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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOMS:
THE CASE IN THE SECOND CYCLE PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF
WESTERN GOJJAM AND BAHIR DAR
ADMINISTRATIVE ZONES

ASNAKE TAREKEGN

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WESTERN GOJJAM AND BAHIRDAR
ADMINISTRATIVE ZONES**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore students' experience in social studies classrooms. The study takes place in the context of the recently introduced (1996) second cycle primary schools social studies curriculum in Amhara Region.

For the purpose, the perspectives of those who are directly impacted by the curriculum changes-students were the main subjects of the study. In addition, subject teachers, who are close to students, were also the source of information. Moreover, attempts were made to obtain data about the transparency of the teaching-learning processes in enhancing students' experience through systematic observations of classrooms in live situations.

Principal findings are that students view the contents and learning experiences of social studies as 'providing them an opportunity to be more sensitive to social and environmental problems', 'to learn some to be better citizens', 'to increase own exposure to people who are different', and the like. Most of the respondents also reflected that, social studies have immediate and direct relevance to the development of their social knowledge, attitudes and skills. The majority of the students believe that the contents and learning experiences are 'enjoyable and stimulating'. The overall attitude of the majority of students toward social studies is found to be 'favorable'. However, this study showed as the majority of students are of the opinion that the contents and learning experiences of social studies are 'difficult', that required them to apply hard efforts to master, 'broad' that required them to cover much contents in so little time, and 'remote' that required them to handle so unfamiliar facts, concepts, generalizations and the like.

Teachers also endorsed the feelings of students regarding the 'difficulty' and 'broadness' of the social studies curricular materials meant for the specified groups. But teachers also condemned students for failures to do reasonable efforts. Then, their response showed a discrepancy from students concerning the 'interest' and 'willingness' of students in accomplishing subject related tasks. Though the social studies teachers reported that they are competent to teach the subject and have a favorable attitude towards their tasks, their instructional attempts in enhancing students' experience is found to be deficient. Students seemed less considered as an agent for their own learning. Meanwhile, they are not provided opportunities to be active.

The classroom interaction too, found to be less transparent for the quality and nature of student learning. Therefore, it was concluded that the second cycle primary school students who are found in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones are encountered for moderately relevant, interesting and enjoyable but challenging contents and passive learning experiences.

Accordingly, the findings from this exploratory study suggest issues like: the need of reinforcing the existing favorable attitudes towards the subject; the need of being aware of the problems that come from introducing the concepts too early; the need of employing active instructional strategies to ensure student learning, and the need of authentic, and valuable atmosphere for two-way classroom interaction

CHAPTER ONE

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

One way to begin the process of improving school practice is to listen to students' views about them and to watch at their learning activities. According to Nieto (1994:420), students have important lessons to teach educators. By listening to what students have to say, educators are more able to (1) transform schools to better educate students, (2) understand the sense students are making of the curriculum so as to decide how to change it, (3) understand diverse perspectives that need to be part of the theories of learning and teaching, and (4) demonstrate respect for students (Nolen, 1994; cited in McCombs and Whisler, 1997:31).

However, for the most part, discussions about developing strategies to solve educational problems lack the perspectives of one of the very groups they must affect – students. Hoo quoted by Nieto (1994), captured the fact that educators are losing compelling opportunity to learn from students and described that:

Somehow educators have forgotten the important connection between teachers and students. We listen to outside experts to inform us, and consequently, we overlook the treasure in our backyards – our students (p.420).

Especially, a common assumption among educators has been that if student experiences problems, the source of the difficulty must lie within the students. This deficit model is now being replaced with a more realistic view that problems can sometimes be traced to the match between a given student and the materials and methods used for instruction (McKenna and Robinson, 1993:36). Moreover, traditionally people think of the classroom as the place where the teacher 'knows' and the students 'don't know' and their reason for being there is to 'find out'. In recent years this approach has been viewed with less and less favor as learner-centered teaching and skills-based learning is experimented

(Deller, 1990, 1990; Leather and Rinvolutri, 1989; cited in Wajnryb, 1992:119). The key to this approach is for the student to be an active and not a passive partner in the totality of his or her education program.

Hence, attention has expanded recently, to include student perceptions and behavior in classrooms as well as the cognitive operations involved in the school curriculum (Anderson, Spiro, and Motague, 1977; Doyle, 1977; Levine and Wang, 1982; Rosenshine, 1979; Weinstein, 1982; cited in Doyle, 1983:159). With this expansion has come an awareness of the need to understand the character of academic work and how students in classrooms experience that work.

That work is the curriculum, and it has always been the key to what happens in schools. In this regard, Eggelston (1980:1) wrote that curriculum is the device through which the vast ranges of knowledge, values, skills, roles, etc., which the school offers to its pupils is organized, taught, and eventually evaluated. For this reason, there has always been curriculum document as knowledge has changed, methodology has advanced and the results of efforts have illuminated practice.

Fundamentally, curriculum can be viewed from several perspectives. From the administrator's point of view, there is the intended curriculum that is the curriculum produced by the curriculum developers. From the teachers' point of view there is the implemented curriculum that is the curriculum as it is presented to students in their classrooms. From the students' point of view, there is the attained or realized curriculum, which is the curriculum as learned or assimilated by them (Adeleke, 1998:1).

The success of curriculum implementation is hence, a collaborative effort to which students, teachers and the curricula as well as the supports of the external sources come together. In particular, the teaching-learning process, often called the 'Teaching-Learning Transaction' (Arega, 1975) is important. This is due to its role in involving the learner, the teacher and the learning environment.

This process takes place mainly in school, where children are supposed to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and learn attitudes in an organized manner. Hence, as long as schools are social institutions set up for advancing and directing the learning process, the society demands of them to maintain integrity and respond to the needs of the students.

However, the curriculum does not always function as smoothly and powerfully as intended. For a variety of reasons, students may fail to learn or refuse to learn all that the curriculum plans propose. The students may refuse to learn not only by refusing to sit still but, as stated by Erickson and Shultz (1996) by going through apparent learning without actually assimilating what was presented in the curriculum “meal”. The students may withhold assimilating what is being attempted by offering what Dewey called ‘outer attention’ as distinct from “inner attention”.

Such conditions are more serious in some subjects than in others. For instance, student survey data spanning several decades (Haladyna and Thomas, 1979; Jerslid, 1949; Morrisset, 1982) indicated that students consistently find social studies to be the least interesting of the major subjects, despite their focus on human affairs. The researchers, typically, cited the boring activities and assignment as the major reasons for this perception, depicting social studies as a daily grind of reading the text and then answering questions about it by filling in blanks or circling correct answer (Alleman and Brophy, 1992; 48).

Consequently, though there is something else students learn with regard to social studies, many learn to dislike it. For instance, different scholars quoted by Marker and Mehlinger (1992:845) wrote that social studies is seen by students as less important and less interesting than other subjects (Schug, 1982). Negative attitudes toward social studies increase over time; the higher the grade level, the more negative students seem to be (Crawley, 1988) (ibid).

In general, students with negative views of social studies find the content boring, unrelated to their experience, excessively detailed, and overly repetitious (Schug, 1982) (ibid).

On the other hand, research in some African countries show a different picture. For instance, in the inquiry made into the status of social studies in Kenya, Shiundu (1980) found primary schools pupils' attitudes generally positive toward social studies despite its low status in the educational system, lack of support in the community, and inadequate teacher preparation. Adejumobi (1976) had also surveyed Nigerian Secondary School students on their perception of social studies and the students overwhelmingly preferred social studies because it provided "total human understandings" involved in "problem solving through subject fusion" and lead to "community understandings" (cited in Merryfield and Muyanda-Mutebi (1992:624).

This shows that social studies curriculum in schools is at odds with the experience, hopes, and wishes of students in some countries while it is the opposite in others. This condition provided the gap to the researcher to search facts about the problem at hand.

Those who have studied towards social studies believe that the way the content is presented may be the most important variable. The kind of classroom environment created by teachers and their attitudes towards the subject appear to influence how their students react to the subject (Haladyna, Shaughnessy, and Redsun, 1982). Diverse teaching strategies and routines, active student participation in the lesson, cooperative learning activities among students, and positive interpersonal relationships between the teacher and student have been shown to foster student interest in the social studies (Fouts, 1987, 1989 in Marker and Mehlinger, 1992:845).

Therefore, if teachers are to help students gain access to social studies knowledge, attitudes and skills, they need to change their relationships with their students and engage them in active learning. They need also to use new educational techniques and

pedagogically sound methodologies so that to fit the social studies curriculum to the abilities, needs and interests of students and to improve students' experience in the subject.

Basically, few to day would argue with the notion that people learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process. Because active engagement involves many forms like doing, thinking, reacting, absorbing, observing, reflecting, preparing, considering, applying, listing, selecting, prioritizing, ranking, interpreting, completing, rearranging, evaluating among others (Ellis, 1990; cited in Wajnryb, 1992:15).

Moreover, current educational reforms share a vision of students as active learners engaged in meaningful, complex tasks, problem solving and critical thinking, collaboration and group work (Weinstein and Magnano, 1997:8).

On the basis of these trends, this research was designed and conducted to make sense of students' experience in social studies classrooms with particular reference to the second cycle primary schools of Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Students need knowledge of the world at large and at hand, the world of individual and of institutions, the world of the past, the present, and the future. Consequently, the social studies curriculum is expected to address the respective issues by helping students gain access to important social understandings, attitudes and skills.

Regarding this, Lawton (1981) cited in Ross (1995:68) described that the world is increasingly ... "social scientific" in its orientation and young people need to acquire accurate knowledge of certain aspects of their society if they are to participate effectively within it. Armento (1993:35) also argued that young children today have many direct and various experiences; their natural curiosity prompts them to want to "know more". And

today much is known about these experiences and processes. Meanwhile, Armento indicated the need of creating challenging learning experiences for young children.

In response to this, changing the social studies curriculum is underway in Amhara region in particular and in Ethiopia in general. Moreover, few years has passed since these primary school curriculum materials began to be placed under implementation.

Those materials are supposed to call for the enhancement of critical thinking and problem solving skills among pupils and to put emphasis on intellectual stimulation, practical application and student-centered learning. This is because the current Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia puts special emphasis on functional, purposeful and relevant education which enable children and youth to acquire a body of knowledge develop a system of skills and solve problems in order to live productive life, and to play active and meaningful role in the advancement and development of their country (NETP, 1994).

Nevertheless, some students are heard while criticizing the second cycle primary school social studies for stressing low-level facts presented in isolation from any meaningful context and some students express views as social studies knowledge has little to do with them, as it has no relevance to improve the quality of their lives either present or future. Still, some others are heard complaining that the second cycle primary school social studies materials are “too advanced” to the intellectual level of them and some contents are vague, abstract and foreign to their experience.

Of course, difficult content can be easier at the classroom level; if it is restructured into the language of experience consistent with each child’s current stage of understanding, and if teachers describe the task in different words and examples. Because, as Bruner (1960) quoted by Rinne (1997:135) has insisted it; “any subject can

be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development.”

The implication of this is that no matter how difficult the curriculum of social studies may be, the way in which it is presented is what will make it engaged or dull to students. Unfortunately, it is also condemned by some students that social studies is still poorly taught ,and as the prevailing experience is teacher dominated, seat-centered and textbook centered.

As a result, students’ views seems to echo those of educational researchers who have found that teaching methods in most classrooms vary little from traditional “talk and chalk” methods; that text-books are the dominant teaching materials used, the routine and rote learning are generally favored creativity and critical thinking, and that teacher-centered transmission models prevail (Goodlad, 1984; McNeil, 1986; Cummunis, 1984; cited in Nieto, 1994: 405).

Such type of lack of dynamism in the teaching methods is also reported as the characteristics features of many classrooms in Ethiopian schools (Anbesu, etal., 1998; Getahun, 1999). These authors show that the system lacks the capacity to develop openness, assertiveness, and creativeness among students. The teaching method is mainly a one-way instruction system allowing little encouragement for the active participation of students.

However, those findings are not social studies – specific. Therefore, this study is planned and implemented to examine the state of the second-cycle primary school students’ experience in social studies classrooms.

Objectives of the study:

This particular study aims at:

- assessing the perception of students about the social studies that they are learning.

- mapping out the existing opportunity to students for active learning in social studies.
- identifying the degree of student-centeredness of the social studies classroom interaction.
- judging the tendency of teachers in social studies classrooms in enhancing students' experience in the subject.

Research Questions

1. How is the learning of social studies perceived and felt by the students?
 - 1.1. Do students perceive the social studies lessons relevant to bring about behavioral changes?
 - 1.2. Do students feel that the contents and learning experiences in social studies match to their ability, needs and interests?
 - 1.3. Do students have favorable attitude toward the social studies subject?
2. How do subject teachers view the experience of students in social studies subject?
3. To what extent does the teaching-learning process in social studies classrooms enhance students' experience in the subject?
 - 3.1. Are students given an opportunity for active learning in social studies classes?
 - 3.2. Do students participate in social studies classrooms?
 - 3.3. How do social studies teachers react to the ideas and feelings of students?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Focusing efforts on assessing what and how students experience in school is essential to be responsive to the students' emotional, social, intellectual and learning needs. Specifically, the findings that are generated through this study may:

- help curriculum planners to check whether or not the materials in use are matching to the abilities, needs and interests of students. Once the information is obtained, they can make desirable considerations whenever revision measures are taken.
- Initiate curriculum planners to offer supplementary materials, to prepare additional readings, or to organize other means.
- Make teachers aware of the students' perceptions about the social studies subject, and once the teachers understand these, they can help students sense the value of the subject and find a way of creating a classroom atmosphere in which students are more inclined towards it.
- reveal the dominating teaching-learning process in the social studies classrooms, and if pedagogically sound methodologies are found to be missing, it may initiate teacher educators to fill the gap by what ever means.
- indicate the pattern of classroom interaction against the rate of participation of students and may assist education officials whether the talk of the day i.e., student-centered learning and active learning are exercised in the classrooms or not.
- suggest ways and means of improving weaknesses.
- initiate some other researchers to extend the study by increasing breadth and depth.

1.4. Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited on the identification of the second cycle primary school students' experience in social studies. For the purpose, students of grades 7th and 8th who are found in the Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones (Amhara Region) are taken as the components of the study.

The reason why grades 7th and 8th are taken from the cycle is because these grade level students have a bit longer exposure to the subject than the others in the respective cycle.

The fact that Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones are selected as the center of the study is that, for one thing, the existing administrative structure compelled the researcher. Because, Bahir Dar Zone, is a special zone confined its administration at the respective urban site. Therefore, taking only this zone would mean missing the information from students of rural schools.

Meanwhile, the need to incorporate rural students and classrooms for the study obliged the researcher to include one of the proximate zones to Bahir Dar. Of which Western Gojjam is found to be convenient to the researcher himself and to properly use the assistant observer. Secondly, taking only Western Gojjam would also mean missing the information from where the stated problems are more or less exhibited.

Having these important reasons, the two zones became the focuses of the study.

The major descriptors of the study are:

- Perceptions of students' toward the social studies subject.
- Active learning experience of students in social studies.
- Students' participation in classroom interaction.
- Tendency of social studies teachers in enhancing students' experience.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

This study has limitations for some reasons.

Firstly, studying students' experience is technically difficult because of the diverse subjective worlds that students could inhabit in schools. Therefore, this study lacks complete information in this regard.

Secondly, the topic is under conceptualized and under researched (e.g. Erickson and Shultz; 1996:466). Hence, the scarcity of student experience from current educational discourse limited the insights gained through this research. Nevertheless, it has been attempted to include the available recent publications related to the area.

Thirdly, even though interviewing is seem to be a more appropriate means to uncover the subjective experience of students, the inability of students to articulate about their experience enforced the researcher to rely on other data gathering instruments especially after the pilot test. Hence, the substance of students' critical reflections is missing in this study. This is true even in the open-ended part of the questionnaire. Hence, lack of critical comments expected to be articulate by the students was the other scanty feature of this study.

However, the researcher has attempted to bridge the gap, by employing other data gathering instruments relevant to the issue.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

Student Experience:	refers to the meaningful encounter created in the transaction between the learner and the Milieu in which he or she operates.
Active Learning:	refers to the instructional model which directly challenge the assumptions of traditional, largely passive, learning and instruction. It is an active process requiring participation and interaction with mentors, materials and meaning.
Student-centered Learning:	refers to the new instructional model whereby students are not passive recipient of knowledge

rather active. It is also a model whereby students are not only required to receive information from lectures and books but also to collect information, to record it systematically, to discuss it, to compare it, to analyze it, to draw conclusions from it and to communicate about it.

Classroom Interaction: refers to purposeful chain of communication events which occur one after the other among teachers and students, each occupying only a small segment of time.

Classroom Interaction Analysis: refers to the system of coding spontaneous verbal communication, arranging the data into a useful display and then analyzing the results in order to study the learning and teaching behavior in the classroom.

Relevance: refers to the pertinence, usefulness and applicability of contents & learning experiences to the respondent.

Perception: Refers to the different interpretations that somebody gives to something, and thereby develops his/her own views, feelings, inclinations and attitudes by using all of his/her thoughts and experiences there in.

Urban: refers to a town area with 2,000 or more inhabitants (EMA, 1983)

Rural: refers to areas in most cases inhabitants has to do with farming and other agricultural activities.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. General View of Social Studies

Social studies is a composite subject - a school subject created for teaching purposes-that deals with social phenomena or, to paraphrase John Dewey (1938), the study of things social (Welton and Mallan, 1992:12).

The introduction of social studies to the school curriculum was marked by the publication of *The Social Studies in Secondary Education* in 1916 in U.S.A. (Ross, 1997). Since then, social studies curriculum has had a mixed history of predominantly conservative in its concern, but also at times incorporating progressive and even radical concerns. In this relation, Stanely and Nelson (1994) indicated three variations in social studies curriculum and instruction i.e. subject-centered social studies, civics - centered social studies and issues-centered social studies.

According to the authors,

- (1) **Subject-centered approaches** argue that the social studies curriculum derives its content and purposes from disciplines taught in higher education. Some advocates would limit social studies curriculum to the study of traditional history and geography, while others would also include traditional social sciences (for example, anthropology, economics, political science, sociology, psychology). Still others would include inter and multi-disciplinary areas such as ethnic studies, law, women's studies, cultural studies, and etc.
- (2) **Civics-centered social studies** is concerned with individual and social attitudes and behaviors more than with subject matter knowledge. Civic competence or the ability and responsibility to interpret, understand, and act effectively as a member of one's society - is the unifying theme in this approach.

(3) **Issues - centered approaches** propose that social studies is the examination of specific issues. Social as well as personal problems and controversies are the primary content of the curriculum (Ross, 1997:7-8).

As a result of these approaches, what is called social studies in one country may be quite different from social studies in another. Regarding this, Lucan (1981:59) described that differences in content and approach often vary widely even among schools within the same country. What social studies teachers within a nation and across nations have in common, and what distinguishes them from those who do not teach social studies, is a sense of shared purpose:

All social studies teachers attempt to help young people learn about themselves, about other human beings and about society and culture so as to enable them to develop to their maximum human potential while functioning effectively as members of society.

This means despite variations in social studies patterns, all teachers share the purpose of social studies, i.e.

The main purpose of social studies is, to produce thoughtful, competent, human, well informed, and participatory citizens. The purpose for social studies parallels the purpose for schools: to produce good citizens (Welton and Mallan, 1992:XXVIII).

Furthermore, the goals of social studies as seen and broken down into three dimensions of learning-knowledge, attitude and values, and skills as expressed by Preston, Aggrawal, and Dobkins et al. , (1985); NCSS, (1994), includes the following:

2.1.1. Goals of Knowledge in Social Studies

Knowledge goals have to do with the development of concepts, generalizations, principles, and facts that comprise the basic content of the social studies such as:

- Understanding of social and natural environment;
- Understanding of the interrelationships and interdependence of people;

- Understanding about the history, geography and civics conditions of own country, continent and the world;
- Understanding human institutions like family, society, state, country etc.
- Understanding the political, economic, and legal systems of own country, continent and the world;
- Understanding of social changes;
- Understanding of current events and enduring public institutions etc (ICDR, 1991:54-106;Parker and Jarolmek, 1997:11-13).

2.1.2. Goals of Attitude and Value in Social studies

Social attitudes and values also called dispositions, virtues and character traits that the social studies need to address are:

- Developing a reasoned commitment to the public values of own society;
- Developing an attitude to accept responsibility, to participate actively in social activities, to work cooperatively, to take care of private and common properties;
- Treating one self and others with respect; taking responsibility for one self and the goal of the community;
- Fulfilling one's obligations to others and the natural environment;
- Developing a reasoned loyalty to own nation;
- Developing a feeling of kinship to human beings everywhere;
- Protecting the basic human rights guaranteed to all citizens etc (ibid).

2.1.3. Goals of Skills in Social studies

Skill goals that are to be attained through learning social studies are subdivided as: study and inquiry skills, intellectual skills and democratic participation skills. Hence, specific skills under the subdivisions are:

2.1.3.1. Study and Inquiry Skills

- Using and making time lines, maps, globes, charts and graphs,
- Locating, gathering, organizing, and analyzing information from various resources,
- Reading social studies materials for a variety of purposes,
- Writing reports and giving oral reports, etc.

2.1.3.2. Intellectual Skills

- Identifying and clarifying problems and issues,
- Drawing analogies from other times and places and inferring cause effect relationships, etc.

2.1.3.3. Democratic Participation Skills

- Participating in group discussions of public issues,
- Listening to, questioning, and expressing opinions and reasons,
- Participating in classroom, school, and community decision making,
- Working cooperatively to clarify a task and plan group work etc (ibid).

These goals are more or less the goals of social studies in Ethiopian schools too (ICDR, 1991). Therefore, one can say that social studies is the main school subject to address the development of important social understandings, attitudes and skills.

The whole success of meeting these goals is, however, hinged on the provision of rightly organized learning experiences. According to Conteh (1975:454), learning experiences are arranged vertically, horizontally and spirally. In the first case, they are arranged in progression from the simplest to the most difficult. That is, each new experience lead from and is an extension of the previous one. In the second case, they are arranged in such a way that one is made to relate to another like beads arranged on a string. The more they are made to relate to each other the more buttressed they become as an entity. In the last case, they are arranged around one idea- theme in a spiral form

where by students experience something each time in a different way from each activities but with a progressive degree of difficulty.

Typical of this practice could be the arrangement of the elements of the social studies by beginning with the "here-and-now" and, as children advance by grades, moving to the far away in time and space so that to develop learning logically from the simple to the complex.

Nevertheless, research data indicate that the "here-and now" sequence is a curriculum myth, which does not meet the variety of children's interests or challenge their abilities (Loomis, 1961; in Arnoff, 1964:335; NEA, 1958). For instance, children cannot wait for a study of gradually expanding social environment-home, school, neighborhood, community, region and the world. Because the children themselves travel; they view television, or read stories about the faraway and long ago. Hence, their need to understand what they hear and see or read may make apparent the inadequacy of logically arranged subject areas as a base for learning experience.

Accordingly, spiral focuses on the development of generalization as opposed to a sequence of expanding environments is much advocated. The basic premise that underlines a spiral curriculum is, according to Hilda Taba (1967) cited in Welton and Mallan, 1992:97), that once students learn an idea, the teacher builds on what they know by introducing new and different dimensions of the concept and by extending those ideas into new situations. That is, concepts and generalizations are introduced in the primary grades and then expanding upon as the children progress from grade to grade.

Similar measures are reflected in the current social studies curriculum of the second cycle in Ethiopia. For example, the concept of Map-Man and his environment-History of man-and Citizenship are all introduced in both grades of 7th and 8th (ICDR, 1991: 47), only to cite in relation to the concern of the study. This is an attempt of

building a spiral curriculum in which the same contents, but not identical ones are taught on different occasions during different grades.

Nevertheless, since a prime difficulty in selecting subject matter is to find content which is abstract enough to challenge without being so abstract as to frustrate (Piaget, 1953; in Doll, 1974:102), checking its status by studying students' experience in social studies is found to be important and this study is concerned at.

2.2. Students' Experience in Social Studies

2.2.1. The Essence of Student Experience

People lack a natural vocabulary to describe experience. Hence, the term 'experience' is subject to interpretation. However, it was explained by Oakeshott (1933) cited in Blyth (1984:14), experience involves both the subjective act of experiencing and the objective, the thing experienced.

This means, there is, on the one hand, an objective independently constituted (independent of the person) reality out there, and on the other hand, a subjective representation of the outside world in the head of the person (Marton and Booth, 1997:163) In distinguishing between subjective and objective experience, Rinne (1997:16-17) wrote that:

Subjective Experiences:	are produced within our minds. They represent the outcomes of our thinking, the feeling sensations of our emotions, the fictional visions of our imaginations, the assumptions of our beliefs. 'They are our opinions and comparisons, our associations and definitions. They exist only within our minds and created by our minds alone.'
Objective Experiences:	in contrast to the subjective experiences are, 'our recorded perceptions of objects and events that exist or occur outside our minds. When we perceive something, its image is recorded in our minds, and the recorded image matches the external object or event. Our minds do not produce the experience but only record it; the recording is not influenced by our personal opinions or feelings.'

From the explanations given one can understand the differences that subjective experiences are characteristically related to a judgment, a conclusion, a feeling, an inference created in the mind while objective experience refers to the real world events.

With this binary quality, the term experience is used in several distinct ways. For instance, the Macquaire Dictionary (1991) quoted by Boud et al. (1994:6) captures a variety of aspects of it in its explanation of the word 'experience'.

Considered as a verb, experience suggests that it is either a particular instance or a process of observing, undergoing or encountering. As a noun, it is all that is known, the knowledge or practical wisdom gained from the observing, undergoing or encountering.

However, these definitions give rise to a number of issues. 'Observing' suggests somewhat detached role, 'undergoing' a passive role and 'encountering' a more interactive one. Hence, experience is not just an observation, a passive undergoing of something but an active engagement with the environment of which the learner is part (Boud et al, 1994:7).

This shows that experience is a meaningful encounter created in the transaction between the learner and the milieu in which he or she operates. In this particular study, it refers to the transaction of the student and the social studies materials, teachers and classroom situation.

Basically, a student or pupil is engaged in an effort to learn (gain knowledge) about some aspects of his or her world in collaboration with a teacher or instructor, or equivalent substitute. Hence, the way in which students experience social studies reflects the ways in which they experience the contents and learning experiences that enable them to make sense of the subject. In this relation, Marton and Booth (1997:56) wrote that experience of the learning situation have two intertwined aspects: the "how" and "what" aspects, where "how" refers to the act, whereas "what" refers to the experience of the content or direct object of learning such as the actual text.

Therefore, experience is said to be characterized by fundamental aspects of learning- the how (the indirect object and the act of learning) and the what (direct object).

2.2.2. Classrooms as a Scene for Student Experience

The role of familiar classrooms, as explained by Walker (1990), are the primary setting for formal education, as they have been for a century, in schools around the world. Until the curriculum comes to life in the classroom, it remains only a plan, and unless it reaches the students there, it makes no difference in what they learn.

According to Walker, schools do sometimes sponsor educative activities outside the classroom: extracurricular activities, assemblies, arts performances, and contests of

various types. And students carry on activities of their own in school. Although these activities may sometimes be more important to some students than what happens in classrooms, the main work of the school is nevertheless still done in regularly scheduled classes, and the curriculum is realized, if at all, in classes (p.225).

So, to understand curricula one must understand how they work in classrooms. The implication of this is that what ever else may influence what students study and learn in school, the final determinative steps must be taken when teacher, student and curriculum materials come together.

Regarding this fact, Erickson and Shultz (1996:469), explained that classroom instruction brings students and teachers together with subject matter. The immediate purpose of students and the teachers, the more distal aims behind the selection of certain contents and materials, and the general cultural frameworks that influence the interaction of teachers and students with the subject matter are at the point of subjective experience, inseparable for the student and for the teacher as well.

However, in ordinary classroom life it is the "enacted curriculum" (Eisner, 1985) rather than the stated one that is engaged by students and teachers. Hence, students' experience of enacted curriculum is significant, presumably, because it is within such experience that learning about self and the world takes place (ibid).

The difference between the formal and the enacted curriculum is that the formal curriculum is the explicit or official curriculum, embodied in published courses or study, state frameworks, textbooks, tests and the like; while the enacted curriculum is best understood as the curriculum experienced by students. Unlike the formal curriculum, the enacted curriculum is "not a tangible product but the actual day to day classroom interactions of teachers, students and ideas" (Cornbleth, 1985; quoted by Ross, 1997:9).

Subsequently, most of the teaching and learning in the classroom take place by means of interaction. The teacher exchange communications with a pupil or pupils; and a

pupil or pupils exchange communication with a teacher or with other pupils. As a result one can say that classrooms are busy places in which much interaction occurs and students' experience promotes.

Nevertheless, though the manifest aim of the normal classroom as a seen of life is that students are taught there and are to learn what they are assigned to learn by the teacher, learning what is assigned may not take place, because, as it was explained by Erickson and Shultz (1996:469) either students withhold assent to learn, or because the learning tasks set by the teacher are presented in such a form that they are impossible for the students to master.

Sometimes, the curriculum plans and materials may be clearly at faulty, the classroom activities they suggest may not offer students a sufficient opportunity to learn. For instance, according to the statements of Walker (1990:236), of the common failures are that the suggested activities in the curriculum may be poorly matched to students' abilities and interests. Or, they may be unnecessary dull, failing to show the intrinsic value and interest of what is being taught. Or, the content and purposes they embody may not be highest and best possible under the circumstances. Sometimes teachers are disorganized and teaching is clearly at fault. Therefore, different factors may influence students' experience in classrooms.

2.3. Measures to be Taken to Enhance Students' Experience in Social Studies Classrooms

2.3.1. Making the Contents and Learning Experiences of Social Studies Relevant to the Students

Ensuring relevance is related to the fidelity (effectiveness and efficiency) of communication among the students, teachers and the material. Regarding this, Amare (1999:71) described that Message-Centered theories of communication stress on the

importance (relevance) of the information (message) to the receivers. The essence of this theory according to Amare is that if students clearly see an advantage in learning materials, they will do every effort to understand the message and apply it. But if the perceived importance of the message is low, it may encounter resistance from the recipient.

Nevertheless, students often describe school content as irrelevant and boring (Goodlad, 1984). The content may be interesting or valuable to academics, teachers, and the general public, but the learner is the prime audience (Passe, 1996:14). Subject matter that the child views as irrelevant, according to Dewey (1964):

Causes the child and the curriculum to be set against each other... The subject matter ... has no direct relationship to the child's present experience. It stands outside of it... The material is not translated into life-terms, but is directly offered as a substitute for, or an external annex to, the child's present life... It remains an idle curiosity, to fret and obstruct the mind, a dead weight to burden it (Passe, 1996:14).

In other words, such content is unlikely to be learned. Educators sometimes present knowledge to students for knowledge's sake. However, the students do not appreciate it, apply it, or retain it. Sometimes children are required to perform tasks not because they are useful in the present or the future, but because they have been required to do so by some higher authority (ibid).

In his discussion about a question how does a person learn? Rogers (1969:158) described that significant learning takes place when the subject matter is perceived by the student to have relevance for his own purpose. A somewhat more formal way of stating this is that a person learns significantly only those things, which he perceives as being involved in the maintenance of or the enhancement of his own self.

2.3.2. Matching the Learning Task to Students' Ability

All conscious processing of information occurs in working memory, which is very limited in both duration and capacity (Miller, 1956; Simon, 1974). Hence, if students are required to follow instructions or engage in procedures that exceed working - memory capacity, then understanding, learning and problem solving may be hampered (Sweller, 1988, 1989, 1993, 1994 in Marcus et al; 1996:49).

The authors continued to describe that the ease with which one understands instructions and procedures is likely to be influenced by two general factors: the intrinsic complexity of the information and the manner in which the information is presented. These two factors interact both with each other and with relevant characteristics of the human cognitive system.

Moreover, in discussions about what makes some things easy to learn and other things more difficult in social studies, Welton and Mallan (1992:193) indicated the facets of difficulty. According to these scholars, the scope, conceptual distance, stability and open-ended ness of the concepts determine the difficulty of learning tasks (Figure1)

Facets of Difficulty	Dimensions (continuum) of complexity	
	Less difficult	Most difficult
Scope	• Narrow scope involving few concepts	• Very broad scope involving many concepts
Conceptual Distance	• Within the child's direct experience (concept)	• Within the child's vicarious experience • Beyond direct or vicarious experience (abstract)
Stability	• Attributes always present	• Attributes sometimes present
Open-ended ness	• "Closed", extremely reliable concepts	• Open to interpretation, less reliable concepts

Fig. 1. Facets and Dimensions of task- difficulties.

Adapted from Welton and Mallan (1992:191-193)

From the figure one can extract meaning that familiarity, stability, and simplicity contribute to ease of understanding, whereas conceptual distance, instability, and complexity contribute to the difficulty of an idea.

In addition, principles of learning are closely related to principles of child growth and development. In this regard, NEA (1958) wrote that the close relationship lies in the fact that learning is one of the two major processes through which individual development can take place: maturation and learning.

The consideration of readiness level of students in learning came from the developmental psychology. Accordingly, no matter what type of learning are sought, instruction will be fruitless unless the pupils are ready. Psychologically speaking, readiness is a complex state, described as the combination of maturity, ability, motivation and prior learning that makes it possible for a person to learn something (Callahan and Clark, 1988:10).

Research on general cognitive development (e.g., Brown, 1975; Paris, 1975) and development with content areas (e.g., Bereiter, 1980) indicates that mature students are selective and efficient in using available cues to extract information relevant to accomplishing a task, and this efficiency increases as they become familiar with a task. Less mature students, on the other hand, attend to a broader range of stimuli and are less likely to select and process information to fit the demands of a particular task (Pick, Frankel, Hess, 1975; cited in Doyle, 1983:172).

This means that younger students may find difficult to understand if the materials are not appropriately match to their maturity level.

Furthermore, it was described by Anderson and Gates (1950) in NEA (1958:93) "learning is a function of 'readiness' to learn, that is, it is a function of the mental, physical, educational, and social maturity of the learner". A common expression with a meaning similar to this principle is:

"The teacher must begin where the learner is." Similarly, it is often heard that "new learning builds upon old."

The implication of this point is that, the case with which new material is learned depends on the extent to which it has meaning for the learner. New material to be learned will be meaningful in so far as the learner is able to see relationships between the elements of the new learning and the things he has previously understood or experienced. He must also have a mastery of the abstractions (word meanings, concepts, generalizations and so forth) he will use in acquiring the new learning.

Dutton and Hocket (1962) further argued that the growth of the child towards maturity (maturation) must be discovered in order to direct his learning in new processes. To say that maturation must be taken into account is to point out the importance of adjusting instruction to the pupil's stage of development to his constitutional characteristics, and to the prospects of improvement at those times which fall within the teacher's guidance. Consequently, if each new learning task confronting the child is something for which he is mentally, physically and socially ready, learning will be easier and more rapid, his progress from learning task to learning task will be smoother. On the other hand, if he has not reached a level of readiness for what he is asked to learn, breaks in articulation will occur. Without readiness, the progress of student's learning in the desired direction will be slow or non-existent, which by definition, constitutes faulty articulation.

Supporting this idea, Miller and Seller (1985) also explained that the proper match between content and student readiness level would spur pupil growth, while an inappropriate match will lead to ineffective instruction.

2.3.3. Matching of the Learning Task to the Needs and Interests of Students

It is important that the needs of students be considered in planning for effective learning experiences and for good articulation among learning experiences. Because, it was argued by NEA (1958) that, the child needs are the wellsprings of all activity from

which learning can result. If these basic facts about how learning takes place are not properly applied by the teacher, learning is likely to be haphazard and seldom on accord with the objectives of instruction.

In relation, Snygy and Arthur (1949) in NEA (1958:94) argued for a principle of learning and said that "... learning, like all other experiencing and behaving, is an active process which results from the efforts of the individual needs."

According to this principle, three conditions must be met before learning occur:

- (a) a need or drive exists in the individual;
- (b) a goal or desired end result is perceived by the individual as offering satisfaction of the need, and
- (c) the individual makes an effort to attain the goal or desired end result.

Moreover, if the learner's efforts are accompanied by satisfaction, his behavior at, or close to, the point of satisfaction will tend to be strengthened.

In addition, gaining interest is put as one of the proposed stage of learning. According to Gesell (in Farrant, 1980), interest is the engine of every human activity. It is the force that determines how much effort an individual should put into his/her learning. Unless a learner is interested to learn, teaching what ever it is smart-remains fruitless. In other words, as Farrant put it, the battle is half-won if the learner develops the interest to learn.

Moreover, all learning takes place in relation to some pupil goal. If pupils' goals are not in harmony with the learning one seeks to impart, teaching becomes difficult. Hence, as argued by Callahan and Clark (1988:9) to make instruction fruitful, teachers must utilize the pupils' natural goals or entice them to accept goals suitable to the instruction.

Nevertheless, several objections arise if education is to be guided solely by the interests and the needs of children. For instance, Doyle (1983, 1986) cited in Brophy and

Alleman (1992:7) argued that students are concerned primarily with getting good grades, because of the rewards associated with doing so and the undesirable consequences of failing to do so, they tend to prefer familiar and uncomplicated tasks that they know they can handle, as well as to fear tasks that are ambiguous or risky. Meanwhile, mere dependence on their interest is a problem.

Bishop (1985) also argued that a more prominent and deeper comprehension should not be sacrificed in the interest of temporary relevance. To him, "how one can know the future needs of children; which needs have educational priority?" Since education is concerned about learning, about culture and about the rules of its aspects; and if the child is to be educated, then he must learn the rules of its aspects, whether they interest him or not.

Even though interest will certainly lend motivation to the child, but in the long run he will need such subjects as reading, mathematics, science, social science etc.

This means, there are certain things a child needs to learn even if they do not interest him/her. Temporary interest and immediate need of children can also be criticized on the grounds that education can degenerate into a hodge-podge of bits and pieces, ephemeral and unrelated (ibid).

Admittedly, no one disagrees that the interests of children should be used to influence methods of teaching to stimulate and motivate. Where the disagreement arises with some progressives is, according to Midwinter (1972), when they advocate children's interests and needs, should influence not only the methods but also the objectives and purposes of education. Hence, the teacher must not opt for what is merely interesting, but must judge what is valuable and then, by method, make it interesting and tempting. The importance of children's interest lies, therefore, in the sphere of method, rather than of content (Bishop, 1985:92).

2.3.4. Developing favorable Attitude of Students Toward a Learning Task

Every human experience is accompanied by affective qualities known as feeling tones. Feeling tones are present in all sensations as pleasantness or unpleasantness, satisfaction or annoyance. These experiences, qualities, which are individual and personal relate to and affect the way a person thinks or behaves in any situation. Attitudes act as dynamic forces in human behavior. They give it direction and influence the mental set of the individual in any situation (Crow and Alice, 1965).

Hence, taking students attitude towards a learning task as the main concern of discussion, understanding the meaning of the term is found to be important. Rokeach (1968) has defined attitude as "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner" (cited in Smith, 1986:68). Other researchers such as Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and Lett (1977) have emphasized the affective dimension by advancing definitions such as the following: "the amount of positive or negative affect that one holds toward a specific social object or class of social object (Lett, 1977; in *ibid*).

A third position was taken by: Bogozzi and Burkrant (1979) when their data supported a two-factor (i.e., cognitive and affective) model of attitude and implied that both factors should be assessed for an adequate measure of attitude (*ibid*). A fourth view is that attitudes consist of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (e.g., McMillan, 1980; Ostrom, 1969); in Smith 1986:68)

Hence, how much a learner can learn from the subject depends on how much the already formed beliefs, attitudes and value systems are favorable and facilitating for the realization of this process (Hailom, 1998).

Because, learning experiences come in all shades and colors. According to Conteh (1975), they can be good/bad, encouraging/discouraging, stimulating/

unstimulating, frightful/unfrightful, enjoyable/unenjoyable, sad/happy, painful/non-painful, repeatable/non-repeatable, etc. Thus learning experiences can attain their purpose if and only if the students perceive them favorably.

Of course, there are many reasons, which lead children to say they like certain subjects and dislike others. For instance, in Sierra Leone the following reasons have been identified (Ferron, 1973):

- (a) **The proficiency motive:** certain subjects are liked because the individuals concerned score high marks in them, and others are disliked because for one reason or another the children involved show little or no proficiency in them.
- (b) **The utility motive:** some subjects are liked because the individuals concerned perceive them as being useful for their future careers and the achievement of status. Irrespective as to their proficiency in such subjects, children they like them.
- (c) **The prestige motive:** certain subjects of the school curriculum tend to have a higher academic status than others, or they are perceived as having a higher prestige among the population at large. This motive also does not correlate with proficiency.
- (d) **The interest motive:** some subjects are liked because the individuals concerned find them 'interesting', whether or not they score high marks in them or not.
- (e) **Liking the teacher:** whether a subject is liked or disliked very often depends the impact the teacher makes on the children.
- (f) **Method of teaching and general approach:** the popularity of a particular subject will sometimes depend upon the teachers' approach.

These show that students' attitude are influenced by many important educational components. Moreover, many students harbor negative attitudes toward content assignments and schooling in general. The reasons are many and include a history of frustration due to poor ability, a failure to perceive the relevance of content, and poorly

designed instruction. The total of a student's past experiences contributes to an overall attitude toward the subject area in general (Mckenna and Robinson, 1993).

For instance, Goodlad (1984:210) found that junior and senior high school students viewed the social studies to be among the least useful subjects in relation to their present and future needs.

One puzzling question was why students liked the social studies less than any other subject. Their data show that they perceived it to be one of the most difficult subjects although the topics commonly included in the social sciences appear of great human interest.

2.3.5. Adopting Appropriate Teaching Strategies to Promote Students' Experience in Social Studies

Teaching is viewed as a pedagogical effort that attempts to bring the learner's knowledge about the world to a new pitch, or to bring them to some way of experiencing aspects of the world. In this aim, according to Marton and Booth, (1997:175), the learners and their experience of the world (knowledge) are intertwined. It allows that the teachers awareness (teaching focus and intentions) have to be interwoven equally of the threads of learner and content.

Teaching also involves connecting a given group of learners with important experiences and with powerful ideas that can expand the experiences, and helping link these processes to their experiences of the learners (Keefe and Jenkin 1997:53). Meanwhile, whatever teaching method one may use, based on whatever so-called principles of teaching, it must address certain features of the learner's experience-a structure of relevance and a pattern of dimensions of variation - if it is to bring about certain qualities in their learning (Marton and Booth, p.179).

Although prescriptions such as how something could be taught, how it should be taught, what method of teaching one should use cannot be derived from any statement about learning, due to the fact that there is never one way of teaching something, it is believed that the mode of learning determines what is learned. Regarding this, Callahan and Clark (1988) explained, "One does not learn to write by parsing sentences. Neither does one learn to swim by listening to a lecture on the crawl." But much school learning is superficial in that the teaching methods used are not really appropriate for the understandings, skills, and attitudes desired. Though memorizing is not the same as understanding, according to Callahan and Clark, yet, many pupils do little more than memorize information. The result is verbalism, meaningless mouthing of little understand of words and sentences.

On the whole, the main aim of modern teaching-learning process is not acquisition of knowledge alone, rather as explained by Aggrawal (1996), it is the awakening of curiosity, the stimulation of creativity, the development of proper interests, attitudes and values and the building of essential skills. To bring changes in students, one must therefore employ appropriate teaching strategies, which provides for active learning opportunities.

2.3.5.1. Providing Methodological Variety in Social Studies

Classrooms

The majority of classes must offer some variety in the activities with which instructional stimuli are presented. For instance, according to Borich (1988:303), a lesson plan that includes some combination of methods such as lecture, discussion, question and answer, guided practice, and independent seat work generally is preferable to one that exclusively emphasizes only one of these instructional alternatives.

Knowledge of variety of instructional strategies and the flexibility to change instructional approaches both within and among lessons are two of the greatest assets a teacher should have (McNair, 1978-1979). Without variety and flexibility to capture the interest and attention of students, it is unlikely that any other key behavior, however well executed, will have an effect (ibid).

Everston and Anderson (1980) in Borich (1988:140) found that teachers who were flexible and who showed variety in their instructional strategies were found to be more interesting to their students than who had no knowledge of alternative teaching strategies.

However, how one goes about teaching needs to be linked to who the children are and what the subject matter is. According to Parker and Jarolimek (1997), good teachers are extremely curious about their students' current understanding of the subject matter - their conception of the past. What they want to ascertain is the understandings their children have developed already. Without this knowledge, teachers cannot teach for they cannot connect social studies curriculum meaningfully to the child.

Moreover, teaching also should be related to the nature of what is to be learned. For instance, skills, ideas, the inquiry process, and issues are the major subject matter of the social studies curriculum. Hence, as to how matching teaching strategies to the nature of subject matter is shown below (on figure 2).

Subject Matter	Teaching Strategies
Skills	Explain, practice, apply
Ideas	Provide examples and help students compare and synthesize them
Inquiry	Have students develop, then revise hypothesis as evidence warrants
Issues	Classroom meetings, discussion, decision making, conflict resolution

Fig. 2. How to Match Teaching Strategies to the Nature of Subject Matter

Adapted from Parker, W.C. and Jarolimek, J (1997:1988)

The figure shows that the nature of the task affects both the teacher's strategy for teaching and the pupil's strategy for learning.

Just to provide clues as to how to arrange the teaching-learning environment in the best way possible, the student activities are more or less suggested in curriculum guides and materials. Nevertheless, as explained by Conteh (1975:453), it should be the teacher's responsibility to see that this is done. Without student activities, the fountain of learning experiences, students cannot on their own, experience the things one plans for them. What they get instead is a second hand experiences a mere telling of a tale.

Teachers therefore, need to be strategic in their approach and able to select and orchestrate the appropriate strategy for a particular context. Some of which are:

2.3.5.1.1. Teaching Strategies for Cognitive Development

For students to develop a knowledge base through comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis on a particular subject they need to first create a simple, rudimentary, or basic schema on that topic through direct or vicarious experience.

For the purpose, according to Callahan and Clark (1988), "teachers should use direct, realistic experiences, whenever feasible. Vicarious experiences, such as reading about the pyramids, are necessary to bring to pupils knowledge. Otherwise unattainable, however, direct experience of the real thing is more powerful."

Hands on activities and field trips such as taking students out of their familiar environment to a zoo, museum, play, etc is likely to result in schemata forming (Eby, 1997).

To promote comprehension of a subject, reflective teachers frequently employ visual or graphic aids in their teaching. They also ask their students to create illustrations, graphics, diagrams, and charts to demonstrate that they have interpreted data or new concepts successfully (ibid).

Moreover, a widely accepted principle of learning is that "if a student really comprehends something, then he can apply it" (Bloom, et al., 1956; cited in Eby, 1997:251).

When students are required to apply what they learn, they are expected to find out and think out things themselves. That includes approaches in which students are digging out their own learning. Among these approaches, according to Callahan and Clark (1988:11) are open discussion, inquiry and discovery lessons, action learning, individual and small group work, projects of various types, and numerous multi-task activities in which students control, to a large extent the conduct of their learning activities can be cited.

Meanwhile, classroom teachers of social studies can successfully use to cause their students to apply by offering opportunities & setting up conditions for better comprehension and learning by doing.

Teaching strategies that stimulate analytical thinking skills require the use of discussions that focus on identifying the elements of an argument: assumptions, hypothesis, facts, opinions, inferences, and conclusions. Analysis of relationships also can focus on comparisons, similarities, differences, and cause and effect (ibid).

Further, teachers need to encourage synthesis. The primary reason for including synthesis activities and products in the curriculum is because they emphasize and encourage personal expression rather than passive participation and dependence. Synthesis involves "recombination of parts of previous experience with new material, reconstructed into a new and more or less well integrated whole" (Bloom, et al., 1956; quoted Eby, 1997:252).

Synthesis requires creating a unique communication or product by an individual or a group. It is another way for creativity and occurs when students express what they have learned in an original way.

In the social studies classroom, synthesis is usually expressed through drama activities related to the subject taught. In such circumstances, the teacher needs to give opportunities to play in dramas, establish criteria to make sure that the students' products fit the subject and demonstrate that learning has taken place. Expressive experiences in which children have opportunity to express themselves through dramatic play, role-playing and socio drama, and enactive experiences (sometimes called projects) help students to synthesis something in which students build or create something (Welton and Mallan, 1992).

Teaching strategies that generate useful and valid evaluations are those that involve students in discussion, writing, problem solving, debate, and any other activities in which students express their own views and opinions on a subject (Eby, 1997).

2.3.5.1.2. Teaching Strategies to Attitudinal Modification

Attitudes of tolerance and civility toward other people are often mentioned as goals of education in the school. Positive attitudes toward the seeking and learning of new skills and knowledge are also usually stated as educational goals of far-reaching importance. And, there are attitudes of broad generality, often called values, to which schools and other societal institutions are expected to contribute and influence. These are attitudes pertaining to such social behaviors as are implied by the words of fairness, honesty, charitableness, and the more general term morality (Gagne, 1985; cited in Gagne et al., 1992:85).

Certainly, the methods of instruction to be used in establishing desired attitudes of these natures are considerably different from those applicable to the learning of intellectual skills and verbal information (Gagne, 1985). Consequently, the use of persuasive communication is said to be important to modify the internal state of an individual (McGuire, 1969 as cited in Gagne, et al., 1992:87). Furthermore, there are

direct and indirect methods of establishing and changing attitudes. Of the direct method of attitude learning more useful for school situations is based upon the idea of arranging contingencies of reinforcement (Skinner, 1968). Generalizing somewhat from this learning principle of reinforcement contingencies, it would appear that success in some learning accomplishment is likely to lead to a positive attitude toward that activity (Gagne, et al., 1992:88). For instance, this can be effected when praise is applied consistently and immediately after an acceptable response.

In directly, a method of establishing or changing attitudes of great importance and wide spread utility is human modeling. This means, as instances of fairness, sympathy, kindness, honesty and so on could be initiated from either older siblings or other members of the family, so do intellectual skills and knowledge if exhibited from teachers and classmates (Bandura, 1969, 1977; cited in Gagne et al., 1992:89).

Hence, one can teach attitudes by providing a more conducive atmosphere and models that pupils can emulate. Developing understanding may enhance the learning of attitudes just as value clarification, role-playing, and discussion of moral dilemmas may enhance the development of values and morals. Nevertheless, the changing of attitudes, ideals, and appreciation is a long drawn-out process. It requires numerous experiences favorable to the attitudes, ideal, or appreciation to lead pupils to conviction and commitment (Callahan and Clark, 1988:10).

Efforts should be made in school to initiate and develop positive attitudes of students to be successful in a certain fields of study (Aiken, 1972). For the purpose, the subjects present in the school curriculum should be organized on the common needs, interests and concerns of those being educated (Brigs, 1950). The curriculum should not only offer knowledge and organized system of thought, but also responsible of creating interest of students until they will maintain themselves. The varieties of school activities

should be based on pupil experience so that it will be meaningful to them (Bossing, 1955; Bend and Henery, 1966; Smith, 1969; Oser, 1994).

Meanwhile, teachers must understand the need and interest of the youth in school, and help them to develop desirable attitudes toward schoolwork. Teachers must know about the emotions, attitudes, and interest of their students to provide them adequate classroom instruction. They should lead students to activity motivated experience or self-motivating activities (Beaumont, 1949), since learning is largely the result of pupil motivation.

2.3.5.1.3. Teaching Strategies to Assist Student Master

Social Studies Skills

All skills have two characteristics in common: they are developmental, and they require practice if they are to be mastered. To speak of skills as being developmental means that they are learned gradually over a period of years. They are not really learned to completion although these usually come a time when the learner has mastered them sufficiently for most purposes. However, one could continue refining these skills throughout one's lifetime. Thus teaching should not assume that skills are taught and learned only once in some particular grade (Parker & Jarolimek, 1997). However, all teachers need to assume some responsibility for the teaching and maintenance of social studies skills.

2.3.5.2. Maximizing Activity Flow in Social Studies Classrooms

The wise use of time is said to be important to maximize opportunities for learning and minimize opportunities for disruption and to some extent time-on-task reflects teachers' ability to motivate students and involve them in learning activities.

Of the time available for academic learning, findings show that student learning will increase as the corresponding increase of allocated time, engaged time and academic learning time; and of the three again, academic learning time is said to be the best predictor of achievement. Herbert Walberg (1968) calls such meaningful and appropriate time that spends on work as 'productive time' (Weinstein and Mignano, 1997:141).

Paul Gump (1982) suggests some classroom activities prod students to be involved and "push" them along, while others do not. In a class discussion, external events (i.e., the teacher's questions, the other students' answer and the other teacher's responses) press students to pay attention (ibid).

When used under the step-by-step guidance of the teacher, oral questions, exercises from the workbooks and specially prepared handout problems and model answers are some of the ways students can be encouraged to think about, work through, or otherwise practice with the material being presented (Borich, 1988). To him, the degree of learning that occurs will be directly related to the time a student is actively engaged in the learning process. Therefore, the efficient utilization of class time and the active involvement of the student in practicing the content learned are important ingredients of student learning.

Good and Brophy (1994) cited in Weinstein and Mignano (1997:144) observe, "four things can happen" when students must wait with nothing to do, and three of them are bad:

- (1) Students may remain interested and attentive;
- (2) They may become bored or fatigued, losing interest and ability to concentrate;
- (3) They may become distracted or start day dreaming; or
- (4) They may actively misbehave.

Given the three-to-one odds that waiting will result in undesirable behavior and a loss of valuable learning opportunities, it is essential for teachers to learn how to maintain the flow of classroom activities.

Kounin (1970) investigated differences in teachers' ability to initiate and maintain activity flow in classrooms and found that in some classrooms, activities flowed smoothly and briskly, while in others activities were "jerky" and slow (ibid).

A recent study of motivational strategies (Newby, 1991; quoted by Weinstein and Mignano (1997:83)) has demonstrated that on-task behavior is higher in classrooms where teachers provide students with reasons for doing tasks and relate lessons to students' personal experiences. Unfortunately, Newby found that teachers use these "relevance strategies" only occasionally.

2.3.5.3. Providing Clarity in the Learning Process of Social Studies

When an individual completes an assignment, participates in a class discussion, or solve a problem, the mental structures known as schemata are activated and influence the way in which the written or spoken communication is understood. The individual may fail to understand an author or speaker's meaning for three reasons (Byrnes and Torney-Purta, 1997:728).

First, the student may not possess appropriate schemata (information processing) related to the communication;

Second, the student may possess an appropriate schema but the clues provided by the teacher or textbook may not prompt the individual to see the link with the existing schema;

Third, the student may call upon an inadequate schema and distort what is heard or read for fit.

Hence, correcting the "instruction-resistant" misconceptions students bring with them into the classroom is an important goal of instruction. This has happened extensively in science education, but also holds true for other areas. Students are very likely to come to their classroom with misconception, partial understandings, or inadequate schemata, and these misconceptions are neither obvious nor easy to change. Example "the earth is flat".

Furthermore, Gutierrez (1992) cited in Hailom (1998:402) argues:

Reality is what we take to be true. What we take to be true is what we believe. What we believe is based upon perceptions. What we perceive depends on what we think. What we think depends upon what we take to be true. What we take to be true is our reality.

This assertion obviously shows that what one perceives influences learning, for learning takes place through the process of perception. The school can facilitate learning if its activities are based on what the learner can perceive and realize particularly in elementary education. Sometimes already learned beliefs, attitudes, and value systems may hamper or facilitate learning process. Accordingly, classroom activities should focus initially on what students think about the subject they learn, what they expect to learn and other related activities that can help students to reflect what they feel and think. (Hailom, 1998:402).

To develop the concept, one should give pupils opportunities to roll the notion over in their minds by providing numerous examples and by letting them see the idea from various angles so as to establish relations and to draw conclusions (Callahan, and Clark, 1988:9). For instance presenting globe to show the spherical shape of the earth.

In spite of this, teachers need to portray subject matter to students, according to McDiarmid (1991:262): through the topics, questions, and ideas they present to students; through the sequence in which they present these substantive matters; through the kinds of discourse they encourage in the classroom and the kinds

of discourse they encourage in the classroom and the kinds of activities they organize; through the examples, illustrations, analogies, metaphors, and so on that they employ to represent concepts.

Otherwise, the child will continue to understand and give meaning to new experiences in the light of already established conception of reality and if the new experiences are totally unconnected to his/her conception of reality, the child is likely to be confused and may withdraw from learning. But when school experiences reflect the child's reality, then she/he can embark on the process of learning, with emphasis on assimilation (Hailom, 1998:402).

Basically, clarity will depend in part upon packaging instructional stimuli in the form of oral presentations, visual messages, exercises, and reading assignments that are at the current level of functioning of all of the students (Borich, 1988:300).

However, learning appears to be enhanced when students understand what is expected of them, get recognition for their work, learn quickly about their errors, and receive guidance in improving their performance. These pedagogical practices are very much within the control of the teachers, and therefore, they should recognize as desirable pedagogy (Goodlad et al, 1984:124).

Meanwhile, accenting the curriculum topics with personal experiences, examples and illustrations from outside the text or even outside the curriculum often is the mark of effective teaching. But failing to relate these experiences, examples, and illustrations to the adopted curriculum will orient the students away from unit goal, and make it less likely they will be achieved.

2 .4. Methods of Studying Students' Experience in the Classrooms

To learn what is included in the classroom curriculum students must manage the mental, physical and emotional processes involved in preparing classroom activities and

in learning from them. However, it is stated that one does not know very much about what specifically goes on in their minds and bodies when people are engaged in school learning (Walker, 1990) because it is far more covert such as when one student generalizes from another's utterance and echoes an error (Wajnryb, 1992:8).

Psychologists call these processes Mathemagenic, a coined term meaning giving birth to learning in Greek (Rothkopf, 1970:cited in Walker, 1990:234). It is control of attention, psychological and cognitive processing of sensory data, strategies for remembering and for relating one item of information to another, monitoring one's own state of knowledge or ignorance, and other mental actions that control the use of one's abilities for learning. These processes play a crucial role in making the classroom curriculum accessible to students but they are not directly accessible to any other than the learner (Walker, 1990).

Therefore, of the routes researchers have into the learner's own experience is that experience itself as expressed in words or acts. They have to ask learners what their experiences are like, watch what they do, observe what they learn and what make them learn, analyze what learning is for them. According to Marton and Booth (1997), it is through such attempts that researchers can fetch a wealth of important insights from those experiences.

Supporting this idea, Erickson and Shultz (1996:478) explained that a body of work that only approaches the phenomena of student experience of curriculum in a concrete and direct way is the first person voice of the student because on the topic of student experience, students themselves are the ultimate insiders and experts.

The implication of this is that asking students to tell about how they see their learning, how they go about learning and what they think is, important to research about their own experiences. Perhaps the following proverbs that state, "The fish would be the last creature to discover water" (Kluckhohn, cited in Erickson and Shultz, 1996:481) may

hold a certain truth in this regard. Another approach is to ask teachers and principals, those already close to students on a long-term basis (Erickson and Shultz, 1996).

Nevertheless, even though a task analysis of the cognitive; psycho-physical, and emotional demands of any one of the content which is presented to the students in classrooms by the teacher, by curriculum materials, and perhaps by other students would be beyond the state of the art of modern psychology, what is happening in the classroom is sometimes overt, such as when a student asks a question and a teacher responds directly. Hence, using an observation task charting students' concentration, participation and the like can be possible (Wajnryb, 1992).

In relation to this fact, Erickson and Shultz (1996:481) indicated that sensitive participant observation by outsiders who visit a class could play a part in making visible the immediate experience of students. The observation task can focus on one or small number of aspects of teaching or learning and can require the observer to collect data or information from the actual lesson or the patterns of interaction that emerge in a lesson.

Classrooms, however, are complex areas where many processes co-occur and overlap. It takes a skilled and trained eye to perceive, understand and benefit from observing the proceedings of learning/teaching (Wajnryb, 1992:5)

This means all teaching-learning behaviors are not equally amenable to observation. Nevertheless, if once the researcher entered into the classroom to record classroom interaction she/he can choose from different instruments that have been developed to measure various aspects of classroom interaction over the years.

Of which, Flanders' Classroom Interaction Analysis System is one of the most utilized category system to study classroom verbal communication (Chauhan, 1979). An important aspect of Flanders' interaction analysis system is that it helps to analyze the balance of initiation and response between the teacher and his students in the classroom (Perrott, 1982: 186). The system enables one to analyze whether a class is teacher

dominated or pupil dominated, whether it is open or repressive and whether the teaching style is direct or indirect (Moore, 1995:34).

In discussing the same issue Cronback and Snow in Anderson and Burns (1989:229) also indicated the importance of studying classroom interaction using Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC). According to those writers, research works undertaken using FIAC represent a movement away from the more traditional "teaching method" studies and toward studies that investigate the issues like the impact of teaching behaviors or students' learning, the relationship between aptitude and interaction.

Of course, most of the attempt to analyze classroom interaction has focused on the examination of the teachers' and pupils' behavior performed during interaction. These examinations have concentrated on such variables as contents of the interaction, its scope, duration, or non-verbal behavior involved (Bar-Tal and Bar Tal, p.140).

Similarly, Flanders' Classroom Interaction Analysis System (Flanders 1963:2-5) selected ten kinds of verbal behaviors, which he thought would give insight into the nature of the teaching-learning process.

He divided these ten behaviors (categories) into three major sections: "teacher talk", "student talk" and silence or confusion."

The first section (teacher talk) comprises the first seven categories, which are again grouped under "indirect teacher influence" and "direct teacher influence". The indirect teacher influence includes "acceptance of feelings", "praise or encouragement", "acceptance of pupil's ideas" and "questions". Direct talk, on the other hand, includes "lecturing", "giving directions" and "criticizing or justifying authority". Of the above categories of teacher's talk, Flanders (1970:34) considered the first three (1-3) as teacher's response while the last three (5-7) are taken to be initiation.

Flanders' eighth and ninth categories are for pupils' talk and are labeled "pupil talk-response" and "pupil talk-initiation", respectively. The tenth category is for the amount of

silence or confusion. These ten categories, with Flanders' own description of them, are given in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC)

Teacher Talk	Response	1. Accepts feeling. Accepts and clarifies an attitude or the feeling tone of a pupil in a no threatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative. Predicting and recalling feelings are included. 2. Praises or encourages. Praises or encourages pupil action or behavior. Jokes that release tension, but not at the expense of another individual; nodding head, or saying "umhm?" or "go on" are included. 3. Accepts or used ideas of pupils. Clarifying, building or developing ideas suggested by a pupil. Teacher extensions of pupil ideas are included
		4. Asks questions. Asking a question about content or procedure, based on teacher ideas, with the intent that a pupil will answer.
	Initiation	5. Lecturing. Giving facts or opinions about content or procedures; expressing his own ideas, giving how own explanation, or citing an authority other than a pupil. 6. Giving directions. Directions, commands, or orders to which a pupil is expected to comply. 7. Criticizing or justifying authority. Statements intended to change pupil behavior from no acceptable to acceptable pattern; bawling someone out; stating why the teacher is doing what he is going; extreme self-reference.
Pupil Talk	Response	8. Pupil-talk-response. Talk by pupil in response to teacher. Teacher initiates the contract or solicits pupil statement or structures the situation. Freedom to express own ideas is limited.
	Initiation	9. Pupil-talk-initiation. Talk by pupils, which they initiate. Expressing own ideas; initiating a new topic; freedom to develop opinions and a line of thought, like asking thoughtful question; going beyond the existing structure.
Silence		10. Silence or confusion. Pauses, short periods of silence and periods of confusion in which communication cannot be understood by the observer.

**There is no scale implied by these numbers, each number is classificatory; it designates a particular kind of communication event. To write these numbers down during observation is to enumerate, not to judge a position on a scale. Adapted from Flanders (1970:34)*

CHPATER THREE

3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

This study is conducted in second cycle primary schools of Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones in Amhara Region. It employed descriptive survey methods, since it attempted to secure pieces of information about students' experience in social studies classrooms as existing currently. To this effect the researcher employed the following procedures to determine sample population and to collect and analyze the secured data.

3.1. Population and Sampling Procedures

Sources of data of this study are:

- Students of grades 7th and 8th (approx. ages 14-16) in the second cycle primary schools,
- Social studies classrooms in live situations, and
- Teachers of the social studies subject in the respective schools of Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Zones.

To arrive at the representative students, teachers and classrooms, multi-stage cluster sampling technique is used. The advantage of this kind of sampling technique in survey study is supported by: Kerlinger (1986) who indicates that this technique is useful to select representative samples from large number of cases.

3.1.1. Sampling of Schools

Currently, there are 10 'woredas' in Western Gojjam Administrative Zone, and 2 'woredas' in Bahir Dar special Administrative Zone. Hence, first from the available 12 woredas in the two zones, the total of 40 percent was planned to be taken as a sample.

Hence, using quota-sampling technique, 4 woredas were taken from Western Gojjam zone, while 1 woreda from Bahir Dar zone.

In determining the specific woredas, purposive sampling technique was employed on the basis of accessibility to the researcher. Meanwhile, namely 'woreda 2' from Bahir Dar Zone; and 'Achefer woreda', 'Mecha woreda', 'Yilmana Densa woreda', and 'Bahir Dar zuria woreda' from western Gojjam zone were sampled.

Second, in all the sampled woredas, there are a total of 25-second cycle primary schools. Of these, 40 percent schools were taken as a sample. Accordingly, a total of 10 schools were selected from the sampled woredas. Applying quota-sampling technique, again, each woreda was required to contribute two schools. Due to the heterogeneity of school contexts between rural and urban sites, the sampled schools from each woreda was purposefully drawn from 5 urban and 5 rural sites. The participating schools were Sertse Dingile, Shimbite, Merawi, Adet and Ayalew Mekonnen second cycle primary schools from urban sites; and Gonji, Tis Abay, Azena, Rime, and Fereswega second cycle primary schools from rural sites.

3.1.2 Sampling of Classrooms in Live Situations

As indicated earlier, this study is confined to the examining of students' experience in social studies classrooms. In obtaining some relevant data about the learning behavior of students in the teaching learning process, classrooms were observed while on progress. Consequently, ten Grade 7th classrooms and ten Grade 8th classrooms were randomly selected among the total available of 25 and 23 urban school classrooms respectively; while five Grade 7th classrooms, and five Grade 8th classrooms were randomly selected almost as available among (except from Azena and Tis Abay schools) the total 7 and 5 classrooms respectively from the rural sites.

3.1.3. Sampling of Students

There are 2275 Grade 7th and 1822 Grade 8th totally 4097 students currently in the sampled schools. Among these students, 116 Grade 7th and 110 grade 8th totally 226 students were randomly drawn and required to fill a questionnaire. Moreover, 75 students from each grade of 7th and 8th were selected following the same procedure and participated in focus group interviews.

3.1.4. Sampling of Teachers

Those teachers of social studies subject in the sampled schools and observed classrooms were the components of the study, as available. Hence, a total of 16 teachers were participated in the study. The pattern of distribution of teachers is that in rural classrooms there is a single teacher responsible to teach social studies in both grades (except at Azena), while there are 2 teachers in each urban school responsible for grades 7th, or 8th or both.

3.2. Data Gathering Instruments

3.2.1. Questionnaire

Grades 7th and 8th students were required to fill both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaire. This is to enlist information whether or not students perceive social studies as relevant to develop social knowledge, attitudes and skills; to judge the perceived match between the assigned social studies curricular materials and students' ability, needs and interests; and to check if students have favorable attitude towards the subject. The questionnaire instruments were most developed based on the reviewed literature while few were adapted from the works of Shumba and Mayati (2000:69-71)

To avoid ambiguities in the questionnaire it was pilot tested and the necessary amendments were made following that by restating, omitting and inserting what ever needed (Appendix-A).

Teachers were also required to fill a list of questionnaire (Appendix-B) to support the findings obtained from the students. Finally, the reliability of the questionnaire was checked. Hence, the reliability of student questionnaire items as estimated by Alpha (Cronbach) co-efficient to part I and part II were .91 and .85 respectively. The reliability of teacher questionnaire items as estimated by the same instrument for part I and part III were .97 and .61 respectively.

3.2.2. Observing Classroom Interaction

The objective of implementing observation schedules was to obtain a specimen of teacher-pupil interaction in the social studies classrooms in enhancing students' experience. Though there are many published observation schedules and accounts of different methods of observing individuals and groups in different contexts, the Flanders (1970) system, which was derived from the Bales (1950) method of classifying behavior, is one of the best known (Bell, 1993:90).

However, the problem about Flanders- type systems is that the categories are quite complex, unable to describe the totality of the classroom activity, overlook some behavior, concerned primarily with social skills, and devote little attention to students' talk (Chauhan, 1979:141). Consequently, being conscious of the drawbacks specified, the researcher backed up the limitations by employing additional items (Appendix-C).

Flanders (1970) devised ten categories of teacher/student behavior (the Flanders interaction analysis categories), which the observer used as a basis for categorizing and recording what took place in the classroom. Here, observers were required to record what

was happening every three second and to enter the appropriate category number on a prepared chart.

To apply this model in the schools under discussion, the following steps were taken. Firstly, based on Flanders' model and using grades 7th and 8th social studies textbooks, a manual was prepared in Amharic language in order to acquaint the assistant observer before gathering the data for the main study.

Secondly, an assistant observer, who has a pedagogical science background, was given an orientation for three days and for about three hours long each day on how to code classroom teaching. During training, the researcher concentrated on:

- giving orientation to the assistant about classroom interaction and the FIAC system.
- giving exercises to the observer and following him up whether or not he memorize the ten code symbols associated with each category, whether he can record classroom verbal communication using code symbols, and whether he attain the appropriate speed in using these ten code symbols.

Thirdly, inter-observers' agreement in coding the teaching-learning process using the ten code symbols was calculated using the formula suggested by: Emmer and Millet (1970); cited in Good and Brophy (1987:69).

$$\text{Agreement} = 1 - \frac{A - B}{A + B}$$

* The A term is always the larger term.

The necessity of establishing consistency or reliability between observers is documented in Good and Brophy (1987:69). Meanwhile, the formula was employed to determine if the researcher and the assistant observer were able to record what happened in the classroom at about the same pace

Applying this formula, the agreement between the researcher and the observer was found to be significantly high (95.5%) at initial observation and 97.2% agreement at about the middle of the observation schedule. This enabled the researcher to confidentially continue the observation since the expected general agreement is 60-90 percent (ibid).

For methodological validity, attempt was made to see in advance of observation, the lesson plan that the teacher intends to follow. But as it was suggested by Wajnryb (1992:19) care was also taken not to alert the teacher to the central point of the observation for fear of contaminating the data. Rather, teachers were advised to continue their own program as usual.

3.2.3. Interviewing

As it was explained by Erickson and Shultz (1996:468) direct observation cannot reveal fully the students' experience in the midst of engagement with curriculum, although close observation can provide clues that point to the nature of experience. Hence, interviewing is recommended as a more appropriate means to uncover the subjective experience of a student within a classroom task.

Therefore, this study was also engaged in interviewing ten students in each grade of five urban schools and five students in each grade of five rural schools, in the way that they represent sections. The interview had a focused-group character though not in its complete form because of the limited exposure of students in discussing in front of guests and among students of different classrooms.

However, an open-ended form of inquiry was pursued (Appendix-D) through discussion with group of students with the interest of illuminating student perception of difficulties/ease of the students and like. Since the problems of 1 or 2 individuals in a section cannot turn out to be a representative of those of the target group, such

discussions were followed by related questionnaire to determine to what extent the perceptions are common to the group as a whole.

3.3. Methods of Data Analysis

The procedures followed for analyzing the data was different depending on the instruments employed. Hence, the questionnaire was first, collected, tallied and tabulated. Thereafter, the interpretation was made with the help of percentages, means, Chi-square and t-tests.

Regarding the analysis of classroom interaction, after a list of code symbols obtained from observations, the researcher used a 10 x 10 matrix to place the code symbols in the appropriate category. The entire observations made in grades 7th and 8th at urban and rural sites were displayed in separated matrices so that to make comparisons. All of the tally marks were again summed up and used to represent the whole observation by a master matrix (Appendix-E).

Finally, using the formula, suggested by FIAC (1970), the researcher analyzed indices like: the proportion of teacher's talk, students' talk and silence and confusion, the tendency of teachers to make direct and indirect influences, the tendency of teachers to use questions when guiding the more content oriented part of the classroom discussion, the ratio of pupils' initiation in introducing their own ideas into the classroom discourse, the attention of teachers on subject matter content, student motivation or discipline, and the rapidity of the interchange of communication between the teacher and the pupils. To calculate the frequencies of each category and the indices listed above, the percentage system of data analysis and ratios were used.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATIONS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This part of the study deals with presentation and analysis of data gathered through student questionnaire and interview, teacher questionnaire, and consecutive observations of Grades 7th and 8th social studies classrooms in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones.

The results of the study are presented in the following order. First background information of the samples is presented. Second, the perception of students regarding the relevance, difficulty, and the degree of match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the students' needs and interests are presented. Third, views of social studies teachers about their students' experience in the subject are followed. Fourth, the instructional attempts made to enhance students' experience, as reported by students, teachers and the observer are displayed. Fifth, the results of the analysis of social studies classroom interaction are presented.

4.1. Background Information of the Samples

Table I : Characteristics of Sampled Schools and Classrooms

School	Location	Average Class Size		Arrangement of Classroom Space	Delivery of Instruction	Delivery of Support Inputs					
		7th	8th			Teacher Characteristics			Availability of Some Facilities		
						No	Qualification	Field of Study	Library	Ped. Center	Social Science Club
Sertse Diggile	Urban	84	88	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	2	12+2	Geography (Both teachers)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shimbte	Urban	79	76	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	2	12+2	Geography (Both)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adet	Urban	95	88	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	2	12+2	Geography = 1 History = 1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ayalew Mokonnen	Urban	89	78	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	2	12+2	Geography = 1 History = 1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Merawi	Urban	78	81	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	2	12+2	Geography (Both)	No	Yes	No
Azena	Rural	52	60	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	2	12+2	Geography (Both)	No	Yes	No
Gonji	Rural	50	52	Up to half of class arranged at fixed chairs and half at floor	Whole Class	1	12+2	Geography	No	No	No
Ferewoga	Rural	62	30	Movable chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	1	12+2	Geography	No	No	No
Rime	Rural	38	58	Up to half of class arranged at fixed chairs and half at floor	Whole Class	1	12+2	Amharic	No	No	No
TisAbay	Rural	64	50	Fixed chairs in rows facing the blackboard	Whole Class	1	12+2	Geography	No	Yes	No

As shown in Table I, the total number of schools involved in this study was 10 in number. Of these, 5 are located in urban sites. A close examination of the table depicts some of the similarities and differences among schools and classrooms. Accordingly, the observed differences are that the average class size is higher, ranging from 78-95 students in urban schools as compared to 30-64 in rural ones. Facilities such as library, pedagogical centers and social science clubs are found most in urban schools. Moreover, while two different teachers are responsible to teach social studies in grades 7th and 8th in each of the urban schools, a single teacher is responsible for both grades in rural schools.

Regarding the similarities, all teachers are diploma holders in qualification and most have either a geography or history backgrounds except at 'Rime' school with Amharic field of study. But none of them has an integrated qualification in line with social studies. The delivery of instruction in all schools were 'whole class' whereby the work of teachers with small groups or individual students is seldom observed. Rather teacher talking (lecturing, explaining, giving directions etc) were prevalent.

Furthermore, the arrangement of classroom space were more or less similar in the schools under discussion by which movable desks and chairs in rows facing the teachers desk or blackboard is the dominant pattern. The exceptions were "Gonji", 'Rime' and 'TisAbay' schools where up to half of the students were required to sit either on floors or at fixed desks - in fact facing the teacher's desk or the blackboard was the characteristics of these classrooms too. In all cases, no student movement away from desk was observed during live classroom situations.

The domination of classroom arrangements with rows of desks is expected to result, according to Weinstein and Mignano (1997:30), with reduced interaction among students and with the missing of the merits of clustering such as promoting social contact,

working together on activities, sharing materials, having small group discussions and helping each other with assignments.

Hence, the patterns, classroom dimensions and specific behaviors in all the observed schools were more or less characterized with what Cuban (1984) in Anderson and Burns (1989:180) has clarified as 'teacher-centered' rather than 'mixed' or 'student-centered'.

According to Marsh (1992), specific classroom environment and space allocations can have important consequences, on the attitudes, behaviors and even the achievements of students. Consequently, specific experiences of students in such social studies classrooms are to be presented in the proceeding sections.

Table II ; Bio data of Students who Get Involved in the Study

Grade	Sex			Location			%
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
7	58	41	99	66	33	99	48.5
8	56	49	105	76	29	105	51.5
Total	114	90	204	142	62	204	100
%	55.9	40.1	100	69.6	30.4	100	

The distribution of student respondent across grade, sex and location is depicted in Table II above. Of the total 204 subject, 48.5% were drawn from grade 7th while 51.3% from grade 8th. Among these, Male students accounted 55.9%. Moreover, 69.6% of the respondents were from urban while 30.4% were from rural schools.

In addition to the above-mentioned number, a total of some 150 students were drawn for focused group interviews (10 students from each school and each grade (7th and 8th) in urban sites, and 5 students from each school and grade. However, the results obtained through the interview schedules were much diffused only to triangulate where the need arise.

4.2. Students' Perceptions Regarding the Relevance, Difficulty, and Degree of match of the social studies to Needs and Interests.

By investigating the perception of students one could obtain information concerning students' experience in the social studies subject. Given the major goals that the curriculum is designed to accomplish, different learning experiences might be perceived by the students as directly relevant and useful or less relevant and inappropriate.

Meanwhile, this study attempted to investigate the experience of the second cycle primary school students, particularly, grade 7 and 8 from their perceptions about the social studies subject that they learn and presented in the following tables

Table III: Perceived Relevance of the Learning of Social Studies to the Development of Social Knowledge (Student Response)

Q. To What extent do you find the learning of Social Studies important in developing your knowledge and understanding of facts about:	No. of Respondents in Each Scale					χ ² (N=204)	x ²
	Very Much 5	Much 4	Moderate 3	Less 2	Very Less 1		
the social and natural environment?	70 (33.7%)	76 (36.5%)	53 (25.5%)	2 (1.0%)	3 (1.4%)	4.02	126.8*
the interrelationships and interdependence of people?	55 (26.4%)	66 (31.7%)	60 (28.8%)	18 (8.7%)	5 (2.5%)	3.72	80.3*
the history, geography, and civics conditions of own country?	104 (50.0%)	51 (24.5%)	33 (15.9%)	10 (4.8%)	6 (2.9%)	4.16	154.8*
the history, geography, and civics conditions of own continent and the world at large?	62 (29.8%)	62 (30.8%)	53 (25.5%)	17 (8.2%)	8 (3.8%)	3.76	68.1*
the meaning and nature of human, social and economic institutions?	35 (16.8%)	62 (30.5%)	60 (29.6%)	37 (18.2%)	9 (4.4%)	3.38	46.2*
the concept of social changes?	39 (18.8%)	58 (29.6%)	65 (33.2%)	27 (13.8%)	7 (3.6%)	3.48	56.2*
Aggregate Mean 3.82							

* Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table III indicates the perceived worthiness of social studies learning to the development of factual and conceptual social knowledge, as reported by the students.

Meanwhile, the response of students in relation to the presented items showed an aggregate mean rated value of 3.82, which is well above 'moderate' in a five-point scale.

Of the items, the relevance of social studies to the understanding of facts about 'the history, geography and civics conditions of own country' is rated relatively higher (mean = 4.16) followed by the knowledge of facts about 'the social and natural environment' (mean = 4.02). The mean rated values to all the other items in Table III are above the midpoint (3.0). These depicted that the relevance of social studies that students are studying in the year is perceived to be helpful for the development of knowledge and understanding of facts about social reality by the majority of students.

The computed Chi-square values for all the six items in Table III also depict that there are significant differences among the observed frequencies along each scale.

Since students are required both to know about and experience a deep sense of appreciation for the peoples and places on earth, their relationships, the similarities and differences among them, the problems they encounter and social trends that likely will shape the future (NCSS, 1994; in Parker and Jarolimek, 1997:14), it seemed that the reported perception and belief students hold about may serve as an important spring board to promote students' experience in these regard.

Obviously, relevance is one of the qualities of good curriculum, which closes the gap between the school curriculum and the life experience, which the learner encounters out of the school (Lewy, 1977:51). Meanwhile, even though some portions of social studies may be taught because they represent bodies of knowledge that children are expected to learn and know regardless of any direct relevance to their day-to-day lives (Parker and Jarolimek, 1997:14), the reported perceived relevance is significant since the purpose of social science disciplines is not to teach facts apart from their importance.

Table IV: Perceived Relevance of the Learning of Social Studies to the Development of Social Attitude (Student Response)

Q. To What extent do you find the learning of Social Studies important in developing your attitude towards the following:	No. of Respondents in Each Scale					x (N=204)	x ²
	Very Much 5	Much 4	Moderate 3	Less 2	Very Less 1		
to accept social responsibility?	44 (21.2%)	59 (28.4%)	65 (31.3%)	27 (13.0%)	9 (4.4%)	3.50	54.0*
to participate actively in social activities ?	41 (19.7%)	50 (24.02%)	74 (35.6%)	28 (13.5%)	11 (5.4%)	3.40	56.6*
to work cooperatively ?	45 (21.6%)	53 (25.5%)	49 (23.4%)	42 (20.2%)	15 (7.4%)	3.27	24.9*
to take care of private and common properties?	48 (23.1%)	42 (20.2%)	50 (24.0%)	35 (16.8%)	29 (14.2%)	3.22	9.6*
to display sensitivity to social and environmental problem ?	44 (21.3%)	66 (31.7%)	58 (27.9%)	21 (10.1%)	15 (7.2%)	3.50	48.9*
to show mutual respect for the ideas and feelings of others ?	46 (22.1%)	48 (23.1%)	58 (27.9%)	36 (17.3%)	16 (7.8%)	3.36	27.6*
to love own country and develop national feelings?	81 (38.9%)	51 (24.5%)	48 (23.1%)	12 (5.8%)	12 (5.8%)	3.87	84.1*
to be open about self weaknesses?	24 (11.5%)	42 (20.2%)	65 (31.3%)	49 (23.6%)	24 (11.7%)	2.96	31.9*
to earn a living only through the right means ?	44 (21.2%)	55 (26.4%)	45 (21.6%)	41 (19.7%)	19 (9.3%)	3.31	22.3*
to be optimistic in solving problems?	37 (17.8%)	59 (28.4%)	57 (27.4%)	37 (17.8%)	14 (6.9%)	3.33	37.5*
to improve personal hygiene ?	44 (21.2%)	42 (20.2%)	41 (19.7%)	43 (20.7%)	34 (16.9%)	3.09	1.9
to believe in democracy ?	84 (40.4%)	58 (27.9%)	32 (15.4%)	17 (8.2%)	13 (6.4%)	3.90	42.1*
to lead goal-oriented life?	47 (22.6%)	58 (27.9%)	57 (27.4%)	31 (14.9%)	11 (5.4%)	3.48	15.2*
						Aggregate Mean 3.40	

- Significant at alpha 0.05 level

From Table IV above one can observe the perceived relevance of social studies to the development of social attitudes as reported by the students. It appears that the majority of students rated each item either 'very much, much', or 'moderate' and the relevance of social studies to the development of attitudes is revealed with the aggregate mean rated value of 3.40, which is above the mid point (mean = 3.00) or to express it in words, above moderately relevant.

A close examination of responses to individual items also revealed that the relevance of social studies to the development of students' attitudes 'to accept social responsibility' (mean = 3.50), 'to participate actively in social activities' (mean = 3.40), 'to

work cooperatively' (mean = 3.27), 'to take care of private and common properties' (mean = 3.22), 'to show mutual respect for the ideas and feelings of others' (mean = 3.36), 'to love own country and develop national feelings' (mean 3.87), 'to be open about self weakness' (mean = 2.96), 'to earn a living only through the right means (mean = 3.31), 'to be optimistic in solving problems' (mean = 3.33), 'to improve personal hygiene' (mean = 3.09), 'to believe in democracy (mean = 3.90), and 'to lead goal-oriented life' (mean = 3.48) were all rated nearly close to or above 'moderate' level.

The fact that nearly all items are rated above mean 3.0 indicate that the majority of students perceived the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of their social attitude.

The computed Chi-square values for all the items, except for the relevance of social studies to the development of students' attitudes 'to improve personal hygiene?' show significant differences among the observed frequencies each scale.

On the whole, attitudes are related to those values, appreciation, and ideas that the social studies program seeks to instill in the learner. According to Good & Brophy (1997), students need to develop the attitudes or "habits of mind" that are considered essential for the development of responsible citizenship including positive attitudes about respect, tolerance, and understanding with regard to individuals, groups, and cultures; respect and responsibility for the environment; and understanding and appreciation of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of citizenship. Meanwhile, such moderately high perceived relevance of social studies to students' attitudinal development is found to be important since the objectives in the current Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994) is to produce citizens; who promote the culture of respect for work, who protect natural recourses and historical heritages of the country, and who develop attitudes and skills to use and tend private and public properties.

Table V: Perceived Relevance of the Learning of Social Studies to the

Development of Social Skills

Q. To What extent do you find the learning of Social Studies important in developing your skills in the following areas:	No. of Respondents in Each Scale					x (N=204)	x ²
	Very Much 5	Much 4	Moderate 3	Less 2	Very Less 1		
skills in questioning ?	48 (23.1%)	65 (31.3%)	50 (24.0%)	31 (14.9%)	10 (4.8%)	3.54	4.33*
skills in distinguishing between facts and opinion ?	33 (15.9%)	54 (24.0%)	61 (29.3%)	42 (20.2%)	14 (5.4%)	3.25	38.0*
skills in the use of graphs, charts, diagrams and tables?	73 (35.1%)	50 (24.0%)	50 (24.0%)	21 (10.1%)	10 (4.9%)	3.76	66.1*
skills in the use of maps?	36 (17.3%)	55 (26.4%)	48 (23.1%)	40 (19.2%)	25 (12.0%)	3.18	12.9*
skills in the use of photographs ?	16 (7.7%)	40 (19.2%)	57 (27.4%)	58 (27.4%)	33 (16.2%)	2.75	30.8*
skills in critical thinking ?	33 (15.9%)	51 (31.7%)	57 (27.4%)	54 (26.0%)	9 (4.4%)	3.22	43.1*
skills in identifying and solving problems?	38 (18.3%)	59 (28.4%)	66 (32.4%)	33 (15.9%)	8 (5.8%)	3.42	51.7*
skills in hypothesis testing?	22 (10.6%)	46 (21.6%)	72 (34.6%)	45 (5.8%)	19 (9.3%)	3.03	47.9*
skills in creative thinking?	40 (19.2%)	45 (21.6%)	62 (29.8%)	45 (21.6%)	12 (5.9%)	3.06	32.2*
skills in cooperative work?	34 (16.3%)	63 (30.3%)	57 (27.4%)	33 (15.9%)	17 (8.3%)	3.31	39.2*
skills in studying ?	37 (17.8%)	41 (19.7%)	57 (27.4%)	46 (22.1%)	23 (11.2%)	3.11	15.2*
skills in choosing among alternatives (skills in decision making)?	30 (14.4%)	58 (27.9%)	67 (32.2%)	43 (20.7%)	12 (5.9%)	3.28	15.2*
Aggregate Mean 3.30							

*Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table V shows the relative weight given by the students to the relevance of social studies for the development of their social skills. The aggregate mean 3.30 reveals that the perceived relevance of social studies to the development of students' social skill is close to 'moderate'.

Of all the items aggregated in Table V, the relevance of social studies, to the development of 'skills in the use of graphs, charts, diagrams or tables (mean = 3.76), and 'skills in questioning' (mean = 3.54) were relatively rated higher, while its relevance to the development of 'skills in the use of photographs' (mean = 2.75), and 'skills in hypothesis testing' (mean = 3.03) were relatively rated the lowest. The relevance of the subject to all

the other skills is rated in between means = 3.0 and 3.5. From table V therefore, one can extract meaning that the relevance of social studies to the development of social skills is perceived to be 'moderate' or nearly average.

Except the perceived relevance of social studies to the development of ' skills in the use of photographs', which is rated below 3.0, other items that are rated above it reveal that the majority of students clearly see a personal use or an advantage of social studies to the development of social skills.

The computed Chi-square values for all items also indicate the significant differences of the observed frequencies from the expected ones.

Fundamentally, the social skills that are prompted by contemporary reforms are those which include: work study skills such as reading, outlining, map reading, and interpreting graphs; thinking skills such as critical thinking and problem solving; group process skills such as those involved in leading or participating in group undertaking; and social living skills such as acting responsibility, cooperating with others and the like (Beckler, et al., 1981/89; Welton and Mallan, 1992). Thus, the relevance of any social studies curriculum to these skills are significant in dealing with social studies as a field of study and with other peoples (Jarolimek, 1963:18). Furthermore, by acquiring essential social skills students could have get the advantages such as becoming active in the search for knowledge rather than passive recipients of facts; getting the power to think and learn independently, and applying knowledge to solve academic and practical problems (Patric, et al; 1981).

Table VI: Perceived Difficulty of the Social Studies Contents and Learning Experiences to Students

Items	No. Of Respondents in Each Scale										x (N=20)	x ²
	5		4		3		2		1			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
How difficult do you find the social studies course that you are learning this year?	18	8.82	70	34.3	90	44.1	19	9.3	7	3.4	3.36	136.6*
To what extent do the contents presented in social studies textbook related to the realm of experience?	21	10.29	69	33.8	86	42.16	22	10.8	6	2.94	3.38	119.8*
What do you say about the scope of your social studies textbooks?	66	32.4	68	33.3	41	20.01	18	8.82	11	5.39	3.78	68.2*
Aggregate Mean 3.50												

*Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table VI indicates students' responses to questions related to the perceived difficulty of the social studies that they are learning.

Students' response to the first question "How difficult do you find the social studies that you are learning this year?" was depicted by a mean rating value of 3.36. This implies that the subject is close to moderately difficult or at about average level of difficulty.

Student were also asked through Focused-group interview schedules to discuss whether or not social studies is an easy (or difficult) subject and to give examples about the way they find easy or difficult. Even though approximately two in five group members in each schedule reported that they find social studies difficult, none of the groups were able to specify the part of the social studies curricular materials that are easy or difficult.

These indicate that the difficulty or easiness of the social studies curricular materials is not unit-or topic-specific rather diffused through the entire process.

As to why curricular tasks become difficult, Wright (1987:35), argued that cognitively, a task may be 'difficult' or complex-this may be intrinsic to the task or related to the intelligence or aptitude of the individual performing the task. A task can also be 'difficult' because an individual has a negative attitude towards it, or its contents, or the people with whom he is doing the task. A task can also be 'difficult' because of the

affective involvement it entails. The task may be too demanding of the learner's emotional commitment. Combined with a high cognitive involvement, it can make the task all impossible to do.

Meanwhile, the possible explanations for the perceived difficulty of the social studies may be linked to the aforementioned reasons.

The response of students to the accompanying question (Table VI), 'To what extent are the contents presented in social studies textbooks related to the realm of experience?' was denoted by a rated mean value of 3.38 in inversely rated scale. This value approaches 'moderate' in a five-point scale and it implies that the perceived remoteness of the contents from the students' prior knowledge or the real world events is at about an average level.

Subject matter is said to be relate to the realm of experience when topics are dealing either with things that are physically close but psychologically remote to students, or with things that are physically far away but psychologically close to students. Otherwise, it is remote from the realm of experience. Experience may be direct or vicarious, real or represented in some way, and in one way or another linked to students' prior knowledge (Parker and Jarolimek, 1997:195).

Hence, if students lack prior knowledge to the newly introduced learning task, or if they are not familiar with the concepts no much can be done to accommodate. Rather such students can do little more than sit quietly and observe the activity.

In relation to this fact, Parker and Jarolimek, wrote that "just as the rich get richer, the knowledgeable get more knowledgeable."

This means learners who have more background knowledge about the topic that they are about to learn, all things being equal, will better comprehend that chapter than learners who know little or nothing about it.

Thus, social studies content and learning experience that fails to take the advantages of relating the lesson to the students' experience or prior knowledge may hamper the children make sense of the material specified in the curriculum.

Accordingly, the response showing the existence of 'moderate' relationship between the contents and the realm of experience in this study seems to give a clue that the majority of students perceive as the social studies contents are not much built on what they already know or on what they can comprehend it directly or indirectly.

The third question raised to students (Table VI) in relation to the perceived difficulty of the subject was "What do you say about the scope of your social studies textbook?" The rated mean value of the whole respondents appeared to be 3.78. This value is approaching to 'broad' in a five-point scale. Therefore, it seemed that the social studies contents and learning experiences meant for the students under discussion are nearly broad implying that they are required to cover much material in little time.

Certainly, as it was argued by Newmann (1988:in Welton and Mallan, 1992: XXVII), trying to cover so much material in so little time inevitably results in superficial exposure - a few names and dates and little else - instead of rich, in - depth understanding. As a result, Welton and Mallan, argued for the "less is more" principle with the premise that by studying fewer topics in greater depth ("less"), teachers can spend the time it takes to develop genuine understanding ("more"). While enriching understanding, one can avoid much of the memorization that students too often associate with social studies.

The computed Chi-square values for all the three items in Table VI show that there are significant differences among the observed frequencies in each scale.

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The computed Chi-square values for all the three items in Table VI show that there are significant differences among the observed frequencies in each scale.

Table VII: The Prevalence of the Indicators of Challenge/Ease of Lessons Occurred During Observation

Indicators	Frequency and session in which each indicator is observed					- x (N=27)
	Very Often ⁵	Often ⁴	Sometimes ³	Rarely ²	Not at all ¹	
Sign of non-comprehension among students.	-	-	27 (100%)	-	-	3.0
A relatively longer wait time before responding to questions.	-	22 (81.4%)	5 (18.5%)	-	-	3.81
Failure among first respondents to offer the correct answers.	4 (14.8%)	18 (66.6%)	3 (11.1%)	2 (7.4%)	-	3.9
Looking side ways at a neighbor (consulting before any start of processing a task.	-	2 (7.4%)	17 (62.9%)	8 (29.6%)	-	2.8
Limitedness in the nature of responses to the teacher or peer-posed questions.	25 (92.6%)	2 (7.4%)	-	-	-	4.92
Aggregate Mean 3.69						

As shown in Table VII, of the observed 27 sessions, indicators of challenge tends to be prevalent some frequently in most classrooms. Hence, the observed ratings accounted for an aggregate mean of 3.69, which is well above 'sometimes' in a five-point scale.

Among the observed indicators, 'limitedness in the nature of responses to the teacher-or-peer posed questions was very often observed in 25 (92.6%) of the sessions. Other indicators presented in Table VII were also appeared very often, often or sometimes in the majority of classrooms.

These indicate the challenge of the social studies material to the students. Brown (1988) in Wanjryb (1992:38) argued that if indicators of challenge are present in about a quarter or a third of the class, then the level of challenge is about right. Otherwise, if all students can do an activity easily and accurately then it is very probably below the appropriate level of difficulty for a class.

The indicators of challenge suggested by Wanjryb, 1992:38) include:

- non-comprehension in facial expression,
- student wait time (-silence) before response,
- first respondent does not offer the correct answer,
- a learner looks sideways at a neighbor before starting writing;

Indicators of ease on the other hand, reflected when:

- student gets started quickly,
- plethora of responses to teacher's question occur,
- expected time needed for tasks over-calculated.

In keeping up the pace of students experience in the learning task, however Callahan and Clark (1988:143) advised that "Be sure the work is difficult enough to be challenging, but not too difficult. Do not baby pupils, but do not frustrate them either."

Table VIII: Perceived Match of the Social Studies Contents and Learning Experience to Students' Needs and Interests

Items	No. Of Respondents in Each Scale										- x (N=204)	x ²
	Very Much		Much		Moderate		Less		Very Less			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
- To what extent do you find the social studies contents and learning experiences relevant to your needs?	25	12.25	64	31.4	93	45.6	19	9.3	3	1.47	3.44	50.2*
- To what extent do you find the social studies contents and learning experiences interesting and enjoyable to you?	51	25	80	39.2	62	30.4	11	5.39	-	3.84	3.84	137.7*
Aggregate Mean 3.87												

*Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table VII above depicts the perceived match of the social studies contents and learning experiences to students' needs and interests. The response of students to the

question "To what extent do you find the social studies contents and learning experiences relevant to your personal needs?" was denoted with a rated mean value of 3.44. This is above 'moderate' in a five-point scale. Hence, it seemed that the majority of students find the social studies moderately fit to their needs.

Results of curriculum research indicated that curriculum planning should take into account the following factors: the nature and needs of the individual learner, the nature of the learning process, the nature of contemporary society, and the roles individuals and groups must perform in their society (NEA, 1963:9). From this statement it becomes obvious that the needs of the learner and society are important bases upon which the curriculum is designed.

Consequently, the social studies curriculum meant for the grades under discussion seems to moderately meet the needs of the learner, however, the fact students did not rate it above that (mean = 3.44) indicates that there is a gap to be addressed by curricular planners.

The second question mentioned (Table VIII) to be responded by the students was "To what extent do you find the social studies contents and learning experiences enjoyable and stimulating?"

The recorded rated mean value to the respective question appeared to be 3.84, which is close to 'much interesting' in a five point scale.

Since "boredom is the enemy of learning" (Callahan and Clark, 1988:143), the response of those students as social studies is a subject which they found interesting and stimulating is an encouraging phenomena that needs to be reinforced to keep things lively. Similar positive responses were given during focused-group interviews.

In this regard, this finding is in contrast with the findings of Schug, Todd, and Beery (1984) who reported that social studies is not perceived as being a particularly enjoyable and relevant subject (in Welton and Mallan, 1992:XXX)

For both questions in Table VIII, the Computed Chi-square values reveal that there are differences between the observed frequencies in each scale.

Table IX: Overall Attitude of Students Towards Social Studies as a Subject

Q. Overall, to what extent do you like social studies as a subject?	Respondents	
	N	%
5. Very Much	47	23.0
4. Much	69	33.8
3. Moderate	70	34.3
2. Less	11	5.408
1. Very Less	5	2.5
Total	204	100%
$\bar{X}$	3.71	
χ^2	95.3*	

* Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table IX depicts the overall attitude of students to social studies. Hence, the response of students to the question "Overall, to what extent do you like social studies as a subject?" was represented by a rated mean value of 3.71. This is well above 'moderate' in a five-point scale. From the value one can extract a meaning that students liked social studies.

Determining how students feel about the subjects they study in school has intrigued researchers for at least fifty years, and most found that students' current favorites are mathematics, science and reading in that order whereby social studies, regrettably, usually falls somewhere back in the Pack (Welton and Mallan, 1992:XXX). Nevertheless, even though this study did not concerned with checking the relative position of social studies as compared to other school subjects, the response to its own right reveals that students liked social studies as opposed to some of the findings hitherto.

The reasons given for liking the subject were:

- the importance attached to the subject by 51% ,
- high interest of the subject by 49%,
- attractive method of instruction by 34%,
- teachers' motivation and support by 33%,

- challenging nature of the subject by 26%,
- high achievement (marks) by 24%,
- family encouragement by 23%,
- peer group influence by 12% , and
- ease of the subject by 9% respondents.

A study conducted in Sera Leon Secondary School identified proficiency motive, utility motive, prestige motive, interest motive, liking the teacher and the method of teaching as the major reasons which lead children to like certain subjects and dislike others (Ferron, 1973). In this study, however, the significant reason given for liking social studies is the importance attached to the subject among others.

On the other hand, the reasons given for disliking social studies as a school subject were:

- poor method of teaching by 8%,
- difficulty of the subject by 5%,
- low interest in the subject by 4%,
- lack of understanding of its importance by 3 %,
- lack of teachers motivation and support by 3%,
- home influence by 3%,
- less challenging nature of the subject by 1%,
- poor achievement (marks) by 1%, and
- peer group influence by 1% respondents.

However, no one of the reasons was cited as a significant one by a considerable number of respondents. The implication of these is that the reported perceived difficulties of social studies have no negative influence upon the students overall attitude toward the subject.

Table X-A: Comparative view of Means, and Standard Deviations of
Perception Scores by Grade

Variables	Grade 7 (N=99)		Grade 8 (N=105)		t	df	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social knowledge	3.79	0.73	3.86	0.69	-.698	202	.486
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social attitude	3.39	0.75	3.42	0.72	-.244	202	.808
• Perceived relevance of the contents & learning experiences of social studies to the development of social skills	3.29	0.73	3.31	0.68	.215	202	.830
• Perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the needs and interests of students	3.79	0.80	3.95	0.73	-1.541	202	.125
• Perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the students' ability	3.46	0.76	3.54	0.76	-.735	202	.463
• Overall attitude of students toward social studies subject	3.70	1.06	3.72	0.88	-.177	201	.860

* Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table X-A comparatively displays the means, and standard deviations of perception scores by grade. The observed difference in perceptions among grade 7th and 8th students tends to be statistically non significant in an independent sample t-test at (alpha =0.05) level). Therefore, the perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of students' social knowledge, attitude and skills; the perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the abilities, needs and interests of the students; and the overall attitude of students toward the social studies subject were appeared to be nearly similar among grades 7th and 8th students.

This may provide a clue that the expected increment of a progressively more difficult and new challenging activities with the corresponding increment in grade seems to be missed in grades 7th and 8th social studies and learning experiences and this might have in turn influenced the perception scores of the other items.

Consequently, the findings by Haladyna (1979) which states interests toward social studies decline and attitude became less favorable with increasing grades does not hold true in this study.

Table X-B: Comparative View of Means, and Standard Deviation of Perception

Scores by Location

Variables	Urban (N=142)		Rural(N=62)		t	df	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social knowledge	3.87	0.69	3.73	0.75	-1.306	202	.193
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social attitude	3.34	0.75	3.56	0.67	2.044	202	.042*
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social skills	3.27	0.70	3.39	0.71	1.113	202	.267
• Perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the needs and interests of students	3.96	0.79	3.66	0.65	-2.646	202	.009*
• Perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the students' ability	3.52	0.81	3.47	0.65	-.461	202	.645
• Overall attitude of students toward social studies subject	3.84	0.95	3.40	0.95	-3.044	202	.003*

* Significant at alpha 0.05 level

Table X-B displayed location - based comparisons of means, and standard deviations of perception scores. Of the variables presented in the table, the perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social attitudes is rated significantly higher by rural students (mean = 3.56) than by the

urban ones (mean = 3.34). Though it is difficult to confidentially put the reasons for this variation, from the focused - group interviews held with students, one could understand that it was through their exposure with the contents of social studies that students were able to develop human interest, to show social concern and to display sensitivity with social environmental problems. In particular, the essentiality of social studies for such purposes was emphasized among rural students than the urban ones. Perhaps the observed scarcity of mass media in rural sites might have made the contents of social studies the sole route to be informed about ideas that develop social attitudes.

Nevertheless, the items referring to 'the perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the needs and interests of students' and ' the overall attitude of students toward social studies subject' were rated significantly, higher by urban students (mean = 2.96 and mean = 3.84 respectively than by rural students (mean = 3.66 and mean = 3.40 respectively). Accordingly, this finding appeared to be inconsistent with Assebe's (1997:46) finding that reported that the rural students showed more favorable attitude toward social studies than the urban school students.

Nevertheless, the position that states difficulty level of a course explains course attitude tends to be reflected in this study. The basis of argument regarding it was, course materials that are either too difficult or too simple are less motivating. In both cases, as Payne (1992:411) has argued on, learners develop unfavorable attitude, while materials of moderate difficulty promote favorable attitude toward the materials.

Table X-C: Comparative view of Means, and Standard Deviations of
Perception Scores by Sex

Variables	Male (N=114)		Female (N=88)		t	df	p
	M	SD	M	SD			
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social knowledge	3.85	0.68	3.80	0.75	-.550	200	.583
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social attitude	3.45	0.73	3.36	0.75	-.801	200	.424
• Perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social skills	3.28	0.66	3.34	0.77	.598	200	.551
• Perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the needs and interests of students	3.92	0.79	3.82	0.74	-.946	200	.345
• Perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the students' ability	3.56	0.79	3.45	0.71	-.998	200	.320
• Overall attitude of students toward social studies subject	3.82	0.99	3.56	0.94	-1.899	199	.059

*Significance at alpha = .05 level

Table X-C denotes the means, and standard deviations of perception scores by sex. A comparative look at the rated means across variables showed no significant difference in perception scores among male and female students of Grades 7th and 8th in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones. This implies that students experience in social studies indicated no variations on the basis of sex.

Though not referring to all the variables, Frey (1970) and Assebe (1997) observed a very favorable attitude among boys and girls toward social studies. This study also reported the prevalence of favorable attitudes toward social studies among students (Table IX), disregarding sex.

4.2. Views of Social Studies Teachers about their students' experience in the subject, own attitude and perceived competency.

The significance of asking those teachers who are already close students about their students' experience is documented in Erickson and Shultz (1996-478). Moreover, it is stated that what teachers believe and assume about learners, learning and teaching affects what they do, behave and practice at the school and classroom levels (McCombs and Whisler, 1997:27). Consequently views of teachers with regard to students experience and own beliefs about their duties are presented in the following tables.

Table XI: Views of Social Studies Teachers Regarding the Content, Difficulty of the Material that they teach

Items	Alternatives	Respondents	
		N	%
- Are the contents and learning experiences presented in the social studies curricular materials pitched within the optimal range of difficulty?	- Very much	7	43.8
	- To some extent	7	43.8
	- No	2	17.5
	- Not at all	-	-
	Total	16	100
- How do you think is the proportion of students who can understand the concept of social studies?	- Below 25 percent	2	12.5
	- 25-50 percent	6	37.5
	- 51-75 percent	6	37.5
	- Above 75 percent	2	12.5
	Total	16	100
- If you are faced with students who have problems to understand what is presented in social studies lessons, what do you think are the reasons?	- Weakness of students	3	18.75
	- Students' lack of interest in the subject	7	43.8
	- Content difficulty of the subject	6	37.5
	Total	16	100
- What do you say about the scope of the contents of social studies that you are teaching?	- Very broad	7	43.8
	- Broad	7	43.8
	- Appropriate	2	12.5
	- Limited	-	-
	- Very limited	-	-
	Total	16	100
- Are the suggested contents and learning experiences feasible in terms of the available resources (time, material, human, etc.) in your school?	- Very much	4	25
	- To some extent	12	75
	- No	-	-
	- Not at all	-	-
	Total	16	100

Table XI shows teachers' response about the match between their students' ability and the social studies materials. Consequently, 43.8% of the respondents indicated that the materials are pitched within the optimal range of difficult, while the

remaining 43.8% responded "to some extent", and 12.5% said 'no'. This indicates that the social studies materials that are perceived to be moderately difficult by the students are also viewed by nearly more than half of the teachers (cumulative 56.3%) as it is 'to some extent' or not pitched within the optimal range of difficulty. Teachers were asked to indicate topics (units), which are beyond students abilities, the majority of respondents indicate that each unit has its own difficulties in concepts and terms.

Table XI further depicts the estimation made by teachers about the proportion of students who can understand the concept of social studies. Accordingly, some 37.5 percent teachers indicated that the number of students who understand the subject accounted to 25-50 percent while similar amount of respondents estimated 51-75 percent, since the distribution of respondents across the given alternative is difficult to determine the position of the majority, the cumulative percentage tends to serve the purpose. Meanwhile, almost 75 percent of the teacher respondents estimated the proportion of students who can understand the concept of social studies to be in between 25-75 percent.

The response of teachers to the corresponding question "If you are faced with students who have problems to understand what is presented in social studies lessons, what do you think are the reasons?" is also presented in Table XI above.

The results show that 18.75 percent teachers responded "weaknesses of students" as a reason, while 43.8 percent attributed to the students' lack of interest in the subject, and the remaining 37.5 percent indicated 'content difficulty of the subject' as a reason for student problems in understanding the subject. From these teachers responses it seemed that students lack of interest in the subject and content difficulty of the subject tend to operate as a problem for student understanding. One can also extract an information from these responses of teachers that the nature of the subject

which was reported to be as an interesting and stimulating by the students did not reflected in their day-to-day activities of students, as perceived by teachers.

Teachers were also required to respond about the scope of the contents of the social studies that they are teaching. Consequently, 43.8 percent of teachers rated it as 'very broad' while others 43.8 percent rated 'broad' and the remaining 12.5 percent 'appropriate'. Here, the responses of teachers tends to agree with the views of students in that both parties reported the contents and learning experiences of social studies meant for the students under discussion.

Table XI further denotes the response of teachers to the question "Are the suggested contents and learning experiences feasible in terms of the available resources (time, material, human, etc. in your school?" Some 25% teachers responded that they are 'very much' feasible, while the majority 75% responded that the contents and learning experiences suggested in social studies are 'to some extent' feasible in terms of the available resources (time, material, human etc.).

Table XII: Views of Teachers Regarding the Interest and Stimulation of their Students

Q. How is the effort of your students in the following conditions regarding social studies?	No. Of Respondents in Each Scale										- X (N=16)
	Very Much		Much		Moderate		Less		Very Less		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Interest in learning social studies.	-	-	5	31.3	5	31.3	6	37.5	-	-	2.98
Willingness to accomplish learning tasks.	2	12.5	6	37.5	5	31.3	2	12.5	1	3.38	3.78
Participation in classroom interaction.	2	12.5	2	12.5	6	37.5	3	18.8	3	18.8	2.81

Table XII indicates the witness of social studies teachers about their students in attacking the work willingly and diligently. Meanwhile, the rated mean value recorded about the students' interest in learning social studies is 2.98. This denotes that their teachers perceive students, as they are moderately interested in the subject, which is below their response in Table VII.

The 'willingness of students to accomplish learning tasks' and 'participation in classroom interaction' were also showed a rated mean value of 3.38 and 2.81 whereby the former is nearly 'moderate' and the later below that.

The responses of teachers indicate as students are less interested in the subject and their willingness to accomplish learning tasks and their participation in the classroom are moderate.

Table XIII: Attitude and Perceived Competence of Social Studies Teachers

Q. How is your attitude towards the following conditions ?	No. of Respondents in Each Scale										- X (N=16)
	Very Much (5)		Much (4)		Moderate (3)		Low (2)		Very Low (1)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Interest toward teaching in general.	7	43.8	2	12.5	3	18.8	2	12.5	2	12.5	3.62
Interest toward teaching social studies.	9	56.3	5	31.3	2	12.5	-	-	-	-	4.43
Interest to continue in the profession.	5	31.3	5	31.3	4	25.0	-	-	2	12.5	3.69
Satisfaction with the effort and outcome of your social studies teaching.	4	25	8	50	4	25	-	-	-	-	4.0
Perceived competence to teach social studies.	2	12.5	10	62.5	3	18.8	-	-	1	6.3	3.75
Degree of attention to consider the abilities, needs, and interests of students while planning a lesson or course work.	3	18.8	7	43.8	5	31.3	1	6.3	-	-	3.75

Table XIII depicts the attitude and perceived competence of social studies teachers. Teachers' response indicated that their interest toward teaching social studies is higher (mean = 4.43) than their interest toward teaching in general (mean = 3.63), or than their interest to continue in the profession (mean = 3.69). However, teachers seemed to satisfy with the effort and out come of their social studies teaching (mean = 4.0). Further more, teachers perceived competence to teach social studies is rated 3.75 as equal as their consideration of the abilities, needs and interests of students while they are planning the lesson or course. It was stated that the key to the curriculum experienced in social studies classrooms is the teacher:

Teacher's beliefs about schooling, his or her knowledge of the subject matter and of available materials and techniques, how he or she decides to put these together for the classroom - out of these process of reflection and personal inclination comes the day-to-day classroom experience of students. This is not to say that social studies classes are not affected by factors such as the characteristics of the students enrolled, but only to emphasize that the teacher plays the primary structuring role (Shaver, Davis, and Helburn, 1980; in Ross, 1997:16).

Accordingly, such favorable attitude of teachers towards their profession, the subject, and their outcomes together with their perceived competence would be expected to result with a meaningful encounter to the students.

4.4. Instructional Attempts made to promote students' experience in the Social Studies Subject

Instruction is the means of attaining the content that has been selected and the over all goals of the program (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1998 = 218). Meanwhile, the success of an activity in producing thoughtful student engagement with important ideas will depend not only on the nature of the curricular materials itself but also on the nature of instructional activities.

Subsequently, the attempts made by social studies teachers in leading students to make progress toward mastering the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions of the subject are presented in the following tables.

Table XIV: Frequency of Application of Passive Vs Active Learning Methodologies

(Students' Response)

Methodologies	No. Of Respondents in Each Scale				
	Not at all	In every few lesson	In some lessons	In most lessons	Grand Mean (N=204)
Learning by listening to the teacher talk.	4 (0.9%)	23 (11.3%)	66 (32.5%)	112 (55.3%)	2.41
Learning by writing down notes given by the teacher.	17 (6.5%)	33 (16.5%)	62 (31%)	92 (46%)	2.12
Learning through asking questions and answering during class hours.	28 (9.31%)	54 (26.5%)	76 (37.3%)	46 (22.2%)	1.69
Learning by completing individual seatwork assignments given by the teacher.	18 (74%)	65 (31.9%)	64 (31.4%)	57 (27.9%)	1.78
Learning by completing group work assignments given by the teacher.	79 (38.3%)	66 (32.4%)	39 (19.1%)	20 (9.8%)	1.0
Learning by producing something useful for social studies lessons from locally available materials.	121 (53.5%)	43 (21.1%)	28 (13.7%)	12 (5.8%)	0.66
Learning by observing maps, globes, graphs, pictures, or other visual media brought by the teacher.	34 (20.6%)	78 (38.2%)	46 (22.5%)	46 (22.5%)	1.51
Learning through listening to social studies instructional radio programs.	42 (20.58%)	107 (52.5%)	31 (15%)	24 (11.8%)	1.18
Learning by measuring and calculating (e.g. temperature, rainfall, distance. etc.).	163 (79.4%)	22 (10.8%)	12 (5.9%)	7 (3.5%)	0.32
Learning by collecting, classifying, and exhibiting materials of any type appropriate to social studies.	157 (76.5%)	35 (17.2%)	10 (4.9%)	2 (0.9%)	0.3
Learning by dramatizing of the activities of peoples being studied or the processes and procedures being learned.	174 (84.3%)	19 (9.3%)	7 (3.4%)	4 (1.9%)	0.22
Learning by listening to guest speakers	135 (66.18%)	49 (24.8%)	16 (7.8%)	4 (1.9%)	0.45
Learning through field trips and school journeys	179 (86.8%)	15 (7.4%)	9 (4.4%)	1 (0.5%)	0.16
Learning by asking parents and elders about customs and issues that contribute to social studies units and by reporting about it.	112 (53.9%)	79 (38.7%)	8 (3.9%)	5 (2.5%)	0.54
Learning from newspapers, magazines and the like other than the textbooks.	134 (64.7%)	43 (21.1%)	22 (10.8%)	5 (2.5%)	0.50
Learning through academic competitions organized at intra-school and/or inter-school basis.	37 (17.2%)	92 (45%)	46 (22.5%)	29 (14.2%)	1.32
Learning through peer tutoring.	97 (46.0%)	70 (34.3%)	31 (15.2%)	6 (2.9%)	0.73

Table XIV shows the frequency of application of passive Vs active learning methodologies in the social studies classrooms as reported by the students themselves. The results reveal that the most frequently applied methodologies include learning by: listening to the teacher talk (mean = 2.41), writing down notes given by the teacher

(mean = 2.12), completing individual seat work assignments (mean = 1.78), and by asking and answering questions during class hours (mean = 1.69).

But methods that are reported to be either totally neglected or very rarely used include: field trips (mean = 0.16), dramatizing (mean = 0.22) exhibiting materials of social studies value (mean = 0.3), learning by measuring and calculating (mean = 0.32), listening to guest speakers (mean = 0.45), learning from materials other than the textbook (mean = 0.54), interviewing parents & elders and reporting about (mean = 0.54), producing something useful for social studies from locally available materials (mean = 0.66), peer-tutoring (mean = 0.73), and working in groups (mean = 1.0).

During the interview sessions with students they also indicate that the way they learn social studies is mostly characterized by 'talk and chalk' method and as a result feel discouraged with the methodologies their teachers employ.

Thus, by looking comparatively to the types of most frequently Vs the neglected ones, one can be hinted that the emphasis given in social studies classrooms is to passive learning methodologies than the activity-focused ones.

This finding is consistent with Goodland and his colleagues who participated in a study of schooling. Throughout their observation of 129 elementary, 362 Junior high and 525 senior high classes, they found that students receive relatively low exposure to audio-visual aids, field trips, or guest lecturers. There is little hands-on activities. Acting out, role playing, dance, the manipulation of materials, and the like are rarely used as accompaniments or alternatives to textbooks and workbooks as media of instruction in academic classes (Bullough, 1986:89).

Essentially, active learning allows learning to be both more personal and memorable and for these reasons, is more effective. Learners who are 'engaged' by the lesson-by the teacher, the materials, the tasks, the activities are more likely to have that learning make an impact on them (Wajnryb, 1992:34). But active learning tends to be

limited in the schools under discussion. These call for the methodological arrangement that could assist the child in comprehending the ideas encountered.

Furthermore, if a pupil is to develop all sides of his personality, according to Ryburn, in Aggarwal (1982:63), it is necessary for him to be active in all ways, to exercise all the different powers he has. Otherwise, any process that is not based upon 'student activity' is not in accord with recent educational theories which gives the central place in the school to the child and which considers as the 'child' is a 'hero' in 'The Drama of Education and as such he must play the dominant role'.

Table XV: Frequencies of Application of Passive Vs Active Learning (Teachers' Response)

Methodologies	No. Of Respondents in Each Scale				
	Not at all	In every few lesson	In some lessons	In most lessons	Grand Mean (N=204)
- Students learn by listening to the teacher talk.	-	-	5 (31.3%)	11 (168.8%)	2.69
- Students learn by writing down notes given by the teacher.	1 (6.3%)	4 (25.0%)	8 (50.0%)	3 (18.8%)	1.81
- Students learn through discussion during class hours.	-	5 (31.3%)	9 (56.3%)	2 (12.6%)	1.81
- I give to students' assignments to be completed individually.	-	1 (6.3%)	8 (50.0%)	7 (43.8%)	2.37
- I give to students' group assignments.	1 (6.3%)	5 (31.3%)	7 (43.8%)	3 (18.8%)	1.75
- Students produce something useful for social studies lessons from locally available materials.	2 (12.5%)	7 (43.8%)	6 (37.5%)	1 (6.3%)	1.38
- Students learn by closely observing maps, globes, graphs, pictures and other visual media brought by the teacher.		1 (6.3%)	10 (62.5%)	5 (31.3%)	2.25
- Students listen to social studies instructional radio programs.	-	4 (25.07%)	3 (18.8%)	9 (56.3%)	2.31
- Students learn by measuring and calculating.	4 (25.0%)	2 (12.5%)	6 (37.5%)	4 (25.0%)	1.62
- Students learn by collecting, classifying, and exhibiting materials of any type appropriate to social studies.	5 (31.3%)	9 (56.3%)	2 (12.5%)	-	0.91
- Students learn by dramatizing of the activities of peoples being studied or processes and procedures being learned.	10 (62.5%)	4 (25.0%)	2 (12.5%)	-	0.50
- Students learn from resource people invited by me to talk on relevant topics.	10 (62.5%)	2 (12.5%)	4 (25.0%)	-	0.63
- Students learn through field trips and school journeys made to different places of social studies value.	11 (68.8%)	4 (25.0%)	1 (6.3%)	-	0.63
- Students learn by asking parents and elders about customs and issues that contribute to social studies unit.	1 (6.3%)	4 (31.3%)	9 (56.3%)	1 (6.3%)	1.63
- Students learn from newspapers, magazines, and the like other than the textbook.	-	8 (50.0%)	8 (50.0%)	-	1.5
- Students learn through academic competitions organized at intra-school and inter-school basis.	2 (12.5%)	1 (6.3%)	5 (31.3%)	8 (50.0%)	2.19
- Students are encouraged to learn by organizing themselves for peer tutoring.	2 (12.5%)	3 (18.8%)	7 (43.8%)	4 (25.0%)	1.81

Table XV depicts the frequency of application of passive Vs active learning methodologies in the social studies classrooms as reported by teachers. The results show that the most frequently applied methodologies include: teacher talk (mean = 2.69), individual assignments (mean = 2.37, using instructional radio (mean = 2.31), and demonstration of visual media (mean = 2.25).

Methods that are reported to be either totally neglected or rarely used by the majority of teachers include: field trips (mean = 0.38), dramatizing (mean = 0.5), inviting guest speakers (mean = 0.63), exhibiting materials of social studies value (mean = 0.81), producing something useful for social studies lessons from locally available materials (mean = 1.38), and using materials other than the textbook (mean = 1.5). In most cases teachers report overlap with the report of students.

Hence, by comparatively looking at the types of most frequently used Vs the missed ones, one can get a clue that the emphasis given to active learning is minimal in social studies classrooms.

According to Dewey (in Aggrawal, 1982:63), the school is a "special environment" where a certain quality of life and certain types of activities are provided with the object of securing children's development along desirable lines. "The teacher", according to Dewey "is a guide and director, he steers the boat but the energy that propels it must come from those who are learning."

The implication of this is that students have to be guided for active learning. Teachers were also provided with open-ended questions regarding the problems that hinder the promotion of students' experience. Meanwhile, they mentioned the out datedness of maps, limitedness of the allotted periods for social studies, shortage of textbooks, lack of budget to organize field trips and to produce instructional media, etc; work overload of teachers, failure in making immediate corrections from curriculum planners, and lack of an integrated training from the part of teachers in line with the components of social studies-History, Geography, and Civics were listed. This shows that there is a gap to be filled in terms of resources.

Table XVI: Opportunities Given to Students for Active Learning

(As observed in the classrooms)

Items	Frequency of Occurrence					
	Yes		No		Total Obs.	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Did students get an opportunity: 1. to identify the desired behavioral change expected of them?	26	96.2	1	3.7	27	100
2. to express their views about the "what" and "how" of the lesson?	-	-	27	100	27	100
3. to link the daily lesson to the previous and forthcoming ones?	27	100	-	-	27	100
4. to distinguish between facts and opinions?	27	100	-	-	27	100
5. to compare and order any sort?	27	100	-	-	27	100
6. to learn how to apply what they have learnt in their daily life?	21	77.7	6	22.2	27	100
7. to think out things by themselves through individual discovery lessons?	-	-	27	100	27	100
8. to collaborate and work in groups with fellow students?	-	-	27	100	27	100
9. to relate the lesson with their immediate experiences?	20	74.0	7	25.9	27	100
10. to closely observe instructional media of social studies value?	16	59.2	40.7	-	27	100
11. to engage in hands-on activities such as making maps, drawing pictures, graphs, tables and/or creating illustrations?	1	3.7	26	96.2	27	100
12. to be exposed for various activity focuses on the basis of individual differences?	-	-	27	100	27	100
13. to utilize community resources as a means of enriching and expanding learning activities?	4	14.8	23	85.2	27	100

Table XVI shows the opportunities given to students for active learning. Out of the observed 27 sessions in grades 7th and 8th, it was recorded that in 96.2% of the sessions, students had an opportunity to be acquainted about the desired behavioral change expected of them; in 99% to link the daily lesson to the previous and forthcoming ones; in 100% to distinguish between facts and opinions; in 100% to compare and order any sort; in 77 % to learn how to apply what they have learnt in their daily life; in 74 % to relate the lesson with their immediate experiences; and in 59.2% to closely observe instructional media of social studies value.

But students seldom had or completely no opportunity to express their views about the "What" and "How" of the lesson in 100%, to think out things by themselves

through individual discovery lessons 100%; to collaborate and work in groups with fellow students in 100%; to engage in hands-on activities such as making maps, drawing pictures, graphs, tables and (or creating illustrations in 96.2%; to be exposed for various activity focuses on the basis of individual differences in 100%; and to utilize community resources as a means of enriching and expanding learning activities in 85.2% sessions.

Therefore, this study gives a clue that students' opportunity for active learning in the social studies classrooms of schools and grades under discussion tends to be limited.

Fundamentally, in his discussion about how a person learns, Rogers (1969:162) argued that much significant learning is acquired through doing. Placing the student in direct confrontation with practical problems, social problems, ethical and philosophical problems, personal issues, and research problems are one of the most effective modes of promoting learning. Rogers continued to show that learning is facilitated when the student participates responsibility in the learning process. When he chooses his own directions, helps to discover his course of action and when he lives with the consequences of each of these choice.

However, the observed students had no any say in the methods or contents of lessons under presentation. To the matter of fact, there is evidence from industry as well as from the field of education that participative learning is far more effective than passive learning (Rogers). Moreover, to Rogers, self-initiated learning which involves the whole person of the learners feelings as well as intellect is the most lasting and pervasive.

The extension of the important concept "learning by doing" indicates one learns from the activity, which she/he makes. The basic assumptions embodied in the idea of activity for learning are: humans "learn best by doing; and find interest and enjoyment in activity" (Azeb, 1984). Consequently, the common quotation noted by Callahan and Clark (1998:189) seems to reflect this view. "What I hear, I forget, what I see, I

remember. What I say and do I understand". The proverb indicates the importance of doing as a part and parcel of the learning process.

4.5. Results of Observations of Social Studies Classroom

Interaction

In the teaching-learning process, communication between the teacher and pupils or among pupils is principally, but not solely, through talk. And its analysis can give a dimension to understanding of what goes on when a teacher teaches.

Subsequently, a flow chart of participation in a stereotype, and yet still prevalent, recitation strategy would probably reveal a significant number of tallies for the teacher, with a smaller number distributed over a relatively small number of students selected by the teacher to participate. On the other hand, a flow chart of student participation in an inquiry and discovery learning approaches would probably reveal a significant number of tallies for the students, since these tend to view knowledge as the product of creative inquiry and active student participation in the learning process (Callahan and Clark, 1989:211). Therefore, the attempts made to analyze the interaction of social studies classrooms revealed the patterns presented in Table XVII.

Table XVII: Proportion of Time spent in each categories of Classroom Interaction

Category No.	Category Name	Grade		Location		Average (Total Observation) %
		7 %	8 %	Urban %	Rural %	
1.	Accepting Students Feelings	0.17	0.21	0.17	0.22	0.19
2.	Praising or Encouraging	0.8	1.18	0.93	1.09	0.99
3.	Accepting or Using Student Ideas	3.12	2.1	2.76	2.32	2.59
4.	Asking Questions	4.36	3.8	4.36	3.48	4.07
5.	Lecturing	72.91	78.19	73.07	79.69	75.61
6.	Giving Directions	1.25	1.04	1.02	1.33	1.14
7.	Criticizing or Justifying Authority	0.52	0.36	0.56	0.24	0.43
8.	Pupil-Talk Response	6.03	4.65	5.84	4.49	5.32
9.	Pupil-Talk Initiation	1.22	0.98	1.04	1.19	1.09
10.	Silence or Confusion	9.62	7.5	10.16	5.91	8.53
Total		100	100	100	100	100

Table XVII shows the proportion of time spent and type of talk in the social studies classroom interaction. Of the categories of teachers' and students' talk, lecturing was found to be the most dominantly used category (75.61%); on average.

In descending order, this was followed by pupil-talk response 5.32%, asking questions 4.07%, accepting or using student ideas 2.59%, giving directions 1.14%, pupil-talk initiation 1.09%, praising or encouraging 0.99%, criticizing or justifying authority 0.43%, and accepting students feelings 0.19%.

This implies that the class time devoted by social studies teachers to pupil-talk response (category 8) and pupil-talk initiation (category 9) are at a low level in classrooms. Moreover, it also indicates the limitedness of the time devoted for indirect influences made by teachers to such activities as accepting or clarifying the feelings of the students (category 1), praising or encouraging students so that to motivate and

engage students in the learning process (category 2), accepting or using students' ideas during a lesson (category 3) and the like.

No doubt that teaching is an influence-directed and two-way activity where by both teachers and students are influenced to each other. As it was explained by Chauhan (1979:140), the teacher is said to be influencing students when he/she manages class activities by giving directions, expresses his/her ideas by lecturing, stimulates students participation by asking questions, classifies students ideas by applying to the solution of the problem, praises and encourages students from time to time, diagnoses the feelings and attitudes expressed by students or inferred from their behavior, criticizes the behavior of the students and so on and so forth.

On the other hand, students also influence the teacher by their talk, which generally consists of responses to the teacher, initiation and some other activities. However, the expected bi-directional, reciprocal and mutual pupil-teacher interaction seems to be neglected in the observed social studies classrooms.

Comparative view of classroom interactions in grades 7th and 8th, and in urban and rural classrooms also reveals no considerable differences in the proportion of time spent and type of talk. In all cases, teacher lecturing (category 5) covered the large amount followed by pupil-talk response (category 8) and teachers' asking questions (category 4).

Table XVIII: Some Indices of Teacher-Student Interaction in Social Studies

Classrooms

Variable	Indices	Symbol	Findings Across Grade and Location					Normative Expectations (Flanders, 1970)
			Grade		Location		Total Observation	
			7th %	8th %	Urban %	Rural %		
Proportion and type of talk in social studies classroom interaction	Percent of teacher talk	TT	83.12	86.88	82.87	88.37	85%	68%
	Percent of student talk	ST	7.25	5.63	6.88	5.68	6.41%	20%
	Percent of silence or confusion	SC	9.62	7.5	10.16	5.91	8.53%	11-12%
Students' initiative in introducing their own ideas in the social studies classroom interaction.	Pupil Initiation Ratio	PIR	16.85	17.5	15.14	20.97	17.12%	34%
Tendency of social studies teachers to use indirect influence	Indirect/Direct Ratio	I/D	0.11	0.09	0.11	0.09	0.10	>1.0
		I/d	2.31	2.49	2.43	2.32	2.39	
Tendency of social studies teachers to react to the ideas and feelings of students.	Teacher Response Ratio	TRR	69.78	71.34	70.9	69.84	70.5%	42%
			5.48	4.38	4.92	4.29	4.89	
Tendency of social studies teachers to use questions when guiding the content part of class discussion.	Teacher Question Ratio	TQR	5.63	4.64	5.72	4.19	5.11%	26%
Social studies teachers' emphasis on content area.	Content Cross Ratio	CCR	83.70	87.43	84.0	87.95	85.87%	55%
Tendency of classroom interaction to sustain in the same category for relatively longer seconds.	Steady State Ratio	SSR	74.84	80.2	75.25	78.7	77.37	50%

4.5.1. Proportion and type of Talk in Social Studies Classroom

Interaction

Table XVIII above depicts the proportion of teachers' talk, students' talk and silence or confusion across the observed grades 7th and 8th classrooms of urban and rural schools.

Of these indicators of proportion and type of talk, teachers' talk (categories 1-7) occupied the highest percentage frequency (85.0%) for the total observation, while the percent of students' talk (Categories 8-9) was very low in all classrooms (below 8.9%). Silence or confusion (category 10) also covered a time that ranges from about 5.91% to 10.16% in the observed social studies classrooms. From a close examination of the distribution of time spent for each of the three variables (teachers' talk, students' talk and silence or confusion), one can sense that the highest percentage of teachers' talk was recorded in rural classrooms (88.37%) than in urban (82.87%) ones and it was a little higher in Grade 8th classrooms (86.88%) than in Grade 7th(83.12%).

Therefore, the proportion of time covered by students talk was observed to be far to the contrary lower than teacher talk, i.e., 6.88% in urban classrooms, 5.68% in rural, and 7.25% in grade 7th and 5.63% in grade 8th classrooms. These imply that teachers of social studies in all the observed classrooms give little opportunity for students' participation.

Table XVIII also denotes the percentage of time spent in silence or confusion. Accordingly, it was found that the higher percentage frequency 10.16% was observed in urban classrooms, while the lowest 5.9% in rural ones. Comparisons across grade also reveal that higher rate of silence or confusion 9.62% was observed in grade 7th, while it was low 7.5% in grade 8th.

When these proportions are comparatively seen against what Flanders (1970:101) called the normative expectations after repeated observations (68% teacher talk, 20% student talk, and 11 or 12% silence or confusion), the percentage of students' talk and teachers' talk in all the observed classrooms are not in accordance to the norm. Meanwhile, the observation showed the domination of social studies classrooms by teachers.

Thus, as far as the proportion of teachers' talk and students' talk are concerned, the results of this study showed consistency with the finding of Abdulaziz (1997:58) for geography classrooms 85.42% for teachers talk and 5.32 student talk. And with, Birhanu's (1997) report about Amharic teachers' talk covering 84.4% and students' talk covering 11.74%. Nevertheless, coverage of teachers' talk observed in this study are higher than Abdulkedir's (1983) finding from observation of English teachers 72.62%, Tassew's (1992) finding from observation of science teacher trainees 77.07%, and Patricia's (1994) finding from observation of Mathematics teachers 62.37%. The reason may be due to the difference in the intrinsic nature of the subject or some other.

However, from the findings, it seemed that the high proportion of teachers' talk restricted students' participation in the teaching-learning process and as a results students seemed to experience passive learning in social studies classrooms of grades 7th and 8th in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones.

As a result, the importance of interaction between teacher and learners and among learning groups tends to be limited in the observed classrooms. Accordingly to Azeb (1984), there must be two-way communication (between learners and teachers) for teaching to be effective, there must be exchange of ideas. The reason is that without exchange of ideas, there can be no genuine communication, and without communication, there can be no true learning. Genuine communication builds up cooperation and trust between the teacher and students, and among students. This in turn enhances the acquisition of knowledge, which is essentially a social product.

Furthermore, classroom interaction in its explicit objective is carried out not only to add knowledge to pupils and to attain educational objectives, but it also functions as a mechanism through which a teacher and pupils realize their personal and social goals. (Bar-Tal and Bar-Tal, 1986:136). However, the prevailing practice tends to operate in favor of the teachers' domination.

4.5.2. Students Initiative in introducing their own Ideas in the

Social Studies Classroom Interaction

"Student talk", according to Flanders classification, includes "student talk response" (category 8), and "student talk-initiation" (category 9). Particularly, the later refers to the participation of students in asking questions, in expressing their own ideas, in making the first move in classroom communication etc.

When one examines Table XVIII and the results of these observations, the amount of time these two categories accounted was 5.32% to the "Student-talk response", and 1.09% to the 'student-talk initiation'. But when the proportion of pupils talk which was judged by the observer to be an act of initiation is compared against the whole student talk using Flanders formulas:

$$PIR = \frac{\text{Category 9} \times 100}{\text{Category 8} + \text{category 9}}$$

The results show that it accounts 17.12% for the whole observation. This implies that the remaining 82.8% student talk was only to respond for what was raised by the teacher or other students.

A comparative view of PIR across the groups of observed classrooms denotes that, it was higher in rural classrooms (20.97%) than in the urban (15.14%), but no much difference is observed between grades: i.e. 16.85% in Grade 7th and 17.5% in Grade 8th. This study almost showed that the student-initiated classroom talk was far below the normative expectation 34%) as pointed out by Flanders.

Of course, studies reviewed by Dunkin and Biddle (1974) indicated that giving opportunity for students to talk does not necessarily imply or indicate higher learning. Because other factors like the content of talk, occasions of 'pupil talk', etc are important.

But talk, if the above factors are on the credit side, can obviously lead to active participation and in turn maximize student learning.

Therefore, the results of this study being below expectation might have a negative impact on the student learning even if, the contents of talk or occasions of talk are as required.

In spite of this, the results of this study show higher than the findings of Abdulaziz (1997:72). In his study, Abdulaziz reported that the highest pupils initiation ratio in geography classes of secondary schools of Sidama Zone to be within the range of zero to 14%, while it is in between 15.14% to 20.97% in the present study. Moreover, this study also show higher pupil initiation ratio than the findings of Birhanu (1987) to Amharic classes (3.08%).

4.5.3. Tendency of Social Studies Teachers to use Indirect Influence

The greater use of indirect influence means asking more questions, clarifying and using pupil ideas and giving praise. Table XVIII summarized the Indirect (Direct) ratio calculated using the formula proposed by Flanders (1970:102).

$$I / D = \frac{\text{Categories } 1 + 2 + 3 + 4}{\text{Categories } 5 + 6 + 7}$$

The results indicated that the I/D ratio for all the observed classrooms was 0.10 with a little variation across groups of classrooms. Teachers are said to be indirect if the ratio accounts greater than 1.0.

This implies that the social studies teachers under discussion employed direct influence in teaching the subject, that is, the classroom communication is much controlled by teachers and the notion of classroom freedom to the students had less emphasis.

This study show lower than the findings by Birhanu (1987) to Amharic classroom interaction (0-62) and by Abdulkadir (1983) to English classes (0.62-1.0) implies classes under this discussion more are teacher dominated than the mentioned ones.

According to the observations made by Delamont (1983), using more indirect influences develops a favorable attitude to schools work and this in turn leads to higher learning. Moreover, scholars like Flanders (1970), Stones and Morris (1973) and many others advised teachers to be indirect than direct in their approach. However, the results of this study indicated that dominative teachers taught students of social studies.

Furthermore, the other method of measuring indirectness is the small i/d ratio, which consists of category frequencies 1+2+3 divided by 6+7. The results in this study show 2.31 and 2.49 for grades 7 and 8; and 2.43 and 2.32 for urban and rural classrooms respectively. Hence, the results tends to be higher than the I/D this is because of the limited denominators that imply as teachers were less concerned with giving directions and control, of course, not due to their emphasis to accepting students ideas, praising and the like but lecturing.

4.5.4. Tendency of Social Studies Teachers to React to the Ideas and Feelings of Pupils

Table XVIII above summarized the class time devoted by social studies teachers to accept or clarify the feeling of the attitudes of the students (category 1), to praise or encourage students so that to motivate and engage students in the learning process (category 2), to accept or use students' ideas during a lesson as compared to giving directions (category 6), and criticizing or justifying authority (category 7). The formula applied for the purpose is:

$$TRR = \frac{\text{Categories } 1 + 2 + 3}{\text{Categories } 1 + 2 + 3 + 6 + 7} \times 100$$

$$\text{Categories } 1 + 2 + 3 + 6 + 7$$

The results show that the Teacher Response Ratio for the total observed classrooms is 70.5%. The pattern across grade and location also show very minor differences. That is, 69.78% in Grade 7th and 71.34% in Grade 8th; while 70.9% in urban and 69.84% in rural classrooms. These values tend to be well above the normative expectations (42%). This is because the amount of time devoted to giving directions (category 6) and time devoted to criticism and justifying authority (category 7) is very much limited which is nearly below 1%.

As a result, one could understand from values of teacher response ratios given in Table XVIII that teachers of social studies in the observed classrooms had a tendency of praising or accepting or using students' ideas than giving directions or criticizing them.

Since greater teacher's acceptance of pupils' ideas is associated with lower pupil anxiety, higher pupil creativity and higher pupil initiations (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974: 123), the observed value could be interpreted as encouraging. Nonetheless, researchers appeared to be satisfied about the teacher response ratios after making comparisons between the proportions of teacher response categories 1,2,3 and initiation categories 5,6,7 (Birhanu, 1997; Abdulaziz (1997).

Similar measures were taken by this study and it is found that teachers' response ratios accounted much lower than the normative expectations (42%). Thus the results indicate (4.89%) teacher response ratios for the whole observations without many variations among groups of classrooms. The information that could be drawn from this is therefore, social studies teaching in schools under discussion were associated with high teacher's use of initiation categories particularly lecturing rather than accepting feelings, praising and using students ideas.

Certainly, studies show that the amount of time teachers use for praising accounts for not more than six percent of the total interaction time, and the amount of teachers' acceptance of students idea is found to be less than eight percent of the class time, on

the average (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974:121-123). However, the findings in this study show very much below the findings of those scholars, which is 0.99% for the former, and 2.59% for the later (Table XVIII)

4.5.5. Tendency of Social Studies Teachers to use Questions when Guiding the Content Part of Class Discussion

Questions provide a platform for engaging the student in the learning process by getting the learner to act on (Borich, 1988:303). Consequently, Bellon et al. (1992:315-316) advised teachers to use different types of questions (lower level questions and higher level questions depending on such factors as objectives of instruction, nature of the lesson etc.

Moreover, according to Flanders (1970), one could normally expect average teachers' questions to be close to 26%. To calculate Teacher Question Ratio, Flanders used the percentage of all category 4(asking questions) and 5(lecturing) statements. I.e.,

$$\text{TQR} = \frac{\text{Category 4} \times 100}{\text{Category 4} + 5}$$

Applying this formula, this study found that the teachers' question ratio for the total classroom to be 5.11%. Comparisons across grade & location also reveal nearest results such as 5.63% for grade 7th, 4.64% for grade 8th classrooms, and 5.72% for urban and 4.19% for rural classrooms. These results indicate that the time spent in using questions to guide the content part of the class discussion were below the norm (26%). As a result, it seemed social studies teachers under this study tends to give less emphasis too the issue of questioning.

Similar study undertaken by Abdulaziz (1997:69) reported that the teachers' question ratios only ranged from 0.55% to 17.7%. However, Birhanu 1987) in Amharic

classroom interaction found 39.76%, Abdulkadir (1983) in English classroom interaction found 35.5%, Patrica (1994) in Mathematics classroom interaction found 31.6%, all higher than this finding.

It was stated that the more teachers structure problems and ask relatively specific questions, the more likely pupils will complement this behavior by following the teacher lead (Flanders, 1970:184). Correspondingly, the limitedness of such behavior among social studies teachers under discussion would result with the opposite experience among students.

4.5.6. Social Studies Teachers Emphasis on Content Area

Teachers' emphasis on content area can be indicated by the index known as content cross Ratio and according to Flanders, it should be found by calculating the percent of all tallies that lie within the columns and rows of categories 4 (asking questions) and 5 (lecturing).

This study applied the method and found that the social studies teachers emphasis on content area accounted the time of 83.70% in Grade 7th and 87.43% in Grade 8th classrooms. Which indicates that grade 8th teachers were much content focused than grade 7th. It was also calculated 84.0% in urban and 87.95% in rural classrooms, even though the observed differences across groups of classrooms is limited, it gives a clue that rural teachers were much content focused than the urban ones. Hence, the values in each group or the value of the total observations, (85.87%) reveal that the results are well above the normative expectations, 55%.

Therefore, this finding indicated that the main focus of social studies teachers' talk was on subject matter. They tend to play a very active role and placed too much emphasis on the presentation of the content area, and the time devoted to motivation or discipline problems were minimum.

This finding is also consistent with the finding of Abdulaziz (1997:74) who reported the content cross ratio of geography classes of Sidama Zone to be ranging from 80.2% to 95.26%, which is beyond the normative expectation. But inconsistent from Brihanu's (1987) findings that show 48.15% content emphasis.

Basically, how much students learn is dependent, according to Callahan and Clark (1988), on the time spent on the students' motivation, the quality of instruction, the aptitude of the student to the topic and the students' general ability. Hence, the limited allocation of time, particularly, for student motivation may result by hampering the experience of students in the subject.

4.5.7. The Tendency of Teacher and Student Talk to Remain in the Same Category for Relatively Longer Seconds

The sustainability of teacher and student talk is indicated by an index called a Steady State Ratio. According to Flanders, it refers to the percent of all tallies that lie within the 10 steady state cells, that is (1-1), (2-2), (3-3)... (10-10). The higher the ratio, the less rapid is the interchange in communication between the teacher and his./her students and vice versa.

In this study the calculated steady state ratios for urban and rural classrooms of Grades 7th and 8th reveal that the higher was observed in grade 8th which is 80.2% while it was 74.84 in grade 7th. This implies that the interchange in communication between the teacher and the students appeared to be lower in grade 8th than grade 7th.

Similarly comparisons between the ratio of interchange in communication in urban and rural classrooms also showed that a relatively lower interchange occurred in rural classroom where 78.70% of steady state ratio was recorded which is above the urban with 75.25%.

Despite such differences observed among the subjects of this study, all of the ratios are above the normative expectations as suggested by Flanders (55%), implying a very low interaction between teachers and students.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the present study was to examine the state of students' experience in social studies classrooms. The study was conducted in the second cycle primary schools of Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones.

In order to meet the purpose of the study the following specific questions were formulated for investigation.

(1) How is the learning of social studies perceived and felt by the students?

(1.1.) Do students perceive the social studies lessons relevant to bring about behavioral changes?

(1.2.) Do students feel that the contents and learning experiences in social studies match to their ability, needs and interests?

(1.3.) Do students have favorable attitude toward the social studies subject?

(2.) How do subject teachers view the experience of students in social studies subject?

(3.) To what extent does the teaching-learning process in social studies classrooms enhance students' experience in the subject?

(3.1.) Do students get an opportunity for active learning in social studies classes?

(3.2.) Do students participate in social studies classrooms?

(3.3.) How do social studies teachers react to the ideas and feelings of students?

To find out answers for these leading questions, student questionnaire, focused-group interviews with students, teacher questionnaire and classroom observation instruments were employed.

Initially, all the instruments were administered on a pilot group. Consequently, they were analyzed and subjected to amendments. In addition, since phrasing of words

is important in eliciting information about perceptions, graduate students were asked to review and revise the questions.

Secondly, these instruments were administered in 10 second cycle primary schools of Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones that were selected using multi-stage sampling techniques.

From a total of 10 sampled schools (5 urban, and 5 rural), 226 student subjects were randomly selected and required to fill a questionnaire. Of which, 204 student subjects (90.26%) have returned the questionnaire. The distribution of respondents across grade, sex and location was: 99 grade 7th and 105 grade 8th; 114 male and 88 female; and 142 urban and 62 rural students.

In addition, group-focused interview schedules were conducted with 10 students in each grade of 5 urban schools, and 5 students in each grades of 5 rural schools. Hence, the number of students who participated in the group interviews accounted for 150 students.

The available 16 social studies subject teachers and who are responsible for the respective grades were required to fill a questionnaire. Moreover, using the Flanders' model the classroom interactions were observed in live situations for two consecutive periods (except teachers of 'Azena' primary school where teachers are observed for only ones) by two observers (the researcher and an assistant). Among the possible 30 sessions to be analyze; only 84.4% were amenable for the employment of the model. The remaining 15.6% sessions were allotted for radio programs; seatwork assignments & jotting down of summary notes and were inconvenient to the instrument used.

Finally, the raw data collected through different methods was labeled, tabulated and presented for qualitative and quantitative explanations. Mean scores, percentages; Chi-square and t-tests were employed to analyze the data. From the analysis the following results were obtained.

5.1. Summary

5.1.1. Higher proportion of students perceived the contents and learning experiences of social studies as essential to the development of their social knowledge, attitudes and skills. However, the perceived relevance tends to decrease slightly from knowledge to skill component respectively (mean = 3.73, 3.40 and 3.30).

No statistically significant difference is observed in perceived relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies between students of grades 7th and 8th, male and female. But, perceived relevance of the contents and learning experience to the development of social attitude is greater among rural respondents (mean = 3.56) than among the urban ones (mean = 3.34).

5.1.2. The majority of students perceive the contents and learning experiences of social studies unmatched to their ability (mean = 3.37) unfamiliar to the realm of experience (mean = 3.38) and vast in scope (mean = 3.78). In this regard, no statistically significant difference is observed in perceived difficulty between students of grades 7th and 8th, male and female, or urban and rural groups.

The majority of subject teachers (cumulative 56.3%) who were asked in this study also have the opinion that the contents and learning experiences of social studies meant for grades 7th and 8th students are moderately pitched within the optimal range of difficulty.

Furthermore, the observations made in classrooms reveal the prevalence of the indicators of challenge rather than the indicators of ease.

5.1.3. Higher proportion of students reported that they found the contents and learning experiences of social studies relevant to their personal needs (mean = 3.44) and matched to their interest (mean = 3.83). No statistically significant difference in

perception toward social studies is observed between 7th and 8th graders, males and females, but urban and rural school children responses show variations. Consequently, the perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the needs and interests of students is higher among urban students (mean = 3.96) than among rural (mean = 3.66).

5.1.4. The majority of students shows favorable attitude toward social studies (mean = 3.68). A comparative looking at the responses of students between grades 7th and 8th, male and female, show no statistically significant difference.

The majority of students (51%) considered utility as the main causative agent to create conditions or to make social studies pleasant or unpleasant. But few mentions were also recorded as reasons for liking social studies i.e., interest motive (49%), proficiency motive (24%) liking the teacher (33%) and the method of teaching (34%). But the over all attitudes of students towards social studies is significantly favorable among urban respondents (mean= 3.84) than the rural students (mean= 3.40).

5.1.5. Students had little opportunity to do something active and creative learning tasks in social studies classrooms such as for inquiry-based learning processes, for problem-solving contexts, or for guided discovery experiences. Students report and the observations made in classrooms also depicted that students do only few things beyond merely sitting at their seat and either listening to the teacher talk, jotting down notes, or asking questions and responding for.

- 5.1.6. Of the time used for social studies classroom interaction, about 85% was occupied by teachers' talk while students talk accounted only for about 6.41, and silence or confusion took 8.53% of the class time on average.
- 5.1.7. The observed social studies classrooms were characterized by whole-class instruction without significant differentiation of assignments, or considerable private or small-group assistance.
- 5.1.8. The degree to which students became initiative in classroom discourse was very limited (17.12%), on average, which is below the normative expectations (34%).
- 5.1.9. The extent to which social studies teachers use indirect influence was very low. (0.10) Rather all the teachers in the observed classrooms of grades 7th and 8th mainly employed direct influence in teaching the subject. This means, they were highly dependent on lecturing. Therefore, students are less assisted to form attitudes and feelings toward the subject.
- 5.1.10. The tendency of social studies teachers to react to the ideas and feelings of pupils (4.89%), to use questions when guiding the content part of class discussion (5.11%), and to enhance two-way communication (80%) were very low as compared to the normative expectations (42%, 26%, and 50% respectively). Regarding the last case, it would be important to note that the higher the ratio, the less is the interchange in communication.
- 5.1.11. Social studies teachers of grade 7th and 8th of schools under discussion devote the major portion of time by presenting the subject matter (85.8%) on average that is well above the normative expectations (55%). As a result, they failed to keep the appropriate balance between the presentation of the subject matter and other aspects like motivating the students.

5.2. FINDINGS

Based on the summaries given, the researcher come up with the following findings:

5.2.1. Students of grades 7th and 8th are encountered to the contents and learning experiences of social studies that are:

- (a) perceived to be relevant to the development of social knowledge, attitudes and skills,
- (b) perceived to be enjoyable and stimulating,
- (c) perceived to be "difficult", "broad" and "remote" that required students to do hard effort to master, to cover much content and learning experience in so little time, and to handle so unfamiliar facts concepts and generalizations respectively.
- (d) The difference observed in perception scores is only between urban and rural students regarding the relevance of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the development of social attitudes whereby the later rated higher than the former. To the contrary, the perceived match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to the needs and interests of students, and the over all attitude of students towards the subject are rated higher by the urban students than their counter parts. Other than these, no significant difference is observed across grade and sex.

5.2.2. Though the social studies teachers reported that they are competent to teach the subject and have a favorable attitude towards their tasks; their instructional attempts to enhance students' experience in the subject is

found to be limited. Hence, students seemed less considered as an agent for their own learning. Students of grades 7th and 8th are not also provided opportunities to be active in social studies classrooms. Rather dominated by the teacher and they are left to be passive.

Therefore, based on the findings, it is modestly concluded that the second cycle primary school students who are found in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative zones are encountered for relevant (essential), interesting and enjoyable but challenging contents and passive learning experiences.

5.3. Recommendations

5.3.1. The reported perceived relevance of social studies to the development of social knowledge, attitudes and skills is being 'moderate' or nearly average implies that there is a gap to be filled by curriculum planners and teachers. Meanwhile, it would be good if curriculum planners and subject teachers check and recheck the extent of benefits students derive from contents and learning experiences along those objectives that were rated low.

5.3.2. It is advisable to revise the social studies materials or to provide supplementary materials for the contents that are "too advance" to the intellectual level of students. Otherwise, they may ignore, or distort and then assimilate the distorted concept. Then, the problem might extend to later teaching where children will have the false preconception that block proper learning.

- 5.3.3. The intrinsic motivation approach is based on the ideas that the academic tasks selected for students should be inherently interesting and enjoyable, because according to Brophy and Alleman (1992:29), other things being equal activities that students are likely to enjoy are preferable to activities that students are not likely to enjoy. Meanwhile, the reported match of the contents and learning experiences of social studies to students' needs and interests shall be reinforced to promote students' progress in the subject.
- 5.3.4. It is the students who do the learning. Accordingly, a task that is too difficult might be just right if it is left to their devices. Otherwise, if they minimize their investment of attention and effort, nearly there will be no learning. Therefore, social studies teachers shall stimulate student initiation throughout the entire set of learning experiences by employing activity-based, self-motivated and student-centered methodologies.
- 5.3.5. For many students, peak learning experiences occur especially, during stimulating classroom discussions in which all members of the classroom community are expressing ideas, opinions, and points of view (Eby, 1997:198). However, from the investigation it seemed that social studies teachers are emphasizing on the presentation of content through lecturing rather than extending students experience. Therefore, it is advisable that grades 7th and 8th social studies teachers provide authentic, substantiate, and valuable atmosphere for two-way classroom interaction
- 5.3.6. The variations observed in perception scores between urban and rural students suggest the need of treatment emphasizing across location. Meanwhile, it is advisable to urban teachers to increase the essentiality of

social studies contents and learning experiences to the development of social attitudes of their students. In turn, rural teachers of grades 7 and 8 of the schools under discussion need to do better to match the social studies learning tasks to the needs and interests of their students and for their attitudinal development toward the subject.

5.3.7. When a curriculum change calls for new patterns of tasks, teachers may need to learn about it in order to enlarge their repertoire of teaching styles. However, from this investigation it seemed that social studies teachers of grades 7th and 8th in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Administrative Zones had limited know-how about active student learning, student-centered classrooms, two-way classroom interaction and the like. Hence, it is important to update the skills of social studies teachers through the available means so that to promote students' experience in the subject.

5.3.8. Teaching social studies require teachers to have the knowledge, attitude and skills of history, geography and civics. But the subject teachers in the schools under discussion have no an integrated qualification. Hence, it is advisable to train teachers in line with the nature of the subject that they teach so that to enhance students' experience in the subject.

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Appendix-A

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Questionnaire

(To be filled in by Grades 7th and 8th students in Western Gojjam and Bahir Dar Adm. Zones).

The purpose of administering this questionnaire is to obtain relevant data regarding students experience in social studies subject matter and to give recommendations if some problems are discovered.

The questionnaire consists two parts. The first part seeks to yield information about your perceptions toward the social studies that you are learning this year. The second part is much concerned about the way how you were learning the subject.

You are, therefore, requested to supply honest information about this issue in your school. The researcher appreciates your cooperation in advance.

Personal Information

Grade & Section _____ School _____
Woreda _____ Zone _____
Sex _____

PART I

Direction: Read each statement below. All have to do with the social studies course that you are learning this year. Therefore, put a tick mark (✓) for those questions with alternatives and short responses to others.

1. To what extent do you find the learning of social studies important for you to bring about behavioral changes along the following domains?

		Very much 5	Much 4	Moderate 3	Less 2	Very less 1
1.1	In developing your knowledge & understanding of facts about: 1.1.1 the Social and Natural environment?					
	1.1.2 the interrelationships and interdependence of people					
	1.1.3 the history, geography and civics conditions of own country?					
	1.1.4 the history, geography and civics conditions of own continent and the world at large					
	1.1.5 the meaning and nature of human, social and economic institutions?					
	1.1.6 the concept of social changes?					
1.2	In developing your attitude toward the following: 1.2.1 to accept social					

		Very much 5	Much 4	Moderate 3	Less 2	Very less 1
	responsibility?					
	1.2.2 to participate actively in social activities?					
	1.2.3 to work cooperatively?					
	1.2.4 to take care of private and common properties?					
	1.2.5 to display sensitivity to social and environmental problems					
	1.2.6 to show mutual respect for the ideas and feelings of others?					
	1.2.7 to love own country and develop national feeling?					
	1.2.8 to be open about self weaknesses?					
	1.2.9 to earn a living only through the right means?					
	1.2.10 to be optimistic in solving problems?					
	1.2.11 to improve personal hygiene?					
	1.2.12 to believe in democracy?					
	1.2.13 to lead goal-oriented life?					
1.3	In developing your skills in the following areas: 1.3.1 Skills in questioning?					

		Very much 5	Much 4	Moderate 3	Less 2	Very less 1
	1.3.2. Skills in distinguishing between facts and opinions?					
	1.3.3 Skills in the use of maps?					
	1.3.4 Skills in the use of graph charts, diagrams or tables					
	1.3.5 Skills in the use of photographs?					
	1.3.6 Skills in critical thinking?					
	1.3.7 Skills in identifying and solving problems?					
	1.3.8 Skills in hypothesis testing					
	1.3.9 Skills in creative thinking?					
	1.3.10 Skills in cooperative work?					
	1.3.11 Skills in Studying					
	1.3.12 Skills in decision-making (skills in choosing among alternatives)?					

2. To what extent do you find the social studies lessons enjoyable and stimulating to you?

Very much

Much

Moderate

Less

Very less

3. If your response to question No. 2 is "less" or "very less" would you mention topics that you find with such a character?

4. How difficult do you find the social studies lessons that you are learning this year?

Very much

much

Moderate

less

very less

☐☐☐☐☐

5. If your response to question No. 4 is "difficult" or "very difficult" which of the units are with such a nature?

6. To what extent do you find the social studies lessons relevant to your personal needs?

Very much

much

moderate

less

very less

☐☐☐☐☐

7. If your response to question No. 6 is "less" or "very less", would you cite some areas that you find irrelevant?

8. What do you say about the scope of your social studies textbooks?

Broad enough

Broad

Moderate

Limited

Limited enough

☐☐☐☐☐

9. Are there any social studies concepts that you disagreed with?

Yes

☐

No

☐

10. If your response to question No. 9 is yes, would you cite some examples?

11. To what extent are the contents presented in your social studies textbook related to the realm of experience?

Very much	Much	Moderate	Less	Very less
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Overall to what extent do you like social studies as a subject?

Very much	Much	Moderate	Less	Very less
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. If your response to question 12 is "yes", what are the major reasons for that please tick (✓) the reasons you agree with.

- The importance attached to the subject _____
- High interest of the subject _____
- Ease of the subject _____
- Challenging nature of the subject _____
- High achievement (Marks) _____
- Teacher's Motivation & Support _____
- Attractive Method of instruction _____
- Peer group influence _____
- Family encouragement _____
- Some other reasons, specify _____

14. If your response to question 13 is "No", what are the major reasons for dislike?

Please tick any from the reasons listed below.

- Lack of understanding of its importance _____
- Low interest in the subject _____
- Difficulty of the subject _____
- Less challenging nature of the subject _____
- Poor achievement (Marks) _____
- Lack of teacher's motivation & support _____

- Poor method of teaching _____
- Peer group influence _____
- Home influence _____
- Some other reasons, specify _____

PART II

Direction: Read each statement carefully. Then put a tick mark(✓) under each column to show how much you have done for each activity in social studies

.No.	Learning Experiences	Frequency of use of the Method			
		Not at all 1	In very Few lessons 2	In some lessons 3	In most lessons 4
15	Learning by listening to the teacher talk				
16	Learning by writing down notes given by the teacher				
17	Learning by asking and answering questions during class hours				
18	Learning by doing individual seatwork (assignments) given by the teacher				
19	Learning by completing group works given by the teacher				
20	Learning by producing something useful for social studies lessons from locally available materials.				
21	Learning by closely observing maps, globes, graphs, pictures and other visual media brought by the teacher				
22	Learning through listening to social studies instructional radio programs				
23	Learning by measuring and calculating temperature, rainfall and similar data				
24	Learning by drawing pictures, graphs, tables and by making maps, models and the like.				
25	Learning by collecting, classifying, and exhibiting materials of any type appropriate to social studies.				

No	Learning Experiences	Not at all 1	In very Few lesson 2	In some lessons 3	In most lessons 4
26	Learning by dramatizing the activities of peoples being studied or the process and procedures being learned.				
27	Learning from guest speakers				
28	Learning through field trips and school journeys made to different places of social studies value				
29	Learning by asking parents and elders about customs and issues that contribute to social studies unit				
30	Learning from news papers magazines and the like other than the textbook				
31	Learning through academic competitions organized at intra-school and inter-school basis.				
32	Learning through peer-tutoring				

33. What problems you ever encountered in school in learning social studies?

Thank you!

APPENDIX- B

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM
AND INSTRUCTION**

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this study is to examine the students' experience in Social studies subject that you are teaching. To achieve this purpose, your report on your observation about the issue is found to be important to support the finding.

The data will be used only for research purpose. The information we get from you will be confidential and will not affect any body in any way.

Would you please read the statements that follow and react accordingly?

Thank you

Personal information

Qualification _____

Minor _____

Year of experience in teaching _____

Grade level you report about: 7 ☐ 8 ☐ both ☐

1. Are the contents and learning experiences presented in the social studies curricular materials pitched within the optimal range of difficulty?

Very much ☐ No ☐

To some extent ☐ Not at all ☐

2 .If your response to question No. 1 doesn't refer to 'Very much';

a) Which topics (units) are too advanced to the intended students? (Please make it grade specific)

b) Which topics (units) are below the learning capacity of the students? (Please make it grade specific)

3. How much do you think is the proportion of students in a class who can understand the concept of social studies?

Below 25%

25_50%

51-75%

Above 75%

4. If you are faced with students who have problems to understand what is presented in social studies lessons, what do you think is the reason?

Weakness of students

Students' lack of interest

Content Difficulty of the lesson

Other specify

5. How do you think is the scope of the contents of social studies that you report about?

Very broad	
Appropriate limited	
Broad	
Very limi	

6. Are the suggested contents and learning experience feasible in terms of the available resources (time, material, human, etc) in your school?

Very much	
To some extent	
No	
No not at all	

7. If your response to question No.6 "doesn't refer to "very much"; would you pleas list the problems in relation to the types of resources?

8. How is the effort of your students in the following conditions? (Put a tick mark) along your response from the provided rating scales).

	Very much	Much	Moderate	Low	Very Low
Interest in learning Social studies					
Willingness to accomplish learning tasks					
Participation in					

	Very much	Much	Moderate	Low	Very Low
classroom interactions					

9. To what extent do you consider the needs, interests and abilities of students while planning your lesson or course plan?

Very much

Low

Much

Moderate

Very LOW

10. How is your attitude towards the following conditions? (Put a tick mark along your responses from the given rating scale)

	Very much	Much	Moderate	Low	Very Low
Interest towards teaching in general					
Interest towards social studies					
Interest to continue the profession					
Satisfaction with the effort and outcome of your social studies teaching					
Perceived competence to teach social studies					

PART TWO

DIRECTION: Following 18 teaching learning experiences are presented. Indicate with a tick mark the frequencies of these experiences occur in your teaching. The base for rating is the extent to which you carried out these experiences as stated in the teacher's guide, textbook or the extent to which they occur (happen) in classrooms.

No	Learning experience	In most lessons (3)	In some lessons (2)	In very few lessons (1)	They have not done it (0)
11	Students learn by listening to the teacher talk				
12	Students learn by writing down notes given by the teacher				
13	Students learn through discussions during class hours				
14	I give to the students assignments to be completed individually				
15	I give to students group assignments and home works				
16	Students produce something useful for social studies lessons from locally available materials.				
17	Students learn by closely observing maps, globes, graphs, pictures or other visual media brought by the teacher.				
18	Students listen to social studies instructional radio programs				

No	Learning experience	In most lessons (3)	In some lessons (2)	In very few lessons (1)	They have not done it (0)
19	Students learn by measuring and calculating				
20	Students learn by drawing pictures, graphs, tables or by making maps, models, and the like				
21	Students learn by collecting, classifying, and exhibiting materials of any type appropriate to social studies				
22	Students learn by dramatizing of the activities of people being studied and/or the process and procedures being learned				
23	Students learn from resource people invited by me to talk on relevant topics				
24	Students learn through field trips and school journeys made to different places of social studies value				
25	Students learn by asking parents and elders about customs and issues that contribute to social studies units and by reporting about it.				

No	Learning experience	In most lessons (3)	In some lessons (2)	In very few lessons (1)	They have not done it (0)
26	Students learn from newspapers, magazines, and the like other than the textbook				
27	Students learn through academic competitions organized at intra-school and inter-school bases.				
28	Students are encouraged to learn by organizing themselves for peer-tutoring				

29. What problems are there in your school that hinders the promotion of students' experience in social studies through active learning methodologies?

Thank you

PART TWO

The purpose of this part of the checklist is to record those activities that are not mainly included in the utterance components (Teacher talk, student talk, silence). Hence answer the following questions after lesson observation.

No	Did students get an opportunity	Yes	No
1	☐ to identify the desired behavioral change expected of them after the lesson?		
2	☐ to express their views about the 'what' and 'how' of the lesson?		
3	☐ to link the daily lesson to the previous and forthcoming ones?		
4	☐ to distinguish between facts and opinions?		
5	☐ to compare and order any sort?		
6	☐ to learn how to apply what they have learnt in their daily life?		
7	☐ to think out things by themselves through individual discovery lessons?		
8	☐ to collaborate and work in-group with fellow students?		
9	☐ to relate the lesson with their immediate experiences?		
10	☐ to closely observe instructional media of social studies value?		
11	☐ to engage in hands-on activities such as making maps, drawing pictures, graphs, tables and creating illustrations etc.?		
12	☐ to be exposed for various activity focuses on the basis of individual differences?		
13	☐ to utilize community resources as a means of enriching and expanding learning activities?		

PART III

How often do the following indicators of challenge/ease of a lesson occurred during observation?

No		Very Often	Often	Sometime	Rarely	Not a tall
1	Sign of non-comprehension in facing expression among students?					
2	A relatively longer wait time before responding to question?					
3	Failure among first respondents to offer the correct answers?					
4	Looking side ways at a neighbor (consulting) before any start of processing a task?					
5	Limitedness in the nature of responses to the teacher or peer posed question?					

Appendix-D

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF RADUATE STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Question Route for Focus Group Discussion
(to be administered to students of different groups)

Introduction

I would like to thank you all for coming today. My name is _____ and I am conducting in some interviews as part of a research project on Students' Experience in Social Studies Lesson. A researcher at the Addis Ababa University, Department of Curriculum and Instruction is carrying out this survey.

We feel that by talking to students like you we can best find out about feelings, opinions and activities about the issue. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your views, so please feel comfortable to say what you honestly fee. I have a list of Question I would like us to talk about but please feel free to bring up any other issues you feel are relevant.

During the discussion, I will be taking notes and to keep track of what has been covered, and to remind me if I forget to ask certain things. However, please do not let that worry you, our discussion will remain completely confidential.

Finally, please try to let everyone have a turn at saying something, all you vies are important, and please try to keep the talk within the group rather than just with the students sitting around you. Are there any questions before we begin?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Focus-Group Report

Date _____

School _____

Name of Moderator (interviewer) _____

Time Length started at _____ Finished at _____

Participant Selection Procedure

Setting of the discussion (place)

Focused Group Interview Questions

1. How Interesting and tempting are the social studies lessons of this grade to you
2. What do you like (or not like) about the way you learn social studies?
3. Is social Studies an easy subject (or difficult) SUBJECT?
4. What do you find easy (or difficult) for you in social studies of your respective grade?
5. Does the social studies subject matter require you the allotment of as much a study time as other subjects? Why?
6. To what extent do the contents in social studies helpful for you to prepare yourself in possessing the knowledge, values and skills needed for active participation in society?
7. How would you refute those who argue as social studies is the knowledge of monotonous trivial and redundant events and dysfunctional points?
8. In what ways would you refute those who argue as social studies does not reach beyond factual recall of dates, stories, names of places and people?
9. Do you agree with the opinion that states social studies knowledge can easily be acquired outside of school more by radio television and movies than from textbooks?
10. What problems are there in your school in learning social studies?
11. What solution would you suggest for the problems that are mentioned?

Appendix-E-1

Master-Master Matrix Showing Classroom Interaction of All Observed Social studies
Classes of Grades 7th and 8th in 10 Schools

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	%
1	2	2	1	4	8	1	-	3	-	4	25	0.19
2	2	7	46	15	36	3	1	11	1	8	130	0.99
3	2	14	34	75	123	12	2	23	5	50	340	2.59
4	2	5	5	30	24	9	5	301	2	150	533	4.07
5	4	9	7	250	9320	54	7	8	47	195	9901	75.61
6	-	2	3	14	42	33	2	15	9	30	150	1.14
7	-	2	2	9	14	3	5	8	-	14	57	0.43
8	4	73	211	88	94	12	21	90	8	96	697	5.32
9	3	7	18	6	32	1	4	10	52	11	144	1.09
10	6	9	13	42	208	20	10	228	20	559	1117	8.53
Total	25	130	340	533	9901	150	57	697	144	1117	13094	100.0

T.Q.R = 5.11

T.R.R = 70.5(4.89)

P.I.R. = 17.12

CCR = 85.87

SSR = 77.37

TT = 85.02

ST = 6.41

SC = 8.53

I/D 0.10

i/d = 2.39

Appendix-E-2

Master-Master Matrix Showing Classroom Interaction in Social studies Classes of Grade 8th

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	%
1	1	2	-	2	5	1	-	1	-	2	14	0.21
2	1	3	31	10	19	2	-	7	1	5	79	1.18
3	1	3	11	35	54	8	1	10	2	16	141	2.10
4	1	3	3	21	13	3	2	143	-	66	255	3.80
5	2	4	3	120	3979	29	3	2	16	90	5248	78.19
6	-	1	1	6	25	17	1	5	2	14	70	1.04
7	-	1	1	4	7	1	3	3	-	4	24	0.36
8	3	53	80	40	43	3	8	51	3	28	312	4.65
9	1	3	7	3	13	-	2	4	28	5	66	0.98
10	4	6	5	14	91	6	4	86	14	273	503	7.50
Total	15	79	141	255	5248	70	24	312	66	503	6712	100

T.Q.R = 4.64

T.R.R 71.34(4.38)

P.I.R. = 17.5

CCR = 87.43

SSR = 80.2

TT = 86.88

ST = 5.63

SC = 7.5

I/D 0.09

i/d = 2.49

Appendix-E-3

Master-Master Matrix Showing Classroom Interaction in Social studies Classes of Grade 7th

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	%
1	1	-	1	2	3	-	-	2	-	2	11	0.17
2	1	4	15	5	17	1	1	4	-	3	51	0.80
3	1	11	23	40	69	4	1	13	3	34	199	3.12
4	1	2	2	9	11	6	3	158	2	84	278	4.36
5	2	5	4	130	4341	25	4	6	31	105	4653	72.91
6	-	1	3	8	18	16	1	10	7	16	80	1.25
7	-	1	1	5	7	2	2	5	-	10	33	0.52
8	1	20	131	48	51	9	13	39	5	68	385	6.03
9	2	4	11	3	19	1	2	6	24	6	78	1.22
10	2	3	8	28	117	16	6	142	6	286	614	9.62
Total	11	51	199	278	4653	80	33	385	78	501	6382	100

TQR 5.63
TRR 69.78
PIR 16.5

CRR 83.70
SSR 74.4

TT= 83.127.
ST= 7.5
SC= 9.62

I/D= 0.11
I/d= 2.31

Appendix-E-4

Master-Master Matrix Showing Classroom Interaction of Social studies Classes of Urban Schools

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	%
1	1	-	-	3	5	-	-	2	-	3	14	0.17
2	-	6	22	9	23	2	1	6	1	5	75	0.93
3	1	9	29	51	69	4	2	16	3	39	223	2.76
4	2	5	4	20	20	4	4	194	2	103	358	4.36
5	3	5	4	164	5507	31	6	7	25	145	5897	73.07
6	-	2	3	8	24	13	2	9	5	17	83	1.02
7	-	2	1	5	11	3	5	7	-	11	45	0.56
8	2	36	138	60	67	8	13	62	4	81	471	5.84
9	2	3	14	4	14	1	3	6	27	10	84	1.04
10	3	7	11	34	157	17	9	162	17	406	820	10.16
Total	14	75	223	358	5897	83	45	471	84	820	8070	100

TQR 5.72
TRR 70.9 (4.92)
PIR 15.4

CRR 84.0
SSR 75.25

TT= 82.87
ST= 6.88
SC= 10.16

I/D = 0.11
I/d = 2.43

Appendix-E-5

Master-Master Matrix Showing Classroom Interaction of Social studies Classes of Rural Schools

Cate- gory	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	%
1	1	2	1	1	3	1	-	1	-	1	11	0.22
2	2	1	24	6	13	1	-	5	-	3	55	1.09
3	1	5	5	24	54	8	-	7	2	11	117	2.32
4	-	-	1	10	4	5	1	107	-	47	175	3.48
5	1	4	3	86	3813	23	1	1	22	50	4004	79.69
6	-	-	-	6	18	20	h	6	4	13	67	1.33
7	-	-	1	4	3	-	-	1	-	3	12	0.24
8	2	37	73	28	27	4	8	28	4	15	226	4.49
9	1	4	4	2	18	-	1	4	25	1	60	1.19
10	3	2	5	8	51	5	-1	66	3	153	297	5.91
Total	11	55	117	175	4004	67	12	226	60	297	5024	100

TQR	4.19		CRR	87.95	TT=	88.37	I/D =	0.09
TRR	69.84	(4.29)	SSR	78.70	ST=	5.68	I/d =	2.32
PIR	20.97				SC=	5.91		

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other universities and that all source of materials used for the thesis have been fully acknowledged.



ASNAKE TAREKEGN

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.



Dr. MAREW ZEWDIE