of resources for activities	Positive
	Level of involvement	Positive
Public school students	Content quality	Negative
	Activities quality	Negative
	Availability of resources for activities	Negative
	Level of involvement	Positive
Private school students	Content quality	Negative
	Activities quality	Negative
	Availability of resources for activities	Positive
	Level of involvement	Positive

The summary in table 5-5 on teaching resources indicates that the content and activities of the curriculum are considered inadequate by all groups interviewed. The reasons given include the repetitiveness of the content, unclear instructions to guide activities and lack of clarity between activities and the concept being taught. All parties also indicated that the time allocated for class was not guided by the nature and complexity of each topic as should be the case.

5.3.6 Curriculum Integration

In this new curriculum history and geography have been combined, prior to this, the subjects were taught separately. According to the respondents, a majority of the teachers felt that the merging of history and geography posed a challenged because of how wide the curriculum became after these subjects were merged. Teachers in both private and public institutions indicated that prior to the integration of the curriculum teachers had specialised in either area, therefore having a deeper understanding of either subject. With this new curriculum they have to teach both. The respondents agreed that the recent integration of the subject created a gap between the teacher and the curriculum. TGOV6 said:

> *"Resetting back to teaching the two has been a challenge for many teachers who had specialised. The process of merging these two subjects created this obstacle, which made it very difficult on me as a teacher of history to teach geography, and vice versa. That been said, it will has affect my performance as a teacher because I am not an expert both areas for 10th grade, but I still have to teach.".*

TPS2 stated that:

> *"The integration of History and Geography in one book was done in a very random way that has compromised the quality of the materials provided to us. The structure and flow of the material needs to be reconsidered and modified. If at all they have to be integrated, it has to be organised in a more comprehensive manner."*

According to TPS1, who also agrees with the sentiments of the other respondents,

> *"My point of view in the integration of history and geography under one curriculum is unstructured and random. This needs to be reviewed, especially the content.".*

Only two of the teachers responded that the integration of History and Geography curriculum is useful but added that the advantages of integration will only be realised if done correctly with better content and selection of more appropriate activities.

The outlook of the students as far as the curriculum integration is concerned is positive, the respondents generally supported the integration of History and Geography. According to the respondents, it helped reduce the number of subjects they had to learn. Some were supportive not because the content to be studied was reduced, but because the learning process was refined to make it more interactive and engaging thus creating a better environment that allows them to learn faster. According to SPS14,

"Integrating history and geography in 10th grade is better because this makes me study one subject with one exam and one teacher. I agree with this integration because it makes me focus on one subject only instead of two different subjects in one semester."

SGOV20 who was more excited by the new teaching methods indicated that:

"I like it much more now that it is combined as one subject. Me and a lot of the other students find it to be more interesting and fun now. Overall, the tenth-grade students seem to be enjoying a lot more now,"

5.3.7 Teaching Methodologies

This section sought to establish whether the new curriculum provided opportunities for teachers to adopt an appropriate methodology to ensure students understand content easier and more accurately. Also, the study aimed to determine whether the curriculum allows teachers to devise their own methodology in the teaching process. According to the findings of the study, all the teachers have a positive outlook on the teaching methodology that can be used in the teaching process. TPS1 agreed that:

"Yes, curriculum content helps in guiding me to come up with interesting and interactive methods of teaching students. There is a degree of freedom for teachers in the selection of methods for teaching the students."

The respondents also observed that with these curriculum students were engaged more through class activities. The respondents observed that unlike the previous system, the current one encouraged activity and participation of students.

According to the students, the teaching methodologies promoted divergent views and experiences among the students. Students were found to be more interactive because of the excitement brought on by class activities. Students in both private and public schools agreed that the new curriculum encouraged them to be more active in class. Students also indicated that because of the activities, they were able to relate content learnt in class to more practical events and elements they observe in their daily environments. Students were generally impressed and encouraged by the attitude of their teachers during class sessions. Additionally, the students observed that their teachers were considerate of their differences and approached them differently while teaching to ensure they had a good chance at understanding what was being taught. According to SPS12,

> *"Teaching methods vary from one teacher to another. Our teacher is also considerate of the individual differences between the students during the class*."

5.3.8 Formative Assessments

According to the findings of this study, teachers deployed different assessment methods to evaluate whether students have understood concepts or not. These methods include class tests, homework, and monthly assessments. The teachers indicated that they were supportive of the provision that allowed them to set their own assessment parameters. According to the teachers, content should be assessed differently and determined by the nature of what is being assessed. Some require practical assessment, while others require research finally there are those that require sit in tests. According to TPS3,

> *"Students benefit from the results of their evaluation in raising their grades. Evaluation provides feedback to me as a teacher to understand whether or not my students have understood a concept. From the test results, I know what to pay more attention to and which of my students need more guidance in certain areas."*

The students in both private and public schools were supportive of the assessment methods used by their teachers. According to the students, their teachers set clear guidelines on what is being examined so it is easy to know what is required of them. The students also added that mixing the methods ensures they are constantly studying and refreshing their knowledge on what they have learnt. Additionally, the students indicated that the time allocated to the various methods of evaluation was appropriate enough for them to complete the task provided. For them, evaluation helped them to examine how much they know and what they need to work on. According to SPS 11,

> *"My evaluation results help me in improving my educational attainment level, I think assignment feedback helps me identify my weaker areas. Also, evaluation methods used by my teacher are appropriate, easy and clear."*

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the study pointed to some concerning disparities in the reception and application of the curriculum in private and public schools. The study established that teachers in public schools were not satisfied with the performance of their students, especially those in the 11th grade. The curriculum was also considered too complex and had numerous repetitions. The study also established that teachers and learners in public schools had very limited access to the resources required for effective learning and teaching. Class capacity was too large, activities sometimes unaffordable, libraries poorly resourced and the time allocated for class learning was also considered too short. Public school leaners and teachers also maintained that the language and content included in course texts was too complex and not appropriate for the ages in question. Private learners and teachers on the other hand performed better and have access to the right resources for learning and teaching. The private education sector in this study also considered the language and content appropriate though it was mentioned that there was a lot of repetition. My opinion is that the curriculum has to be revised to take into consideration, the various weaknesses identified. One of the major weaknesses is repetitions and the perception by the students that it is complex. Similarly, investing in new technology is recommended, along with the additional

teacher training. This can be attained through increased investments in education by the KSA government.

Chapter 6: Inferential Analysis

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the inferential analysis of the data. However, before presenting the results of the inferential analysis, the chapter will outline some other analyses such as reliability analysis, normality analysis and linearity analysis. The actual inferential analysis is done later and was undergone using regression which was also connected to the testing of some hypotheses linked to the research questions. It is important to note that because there were many variables, some types of analysis only select one variable from each group to stand for the others. A correlation table with 37 columns cannot fit in a page therefore five columns, for example, should be used in a table. The following groups of variables or questions are there: school environment, activities and exercises, academic content, teaching methods, and evaluation methods. The variable groups were having the following codes as they follow each other: *env, act, acd, tec and eve*. The summary below (Table 6-1) shows which variable was selected to represent the group, but only a few analyses used these summaries; most of the analysis was using all the variables.

Table 6-1 Variables to represent each group in analyses that produce large tables

Sample	Variable Group	Abbreviation	Selected Variable	Variable Label
Students	School environment	Env	Q6Env05	Sch Env Good_New Cur
	Activities and exercises	Act	Q11Act03	Materials And Tools Available
	Academic content	Acd	Q25Acd07	Content Promotes Student Interaction
	Teaching methods	Tec	Q33Tec07	Teachers Use Edu Aids In Classroom
	Evaluation methods	Eve	Q38Eve05	Testing Environments Quiet
Teachers	School environment	Env	Q5Env04	Sch Env Good_Teaching
	Activities and exercises	Act	Q10Act02	Materials And Tools Available
	Academic content	Acd	Q27Acd09	Content Promotes Student Interaction
	Evaluation methods	Eve	Q32Eve05	Testing Environments Quiet

6.2 Preliminary Analysis

6.2.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is the measure of internal consistency, meaning the how closely related a set of items are in the given group (George and Mallery, 2016).

The first thing to do was to tell whether the questionnaires were reliable or not as this is very important. It was found out that indeed the questionnaires were very highly reliable. As shown in the reliability statistics test (Table 6-2, 6-3), Cronbach's Alpha (George and Mallery, 2016) was more than 0.7 for both the students' and teachers' questionnaires.

Table 6-2 Reliability test for students' questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.89	41

Table 6-3 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.890	41

Table 6-4 Reliability test for teachers' questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.909	37

6.2.2 Normality Analysis

One of the main assumptions for the test to be reliable that is that it has be closely normally distributed. Usually, normal distributions peak in the middle and is almost symmetrical about the means. In this analysis, normal data is taken as that which comes from a population that has a normal distribution (George and Mallery, 2016).

It was important to test whether the variables were following a normal distribution. This is because regression needs data that is normally distributed. All the results of the normal distribution are shown at the appendix, but this section only shows normal distribution results for one variable for each group (and for both teacher and student). As stated in the introduction of the chapter in Table 6-1 In addition, the normal distribution curve for the dependent variable is also shown with Figure 6.1, 6.2). As Table 6-1 shows, the selected variables were normally distributed ($p = 0.000$ which is less than 0.05) according to the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test (Kolmogorov, 1933 and Smirnov, 1948) as performed in SPSS.
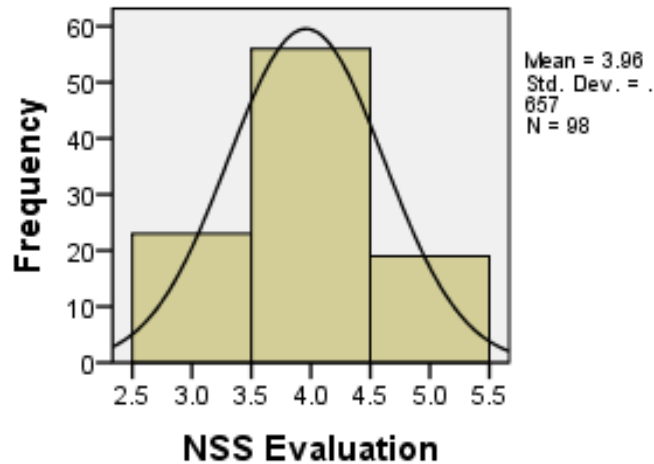
Figure 6.1 Normal distribution curve on how students see the level of NSS
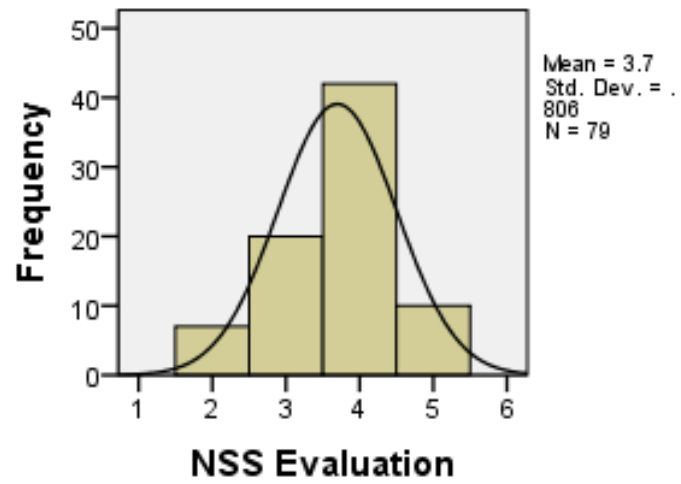
Figure 6.2 Normal distribution curve on how teachers see the level of NSS

Table 6-5 Normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Sch Env Good_New Cur	*Materials And Tools Available*	*Content Promotes Student Interaction*	*Teachers Use Edu Aids In Classroom*	*Testing Environments Quiet*	*NSS Evaluation*
Students	N	98	98	98	98	98	98
	Test Statistic	.290	.254	.318	.344	.336	.290
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		Sch Env Good_Teaching	*Materials And Tools Available*	*Content Promotes Student Interaction*		*Testing Environments Quiet*	*NSS Evaluation*
Teachers	N	79	79	79		79	79
	Test Statistic	.199	.246	.280	N/A	.283	.305
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000

Figures 6.2 and 6.3 combined with the analysis in Table 6-5 show that all the variables in both questionnaires were normally distributed.

6.2.3 Correlational, Validity & Linearity Analysis

Before regression analysis is done, it is important to ensure that the independent variables have a linear relationship with the dependent variable. This can be done by doing Pearson correlation (George and Mallery, 2016) analysis (Table 6-6, 6-7). After establishing that the independent variables have a linear relationship with the dependent variable, the questions can be said to be valid ($p<0.05$).

Table 6-6 Correlations for the students' data

		NSS Evaluation	Sch Env Good_New Cur	Content Promotes Student	Teachers Use Edu Aids In Classroom	Testing Environments Quiet
NSS Evaluation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.201*	-.029	.104	.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.047	.018	.007	.013
	N	98	98	98	98	98
Sch Env Good_New Cur	Pearson Correlation		1	-.034	.300**	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.743	.003	.886
	N		98	98	98	98
Content Promotes Student Interaction	Pearson Correlation			1	.048	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.639	.026
	N			98	98	98
Teachers Use Edu Aids In Classroom	Pearson Correlation				1	.146
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.051
	N				98	98
Testing Environments Quiet	Pearson Correlation					1
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					98

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

For the student's questionnaire, it was found out that the five important variables were having a linear relationship with the dependent variable. NSS evaluation is the dependent variable while the other five were independent variables. The relationships were linear, but some had weak linear relationships. As for the teachers' data, one variable (testing environment is quiet) of the four was not linearly related to the dependent variable. Others had p value significant (<0.05)

Table 6-7 Correlations for the teachers' data

		NSS Evaluation	Sch Env Good_Teaching	Materials And Tools Available	Content Promotes Student Interaction	Testing Environments Quiet
NSS Evaluation	Pearson Correlation	1	.130	.182	.425**	.198
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.253	.009	.000	.040
	N	79	79	79	79	79
Sch Env Good_Teaching	Pearson Correlation		1	.799**	.271*	.134
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.016	.238
	N		79	79	79	79
Materials And Tools Available	Pearson Correlation			1	.347**	.168
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.002	.038
	N			79	79	79
Content Promotes Student Interaction	Pearson Correlation				1	.233*
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.039
	N				79	79
Testing Environments Quiet	Pearson Correlation					1
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					79

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Therefore, apart from one variable, the others had a linear relationship. Hence, the analyses as carried out were valid.

5.2.4. Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis is a simple form of quantitative data analysis. It entails analysing two variables (often referred to as X, Y) to determine the empirical relationship between them. In the students' data, the relationship between types of school and selected variables were looked into. In the teachers' data, the relationship between school type and key variables was also assessed in consideration with the years of experience. To begin with, the relationship between type of school and some four variables is shown here, but a longer list is shown in Appendix C. In Tables 6.8, it is shown that class sizes in public schools are not small enough compared to the number of students per class. More private schools reported that the number of students per class were acceptable. Furthermore, private schools embraced modern teaching methods more than the public schools. In addition, the library in a private school has more relevant materials than a library in a public school.

Table 6-8 Differences of challenges by type of school from students' data

		School Type	
		Private	Public
Adequate Class Size	Disagree	1.0%	40.8%
	Agree	16.3%	5.1%
	Strongly Agree	17.3%	1.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1.0%	13.3%
	Neutral	2.0%	2.0%
Student Numbers Ok	Disagree	3.1%	36.7%
	Agree	17.3%	5.1%
	Strongly Agree	16.3%	2.0%
	Strongly Disagree	0.0%	12.2%
	Neutral	1.0%	6.1%
Modern Teaching	Disagree	3.1%	31.6%
	Agree	16.3%	1.0%
	Strongly Agree	16.3%	2.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1.0%	25.5%
	Neutral	1.0%	2.0%
Library Relevant Refs Sources	Disagree	6.1%	16.3%
	Agree	11.2%	3.1%
	Strongly Agree	7.1%	0.0%
	Strongly Disagree	3.1%	42.9%
	Neutral	10.2%	0.0%

From what we can ascertain from Table 6-9, private schools generally had more efficient devices for learning and had more materials and tools available for students to use- but used less educational aid materials. This may be because the private schools had better technology so that there was no need to use additional aid. Perhaps the only positive thing about public

schools is that their teachers were more qualified than those in private schools. Next, the challenges were analysed by school type based on data of teachers

Table 6-9 Differences of challenges by type of school from teachers' data

		School Type	
		Private	Public
Adequate Class Size	Agree	5.1%	25.3%
	Disagree	0.0%	21.5%
	Neutral	0.0%	20.3%
	Strongly Agree	1.3%	13.9%
	Strongly Disagree	0.0%	12.7%
Classroom Setup Allows Split Grps	Agree	5.1%	21.5%
	Disagree	0.0%	17.7%
	Neutral	0.0%	12.7%
	Strongly Agree	1.3%	10.1%
	Strongly Disagree	0.0%	31.6%
Efficient Devices	Agree	5.1%	22.8%
	Disagree	0.0%	22.8%
	Neutral	0.0%	7.6%
	Strongly Agree	1.3%	12.7%
	Strongly Disagree	0.0%	27.8%
Library Relevant Refs Sources	Agree	5.1%	13.9%
	Disagree	0.0%	17.7%
	Neutral	0.0%	12.7%
	Strongly Agree	1.3%	7.6%
	Strongly Disagree	0.0%	41.8%

Unlike what the students reported, teachers did not think that class size was a big challenge. On the issue of more relevant library materials, the teachers agreed with the students. Most teachers in public schools also reported that having efficient devices was a challenge, but having a classroom set up that allowed the splitting up of groups was not a challenge. They (the teachers) have ways of dealing with the issue so that it does not become a challenge.

One of the most important comparisons to show was the relationship between NSS evaluation and school type which is done below.

"Cross-tabs"

Table 6-10 NSS Evaluation * School Type Cross tabulation % of the Total

		School Type		
		Private	Public	Total
NSS Evaluation	Excellent	6.1%	13.3%	19.4%
	Good	15.3%	8.2%	23.5%
	Very good	16.3%	40.8%	57.1%
Total		37.8%	62.2%	100.0%

As table 6-10 shows, most of those whose evaluation of NSS was excellent (19.4 per cent of the total sample) were in public schools. This is from the students' data. In addition, those who said that NSS was very good (57.1 per cent) were also from public schools. The lowest evaluation (good) had a majority from private schools (15.3 per cent). This analysis checked whether this was by chance or it was statistically significant. It was found out that the results were statistically significant not only from bivariate analysis (Chi-square = 9.699, df = 2, p<0.05) but also from inferential analysis. The reason why public schools rated NSS evaluation more could be because the public schools had more qualified teachers as shown

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in the next section of inferential analysis. The other reason could be because parents who take their children to private schools are already satisfied with life such that a 'small change' like curriculum change does not make an impact on them.

Table 6-11 TEACHERS' DATA: NSS Evaluation * School Type Cross-tabulation % of Total

| | | School Type | | |
		Public	Private	Total
NSS Evaluation	Fair	8.9%		8.9%
	Good	22.8%	2.5%	25.3%
	Very good	51.9%	1.3%	53.2%
	Excellent	10.1%	2.5%	12.7%
Total		93.7%	6.3%	100.0%

As the results from teachers' data shows (Table 6-11), just like from students, most of those who perceived the NSS curriculum as excellent were from public schools (10.1 per cent versus 2.5 per cent). Likewise, most of those who evaluated NSS as very good were also from public schools (51.9 per cent versus 1.3 percent). The same applied to those who said NSS curriculum was good (22.8 per cent versus 2.5 per cent).

The analysis did not establish any existent statistical relationship between teachers' qualification and type of school. Nevertheless, it was established that no single teacher in private schools had a master's degree (Figure 6.3).
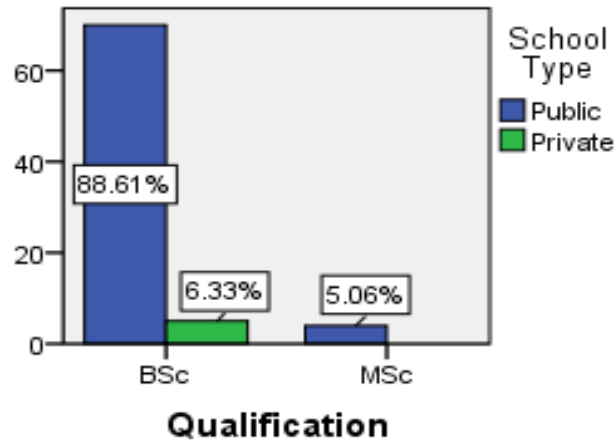
Figure 6.3 Relationship between type of school and qualification of teachers

Furthermore, although most experienced teachers taught in public schools, the relationship between school type and teacher experience was not statistically significant (Figure 6.4).
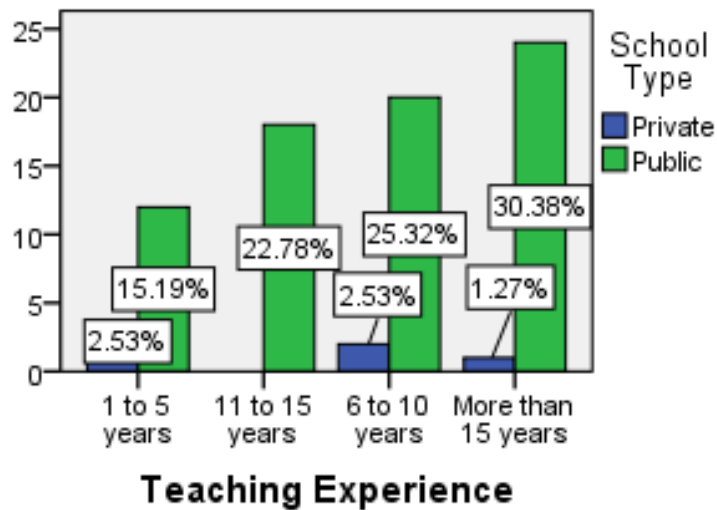
Figure 6.4 School type versus years of experience

It was further established that the most satisfied or positive students were those in third year. This was from the students' data. From the teachers' data, it was established that most of those with excellent evaluation had more than 15 years of teaching experience, owned a bachelor's degree and were teaching first year students. Just like students, most teachers in public schools reported that there was no or limited modern learning in public schools. In addition, most teachers from public schools reported that there were not enough materials

and tools to assist teaching. However, the results were not conclusive as to whether the environment for examination testing was quiet or not and whether the evaluation results were given within time. With the teachers, other than the type of school, years of experience were also assessed in terms of how efficiently they tackled challenges.

Table 6-12 How years of experience interacted with the challenges

| | | Teaching Experience | | | |
		1 to 5 years	11 to 15 years	6 to 10 years	More than 15 years
Modern Teaching	Strongly Disagree	2.50%	5.10%	11.40%	11.40%
	Disagree	2.50%	5.10%	5.10%	12.70%
	Neutral	1.30%	6.30%	5.10%	1.30%
	Agree	6.30%	3.80%	2.50%	2.50%
	Strongly Agree	5.10%	2.50%	3.80%	3.80%
Classroom Setup Allows Split Grps	Strongly Disagree	5.10%	5.10%	12.70%	8.90%
	Disagree	1.30%	6.30%	2.50%	7.60%
	Neutral	2.50%	5.10%	2.50%	2.50%
	Agree	6.30%	3.80%	7.60%	8.90%
	Strongly Agree	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	3.80%
The content helps variation in presenting	Strongly Disagree	0.00%	1.30%	1.30%	1.30%
	Disagree	1.30%	5.10%	2.50%	10.10%
	Neutral	6.30%	6.30%	8.90%	11.40%
	Agree	8.90%	7.60%	12.70%	7.60%
	Strongly Agree	1.30%	2.50%	2.50%	1.30%
Evaluation Results Given Within Time	Disagree	0.00%	2.50%	1.30%	1.30%
	Neutral	2.50%	1.30%	3.80%	3.80%
	Agree	10.10%	11.40%	7.60%	8.90%
	Strongly Agree	5.10%	7.60%	15.20%	17.70%

In the above results, there was no strong association; hence it was concluded that type of school was more important than years of teaching.

6.3 Inferential Analysis

6.3.1 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a form of analysis used to estimate the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. The variables that did not have a linear relationship with the dependent variable were left out of regression analysis. Only those that were significant and had a linear relationship were included in the regression model.

Table 6-13 Regression coefficients for students data

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.249	.410		10.358	.000
	School Type	-.565	.264	-.419	-2.143	.035
	Year	.014	.079	.018	.177	.860
	Sch Env Good_New Cur	-.025	.088	-.053	-.281	.029
	Materials And Tools Available	.092	.067	.194	1.373	.003
	Content Promotes Student Interaction	-.027	.061	-.045	-.445	.658
	Teachers Use Edu Aids In Classroom	.118	.056	.230	2.105	.038
	Testing Environments Quiet	-.010	.058	-.017	-.172	.014

a. Dependent Variable: NSS Evaluation

The students' regression analysis showed that there were problems with the school environment, tools and materials for learning, the use of learning aids in the classroom, and the evaluation of learners. For all these four challenges, the significance (p values) were less than 0.05 (Table 6-13). However, there was no problem with the interaction of students in

the classroom because this was done by the teachers themselves but not the external factors. Another regression analysis was also done with the data that was collected from the teachers so as to compare them. The overall model was significant in telling whether the factors were real challenges for the NSS (p=0.026) (Table 6-14). The significance of each one of the independent variables is shown in the table of coefficients below.

Table 6-14 Regression coefficients for teachers data

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients | | |
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.309	.876		.495	.039
What Year Are You Teaching	.071	.106	.073	.671	.504
School Type	.202	.375	.061	.537	.023
Teaching Experience	-.008	.083	-.011	-.098	.022
Qualification	.432	.394	.118	1.097	.276
Sch Env Good_Teaching	-.020	.098	-.038	-.206	.037
Materials And Tools Available	.026	.116	.042	.221	.026
Content Promotes Student Interaction	.315	.094	.391	3.338	.091
Testing Environments quiet	.128	.116	.125	1.105	.003

a. Dependent Variable: NSS Evaluation

In the case of the teachers, it was found out that the leading challenges were the type of school, the number of years of experience, the school environment, tools and materials and the evaluation in terms of testing environment. As shown under bivariate analysis, public schools had the most challenges. In addition, the less experienced teachers were facing most of the challenges. In the same way, as students reported, the environment of the school, the classes, and the administration, also struggled with giving students the best instructions. Contrastingly, there were enough materials and tools. The testing environment was also

sufficient since the teachers tried their best to maintain silence in the environment of the school. This agrees with the earlier findings from students and teachers in public schools which indicate that the testing environments were adequate.

The regression analysis also followed up on what the bivariate analysis had established, that NSS evaluation was significantly related to school type. The first step was done on the students' data. It was established that indeed, school type was an important (significant determinant) of how respondents evaluated NSS or perceived it (t=22.607, p<0.05). The second test was done on teachers' data. However, it was discovered that the results were not statistically significant.

6.3.2 Hypothesis Testing

In this section, a range of hypothesis tested in the SPSS analysis are presented.

The hypotheses of the study were taken from the research questions. They were as follows:

H1: Teachers and students of National Social Studies at Saudi high schools are faced with many challenges from the perspective of both the course educators and learners.

H2: Students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which the given challenges

impact the teaching and learning of National Social Studies at the Saudi high schools are negative.

H3: Teachers' ownership of the curricular impact on the effectiveness of delivery of the National Social Studies Curriculum.

Hypothesis 1: Teachers and students of National Social Studies at Saudi high schools are faced with many challenges from the perspective of both the course educators and learners.

Many challenges arise from teaching and learning of NSS, but this section only presents the main challenges. Firstly, it was found out that being in a public school presented more challenges than being in a private school, whether learning or teaching. Secondly, although

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the challenges were largely similar between students and teachers, there were slight differences. From the five key challenges that were tested from the students' data, the following were identified to be statistically significant: the school environment was not conducive in supporting the new curriculum, there were no sufficient materials and tools for learning and teachers did not use any sufficient aids to make learning easier. However, the testing environment was quiet in most cases. In most of the cases, $p<0.05$ (see Table 6.14) those who rated the NSS curriculum as very good are from public schools. Regarding teachers, the following were the main challenges: most teachers were not sufficiently experienced, the environment did not support teaching, there were no adequate materials and tools for teaching, some content did not promote the interaction of students, and the testing environment was quiet ($p<0.05$) as shown in Table 6.15.

H2: Students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which the given challenges

impact the teaching and learning of Social Studies at the Saudi high schools are negative

The null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that students and teachers had a positive attitude towards the learning and teaching of NSS curriculum. In both cases, the results were statistically significant meaning that $p<0.05$).
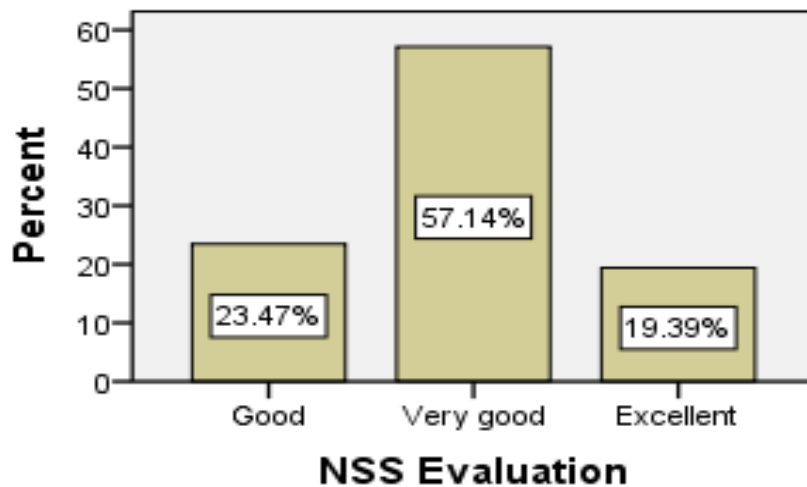
Figure 6.5 Students' perceptions

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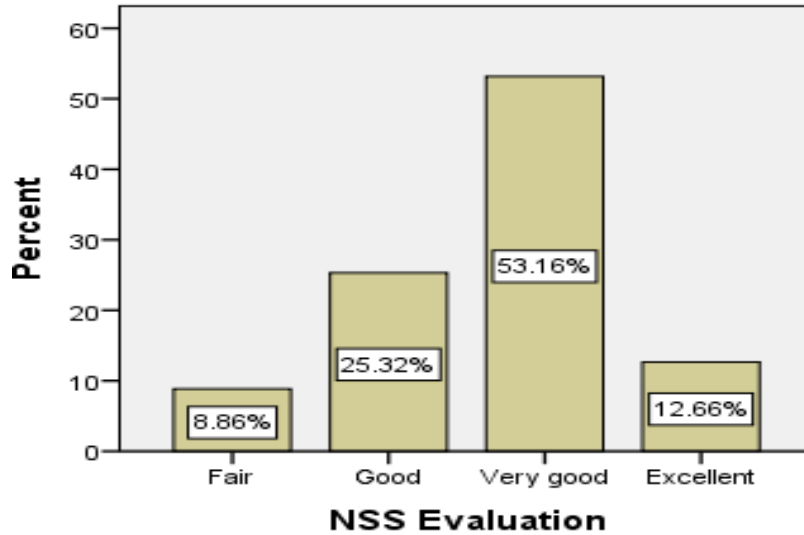
Figure 6.6 Teachers' perceptions

H3: Teachers' ownership of the curricular impact on the effectiveness of delivery of the National Social Studies Curriculum

Teachers' ownership was measured by the time they took before they returned the results for exams or evaluations. It is assumed that returning these on time means that one put in a lot of time therefore taking ownership of the process. Most of the teachers (45.6 percent, N = 79) strongly agreed that they gave back evaluation results in good time while 38.0 percent merely agreed. Therefore, the total agreement is 83.6 percent. This could have been because of the fact that teachers were answering a question about themselves so they may tend to answer in favour of the positive. This was compared with the results of the students on the same question. Although most students also agreed that evaluation results were given within time, this total agreement 65.3 percent, was lower than that of the teachers.

Evaluation Results Given Within Time

Legend: Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

5.06%
11.39%
45.57%
37.97%
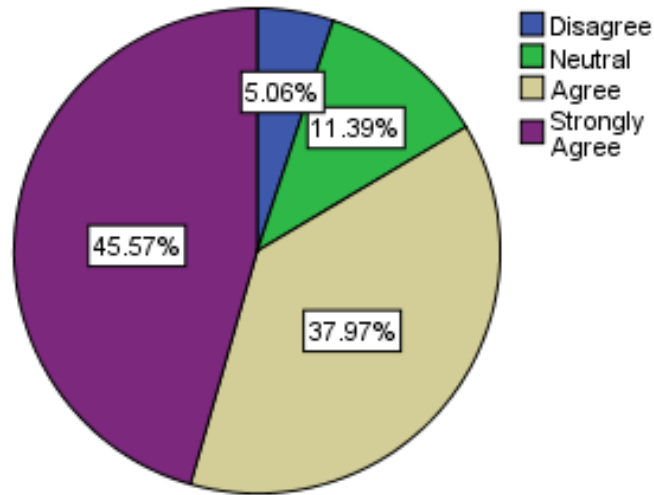
Figure 6.7 Teachers' ownership of the curriculum as reported by the teachers themselves

The above results were found to be statistically significant as shown in the table below (t = 18.288, $p<0.05$). As the coefficient of teachers' ownership shows, whenever teachers' ownership (reduced time to giving back evaluation results) increased by a single unit, the perceptions of students increased by 0.107 or 10.7 percent.

Evaluation Results Given Within Time

Legend: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

9.18%
7.14%
18.37%
10.20%
55.10%
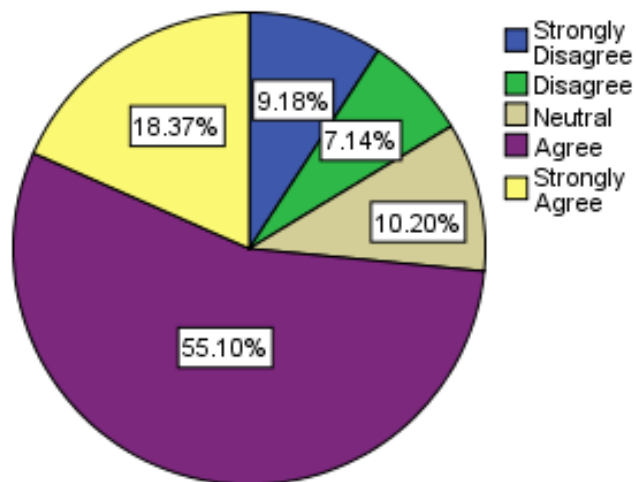
Figure 6.8 Teachers' ownership of the curriculum as reported by the students

Table 6-15 Statistics for testing teachers' ownership from students' data

Coefficients[a]

		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.115	.225		18.288	.000
	Evaluation Results Given Within Time	0.107	.059	.074	.724	.010

a. Dependent Variable: NSS Evaluation

As for the teachers, increased ownership also led to an even better perception of the NSS curriculum. There was 19.1 percent increase in perceptions whenever teachers brought back evaluation results a day earlier and these were also significant (t=1.804, p<0.05).

Table 6-16 Statistics for testing teachers' ownership from teachers' data

Coefficients[a]

		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.887	.458		6.309	.000
	Evaluation Results Given Within Time	.191	.106	.201	1.804	.047

a. Dependent Variable: NSS Evaluation

The next step of the analysis focused on whether ownership varied by type of school or not. The initial results as shown by the charts below, whether student or teacher, seemed to indicate that there was more ownership in public schools than in private schools. However, these results were not statistically significant. Since the results did not indicate that there was more ownership in private schools, it can be concluded that the school type did not determine how much teachers took ownership of the curriculum for NSS.

Figure 6.9 Relationship between teachers' ownership and type of school from students' data

Figure 6.10 Relationship between teachers' ownership and type of school from teachers' data

6.4 Discussion of Findings

To analyse the performance of the curriculum in general, the study focused on the assessment of the implementation environments of the curriculum in High Schools. The components identified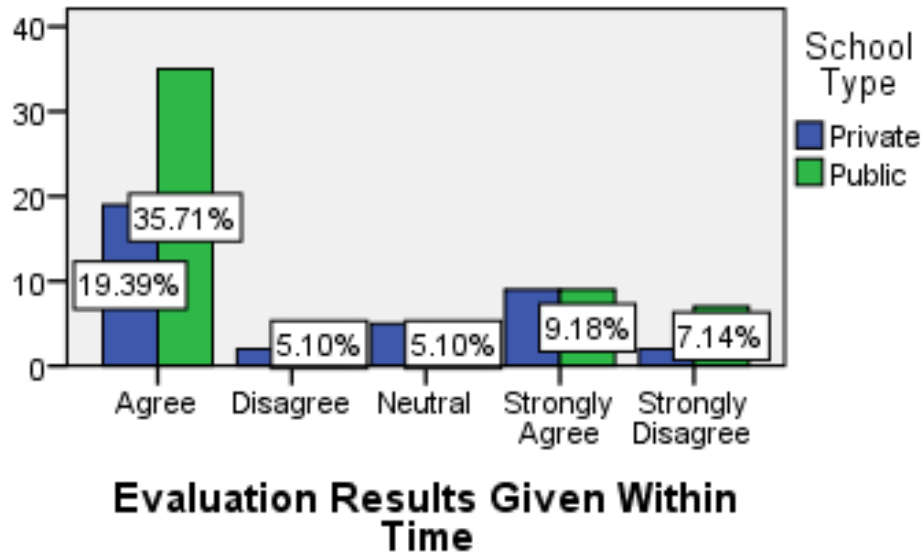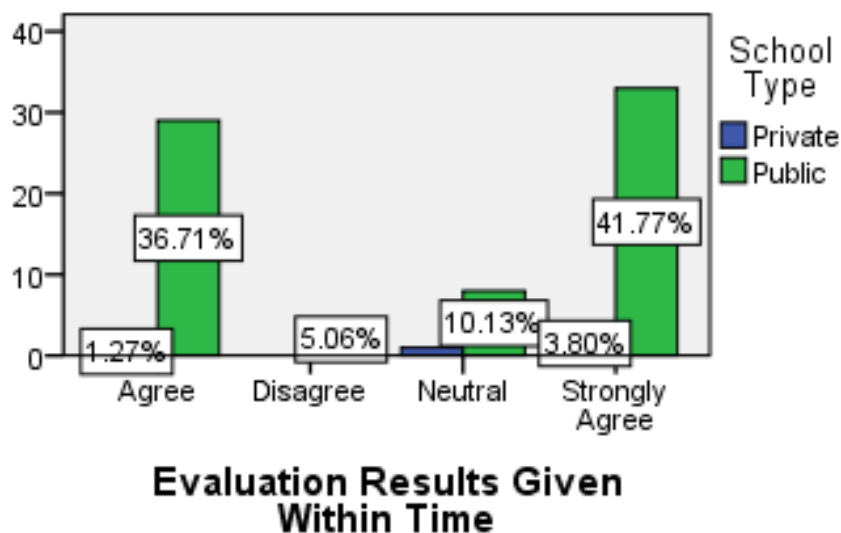 by the researcher that was key in determining the performance of the National Studies curriculum included both internal and external aspects of the curriculum. The internal components studied focused on the content of the curriculum itself and the teaching materials. The external components focused on the teaching environment and the peripheral issues that influence the execution or uptake of the curriculum. The findings of this study indicate that there is a difference between the uptake of the National Studies curriculum in private and public school. Although both types of institutions are exposed to the same academic content, the biggest change is exhibited in the execution. The variances in the data collected through qualitative and quantitative methods hint that private schools seem to be faring better than their counterparts in public schools. This is from both the teachers and the student perspectives. The findings of the study indicate that the implementation environment as well as the curriculum content and the approach adopted for implementation influence the performance of that curriculum.

6.4.1 Environmental Factors that Affect Curriculum Implementation

The first thematic area that were explored in the study is the environmental aspects that affect both the learning and teaching processes. In this regard, the study sought to determine how the suitability of the classroom environment affects the implementation of the National Social Studies curriculum. The findings of the study indicate that in private schools, the classroom environment was considered more suitable for learning and teaching. This was attributed to the physical space allocated for learning as well as the capacity acceptable for each class. The classroom capacity in private schools limits the number of students accepted in each class thus impacting the quality of the attention each student can be accorded during class interactions. Findings indicate that students appreciate and respond to personal attention and interaction with their teachers in class and during class activities conducted outside classrooms. Finn (2003) concluded that the students became occupied in the small class size, both academically and socially. Therefore, their strong engagement caused

academic achievement improvement. The respondents, teachers and students, in private schools, had a medium to high-level satisfaction with the class environment. High school education is open and free to everyone in Saudi Arabia, the number of learners enrolled in high schools has gradually increased in recent years as more Saudis encourage their children to pursue formal education. As the number of students increases, so has the strain on public facilities. Thus, the resources originally availed in several public institutions have more students than the intended and recommended number. This finding supports the work of Alyami (2014) who highlights that the quality of education in Saudi Arabia in public schools has been affected by the increase in enrolment numbers witnessed in recent years. According to Howell (2014), despite billions of dollars being invested, the quality of teachers remains problematic in the education system in Saudi Arabia. The disparity in Saudi Arabia between the public and private sectors appears to be particularly pronounced.

The findings of this study point out the disparities in the private and public sectors of high school education in Saudi Arabia. According to the findings of the study, there is a very low satisfaction level among the students when it comes to their endorsement of the classroom environment. The study brought to light that the classrooms in the public institutions have a very large number of students which creates challenges in both learning and teaching. For the learners, the large capacity impacted the quality and quantity of attention they received from their teachers while in class and even outside the classroom. For the teachers, the biggest issue raised was the inability to identify the challenges each specific learner has and allocating appropriate time and attention to the respective learner to ensure they understand concepts accordingly. Although this is an issue that is widespread in the teaching profession, a large class capacity coupled with limited resources which restrict opportunities for direct contact between teachers and learners has made the situation in public schools particularly challenging. According to Basu et al., (2016) teachers need to establish a good understanding of the learning processes and the challenges students face in order to design relevant adaptive content that can help the students overcome their difficulties. Additionally, this study indicates that a large number of students in public schools also affects group work due to the large numbers allocated in every group. It is more difficult to coordinate and monitor individual participation and contribution in larger group settings. The teaching methods

proposed for the curriculum recommend for more intensive, direct, and personalised approaches to both teaching and learning that are difficult to achieve with the large class capacities witnessed in public institutions.

6.3.2 Assessment of the Time allocated Coverage of the Curriculum

The academic calendar in Saudi Arabia is divided into two semesters and each semester has eighteen weeks. The curriculum offers guidance on the content that needs to be covered in each semester. Teachers are expected to design lesson plans that allow them to cover the recommended content within the stipulated period. According to this study, learners and teachers lamented the time allocated for classroom teaching and the activities that were not based on the specific contents of the course content. The standard 45 min classroom sessions have been set by the ministry for every class session was considered inadequate by both learners and teachers in public schools as well as in private schools. Both the qualitative and quantitative data collected concluded a low satisfaction level with the durations allocated for classroom interaction.

The biggest issues for all the respondents was that the abstract nature of the fixed period was not based on the differences in the content of the curriculum. Additionally, some of the activities recommended could not be achieved within the short periods allocated for every class session. The situation in public school was compounded by the large class capacities that make class activities more complex and demanding in comparison to the situation in private schools. School hours are also fixed and retaining learners for more time than what is acceptable at high school may not guarantee effective learning. Out of class assignments that are given to the students help with the syllabus coverage. This approach is more challenging to execute in public schools because a lot of the learning material is shared by several students and the cultural limitations in the country can be quite inflexible to the movement of female learners after school hours except with the permission of parents or guardians. This means that several learners in public schools are not able to carry out of class activities and assignments.

6.4.2 Access to Learning Resources

The findings of this study also indicated that private schools have better access to materials required for teaching and learning. Private institutions have invested in ensuring the resources required for teaching and learning of the curriculum have been provided adequate proportions for both teachers and students. These resources include books, technology, and research facilities. Private schools also have the amenities that allow for better access and utilisation of the technology and recommended learning resources. This captures facilities such as electricity, computers, books, reference materials and the internet among other facilities. The situation in public schools is not as optimistic. The study established that several public schools have very limited learning and teaching materials. Due to this limitation, learners and teachers have been forced to be innovative with their use of limited resources. Some of the solutions devised include sharing of books during class, photocopying teaching and learning material and use of personal resources to supplement limited facilities.

The study also indicated that some of the public schools do not have access to electricity which is consistent with the findings in the study conducted by Alyami(2014) which criticised the current approach to implementation for not being considerate of public schools and most especially those located in rural areas that are yet to have electricity or internet connectivity for some of the activities recommended in the curriculum. This eliminates their ability to use electronic resources in classrooms. Reliable internet is almost lacking in public facilities and where teachers decide to use online material, they use their devices and the internet. Unlike students in private schools who could access material while at home, a majority of those in public schools relied on the course books and class teachings for learning because they faced similar limitations at home.

The study also points to a higher level of preparedness in private schools in Saudi Arabia in anticipation of the roll-out of the curriculum that has not been achieved in public schools similar to the observation made by Alyami(2014). Private schools have instituted policies to aid in the implementation of the curriculum with the direct support of their respective managements. Public schools have been grouped in units and assigned resources that by the

time they are distributed to the school units they are very limited. The study pointed out that parents in private schools are also supportive of the curriculum and where necessary are willing to purchase learning material their children are required to have. Public schools are limited in that parents, despite being supportive of their children learning, have not been as quick or consistent with their support. This has been linked more to the financial capabilities of these parents and not an unwillingness to offer support. The government is the sole financier of public institutions. Based on the findings, public schools are not receiving resources based on the population or the specific demands of the institution. The approach is more blanketed, a specified number of resources are sent to a specific educational district shared equally among the institutions in that zone. The distribution of students in every zone is not uniform thus these schools are in a difficult situation where they are not able to outsource to supplement and must use the few resources available by the government. In general, the access to study material, the level of financial support available and facilities accessible in libraries are all limited in public high schools in Saudi Arabia compared to the situation in private schools.

6.4.3 Evaluation of the Curriculum Content

The study also indicated that learners and teachers are not satisfied with the content of the National Social Studies curriculum. The main challenge for the teachers as identified in the study is that while fragmented initially, teachers specialised in specific sub-areas and had taught those areas over many years. Implementation of any curriculum should be aligned with the skill characteristics in the environment as established in the studies conducted by Balyer et al. (2017), Tronsmo and Nerland (2018), and Albilehi et al. (2013). Support for any curriculum change works more positively when the implementers, who are the teachers, feel competent enough to execute the curriculum. As expressed by Albilehi et al. (2013) teachers who are well trained and have adequate knowledge on the curriculum content manage the curriculum change process more effectively.

Respondents agreed that there was a need to change the curriculum to update the content to current matters that learners need to be acquainted with. This study identified international issues, global trade, and environmental change as some of the content that was considered a valuable addition to the syllabus that could broaden the knowledge learners acquired. According to the findings, the content in Grade 10, is relatively satisfactory. There is freshness and uniqueness in the information contained in the course work for this class. The content in the course work enhances the information contained in the high school curriculum. However, the study also highlights that some of the information included in Grade 10 is a bit more advanced for this level based on the difficulties faced by the learners.

According to this study, the packaging of the learning material distributed or recommended by the government, other than the repetition of content, is satisfactory. The language is appropriate; the graphics, pictures, maps, and images included in the material is appropriate for the grades in question. There are no gaps in meaning in the language used and no noticeable typing errors that could be identified in the learning material. The biggest issues raised were related to the content of the material which as previously mentioned, the study established that learners and teachers found some of the information too complex for them to understand. This is not due to the language used or the information provided in the material, but it is more because the material was considered too advanced for the specific grade in question. Teachers in public and private schools indicated that the time allocated within the semester for every grade was not adequate to cover all the areas included in the books.

Additionally, learners are not a homogenous group, there are differences among them that drive their interest, understanding ability and their ability to articulate whether they have understood the information provided to them. This study shows that the curriculum is not considerate of the individual differences among learners. This is not unique to the KSA, numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the opportunities and challenges that exist in standardised education systems. Some of these studies recommend for education systems to shift from a teacher centred approach to the learner centred approach (Abdelmalak & Trespalacios, 2013); Cheang, 2009; Hossain, 2013). This is because the learner-centred approach practices are considered to be more fluid and responsive to the

needs of individual students (Hossain, 2013). The teacher centred approach on the other hand, which can also be described as the traditional way of designing courses, starts the process of content creation from the course content. Teachers in these systems decide based on the content in the curriculum, what and how they intend to teach and then proceed to assess the content taught. This approach is based on the teacher's input and on assessment in terms of how well the students learned/reproduced the material taught. Based on the findings of the study, the current social studies syllabus is a teacher centred system which has little or no room for the practical adoption of the alternative approach.

International trends in education show a shift from the traditional teacher-centred approach to a student-centred approach (Hossain, 2013). In this model the education system focuses more on the learning outcomes (Abdelmalak & Trespalacios, 2013). By definition, learning outcomes are clear statements of what the student is expected to achieve and how the student is expected to demonstrate this achievement as a result of engaging in the learning process. This model focuses on what the students are expected to be able to do at the end of the course. Private schools involved in the study showed some attempts at adopting a learner centred approach, their limitation was however the time allocated to ensure syllabus coverage within a semester. The situation in public schools showed that teachers had very limited opportunities to teach and assess from a learner led process.

Hossain (2013) argues that learning outcomes should be complemented by the constructive. In a constructive alignment system learner are given the authority and space to direct their own learning through predetermined and relevant learning activities. Constructivism learning theory is defined as active construction of new knowledge, based on learner's prior experience. The findings in the study however have not shown any evidence of learners leading the teaching process. The position adopted in the national social studies curriculum places all the authority in the hands of the teachers who select what needs to be taught, how it should be taught and which assessment methods to be used. The aim of a teacher in an ideal leaner led process should be to create and facilitate a learning environment that supports the learning activities appropriate to achieving the intended learning outcomes. The essence is that all components in the teaching system – the intended learning outcomes, the used teaching methods, the resources to support learning, the learning activities and the

assessment tasks and criteria for evaluating learning – are aligned with one another and facilitate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes (Hossain, 2013).

In the current scenario in KSA, the national social studies curriculum has been designed, the teaching methods and activities and the teaching and evaluation methods are based on age groups. The downside with this generalisation is that the different characteristics of learners impact their ability to understand the material. Blanket assignments and in-class and out of class activities are based on the assumption that learners, as well as teachers, have similar backgrounds and experiences. The reality in Saudi Arabia is that learners come from very different backgrounds and will relate to some issues more than others. The disparity in the social economic status, migrations, food insecurity and social and cultural patterns affect the opportunities learners have to access quality education (Yaacob et al., 2019). The population in Saudi is a complex combination of occupations, different income levels, disparities in access to education and power.

When applied to the composition of learners in the region, the reality is quality education in The Kingdom is a commodity that has to be purchased. This statement is supported by the argument posed by Rabaah el a., (2016) whose argument is that the cost attached to access to quality education is a privilege that not all Saudi families can afford. The leaners in poorer rural areas have a different social and economic experience than those from the wealthier urban centres. Therefore, there are some issues that learners may not understand at all due to limited exposure. Private schools are not similar, and neither are public schools. Thus, contextualising learning and teaching based on the immediate environment and characteristics of learners in a given area should be considered while designing a curriculum.

6.4.4 Evaluation of the Activities in the Curriculum

The National Social Studies curriculum contains activities that have been recommended to enhance the learning outcomes in high schools. This study highlights that the curriculum has been endorsed for new strategies and learning methods that provide for a more positive learning environment. According to the findings, the class activities, interaction in class and the out of class activities allows learners to engage more with the teachers and the learning

material at hand. The excitement of using the day-to-day activities to understand the content of the curriculum presents new information in ways that allows learners to apply information learned in real-life environments as well as adequately retain information. The teaching process is completed when learners can comprehend what they have been taught to apply the information they have learnt to solve issues in their daily lives. The approach to learning and the activities recommended sets the pace for proper understanding as well as relatability of the content in books to real-life problems.

The findings of the study indicate that learners and teachers in private and public schools found the learning experience exciting and informative. Teachers in some contexts were allowed to determine which materials can be added to those recommended by curricula to make the learning process easier and more relatable to their learners. The curriculum allows teachers to come up with approaches that their learners can respond to aside from those outlined in the curriculum. In the current Tatweer Schools Phase Two, which was implemented in 2011, schools had to plan and develop self-evaluation and planning schemes. This freedom enhances the involvement of teachers in curriculum implementation that can positively influence the overall performance of a curriculum. This finding supports the argument by Carl (2009) which argues that implementation models that give teachers the authority to determine teaching methods that can be used for greater impact to be achieved among learners.

However, not all teachers enjoy this freedom because it requires a lot of goodwill from educational institutions or the government. The issue in public schools in the Tabuk region is the low level of funding for activities and resources that enhance learning. Creativity among these teachers is limited by financial constraints that limit them to just a given set of activities. The situation in private schools is quite different. Private schools also receive some level of support from the government that comes in the form of learning material. They are then able to supplement what is received from the government through the financial support received from parents. For private schools, parents pay for the quality of education their children receive. Where there is need the school engages parents to offer support for resources and activities such as educational trips. In public schools, the government funds most are not all of the school processes except where special interest groups are involved.

The study observed that the Ministry does not actively monitor the implementation process to collect feedback to establish challenges witnessed at the grass-root level. Additionally, there are no unions or formal groups that teachers can use to engage the government to bargain for more funding.

According to this study, class sessions have a more significant impact when the teaching methods used allow for more engagement between teachers and learners. Class sessions that allow for teacher-student engagement promote productive exchanges that can be used to evaluate understanding as well as promote a research culture among learners which is consistent with the findings of Hopmann (1990) on the impact of class interactions on learning outcomes. Additionally, the curriculum also has out of class sessions and activities recommended in the curriculum therefore increasing the level of interest among learners. Private schools were more excited about the out of class activities than public schools because of the limited resources that public schools have to work with.

Additionally, the findings indicate that the class activities outlined in the curriculum, promote cooperation among the students, creative thinking and problem-solving. The objective of the curriculum change was to ensure the development of human capital in Saudi Arabia to create a more global workforce (AlGhamdi, 2008; Elyas & Picard, 2010). The effect of the teaching methods combined with the content in the curriculum have contributed to an increase in the value of the education learners are exposed to. A similar argument has been made by AlGhamdi (2008) and Elyas & Picard (2010) who observe that the quality of education in the country is more enhanced. The curriculum is gradually transforming towards becoming more responsive to global trends. The inclusion of some global components at an early stage expands the thinking of learners and opens up their view on national and global issues.

The reliance on the government, again, is affecting the performance of public schools in this respect. In public schools some of the tools required to conduct these activities are unavailable. On the other hand, in private schools, most of the tools required for class and out of class activities were available through either the school or at home by parents and guardians. Learners and teachers indicated that the instructions provided to guide the

activities are well captured and explained in the recommended learning materials. Students in public schools are not as satisfied with the time allocated for these activities as those in public schools because on several occasions, they have to share tools. For private school learners and teachers, the activities are relevant and practical in their daily environment. Public schools, on the other hand, face some challenges in executing some activities brought on by limitation in their physical environment as well as the limited access they have to certain resources.

6.4.5 Evaluation of Teachers' Competency

Teachers are key stakeholders in the implementation of any curriculum change in a country. The history of the teaching profession in Saudi Arabia is very complex with previous trends indicating an increased foreign workforce in the Saudi education sector. The journey towards the modernisation of the curriculum as well as government support towards the promotion of skill development in the teaching profession has increased the value of teachers in the country. Based on the findings of the study, despite the challenges faced in the implementation of the National Social Studies curriculum at both private and public schools, the learners in both types of institutions projected that teachers have the appropriate skills and knowledge to guide them in understanding the curriculum. Government's commitment towards enhancing access to education among the female population is slowly paying off. The teaching profession has both experienced and young female teachers who collectively work in the education sector (Alnefaie, 2016). The education sector in Saudi Arabia still segregates the profession as well as the learners according to their gender. The value of local female teachers cannot be ignored because learners can relate and be inspired by these teachers. Similar findings have been made by Sani (2018) whose study focused on the rising number of local female professions and how they have contributed to the improvement of the education sector in Saudi Arabia by dismantling the structural injustices females have historically been subjected to in the country.

According to the findings in this study, teachers in private schools were ranked higher than their counterparts in public schools on their uses of different teaching methods and levels of engagement among students. Qualitative data pointed out that this can be attributed to the

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resource limitations in public schools and the limited one on one interaction opportunities available in public schools. Learners in private and public schools also indicated that teachers engage them during class and explain issues in ways that they can understand. In private schools, the learners indicated that teachers use the appropriate resources recommended in the course texts and add additional tools and activities that make the learning experience more effective and interesting. In public schools, learners indicated that they were unable to perform some of the activities recommended because of limited access to resources and short periods allocated for each class session. Qualitative data brought attention to the commitment and dedication of teachers in public schools to make up for some of the challenges in the working environment. According to the findings, some teachers in public schools use their devices and internet to download and share relevant information with learners to enhance their understanding.

Mouraz, Leite and Fernandes (2013) point out that professional development of the teachers is an important step towards enhancing their capacity to take an active role in curriculum implementation. This study supports this finding, it explains why some institutions in the country are more confident with the implementation of the current curriculum than others. Despite the training exercise launched by the government ahead and on very rare occasions, after the official launch, there was a very limited time for the teachers to master the broader curriculum. Private schools, again, have the advantage of hiring new teachers who have not watered down their knowledge through specialisation. Private schools have also organised internal training to reinforce the information availed through the Ministry of education as recommended by Handler (2010) who suggests that there is need for major investment to be made in teachers' professional development. This study established that teachers in public schools who may wish to enhance their skill level at their coat are limited by finances and time. This finding is consistent with that of Alsubaie, (2016) which emphasised that one of the most common problems identified is lack of resources for teachers' professional development. For the learners, the broadness of the curriculum was widely considered extremely tasking. Learners complained about the complexity of information they had to master as well as the variety of what they considered unrelated material that they were forced

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to learn in the same class. Interest, complexity and broadness of the material was their biggest concern for both the learners in public schools as well as for those in private schools.

6.4.6 Evaluation of the Assessment Methods

According to the findings of this study, teachers in both private and public schools are very satisfied with the evaluation methods allowed within the curriculum, Alotabi, (2014). In a similar study also came to the same conclusion. Evaluation is an important component of the learning and teaching experience. To enhance the assessment system, the education sector in Saudi Arabia has been changed recently to enhance the overall effectiveness of the process. The assessment methods in the National Social Studies curriculum allow for both formative and summative assessment. Learners and teachers in both private and public schools appreciated both methods, though the formative method was more popular among the students than the summative method. The formative methods include class presentation, continuous assessment tasks were identified by the students as their preferred means for evaluation because of the lower level of anxiety and pressure they deal with while handling these processes.

According to this study, which is supported by the findings of a study conducted by Kinesti (2019), formative assessment was preferred because it allows student as well as their teachers to identify areas of difficulty as the learning process advances so that any challenges can be addressed through additional coaching or extra assignments that can enhance understanding. Alotabi (2014) also supports the preference for formative evaluation in Saudi Arabia because it allows for subjective determination of the understanding level of each learner. This method also prevents learners from accumulating frustrations brought on by poor understanding that may affect their general attitude towards the entire subject while their issue could just be a specific topic. For teachers, formative assessment methods offer the ability to identify areas where learners are facing challenges in a more relaxed environment as established in this study. This method allows them to identify which areas each student is struggling within a more continuous process. Based on this assessment teachers can tackle the challenges of each student at an individual level. This study highlighted that this method is more effective in classes with a smaller capacity which is similar to the argument made by Alotabi, (2014).

The issue with larger classes as is the case with several public schools in Saudi Arabia is the limitation caused by the limited attention a teacher can give to each student. This method is very engaging and is more involved and time-consuming than just distributing a final examination. Thus, smaller class capacities are more ideal and easier to execute.

Summative assessments are distributed at the end of the two semesters in both public and private high schools (Alotabi, 2014). They are not based on the actual areas taught in class. They are guided by the course outline designated for the entire semester and are meant to examine the cumulative knowledge of students. This study establishes that these evaluations were also ranked very highly by learners and teachers. In private schools, they were ranked higher because of the personalised feedback each student gets from the examiner. In public schools, the rating was lower mostly due to the limited access to examiners at the end or beginning of the subsequent semester to offer adequate guidance as feedback on the areas a student failed to perform well in. The value to a teacher for this is to gain a broader understanding of the overall class performance in the semester as opposed to evaluating students specifically. The observation is that the content taught in a semester is too broad and basing the understanding of any student on just the summative performance can be misleading. Students indicated that the pressure they work under while preparing for these final examinations and the quantity of work they have to cover can sometimes be overwhelming. Thus, failure to perform is not always indicative of their understanding of the content in that semester, sometimes it is reflective of their state of mind while taking the examination.

Just as Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir (2014) observed in their study, this study concludes that the current system however still heavily depends on summative evaluation which as a requirement should be documented in every school. This has created a memorising culture which does not reinforce understanding. This finding is consistent with Rabaah et al., (2016) which states that "rote memorisation of basic texts continues to be a central feature of much of the educational system of Saudi Arabia even today". This emphasis on summative evaluation focuses on memorisation and neglects the overriding objective of the new curriculum which emphasises the use of higher-order skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. The quality of the examinations, according to the findings, is relevant,

comprehensive and appropriate for all grades. Thus, this study observes that based on the results the teachers can effectively evaluate the performance of students within the framework provided in the curriculum. The evaluation methods ranked very highly in this study as well as the content, time allocated, provision of results, examination environment and the distribution of the content to cover the content taught in a semester.

6.4.7 Evaluation of Learners

This study established that learners in private schools are ranked higher by their teachers than those in public schools. This simply means that the teachers in private schools evaluate the performance of their students more positively than the teachers in public schools do. Al Alhareth & Al Dighrir (2014) state that due to the facilities available in private schools the quality of education the learners obtain is relatively higher compared to the public schools. According to the findings in this study, students in private schools were more capable of understanding instructions, expressing themselves and applying the information they have learnt in class outside the classroom environment. The feedback from public institutions indicates that students in public schools do not exhibit these qualities in the same magnitude as those in private schools. The challenges learners in public institutions have to deal with can explain this finding.

While the learners in private schools have a more supportive and conducive environment for learning at home and in school, those in public schools deal with a unique set of challenges that may limit their ability to comprehend some concepts. According to this study, students in private schools tend to perform better mostly because of the opportunities to learn that are available to them. The automatic qualification of learners at the secondary school level does not offer valid insight into their performance of level of understanding of the educational content. The stricter evaluation and merit measures placed on them at high school can either promote better learning or intimidate learners. Most private high school learners have a similar background in public secondary school education, a lot of those who enrol in public schools in many cases pursue their subsequent levels of education in public schools. The findings of the study in this regard are consistent with the argument presented by Rabaah et al., (2016) which states that public schools rely heavily on rote learning and memorisation,

and do not offer additional subjects such as theatre and art. By comparison, private schools favour a teaching style in which critical thinking is encouraged.

6.4.8 Adoption of Technology on the National Social Studies Curriculum

Technology has been identified as a tool that can enhance the learning process, teaching methods, assessment process and curriculum monitoring. As stated by Hargreaves and Shirley (2009), technology is one of the greatest elements that have inspired modification of curriculums. Technology provides tools and information that can enhance the overall implementation of the National Social studies curriculum. One of the attributes that distinguish the current curriculum from the previous one is the inclusion of technological devices and online material that can enhance learning. This study observes that private schools use more technology in their implementation process than public schools. According to the findings, learners in private schools have the devices and resources to access the audio-visual material relevant to the course content they are learning. This has promoted a higher level of interest among these learners and a relatively stronger research culture. Most public schools do not have the necessary devices and software to supplement what is readily available in their immediate environment. Technology comes at a cost, institutions that invest in it can reap the benefits by exposing learners to a variety of information. Private schools have the financial capacity to direct policies in directions that improve the teaching and learning experience in the institutions. Public high schools on the other hand are heavily reliant on the government and may require more to transition to greater use of technology. The use of this technology also requires training for both the teachers and learners to ensure whatever little access they have can be used effectively to enhance learning outcomes.

6.4.9 Investing in Technology in the Education Sector

The public sector of secondary education is a clear depiction of the positive aspects of the curriculum. Similarly, it also draws attention to the issues that are wrong with the implementation of the National Social Studies curriculum. Based on the findings, schools do not exclusively apply the curriculum, they supplement with content, methods, and activities to enhance learning outcomes. Whereas the system focused on summative assessment which

emphasises memorising content, the National Social Studies model recommends for a higher level of engagement with the learners as well as better teaching methods that are more updated

The population involved in the study, in general, had challenges using some of the basic tools and activities recommended for teaching national social studies. These challenges were witnessed in their ability to design materials such as charts and maps. Additionally, the respondents could not confidently use technology to search and use information relevant to courses in social studies as recommended by Hargreaves and Shirley (2009). The inclusion of both history and geography in social studies means the information provided in textbooks are subject to change because history is constantly evolving. Teachers need to have technological skills that can enable them to select and disseminate online resources.

Nathan (2010) recommends teaching comprehension strategies and critical thinking, such as analysing, summarising main ideas, and having students ask themselves questions about what they have read. Areas of improvement for the teachers should equip teachers with the necessary skills to improve their teaching experience and learning outcomes (Albilehi et al., 2013). The issue with the current system is every concept taught is isolated from real-life contexts where the information taught in class should be applied. Teaching is more than just ensuring information is passed on, successful learning is achieved when students can use the information taught in class to creatively solve real-life problems. Global events like the COVID 19 pandemic have affected all aspects of human societies. Technology prevailed as the solution preferred for its ability to maintain interaction while still maintaining the recommended social distance. The Ministry of Education has not invested in online material that can be used during this period. The access and knowledge on how to apply the technology are still lacking in the public sector for both learners and students. The generation of learners in schools right now is increasingly becoming more conversant with technology and responding better to content disseminated through technology as opposed to the monotonous, repetitive, by the book traditional teaching methods. Investing more in the overall educational experience can significantly improve the implementation of the National Social Studies curriculum. This could work because private schools are investing heavily on technology and are already reaping some of the benefits, such as improvements in the

performance of their learners. Online studies, online material, online evaluation, and online tours are alternatives to the existing traditional methods currently in place.

6.4 Conclusions

The education sector has witnessed many changes since the commencement of the Tatweer program. The changes aimed to make the sector more responsive to global trends. The changes in the National Social Studies curriculum have affected the content, material, activities and evaluation used in teaching and learning. According to the findings, the public sector is struggling with the implementation. Public schools do not have an adequate level of support and resources required to effectively implement the curriculum. The evaluation method in the curriculum ranked highly because of the inclusion of formative evaluation in the overall performance assessment.The biggest issues were resource availability, time limitation, repetition of content and class environment that were established in this study as the factors that negatively impact implementation.

Chapter 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Recap of the study

Based on the findings of the study, the challenges with the national social studies curriculum in high schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stem from the curriculum design, the implementation environment, and the limited access to some of the resources required for the implementation of the curriculum. This study highlighted some of the areas that were pointed out as especially problematic by the respondents involved in the study. Consequently, based on the feedback, conclusions and literature review, the researcher made some recommendations that can be used to enhance the curriculum development and application in high schools in the region.

7.2 Recommendations

7.2.1 Enhanced Collaboration among all the key stakeholders in the KSA Ministry of Education

The first recommendation is that there needs to be greater collaboration between the stakeholders in the education sector. In line with the recommendation made by Vela, (2020) educators and practitioners should have a shared vision of key issues and collaborate on curriculum development. The curriculum taught in schools at any level of education is designed to meet specific agendas in society, as argued by Mian *et al*., (2020). Any product or aspect of the education system in a country needs to be responsive to the challenges and opportunities in the context within which it is applied. Sustainability is also an important factor that has been advocated for by Vela, (2020). This study, therefore, recommends that the national social studies curriculum, the way it was initially done was more of a top to bottom model. This simplistic curriculum change approach has been criticised by scholars such as Hughes and Tan (2017) who argue that the simplistic approach fails to accommodate the input of vital stakeholders in the curriculum development process. Teachers are at the bottom of the hierarchy in this approach and are quite often excluded in the design phase even though they are the grassroots, implementation stakeholders.

In particular, it was noted that there is currently less involvement of the teachers in the process of curriculum design and development. The findings confirm previous studies explored in the literature which affirm that curriculum development in countries where governments majorly manage education generally have little room for teachers to participate effectively in the design, planning, and evaluation process (McKernan, 2013). This is the situation in Saudi Arabia where there is little room for involvement of the teachers. However, it is important to note that, even if they are not directly involved in any curriculum development, there is a degree of choice in the course of the development of the career of teachers (Rieckmann, 2012). Most importantly, curriculum change also affects the manner in which teachers are meant to perform in their careers. Therefore, it makes no sense for teachers to be set aside during the development process of any curriculum because they can offer a lot of input, which could positively influence implementation (Carl, 2009).

Curriculum development initiatives in KSA take a top to bottom approach. In the implementation of the NSS curriculum, teachers do not have full the authority to determine teaching materials that can be used for greater impact to be achieved among learners. The curriculum, as stated by the learners, is complex and repetitive, implying that there is less room for innovation and creativity in curriculum delivery. Teachers in some contexts are also allowed to determine which materials can be added to those recommended by curriculums to make the learning process easier. Bernstein (1990) proposes that teachers should hold an authoritative voice and be positioned as partners in curriculum reform. The authority teachers hold is based on their in-depth knowledge of the recipients of educational content and their day-to-day experience in local contexts of implementation, particularly from their knowledge of their students, available resources, and the practicalities of their work.

As evidenced in the study, teachers constitute the major stakeholders in curriculum design and implementation. In effect, successfully curriculum re-design relies on the extent to which the teachers are involved. This assertion has been outlined in a number of studies where involvement and ownership of the teachers to the curriculum is a growing concern, as

reflected in most studies (Huizinga et al., 2013; You, 2011). For example, Huizinga et al. (2013) demonstrates that there is a positive association between teachers' involvement and ownership in curriculum design and success in curriculum implementation. In addition to this, the authors identified some of the key gaps in teachers' involvement. The first gap is related to curriculum design expertise. The second one is concerned with the pedagogical content knowledge while the third one is concerned with curricular consistency expertise. The other conclusion of this study is that, offering customised support for the teachers and quality design materials significantly influences the outcome of the curriculum implementation. Thus, there is cognisance that teachers from different schools, situations, level of experience and location have unique needs. For example, while some of them might have limited knowledge and understanding about the new curriculum, others may have limited experience in teaching or other issues. It justifies the need to understand the needs of the particular teachers and then develop a mechanism to support them. In the case of NSS, low quality recruitment and development is a key issue that is likely to have a negative impact on effective teachers' involvement and ownership of the curriculum. Thus, the number of training and development hours per teachers should be increased from the current ten to the regional benchmark of 25 hours.

Training and development are significant elements in enhancing the capacity of the teachers to effectively implement the curriculum. Training will improve the quality of the teachers along with their skills. Teacher quality has the greatest effect on student learning. Mouraz, Leite and Fernandes (2013) agrees that the key factor influencing student achievement is the quality of teaching. We could say that the quality of the teacher is "twice as important as any other variable". Measures of teacher quality in the context of certification and preparation had the strongest impact on student academic success than any other form of investment like overall spending on education, teacher salaries and class size. Thus, professional development of the teachers is an important step towards enhancing their capacity to take an active role in curriculum implementation (Mouraz, Leite and Fernandes, 2013). Empowering the teachers enhances their decision-making ability and in turn improves their ability to deliver results. An improvement in decision-making ability is key for innovations and skills needed to implement the new curriculum. Teachers have an essential role to play in

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curriculum planning. The initial stage of curriculum development involves a lot of decision-making and teachers initiate outcomes, teaching methods and curriculum content. In these processes, teachers need to have room to make their input by generating views, opinions, and ideas on what they think needs to be done (Carl, 2009).

Through internalising the curriculum reforms, teachers experience professional growth. They also attain knowledge that is necessary for new curriculum implementation. Thus, allowing teachers to take an active role in the process of curriculum planning is an important tool for their professional growth and development. The other way to involve teachers is by making them part of the change initiatives. According to Balyer et al. (2017), this empowers them to make better decisions and have a positive impact on curriculum implementation. Empowerment has a role in transforming the teachers to work hard to attain the objectives of the school. One study that has investigated the connection between teachers' professional development and efficacy in curriculum implementation is that of Tronsmo and Nerland (2018). The authors reveal that there is a positive connection between professional development and the teachers' ability to implement the curriculum successfully. Through training and development, teachers are able to materialise their experience, and grow their knowledge and expertise. In effect, they are better placed to design and implement a systematic curriculum. It was clear from the studies that professional development offered to the teachers materialised their experience and improved their teaching methods. On the other hand, Albilehi et al. (2013) investigated the influence of in-service professional development programs on curriculum implementation. The study arrived at the conclusion that teachers who went through the in-service programs were more prepared to face the challenges of curriculum implementation than those without. In addition to this, the teacher feels much more empowered, knowledgeable, and confident about their ability to implement the new curriculum. Additionally, the teachers who took part in the in-service programs expressed that they enriched their understanding of their curriculum. In effect, they would apply the knowledge they acquired from the training to develop better lesson plans and other materials related to the new curriculum. However, the same studies noted that, besides in-service training, teacher experience is equally important. Extensive experience allows teachers to have a deeper understanding of the curriculum and boosts the teachers'

confidence in the curriculum. During professional development, teachers experience both personal and professional growth (Mikser et al., 2016). Mikser et al. (2016) further note that teachers gain an opportunity to reflect on their understanding of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning process get to understand their work, their strengths and weaknesses and how best they can use their competence to improve delivery of the curriculum (Balyer et al., 2017). This justifies the need for the professional development of teachers for effective curriculum delivery.

This recommendation finds support in the Mutual Adaptation Model discussed in chapter two of this discussion. The key argument of this model is that education policy and educational organisations must work together in a process, which is mutually beneficial. The benefit of applying the Mutual Adaptation Model is this context is that it not only promotes collaboration but also offers an opportunity for the teachers to be actively involved in the design and implementation of curriculum changes. In the case of NSS, this implies using approaches such as technology-infused and project-based learning. This will significantly contribute to a reduction in the inherent repetition in the curriculum. This will generate deep engagement with the subject with the NSS curriculum, which can serve as a tool for teacher learning and change. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) believe some countries like the USA and UK make use of this model, which has great potential to develop education. Alnahdi (2014) argues that Saudi Arabian public schools and government must look for ways to implement mutual adaptation and invest resources towards developing the public education system. Clearly, mutually beneficial initiatives can make a big difference, as the parties will work towards achieving their goals, thereby sustaining the innovation. The model advocates for collaboration between education policy makers and educational organisations. They must adapt to each other and the implementation process should include all relevant actors. Therefore, it will ensure that there is innovation and collaboration among all the stakeholders.

7.2.2 Enhanced Involvement and Ownership of Stakeholders in the NSS Curriculum

To improve the approach to the curriculum design process, the study concludes that what is currently in place is not entirely inadequate, however it requires enhancement to remedy

some of the issues that have been identified at the implementation level. Among the strategies to be adopted is to institute a multi-sectoral approach where various stakeholders including teachers, parents and guardians, education experts, researchers, practitioners, and ministry officials can be charged to conduct a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the current curriculum, review the emerging challenges then consult widely on how the curriculum can be enhanced to make it more effective and responsive to the immediate and future needs of learners. The process should be led, guided, and executed by adequate, experienced people, who have a thorough understanding of current curriculum needs for the specific context. All decisions should be grounded in and informed by contextualised evidence and research.

On the other hand, effective curricular change will require breaking down the NSS into smaller and manageable pieces. For example, this involves having different syllabi for different subjects and types of schools. In essence, the tasks and issues are differentiated in a manner that the diverse components of the state's administrative framework around school management and governance are insulated from each other. The major focus of differentiation in this case is what might be taught, and probably how that can be taught in the different schools. Most importantly, the curriculum does not specify the resources to be used in delivery of the curriculum. This implies that it does not restrain the autonomy of the teacher and the school environment to be innovative and creative and develop resources for curriculum delivery. The school administration is also not restricted in terms of looking for funds to facilitate learning and teaching of the new curriculum. Schools have the freedom to look for funds to support the teaching of new curricular material. One important thing to note from compartmentalisation is decentralised decision-making. Unlike the traditional approach to curriculum change where decision-making is decentralising, compartmentalisation allows the major stakeholder - the teacher - to take an active role in implementing the new curriculum. There is also increased autonomy on the part of the teachers to decide what types of resources they can use for curriculum change, the topics they can teach at the different levels and issues surrounding teacher education. It is a holistic approach, which ensures that all the stakeholders are involved in the implementation (Mikser, Kärner, and Krull, 2016).

By nature, an effective curriculum should be comprehensive and structured around a clear and strategic vision of holistic and inclusive development of all learners aimed at equipping them with the essential knowledge, skills and competencies, reassuring quality learning in line with Education 2030 Agenda. (Marope, 2017; Stabback, 2016; Opertti, 2017). The need for a monitoring and evaluation process has been endorsed by The International Bureau of Education-UNESCO , who propose that such a process could enhance efforts in reconceptualising and repositioning curriculum within emerging global and national agendas. UNESCO further proposes that a committee instituted by the ministry of education is the most dependable and effective way to approach curriculum development. This ensures that the input of all relevant parties is incorporated in the design phase to produce a curriculum that is more broadly accepted and supported by key stakeholders.

Based on the literature explored, development, delegation and decentralisation are key to successful curriculum implementation. The idea of delegation entails allowing diverse groups to make decisions concerning the curriculum development process. It is highly achievable in the bottom-up approach where there is a chance for decentralised decision-making. In most of the countries, a centralised mechanism has failed to lead to instructional changes and consider the cultural and social factors which shape curriculum implementation. This type of research practice has remained key in most countries. Nevertheless, it continues to raise issues related to a loosely assessed curriculum and poor resource allocation. The major drawback of the centralised decision-making model in curriculum change has been a lack of willingness among the teachers to take up more ownership of the curriculum. The state-based approach to curricular change is more common in the West. However, in the majority of countries in Asia, Northern Europe and the Middle East, the centralised model is not seen as an obstacle to teachers' ownership of the curriculum (Molstad, 2015).

7.2.3 Align Curriculum Development to the Emerging Trends

The study also recommends that the curriculum development process should be approached to conform to the emerging trends that are well-researched and supported with evidence from credible reports. To enhance this point, IBE-UNESCO (2017) proposes that the development process of a curriculum framework should be planned and systematic, comprehensive,

informed, targeted, broadly supported, and inclusive. To support the recommendation for a more inclusive process, UNESCO (2017) outlines that ongoing consultation with key stakeholders should be encouraged and practised, hence actively valuing and validating their inputs to the process. For instance, the Finnish curriculum framework document which was developed by The Finnish National Board of Education, 2011 is considered to be one of the most effective curriculums in the report released by IBE-UNESCO. According to UNESCO, the curriculum has been effective because it aligns with national goals, grants autonomy of municipal authorities and the local curriculum is designed to accommodate to local issues in municipalities. Local level and teachers have been utilised as valued experts who develop the school-based curriculum as a source for different approaches to schoolwork. It is therefore necessary for all the key stakeholders who understand the learning environment and the overall goals of a curriculum be involved in the curriculum design process. Due to the low level of stakeholder engagement, the current curriculum largely ignores differences between student populations which makes the standardised learning and teaching material unrelatable, inaccessible and difficult to utilise.

This study recommends that although some leeway for input has been provided to the teachers especially concerning the evaluation process, their input is still very small. Firstly, a curriculum functions as a part of the steering system of the education sector. Secondly, it performs a pedagogical function, serving as a guiding document for educators, especially for the teachers themselves. If the resulting curriculum is a tool of the trade of teachers, it is necessary that teachers are well represented and put at the core of the design process. The involvement of teachers is seen as a means of increasing their commitment to the implementation of the curriculum. In Ireland, for example, the curriculum design body has representation on their committees of teachers' groups such as specialist associations and trade unions. Their active involvement in the process and therefore their ownership of the curriculum is reinforced by their inclusion in the design process. The findings in this study show that teachers feel disadvantaged by some of the methods recommended for teaching national social studies. A majority of the respondents in the study felt that some of the methods and tools recommended for use are not relatable to the learners, out of reach or inaccessible. To remedy some of the difficulties experienced by the teachers, they should be

allowed to propose solutions that could make the teaching environment more effective and relatable to leaners.

Contextualising social studies applies to the content and the methods used for teaching. The competencies and guidelines should be common, but the curriculum should remain diverse This approach has been supported by studies conducted by Hamilton (2013) whose findings indicated that students reject information in a vacuum and interpret information based on what they already know. This is because background knowledge provides vocabulary, allows bridging of logical gaps and chunking, and guides interpretation. The ability to relate new knowledge to items and events that are familiar also makes learning easier. Willingham (2009) mentions that brain research also reinforces the power of contextualised learning. According to Willingham, the brain uses three regions to make meaning: short-term memory, long-term memory, and working memory. Like in the case of Brazil and Finland, curriculums should be developed to accommodate the development of local curriculum which takes into account the local environment and priorities as well as the characteristics of learners. This study proposes that stakeholders at the local levels should have avenues to engagement and consultation to develop local curriculum material that can be used to teach part of the national social studies curriculum.

The recommendation on local adaptation of the NSS curriculum is in line with the current literature. The need for local curriculum is often a product of the national curriculum offering an opportunity for local adaptation. This is particularly key in a heterogeneous society, as there are subtle or obvious differences between people in different places in any country (Gerrard and Farrell, 2013). The differences in society require local adaptation so that the curriculum contributes in part, to responding to the local challenges and also ensuring that local considerations are taken into account (Tronsmo and Nerland, 2018). Therefore, it is assumed that the local players, including the teachers, have adequate professional experience to make effective changes and implement them. This is tied to the concept of licensing, introduced in the first chapter. In the process of local adaptation, one finds the local adaptation of the curriculum (Dale, Engelsen, and Karseth, 2011). The idea of local adaption of the curriculum often refers to finding the 'right' understanding of the curriculum within the local context. According to Dale et al. (2011), this offers focus for delivering the national

curriculum. Therefore, on this basis, Gerrard and Farrell (2013) point out that it offers a platform to not only define but also constrain the work of the teachers. In the process of implementing a new curricular or any other changes associated with it, the role of the teachers is very important. Constraining the work of the teachers only limits the success of the change implementation process. Thus, it is evident that there is a possibility that the teachers' work can either be constrained or extended. For example, in NSS when teachers are given more autonomy to be innovative and creative in curriculum delivery, it creates room for legitimation and motivation of their actions. The contrary is also true. As indicated in the study by Wermke & Höstfält (2014), restricting autonomy negatively affects the motivation of the teachers.

7.2.4 A Review of the Curriculum

The next recommendation is for a review of the current curriculum to be conducted by the Ministry of Education and all the stakeholders to address some of the issues with the national social studies content and study materials. According to the study, a lot of the information in the material used in grades 10 and level has a lot of repetitions. The curriculum was also considered too wide by a majority of the learners who found it challenging to understand the combined content which includes both history and geography. Baker (2003) states that geography and history are very different subjects that are each very wide areas, combining them means the workload is increased for both the learner and the teacher. In line with the conclusions made by Baker, this study also recommends that the curriculum design approach should put into consideration that the requirement for learning and teaching of the subjects while combined is more intense. Therefore, it requires teachers that are adequately equipped, through training, to competently handle teaching national social studies in Saudi Arabian high schools.

Some of the teachers involved in the study openly admitted to having a limited capacity to handle the subject areas while combined because they had specialised on one of the fields. Relearning has been a challenging task for the teachers. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education and the relevant management bodies should invest in providing training and further learning opportunities for all teachers teaching the subject to allow for

the enhancement and sharing of knowledge. Training teachers is a very important step in the curriculum development process. The curriculum frameworks of countries such as Cambodia and Kenya mention the need to train teachers, emphasising that well-prepared teachers are key towards the achievement of a successful curriculum change. (UNESCO, 2017). Training of teachers should be an active process that is performed in all private and public institutions. Other than workshops, Teachers need to receive training for teaching methodologies and assessment and have the necessary materials and technical support to improve their research abilities for lifelong learning.

The findings of the study also indicated that both learners and teachers found the content very repetitive. The content for grade 10 was found to be too broad. the study recommends that the syllabus for the   grade should be reviewed and redistributed to make the grade 10 easier for the learners and relieve them of some of the pressure and anxieties they are experiencing.

7.2.5 Resource Allocation and Funding

This study also recommends that the Ministry of Education and all the relevant authorities should focus on finding sustainable solutions to address some of the challenges relating to limited resources in public schools According to this study, public schools have limited access to learning and teaching material. Additionally, public schools in some areas have more than the recommended class capacity. The study, therefore, recommends that the stakeholders in the education sector need to come together and propose solutions to make the learning and teaching in public schools more effective. The areas that require the most additional funding include providing affordable learning material, construction of classrooms and libraries, and enhancement of out of class learning environments.

Teachers should not have to purchase teaching material from their own pockets. This is unfair and unrealistic for a very important sector such as the education sector. Answers to this problem should be discussed at the institution and governance levels to find ways of ensuring teaching and learning material are accessible to all learners. School management, in the most affected schools, can engage stakeholders such as parents, development partners,

and local authorities to participate in decision-making to supplement the facilities provided by the government. The fact that there is provision of inadequate resources for teachers means that they are likely to have difficulty implementing the curriculum. They are not completely prepared to teach the curriculum. Lack of resources for teachers' professional development is a problem that other researchers have identified in other countries (Alsubaie, 2016). In most of the countries, the education sectors are underfunded which negatively impacts on the ability of the education ministry to support professional development. The same challenge was found in Saudi Arabia. Teachers are not adequately equipped with the type of training needed for them to teach the new curriculum. The whole idea of professional development requires resources (both human and finances). Financial resources are required to facilitate in-service trainings needed to equip the teachers with the right skills and understanding of the curriculum. The next challenge is lack of clear clarification of what needs to be done to involve the teachers in the process. In most countries, there is no defined approach with the way teacher involvement can be done. Without a clear approach, it is difficult to figure out the resources to make the process effective. Handler (2010) suggests that there is a need for major advances in teachers' professional development. This will be important for the teachers and other stakeholders to reflect on the society's needs at every stage of the curriculum development. Therefore, professional development is an important tool for contributing to the success of any curricular change.

According to this study, at the moment, the curriculum implementation process has focused on the distribution of text material instead of electronic content. The study recommends that the government should also provide public schools with electronic material that contain electronic content to help learners understand the subject better. E-learning has the potential to revolutionise the way teaching and learning is conducted in high schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. According to Basak et al. (2018), e-learning facilitates means learning using information and communications technology. For the purposes of this research, e-Learning is defined as the application of information technology to enhance the distribution of the national social studies curriculum to learners. Private schools in KSA seem to be making more progress with using technology in their day-to-day teaching and learning experience.

Technology is not cheap and requires a lot of effort to make sure the right resources and learning material are available. Academic institutions in the Middle East (ME) are still in the early stages of trying to get students and their parents to accept and adapt to the concept of e-learning. Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Palestine, and others have all tried to different levels of success to implement technology to schools (Aldhafeeri & Khan, 2016). According to Salloum et al. (2019), several countries in the region have already started offering a good number of e-learning courses, others are still in the very early stages of setting up such programs. The results from studies conducted in the UAE already show very favourable results (Ali, 2013; Taha, 2014). According to the survey conducted by Aldhafeeri & Khan (2016), UAE has adopted a blended learning approach which seems to be working effectively with the traditional teaching methods.

Blended learning which is the combination of instruction from two historically separate models of teaching and learning: traditional learning systems and distributed learning systems can be applied in developing and underdeveloped nations to deal with financial gaps in learning institutions (Basu at al., 2016). Blended learning is known as mixing the traditional instructor-led classroom learning and technology-based learning. Blended learning emphasises the central role of computer-based technologies in blended learning (Hubackova, S., & Semradova, 2016). Content saved in technology can be shared among students and learners and can be installed at a fairly low cost. There are also many devices available to meet the needs of every specific group of users. The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should identify the technology solutions that can be purchased to make up for the limited printed resources available in high schools in the region.

Finally, as the government of Saudi Arabia aims to make high school education free, a lot of effort needs to be put into making sure the quality of public-school education does not decrease. Quality in education is a combination of incredibly valuable assets and skills such as quality teachers, teacher's years of experience, instructional materials, and quality infrastructure (Ajani & Akinyele, 2014). The findings in this study identified a wide gap in the learning and teaching experience in high schools between those in public schools and their counterparts in private schools. High standards of education can be maintained if the government and puts effort into increasing resources as the number of learners also increases.

Along with that, the study recommends that the government needs to put more effort into increasing the number of classrooms in public high schools to accommodate the increasing number of learners.

There is a significant relationship between teacher-student ratio and academic achievement of students which this study argues has contributed to the disparity in the performance of students in public schools compared to students in private schools. Students are more involved in small class sizes. And their increased involvement leads to better academic performance. This recommendation is supported by a similar argument presented by Reyes et al (2012) who concluded that pupils in large classes drift off-task because of too many instructions from the teacher to the whole class instead of individual attention, and low-attaining students are most affected. It is worth noting that students benefit in later grades from being in small classes during early grades (Reyes et al., 2012). This study, therefore, recommends for longer periods in small classes to achieve better performance among the learners.

7.3 Proposed Model for Improvement of the Curriculum Development and Implementation

The study recommends a bridging top-down accountability and site-based accountability by bringing policymakers, curriculum designers, and educators together in hopes of designing and implementing curriculum to improve student learning which is supported in the report released by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)(2019). To solve these issues the study recommends that teachers should participate at the decision-making level (curriculum design stage) along with policymakers to adapt the principles of potential curricula to their local contexts. The result of the recommendations made are taken from the systems in Finland and Singapore. Finland has adopted a top-and-bottom approach as a change management strategy (Pietarinena et al., 2017) and added a layer for contextualisation. Singapore has adopted the 21st Century Competencies (21CC) Framework, which has emphasised on collaborative partnerships in the education sector to make sure the curriculum provides learners with the knowledge they need to deal with

challenges in their environment (OECD, 2019). In both of these curriculums, teachers turn the policies into educational practices and initiatives (Tan & Low, 2016).

 The education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is complex and includes many stakeholders who affect the progress and goals of the sector at different levels (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020). This causes many difficulties in the decision making process. All the stakeholders are connected, and the decisions made at any level affects the central part of the education sector, which is made up of learners and teachers. Interaction between teachers and students affects the learning outcomes (Abouelnaga, ET AL., 2019). Also, decisions, processes, structures, and policies taking place within local education institutions, regional governments, and national governments affect what students learn in school (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020). There are five layers, as indicated by the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which work together to produce the content, pedagogy outcomes that students experience in school. External Organisations are the institutions outside the education governance system who can also influence how curriculum change is implemented e.g., the non-profit and for-profit non-governmental organisations as shown in Figure 7.1 (OCED, 2019).
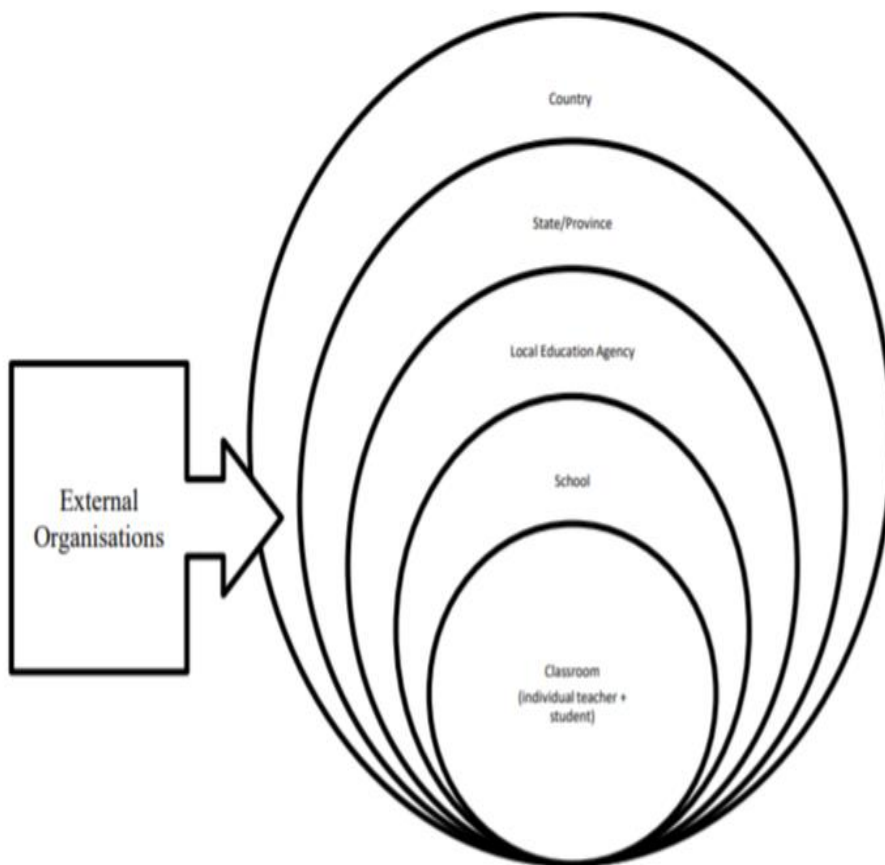
Figure 7.1 Nested Levels of the education system (OCED, 2019)

According to OCED (2019) the state should be responsible for the macro systems, which are the wider socio-cultural policies which guide policy and goals adopted at the national system and also in the education system. The Exo System is the second layer from the top which is the structure within the society. It involves policy activities that take place at local and state/provincial/regional levels. The mesosystem is the connection between various groups and institutions where learners and teachers can interact, share ideas and resources. Then there is the micro system which includes classroom interactions, out of class activities and the influence or family to the learning and teaching process. The ecological systems theory recommends that the student be placed at the core of any curriculum development (OCED, 2019). The learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment process should be designed around the students in this system. Finally, the chronosystem which describes how time and events affect a curriculum. Curriculums should not be rigid; they should be updated frequently to incorporate changes to any of the layers in the nested system (Opertti et al.,

2019). This calls for constant monitoring, evaluation, and subsequent review of the curriculum.
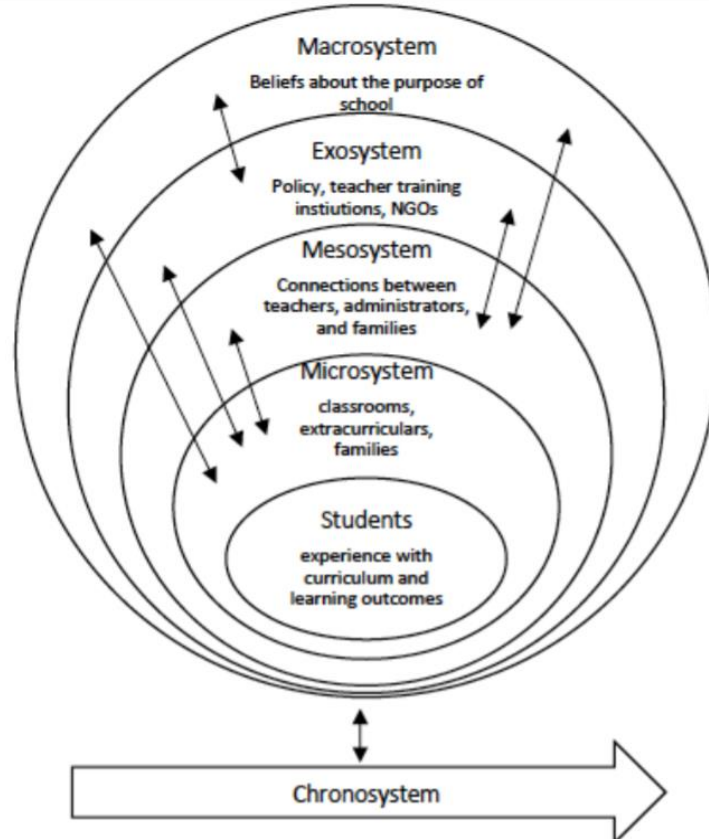
Figure 7.2 Roles within the nested levels of the education system (OCED, 2019)
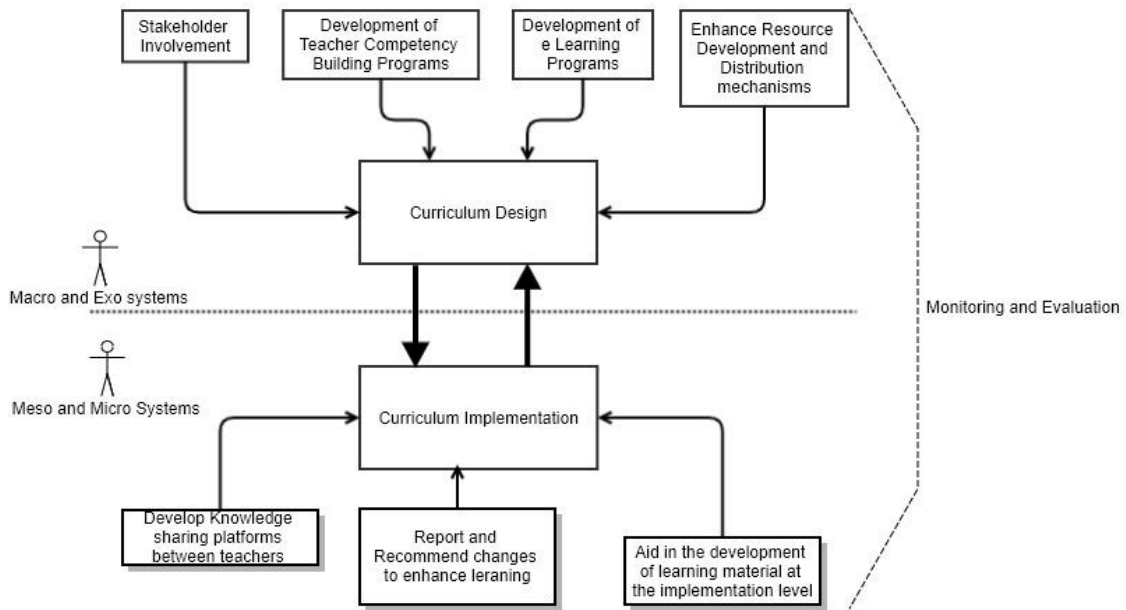
Figure 7.3 Model illustrating the recommendations of the study

Figure 7.3 represents the changes recommended to address the challenges identified in the study. There are roles to be played by different actors at all levels of the education system in Saudi Arabia. The curriculum design and implementation are interconnected. Both processes enhance each other. Monitoring and evaluation should be an ongoing process and each stakeholder has a role to play in the process. Finally, the responsibility for developing and sourcing learning and teaching material should not be left only to the government. Every level must help in identifying the actions that can be taken to supplement what the government provides.

Table 7-1 Summary of the Recommendations

Level	Key stakeholders	Recommendation	Thematic areas addressed
Macro System	National Government, Ministry of Education, Regulatory Bodies, Experts, other related entities, National associations for parents and teachers, etc	● Put together a multisectoral committee to review the current curriculum and design solutions to address some of the emerging issues (curriculum content, curriculum goals, teaching methods etc) ● Draft a funding policy that put into consideration the current capacity of respective schools, along with demands and limitations. ● Put together a competence enhancement system that encourages more interaction and knowledge building among teachers and learners.	Curriculum design Resource Limitations Teacher Competency Key stakeholder engagement

			● Engage teachers more on the curriculum design process to address emerging issues and promote more support for implementation. ● Organise the development of alternative learning material e.g., E-learning resources.	
Exo system	Regional Governments, NGOs,		● Encourage the contextualisation of the curriculum to address the immediate needs and learner characteristics at the regional level. ● Encourage cooperation between local learning institutions. ● Observe and evaluate the progress in	Curriculum design

Contextualisation of Curriculum

Curriculum Enhancement/ Resource Limitation |

			curriculum implementation and report on any limitations.	
Mesosystem	Teachers, Local Education Agency, NGOs		● Supervise the coordination activities between teachers and learners within their locality. ● Regularly report and engage stakeholders on the progress on curriculum implementation. ● Develop a knowledge sharing system that promotes interaction among teachers and learners. ● Develop a resource sharing system that can be used to make sure teaching material can be shared	Teacher competency and learner competency Curriculum enhancement Resource development Resource distribution

			between schools in the same region.	
Microsystem	Teachers, parents, learners		● Report to the regional administration on any limitations that challenge implementation.	Monitoring and Evaluation
				Resource Development
			● Recommend solutions that could help enhance curriculum implementation.	Resource Development
				Resource Development
			● Use technology and e materials for learning and teaching.	Competency Building
			● Develop material that can be used to enhance the teaching process.	Resource Development
			● Register in competency building and knowledge sharing programmes.	
			● Support schools with developing strategies to supplement the	

		resources provided by the national government.	
Student		● Report any limitations that prevent learning in classrooms. ● Adopt the use of technology in learning (in and out of classroom)	Monitoring and evaluation of content resource development

7.4 The National Social Studies Model

7.4.1 Introduction

Based on the researcher's experience as a National Social Studies (NSS) teacher for 10 years, she has noticed that the methods, the environment, the recourses, and the content of this subject face many obstacles and challenges. In this model, the researcher tries to suggest some activities and ideas to overcome the challenges and obstacles that the teachers and students face in private and public schools. In the past, the NSS curriculum was taught using a traditional method of teaching. Additionally, students followed traditional learning methods for this subject by focusing on memorisation and learning off by heart. Therefore, the researcher hopes this model can present a different method in teaching and learning NSS in KSA.

Today, the NSS in KSA is a merged subject; however, it used to be two separate subjects that had been taught in each semester. NSS lessons in Saudi schools take place five times a week for 45 minutes per lesson. This model provides a guide for teachers in involving different activities in their classes and improving higher order thinking skills by increasing

students' critical thinking and questioning skills. The activities included here take 45 to 25 minutes per lesson.

7.4.2 The budget

KSA, as one of the gulf countries, provides a high budget for education, training, and the development of the learning and teaching process. This model will involve three days' training for teachers and supervisors and requires a specialised budget. The total budget will be 300 to 500 EUR. This includes workshop materials (flipcharts, markers, stationery, other NSS materials if needed), food, drink, and others. As indicated by the results, the teachers and students face challenges when attempting to apply the activities in NSS classes, therefore the researcher suggests applying the activities with materials which make the class more innovative and interesting.

7.4.3 The Target Population

This model is designed for in-service training of NSS teachers at the high school stage to both refresh teachers' knowledge of teaching NSS and provide new ideas and methods for teaching NSS. Each training course will consist of no more than 12 teachers. However, it is highly recommended that each school in the directorate participate with at least one teacher from each school to fulfill the course requirements and to share its benefits with all students in the directorate and convince the stakeholders to take decisions towards teaching this subject in KSA.

7.4.4 The Model's Objectives

It is expected from the trainees after completing the training to:

1- establish the importance of teaching National Social Studies and creating new ways to teach and learn the NSS.
2- provide teachers with techniques for showing creative ways of teaching National Social Studies.
3- apply what they learned during training in real classroom situations.

4- share what they learned with their colleagues in the same school by using the strategy think-peer-share.

5- develop the trainees' self-awareness and analysis of their own teaching techniques, and

6- guide students to pose their own high-level thinking according to Bloom's Taxonomy.

7.4.5 Need for the Program

Teaching and learning National Social Studies is connected with higher levels of thinking according to Bloom's Taxonomy. According to Sun (2014, p. 1) "asking the right questions and engaging learners in inquiry-based learning are important steps to help students develop critical thinking and meta-cognitive skills". The need for obtaining various ways of teaching NSS leads the researcher to suggest this simple model to guide the trainees to use different strategies to help students improve their critical thinking skills in learning NSS.

7.4.6 Resources and technology

The current NSS teaching methods lack the application of technology and does not supply many resources for the class which makes it less interesting. Hence, the idea here is to bring technology and resources to the class to get students' attention and connect real-life situations with class content. The model activities will focus on engaging technology and online learning to teach and learn NSS. The teachers should apply technological tools, such as data showing, websites, and online space for some subjects.

7.4.7 The Model's activities

Some activities will be suggested in order to teach NSS more creatively and meaningfully. Due to the study results, the NSS curriculum is heavy and is taught in one term for 5 classes a week, (45 minutes per class). The researcher would like to suggest some NSS activities for school students to help them grow and develop their creativity in the subject of NSS by engaging in these activities with their teachers.

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Activity One   **Time:** 45 minutes

This activity is designed to help the teachers reflect on their current practice by looking at the levels of questions they often ask while they are teaching NSS.

Objectives:

Teachers will be able to:

1- Analyse their questions.

2- Recognise the key words for questioning in Bloom's taxonomy.

3- Identify the meaning of the question and the effective questioning strategies.

Materials:

Data show/ Handouts/ Flip chart/ Markers

Procedures:

1. The trainer asks the teachers to analyse the questions they brought with them to the session.

2. The trainer asks them to classify these questions according to Bloom Taxonomy.

   <u>**Analysis of Questions**</u>

Question	Closed-open-ended	Bloom's Taxonomy Levels	Purpose

1- The teachers discuss the <u>Key words for questioning at Bloom's six taxonomic levels</u> in pairs under the trainer's supervision (Sheet 1, p. 6).

<u>Key words for questioning at Bloom's six taxonomic levels</u>

Level	Keywords			
Knowledge	What When Who Define	Distinguish Identify List Name	Recall Reorganize Show State	Write Which Indicate Tell How
Comprehension	Compare Conclude Contrast Demonstrate Predict Reorder Which	Distinguish Estimate Explain Extend Extrapolate Rephrase Inform	What Fill In Give an Example of Hypothesis Illustrate Relate Tell in your own words	
Application	Apply Develop Test Consider	Build Plan Choose How would	Construct Solve Show your work Tell us	Demonstrate Indicate Checkout
Analysis	Analyze Categorize Describe Classify Compare	Discriminate Distinguish Recognize Support your Indicate the	Relate Explain What assumption What do you	
Synthesis	Write Think of a way Create	Suggest How Develop Make up	Plan Formulate solution Synthesize Derive	

	Propose a plan Put together	What conclusion		
Evaluation	What is Choose Evaluate Decide Judge	Select Which would you consider Denied Check	What is most Appropriate Indicate	

Source: (Teacher tools, 2009)

> 2- The trainer hands out questioning strategies to read about **Effective Questioning Techniques** the trainer encourages the teachers to work in pairs to discuss the main points about the effective questioning strategies (sheet 2, p.7&8).

7.4.8 Effective Questioning Techniques

The focus of these techniques is to gain as much information as possible about what your students know and don't know. Having this information about your students can guide your instruction as immediately as is practical.

1. **Wait Time:** give students time to think after you pose a question to the group. Research has shown that even giving students 3 to 5 seconds to process a question increases the quality and quantity of responses dramatically.

2. **No Hands Up:** unless they are specifically asked to, students are told NOT to raise their hands when a question is asked. All students should be ready to answer a question, even if the response is, "I don't know."

3. **Spiral Questioning:** lessons and questions need to be carefully structured to lead students through a step-by-step process of discovery. Students should first explore using basic cognitive skills- observation, description, identification, recall-and then spiral to eventually

higher levels of cognition such as synthesis, application, and interpretation through class discussions.

4. **ABCDE Cards:** the teacher asks or presents a multiple-choice question, and then asks students to simultaneously ("on the count of three") hold up one or more cards, labeled A, B, C, D, or E, as their individual response. ABCDE cards can be cheaply made in 4-inch x

5- **Inch white card-stock:** printed with one black, bold-print letter per card. A full set might include the letters A through H plus T. This format allows all students to select not only one correct answer, but multiple correct answers, or to answer true/false questions. This is an example of an "all-class response system" that helps the teacher to quickly get a sense of what students know or understand while engaging all students in the class. The teacher may choose to ask the question orally or to present it to the class on an overhead. The teacher then uses the information in the student responses to adapt and organize the ensuing discussion or lesson.

6. **Socratic Seminar:** ask students to write down questions that they have about concepts at the end of a reading lesson. Organize the students into small groups and designate one person to be the facilitator to guide the group discussion. Students can put forth one of their questions to the group for discussion and then the next student can ask their question. The teacher can assist any group that needs support, and/or use this as an opportunity for observation of student learning.

7. **Inquiry Questioning:** why do you think that? How do you know? Could you give me an example? What do you mean when you say . . .? What data/examples do you have to support your position? Tell me more about . . .? How might you validate or confirm . . .?

8. **Add on Responses:** ask students to "add on" to what another student has said. Often students' thinking is triggered by another person's response to a question. It's a good time to ask a most reluctant participant to give his or her input.

9. **White Board Responses:** in order to get a quick snapshot of understanding, give each student a small white board to record a short (one- or two- word) response to a question.

Students can hold them up and teachers can look around the room to see how things are progressing.

10. **Tongue Depressor Questioning:** write each student's name on a tongue depressor. Place them in a cup and pull one out when you want to ask a question to the group. The student whose name is picked can answer the question. If he or she doesn't know the answer, they can pick the next stick.

11. **Using DOK to Design Questions that Elicit Understanding:** always consider the level of the questions you are asking. If you ask recall- type questions, expect discussions that are less deep in understanding of concepts.

Source: (Teacher tools, 2009)

3. The trainer asks trainees to share their thoughts about the effective questioning strategies and write them on a flipchart.
4. The teachers write their ideas on a flipchart to present them.
5. The trainer asks two volunteers from two different groups to present their ideas about teaching NSS by using questioning strategies.
6. The trainer asks the trainees to write a reflection on Activity one and to keep a copy in their portfolios (sheet 3, p. 9)
7. Trainer asks Teachers to post their feedback on FB group that we suppose was established to share their thoughts and ideas as NSS teachers around KSA.

> **Reflect**

Take a moment to reflect on what you have learned in this session. Write 2–3 sentences for each question below in the space provided. Please give the completed form to the trainer.

Questions:

1. Describe 1-2 questioning strategies presented in this session.

2. Explain how you would differentiate questioning techniques using one strategy addressed in this session.

3. Recommend one strategy to a colleague and defend why that strategy is important to use in teaching critical thinking skills of NSS.

Source: (Julie Reed and Koliba 2005)

Activity Two   **Time:** 45 minutes

Objectives

Trainees will be able to:

      1- identify question Hierarchy Techniques.

      2- demonstrates critical thinking skills.

      3- apply questioning strategies on a text of NSS textbooks.

Material:

Photos/ flash cards for the words

National Social studies textbook

Procedures:

    1. The trainer asks the teachers to discuss Question Hierarchy Techniques in pairs (sheet 4, p. 11)
    2. The trainer asks the teachers to apply these techniques to *NSS* activities.
    3. The teachers demonstrate these techniques based on *NSS*.
    4. The teachers practice posing high-level questions.

VOCABULARY **H9**

7.4.9 Question Hierarchy Techniques

It starts with a yes/no question. For example, if we use a picture to start a conversation about a classroom setting, a simple yes/ no question could be, "Is this room bright?" The next question is a choice question, such as "Is this classroom on the first floor or the second floor?" Then I'll use three levels of "WH" questions. Examples of Level 1 WH questions could include, "How many students are there in the room?" or "How many desks are there in the classroom?" Examples for Level 2 WH questions may include, "What are the three things that you like about this classroom?" Examples for Level 3 WH could include "Why do you like or dislike this classroom?" Students can expand the questions to ask about their workplace, neighborhoods, daily life, etc. They can practice yes/ no questions, choice questions, and WH questions at the same time.

F.I.R.E Questions

F.I.R.E. stands for four areas of thinking: Factual, Insightful, Rational and Evaluative.

Factual Thinking

This type of thinking involves gathering factual information and applying it to a given problem in a way that is clear and relevant. If we use Bloom's taxonomy, it fits well with the knowledge and comprehension domain (e.g., what are the relevant facts?). The question words we often use are: who, when, where, and how many.

Insightful Thinking

This is to "imagine and seek out a variety of possible goals, assumptions, interpretations, or perspectives which can give alternative meanings or solutions to given situations or problems."

They are often the "big picture" and "depth" questions (e.g., what is the larger context, or "big picture," of the problem or a situation in the story?). The question words often used are what, which, why, how, and what if.

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Rational Thinking

This is to "analyse the logical connections among the facts, goals, and implicit assumptions relevant to a problem or a situation" (e.g., what are the major components, necessary sequences or orders which structure this problem or situation, or what process did you use in working with this problem?). They are often "breadth" questions and require learners to make logical connections between facts and issues in a situation. The question words often used are what, how, and what steps. Insightful and Rational Thinking overlaps with Bloom's taxonomy Application, Analysis, and Synthesis domains.

Evaluative Thinking

This is "recognizing and articulating the feelings and value assumptions which underlie and affect decisions, interpretations, analyses and evaluations made by ourselves and others" (e.g., what feels most important to you in this situation and why?). Learners need to make a judgment, and reflect and relate to "real-life" experiences. The question words often used are what, how, and why.

With practice, students get better at using these questioning techniques whenever they read an article or a story, discuss a picture, or hold a debate on current issues.

Source: (Sun, 2014)

4- The trainer will demonstrate the following activity (sheets 4, p. 11) as a teacher by:

a. Posting photos on the wall, which are related to the content of NSS activities. Source (NSS textbook, Secondary education, Term system, 2019, p 13-18)

The Content of NSS

أولاً: المقومات الدينية:

تمثل المملكة العربية السعودية القلب النابض للعالم الإسلامي، ومهوى أفئدة ملايين المسلمين في أنحاء العالم كافة، بما تحتضنه من الأماكن المقدسة، كالمسجد الحرام في مكة المكرمة، والمسجد النبوي في المدينة المنورة، ومشاعر الحج المقدسة. كما تستقبل المملكة العربية السعودية كل عام ملايين الحجاج والزوار ليبث الله الحرام ومسجد نبيه محمد ﷺ.

ومن مقومات المملكة العربية السعودية الدينية اعتمادها في نظامها على كتاب الله القرآن الكريم والسنة النبوية الشريفة.

معلومات إثرائية

مضيق هرمز: يقـع علـى الخليج العربي، وهـو واحد مـن أهم ممـر مضيقا في العـالم، ويبلغ عرضـه نحـو(٥٠) كـم، وتبلغ أضيـق نقطة فيه نحـو(٢١) كم، وتتمثـل أهميـة الإستراتيجية في كونه معبـرا لنحـو (١٠,٣٥) مـن النفط المنقول بحـرا على مستوى العالم.

المسجد النبوي

المسجد الحرام

ثانياً: المقومات الجغرافية:

للمملكة العربية السعودية موقع جغرافي مهم وإستراتيجي، فهي تقع بين ثلاث قارات: آسيا وإفريقيا وأوروبا، كما أنها تطل على البحر الأحمر غرباً، والخليج العربي شرقاً، ويحيط بها أكثر المعابر المائية أهمية في العالم، وهما: مضيق هرمز، ومضيق باب المندب.

كما أسهم هذا الموقع الإستراتيجي المهم في أن يكون حلقة اتصال بين القارات الثلاث في العالم، وبخاصة في مجال التبادل التجاري والحركة والانتقال.

فكر

يعدد الطلبة أهم المضايق الأخرى في العالم.

تقوم المملكة العربية السعودية على مبادئ وثوابت وأسس تنطلق من رسالتها وأهدافها، فهي قبلة المسلمين، وأرض الحرمين الشريفين، وموقعها الجغرافي يربط بين قارات العالم، وتطل على مسطحين مائيين مهمين، هما: الخليج العربي والبحر الأحمر.

وينص النظام الأساسي للحكم في المملكة العربية السعودية على أن المملكة دولة إسلامية ذات سيادة تامة، دينها الإسلام، ودستورها كتاب الله تعالى وسنة رسوله ﷺ، ولغتها هي اللغة العربية، وعاصمتها مدينة الرياض.

وورد في المادة الخامسة والعشرين من نظام الحكم ما يأتي: «تحرص الدولة على تحقيق آمال الأمتين العربية والإسلامية في التضامن وتوحيد الكلمة وعلى تقوية علاقاتها بالدول الصديقة».

المملكة العربية السعودية

في هذا الدرس

• الأسـس والمبـادئ التـي قامت عليها المملكة العربية السعودية.
• علاقة المملكة العربية السعودية بالـدول الخليجيـة والعربيـة والإسلامية والصديقة.
• دور المملكة الإغاثي.

تعلم ذاتي

صدر النظام الأساسي للحكم في المملكـة العربيـة السـعودية عـام ١٤١٢هـ، ويتكون مـن تسـعة أبواب، وثمـانين مـادة، يستخرج الطلبة النصوص المتعلقة بمسـؤولية المملكة العربيـة السـعودية تجـاه العالـم العربـي والعالـم الإسلامي.

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فكر

ماذا يعني موقع المملكة العربية السعودية الجغرافي للعالم؟

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وتهذا تؤدي المملكة العربية السعودية دوراً سياسياً فاعلاً يُمكنها من إرساء علاقات وطيدة بين جيرانها من الدول العربية، وسع غيرها من الدول الأخرى، ومن حل الخلافات التي قد تنشأ بين الدول العربية والإسلامية، ولها مواقف متعددة في الوقوف مع هذه الدول في قضاياها، وتقديم الدعم الكامل لها.

والمملكة العربية السعودية علاقات تعاون مع الدول الصديقة، وتعطي باحترام وتقدير متبادل، كما أن لها دوراً فاعلاً في القرارات الدولية، وهي عضو في كثير من الهيئات الدولية، ومن الأعضاء المؤسسين لهيئة الأمم المتحدة عام ١٩٤٥م.

الملك عبدالعزيز بن عبدالرحمن آل سعود

◄ رابعاً: المقومات السياسية:

يعود تاريخ المملكة العربية السعودية إلى منتصف القرن الثاني عشر الهجري عندما تأسست الدولة السعودية الأولى عام ١١٥٧هـ وتقوم المملكة العربية السعودية على أساس نظام الحكم الملكي، يكون الحكم فيه في أبناء المؤسس الملك عبدالعزيز بن عبدالرحمن الفيصل آل سعود، وأبناء الأبناء، ويبايع الأصلح منهم بالحكم على كتاب الله تعالى، وسنة رسوله ﷺ.

وهذا من أهم مقومات المملكة العربية السعودية من حيث أساسها السياسي المستقر والقائم على مبادئ إسلامية، وتاريخها العريق الأصيل على أرض الجزيرة العربية، وكذلك اعتماد النظام الملكي على البيعة، وهو مبدأ إسلامي أصيل، يؤدي إلى الاستقرار وتحقيق المصالح العامة شرعاً ومصدراً.

الملك سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود ملك المملكة العربية السعودية

الأمير محمد بن سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود ولي العهد، نائب رئيس مجلس الوزراء وزير الدفاع

Photos on the wall

△ المملكة العربية السعودية

△ المسجد النبوي

△ المسجد الحرام

▲ الملك عبدالعزيز بن عبدالرحمن آل سعود

▲ صاحب السمو الملكي
الأمير محمد بن سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود
ولي العهد، نائب رئيس مجلس الوزراء، وزير الدفاع

▲ خادم الحرمين الشريفين
الملك سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود
ملك المملكة العربية السعودية

b. The trainer guides teachers to pose their questions based on the photos

صاحب السمو الملكي ▲
الأمير محمد بن سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود
ولي العهد، نائب رئيس مجلس الوزراء، وزير الدفاع

خادم الحرمين الشريفين ▲
الملك سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود
ملك المملكة العربية السعودية

above.

c. The trainer asks teachers to read the content of the lesson and highlight the main ideas.

d. The trainer guides them to pose questions on each page.

e. The trainer asks teachers to post their questions on a flipchart.

f. The trainer asks all teachers to find answers to the posted questions.

g. The teachers respond to the questions.

5- Trainer asks Teachers to post their feedback on FB group that we supposed established to share their thoughts and ideas as NSS teachers around KSA.

Activity Three: **Brainstorming Questions**   **Time: 25 minutes**

Procedures:

1- The teacher prepares questions to brainstorm students' ideas about this passage.

     Examples:

1- What does **Gulf Cooperation Council** mean?
2- What kinds of activities do they do during their meetings?
3- How shall the Arab countries be a part of it?
4- Could this council participate in global affairs?
5- What are the main objectives of this council?

2- The teacher demonstrates (what) using questions prompts.

Example: I am going to ask all of you a question. Everyone needs to hear the question and be ready with an answer to share with the class in 1 minute. Here is the question: what is "**Gulf Cooperation Council** "?

(Reading Horizons, 2016)

Activity Four: Summarising Practice   **Time: 15 minutes**

Procedures:

1- The teacher asks students to read the text and highlight the main ideas.
2- At this point, the students don't need to stop looking up anything that gives them trouble.
3- The teacher asks students to divide the text into sections.
4- The students write down the main idea of each section in one well-developed sentence.
5- The teacher alerts students to be sure that what they include in sentences are key points, not minor details like numbers.

6- The students review their summary and discuss it in pairs.

7- The teacher guides them to have a class discussion.

8- The teacher wraps the lesson by asking students the following questions:

   a. Do you think the Arab world will be united again in the future? How?

   b. Nowadays, people depend more on the technological ways of communication. Do you agree with this statement? Why/why not.

   c. Students post their feelings and thoughts on NSS group on FB.

Activity Five: <u>KWL Chart</u>   **Time: 15 minutes**

Procedures:

   1- The teacher asks the students to use the KWL chart to list the information they already know about Saudi Arabia and the Arab Cases.

Source: (Ogle, 1986)

المملكة العربية السعودية والقضايا العربية | الدرس الثاني

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في هذا الدرس

• دعم المملكة العربية السعودية للقضايا العربية.

• دور المملكة العربية السعودية في تأسيس مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية.

للمملكة العربية السعودية مكانة مميزة بين الـدول العربية، بما تمتلكه من ثقل ديني وسياسـي واقتصادي، وهي من الدول المؤسسـة لجامعة الدول العربية ولمجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية، كما تتمتع باسـتقرار سياسـي مكّنها أن تكون في موقع القيـادة، علاوة على ما تمتلكه من موارد اقتصادية كبيرة.

وللمملكة العربية السعودية مبـادرات مختلفة لحـل قضايا الدول العربية ومساعدة شعوبها، جاء ذلك من حرصها على أمن العالم العربي واستقراره، والوقوف أمام كل ما يعكر صفو وحدته، فمنذ إعلان الملك عبدالعزيـز توحيد البلاد عام ١٣٥١هـ والملك عبدالعزيز ﷺ وجدناه يبذل كل ما في وسـعه من أجل وحدة الوطن العربي وسلامة أراضيه، حيث بعث في عام ١٣٥٤هـ ولي عهده الأمير سعود بن عبدالعزيز إلى القدس لدعم الفلسطينيين في قضيتهم، بل أعلن رفضه التام لمشروع تقسيم فلسطين، وبذل جهوداً كبيرة لمنع ذلك التقسـيم، كما كلّف ابنه الأمير فيصل بن عبدالعزيز لتكوين لجان شـعبية في المملكة لجمع التبرعات لإنقاذ فلسطين وشعبها، وأرسل رسائل تاريخية إلى الرئيس الأمريكي (فرانكلين روزفلت) لدعم الحق الفلسطيني.

كما دعم الملك عبدالعزيز اسـتقلال سـورية والعراق، واتخذ خطوات عملية لتحقيق ذلك، وسعى لتجاوز الخلافات بينهما، وتنمية العلاقات الأخوية مع مصر.

وسـار أبنـاؤه الملوك من بعده على النهج نفسـه، فكانوا يبادرون إلى تقديم كل عـون ودعم للعرب في قضاياهم المختلفة.

ومن الأمثلة على هذه المواقف المثمرة تجاه الدول العربية:

• دعم تأسيس مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية.

• دعم استقلال لبنان واستقراره.

• دعم مصر.

• دعم استقلال الجزائر.

2- The students fill what they want to learn by posing questions about the lesson.

3- The students discuss their posed questions in pairs.

4- The students share the posed questions with the class.

Activity Six: <u>Think- Answer Questions</u>   **Time: 8-10 minutes**

Procedures:

The teacher discusses the following questions with the students.

1- How would you describe the role of KSA towards the Arab cases?

2- Based on this text, would you like to share your country's stories on your social media pages? Why/why not?

3- Why did the Saudi people have a responsibility towards the Arab world?

4- Write a statement on your FB page to express your feelings towards other Arab world countries such as Palestine, Iraq, Syria..

Activity Seven: <u>Think- Pair- Share</u>   **Time: 10-15 minutes**

Procedures:

1- The teacher gives the students time to read the lesson and write down three questions on note papers as they read.

2- The teacher guides the students to ask higher-level questions (e.g. Why did the people do to help each other around the world? If I want to be part of a global initiative to help others, what will it be? Why?)

3- The teacher guides the students to follow Think- Pair- Share strategy in this activity. (Reading Rockets, 2015)

       a. Students write their own questions individually.

       b. Students discuss their questions in pairs.

       c. Students share their questions with the class.

       d. The students find answers to the posted questions.

Activity Eight: <u>Fact vs. Opinion</u>   **Time: 5-8 minutes**

Procedures:

1- The teacher asks the students to write down two facts and two opinions from the text.

Fact	Opinion

2- The teacher asks some students to post their answers on the board.
3- Students justify their answers.
4- The teacher asks students to show the main differences between a fact and an opinion.
5- The teacher guides students to make online activity by using Google forms by asking their community about facts on KSA. Other groups make online activity about an issue face the Saudi people and how they react towards it.

7.4.10 The Study Model

The triangle shape looks like Bloom's Taxonomy, Nathan (2010) stressed engaging students' attention and imagination to push them into thinking about big ideas and questions. Nathan recommends teaching comprehension strategies and critical thinking, such as analysing, summarising main ideas, and having students ask themselves questions about what they have read. Teachers should explain and model any strategy they teach.

Teachers usually start with basic education to focus on the first three levels, on the other hand, in secondary education we focus on all levels but unfortunately in KSA we still focus on memorisation and understanding the content of NSS. What we want is to apply the upper three levels of the bloom taxonomy. The student should be able to discuss, defend, and criticise some issues and some of his/her point of view to graduate global citizens. Nowadays, the situation in KSA is different in that it enters a new decade of lifestyle for two

reasons; the first the new updates in the KSA which is now called "The New KSA" and the other one is COVID 19 which has changed the education system in overnight. The researcher suggest this model which focuses on our **objectives** as teachers, as we want to lead the change in the education system from memorisation to critical thinking. To do this, we first begin at the bottom with "**Needs**", this means that we should focus on our needs as teachers and our students' needs. This leads us to engage the **target populations** in take sharp decisions towards this (students, teachers, parents, stakeholders). And then, we need to set the **budget** by the Ministry of Education to achieve our goals or objectives.
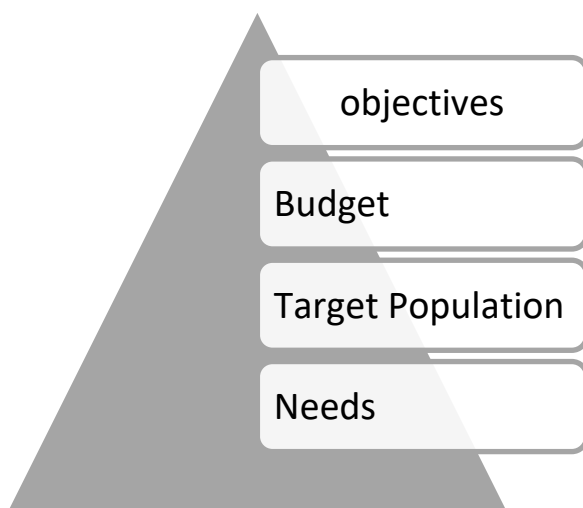
Figure 7.4 Hierarchy of foci of NSS in KSA

In response to the global situation around the world, COVID 19, the Ministry of Education moves towards online learning. The classes are given; students do their homework at home and send it by email or other online apps. We can apply this to NSS to develop it into an online learning subject; students can watch videos and have assessments. They share their ideas on the discussion platforms. In this case, the self-learning will be more effective and valuable. In the study the NSS subject is described as "heavy, boring material". My idea here is to put 30% of the evaluation on e-learning. As we see the KSA situation is a little bit different these past decades and it has even led to the phrase "new KSA" to emerge. So, I hope the stakeholders adopt some new ways in learning and teaching in our schools.

intended.

7.5 Limitations of the Study

The study did present many challenges, however the researcher made all effort to handle some of the challenges that came up. The first challenge was the reluctance by some of the respondents to cooperate with the researcher. Private schools seemed more unwilling to offer deeper insight into some of the issues the researcher was interested in discussing. The study also involved learners who were nervous to offer their honest opinion to the researcher when they were with their teachers. The researcher was unable to get around this limitation in some institutions because some schools gave the approval to involve learners but only on conditions that their staff were present at all times during any interactions with the learners. The duration allocated for the entire study was also very limited thus the researcher was not able to contact as many schools as was originally intended.

7.6 Conclusion

The recommended policies and practices that can help to improve the overall experience of learners and teachers in the Kingdom were guided by the issues that were identified in the data analysis stage. The first recommendation is that the education sector needs to accommodate a wider and targeted engagement of the stakeholders in the education sector, especially teachers in order to how to tackle some of the ongoing issues affecting the implementation of the national social studies curriculum. Secondly, teachers need some sort of skill enhancement process that should be conducted regularly to allow them to enhance and share knowledge in the best methods and tools that can be applied in teaching national social studies. Thirdly, the government needs to address the issues regarding resource distribution in the public sector if they want to promote quality education. Additionally, the curriculum in grades 11 and 12 need to be reviewed to redistribute the content in an appropriate manner for each respective age group. Also, the class capacity in public schools needs to be controlled to make sure teachers can help learners more effectively. Additionally, teaching should be learner led and should also consider the context of the learners. Finally, blended learning that allows teachers and learners to use technology to enhance their respective experiences should be enhanced in the region to address some of the challenges caused by the overreliance on government material resources.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interviewing Female Students

Students No.:
Time of interview:

Place of interview:

Before commencing the interview, it will be reiterated to the participant that the interview will be anonymous, confidential and that they have the right to withdraw at any time. Permission to record the interview will be then obtained, and it will also be stated that the collected data will be used for academic research purposes only and that no names will be mentioned.

Following this, a general introduction of the thesis, its title and objectives will be given to the interviewee.

Introductory Questions:

Student's school:

Student's class:

Student's age:

Q1: What would you evaluate to be your level of social sciences?

Q2: What are the most serious challenges and problems you - as a student - face when learning the curriculum of social sciences?

Now, let us elaborate upon the curriculum of social sciences.

School Environment:

Q3: What are your opinions of the classrooms in terms of their size, equipment, and suitability for student numbers?

Q4: Is the school environment compatible for the social sciences curriculum?

Q5: Are there books and references for this subject available in the library?

Activities and Exercises:

Q6: Does the curriculum provide activities and exercises that help students better understand the lessons?

Q7: Are the activities relevant to the subject and the students' environment?

Q8: Are the materials and tools required to perform the activities readily available?

Q9: What are your opinions of the time allocated to each activity?

Q10: Do you think the activities are too difficult or too easy? And do you feel the instructions are clear or ambiguous?

Q11: Would you like to add anything regarding the activities and the exercises?

Content:

Q12: Are the hours specified in the educational plan enough to cover the topics of the book?

Q13: What do you think of the contents of the book? Are they compatible with the students' intellectual level? Do you think this book takes into consideration the fact that students have diverging skills?

Q14: Are there spelling, linguistic or academic mistakes? Does it repeat itself?

Q15: What are your opinions of having history and geography in one book?

Assessment:

Q16: What are the adopted methodologies of assessments? What are your opinions of these?

Q17: Do the students avail the results of their assessments and develop their achievements in social sciences?

Q18: What do you think of the tests in terms of their difficulty, clarity, inclusiveness, and time allocated to answer them?

Q19: Would you like to add any positive or negative points related to the teaching of social sciences?

Teachers & Teaching Methodologies:

Q20: What do you think of the teaching methodologies in terms of their divergence, discussion management and educational tools?

Q21: Do teachers take student differences into consideration?

Q22: What is your opinion of the way in which teachers deal with their students?

Upon completing the interview, the student will be thanked for their participation.

Appendix B: Student Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is designed to facilitate research concerning the problems and challenges faced by the social sciences curriculum of secondary schools.

The information gathered from this questionnaire shall be treated as confidential and will be used for scientific research purposes only.

Participation is optional and no requests will be made for personal data.

Instructions:

This questionnaire will take 5-10 minutes to complete.

Please tick the appropriate box or complete the answer where relevant.

There is no right or wrong answer. Please choose the answer which best represents your opinion.

School Name:	School Type: □ Public □ Private
Class:	Age:

Please indicate your response by placing an X on the relevant box.

Statement	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak
What is your evaluation of your level of Social Sciences?					

Part 1: instructional Environment.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The classrooms are suitable for the number of the students.					
2	The number of students in the classroom help with implementing teaching modern techniques.					
3	The appropriate teaching methods are available inside the classrooms.					
4	The school environment helps with implementing teaching modern techniques.					
5	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum.					
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently.					
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references to serve the subject.					

Part 2: Activities & Exercise

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other.					
2	The activities taken in class are relevant to the lesson's objectives					
3	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.					
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.					
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material.					
6	The activities equipped the student with problem solving skills.					
7	The activities are written in a clear and accessible language.					
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing their mental skills.					
9	The activities are related to the student environment.					
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate.					

Part 3: Textbook content.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The textbook content is suitable for the students' mental capacity.					
2	The content is suitable for all individual differences.					
3	The new content helps the student to learn new strategies.					
4	The content is free of scientific, linguistic, and spelling errors.					
5	Contains new experiences for the students.					
6	The content lacks repetitive information.					
7	The content encourages interaction inside the classroom.					
8	There is variation in presenting the class lesson.					

Part 4: Teachers & Teaching Methods

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The teachers teach the study materials efficiently and proficiently.					
2	the teachers focus on the important points of the lesson.					
3	The teachers take into account the individual differences between students.					
4	The teachers lead the discussion and dialogue within the classroom					
5	Teachers use multiple teaching methods.					
6	The teachers can communicate effectively with students in the classroom.					
7	The teachers use educational methods during the lesson.					

Part 5: Evaluation methods.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The evaluation methods are clear and concise.					
2	Exam questions relate to the course.					
3	The time allotted for answering examination questions is sufficient.					
4	Evaluation results are given within a suitable timeframe.					
5	The exam environment is quite and comfortable and helps with answering the questions.					
6	Test questions range from easy to difficult.					

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix C: Interviewing Female Teachers

Teacher No.

Time of interview:

Place of interview:

 Before commencing the interview, it will be reiterated to the participant that the interview will be anonymous, confidential and that they have the right to withdraw at any time. Permission to record the interview will be then obtained, and it will also be stated that the collected data will be used for academic research purposes only and that no names will be mentioned.

Following this, a general introduction of the thesis, its title and objectives will be given to the interviewee.

Questions:

School:

Qualifications:

Teaching experience:

Classes taught:

Q1: What is your evaluation of your students' general level of comprehension of the Social Sciences?

Q2: Prior to elaborating on the details, in general what do you think of the new curriculum of social sciences?

Q3: What are the most serious challenges and problems you as a teacher face when teaching the curriculum of social sciences?

Now let us elaborate on points or parts of the curriculum of social sciences:

School Environment:

Q4: What are your opinions of the classrooms in terms of their size, equipment, and suitability for student numbers?

Q5: Is the school environment compatible for the social sciences curriculum?

Q6: Are there books and references for this subject available in the library?

Activities and Exercises:

Q7: Does the curriculum provide activities and exercises that help students better understand the lessons?

Q8: Are the activities relevant to the subject and the students' environment?

Q9: Are the materials and tools required to perform the activities readily available?

Q10: What are your opinions of the time allocated to each activity?

Q11: Do you think the activities are too difficult or too easy, and do you feel the instructions are clear or ambiguous?

Q12: Do the students positively interact and participate during the activities?

Q13: Would you like to add anything about the activities and the exercises?

Content:

Q14: Are the hours specified in the educational plan enough to cover the topics of the

book?

Q15: What do you think of the contents of the book? Are they compatible with the students' intellectual level? Do you think this book takes into consideration the fact that students have diverging skills?

Q16: Are there spelling, linguistic or academic mistakes? Does it repeat itself?

Q17: What are your opinions of having history and geography in one book?

Q18: Do the contents help teachers adopt interesting methodologies that the students can enjoy?

Assessment:

Q19: What are the adopted methodologies of assessments? What are your opinions of these?

Q20: To what extent can teachers devise the methodology adopted to assess the students?

Q21: Do the students avail the results of their assessments and build on their achievements in social sciences?

Teachers & Teaching Methodologies:

Q22: Would you like to add any positive or negative points pertinent to social sciences and teaching it?

Upon completing the interview, the teacher will be thanked for their participation.

Appendix D: Teachers Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is designed to facilitate research concerning the problems and challenges faced by the social sciences curriculum of secondary schools.

The information gathered from this questionnaire shall be treated as confidential and will be used for scientific research purposes only.

Participation is optional and no requests will be made for personal data.

Instructions:

This questionnaire will take 5-10 minutes to complete.

Please tick the appropriate box or complete the answer where relevant.

There is no right or wrong answer. Please choose the answer which best represents your opinion.

School Name:	School Type: □ Public □ Private
Class:	Classes you Taught:
Years of Experience:	Qualification:

Please indicate your response by placing an X on the relevant box.

Statement	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak
What is your evaluation of your students' general level of comprehension of the Social Sciences?					

Part 1: Instructional Environment.

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The classrooms are suitable for the number of the students.					
2	The school provides the appropriate learning methods.					
3	The school environment helps with implementing modern teaching techniques.					
4	The school environment is suitable for the new curriculum.					
5	The class is suitable for dividing students into groups.					
6	Equipment inside the classroom such as projectors work efficiently.					
7	The library has the appropriate sources and references.					

Part 2: Activities & Exercise

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The activities help students cooperate with each other					
2	The required materials and tools are available to carry out the activities.					
3	There are clear instructions for activities.					
4	The exercises provide the students with new and interesting information.					
5	The activities help the student consolidate the scientific material.					
6	The activities equipped the student with problem solving skills.					
7	The activities are written in a clear and accessible language.					
8	The activities stimulate the students' thinking and developing their mental skills.					
9	The activities are related to student environment.					
10	The time allotted for the activities is appropriate.					

Part 3: Textbook Content

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The book theme is in proportion with the number of hours allocated in school curriculum.					
2	The textbook content is suitable for students' mental capacity.					
3	The content is suitable for individual differences.					
4	The new content helps student to learn new strategies and learning methods.					
5	Contains new experiences for the students.					
6	The content is exciting and interesting.					
7	The contents lack repetitive information.					
8	The content encourage interaction inside the classroom.					
9	The content helps variation in presenting.					

Part 4: Evaluation Methods

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The exam questions cover the curriculum.					
2	The time is adequate and appropriate to answer the exam questions.					
3	The students receive the assessment result in a timely manner.					
4	The exam environment is quiet, and comfortable, and helps the student answer the questions.					
5	The exam questions range from easy to difficult.					
6	The teacher has the choice to select the methods of students' assessment.					

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix E: DCU Ethics Approval Letter

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

DCU

Zahwah Alanazi
School of STEM Education, Innovation & Global Studies

Dr. Thomas McCloughlin
School of STEM Education, Innovation & Global Studies

17th June 2021

Proposal Title: Challenges Faced by Female Teachers and Students of High School in Teaching and Learning National Social Studies Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

Dear Colleagues,

After reviewing the information provided, the REC have accepted the ethical approval provided by Zahwah Alanazi (supervised by Dr. Thomas McCloughlin) from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia for the project listed above.

Yours sincerely,

Geraldine Scanlon

Dr. Geraldine Scanlon
Chairperson
DCU Research Ethics Committee

DCU
Research & Innovation

Taighde & Nuálaíocht Tacaíocht
Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath,
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Appendix F: Ministry of Education Approval Form – Saudi Arabia

وزارة التعليم

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
إدارة التعليم بمنطقة تبوك
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

الرقم: ٧٣
التاريخ: ١٤٣٩/١/٦هـ
المرفقات: ٥

٢٠٣٠

وفقها الله

إلى: مديرة الثانوية ....

من: مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير.

بشأن:تسهيل مهمة الباحثة /زهوه سلامه مطير العنزي.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

إشارة الى خطاب الملحقية الثقافية السعودية في ايرلندا رقم – وتاريخ ٢٠١٧/٩/٢١م . بشأن تسهيل مهمة الباحثة/زهوة سلامه العنزي وهي احدى طالبات جامعة مدينة دبلن وترغب في تطبيق أداة رسالتها لدرجة الدكتوراه التي بعنوان (المشكلات والتحديات التي تواجه مناهج العلوم الاجتماعية في المدارس الثانوية). عليه نأمل منكم التكرم بالتعاون مع الباحثة وتسهيل مهمتها في تطبيق إجراء الدراسة.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

عبدالرحمن بن ناصر الناصر
مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

جوا/ ابتل المطري

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