

## Post War Education and Curriculum History in Somalia

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

This study assessed the correlation between post war education and curriculum history of secondary schools in Somalia. With the use of descriptive research design, a survey questionnaire and an interview schedule were utilized to garner data which was used to answer the research question on how post war education leads to curriculum history of secondary schools with an aim of developing a new curriculum to address contemporary issues in education such as helping address the current identity crisis in Somalia. The study adopted a descriptive research design with quantitative and qualitative approaches. A sample of 300 respondents were selected using Slovic's formula. Data was collected using questionnaire and interview guide and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's chi-square statistical test for quantitative data and thematic analysis was used for analyzing qualitative data. The study findings established a significant relationship between post war education and curriculum history in Somalia. The study concluded that post war education has awakened people in Somalia that a relevant curriculum is essential for national development. From the study findings, the researcher recommended that there is a need for a new history curriculum. An integrated thematic instructional model was proposed to deliver a new content and narrative that seeks to develop social cohesion and reconciliation in order to reconstruct national identity in post-conflict Somalia.

**Key words:** Post war education, Curriculum history, Identity crisis, Somalia.

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## INTRODUCTION

Prior to violent conflict, Somalia was known as the Somalia Democratic Republic; however, in post conflict, the country fragmented into three regions: Southern Somalia, Puntland, and Somaliland. Internationally known as the Federal Republic of Somalia, it has been described as a "fragile state" that lacks political stability and economic growth (Thomas, 2016).

Education is a powerful tool for social development, especially in post-conflict states where education has the potential to promote social change and reconciliation (Barakat, 2008; Burde *et al.*, 2017; Ellison, 2014; Hilker, 2011; Naylor, 2015; Rappleye & Paulson, 2007; Schwartz, 2010; Smith, 2011; Tawil & Harley, 2004). Despite the positive and significant role of knowledge, education's role is argued in conflict situations because of the potential "two faces" where it could either lead to conflict resolution or escalate divisiveness and inequality through content and structure (Barakat, 2008; Ellison, 2010; Naylor, 2015; Rappleye & Paulson, 2007).

Somalia's strategic location on the African horn positioned Somalia along "European trade routes" that drew the attention of the UK and Italy. Somalia was colonised by the British in the north and Italians in the south (William and Cummings, 2015). Colonial administrations were concerned due to political interests being attacked; therefore, colonial authorities armed Somali groups to protect economic interests in the region. Linke and Raleigh (2011) believed that this was the beginning of the violent history of Somalia.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

### Data Capturing

Data used for the research project was obtained using both primary and secondary sources in research. Primary data was arrived at by use of questionnaires and interviews to vital persons related to the study. Secondary data was got by the use of documentary reviews. The study employed a descriptive research design including qualitative and quantitative approaches. Creswell (2006) stated that descriptive research design is generally used to describe a phenomenon and its data characteristics. The researcher

used the pragmatic philosophy as a guiding principle in the research study. The researcher chose a total of 300 respondents (sample size) using the sloven's formula to participate in the study.

### Sampling methods

The researcher utilized simple random sampling, stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques in the study in order to garner data for the study. The study population comprised of the target population including categories like teachers, principals, deputy principals, district officials, students and support staff in Somalia education system.

### Self-administered questionnaire and interview guide

The questionnaire is a research tool consisting of inter-related questions prepared by the researcher about the research dilemma under investigation based on the objectives of the research study. Items were organized and written for the participants to answer with options as reflected on the five likert scale type questions. This method was prioritized because it gathers a lot of information within a short period of time.

However, the survey questionnaire involved some challenges of attrition. There were few copies that were not returned, though this was solved by distributing a lot of copies than the required number of the sample size of 300 people. The aim of a qualitative interview schedule was to understand the respondents subjective view of their cosmos; unfolding the meaning of their world, uncovering their lived lifestyles prior to scientific explanations (Cronje, 2013).

### Validity and reliability of research instruments

Validity of the researcher's questionnaire was assured by using content validity Index. Arising from the testing of the validity of the instruments, the

researcher got content validity index (CVI) of 0.78 which was well above 0.75 indicating that the instrument was valid to garner data for the research study (Creswell ,2006). However, the validity of the interviews was obtained by talking to key participants to prove the answered items (Creswell, 2006). Reliability of the survey Questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient formula looking at the variables that had an alpha coefficient of figure greater than 0.70. Besides, the reliability of the interview guide was arrived at by resorting on peer review strategies (Creswell, 2006).

## DATA ANALYSIS

Research Statistical tools which were employed to analyze data for this research study included; descriptive statistics such as tables, frequencies, percentages, pie charts, bar graphs and inferential analyses like Pearson chi-square statistical test for analyzing quantitative data. But, Qualitative data were analyzed by scientifically organizing data into rational themes or sub themes for easy Interpretation in a storyline fashion (Cronje, 2013).

## RESULTS

Background Characteristics of the Respondents. The results indicated that 58% of the sample population were males, and 42% were females as can be seen in the Figure 1. 35% of students were from Mogadishu, 32% from Somaliland, and 33% from Puntland as it is illustrated in Figure 2. Participants had a mean age of 18 years (SD=18) as can be seen in Figure 3. This meant that the participants that supplied data to the researcher were balanced in terms of gender, region and age. It was therefore the right group to provide information for a good research study.

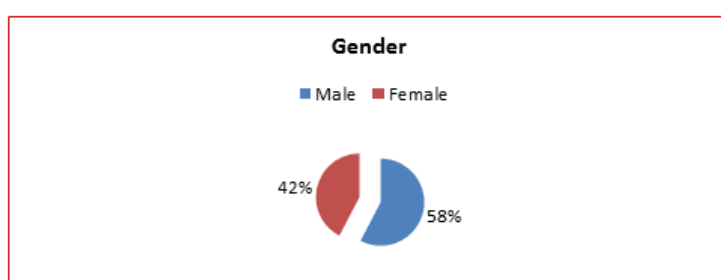


Fig-1: Gender

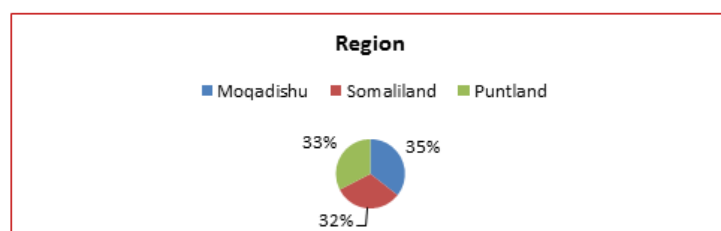


Fig-2: Region

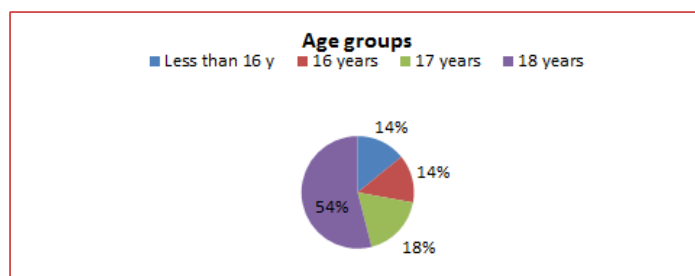


Fig-3: Age groups

### Relationship between individuals and country

As can be seen in Figure 4 below, when asked to rate their clan/tribe, 46% of the students from Mogadishu rated it as the most important, 29% rated it as second most important and 25% of the students from Mogadishu regarded it as third most important. On the other hand, 36% of the students living in Somaliland regarded their clan/tribe as the most important, 34% as second most important, and 31% as third most important. Finally, only 17% of the students living in

Puntland regarded their clan/tribe as the first most important, 18% as the third most important and 66% as the third most important. The above regional differences were significant [ $\chi^2$  (4, N = 288) = 41.437,  $p < 0.01$ ]. This suggested that regional differences (post war education) do influence curriculum history in Somalia and that educational authorities should put more emphasis on regional differences in finding a common stand in curriculum development.

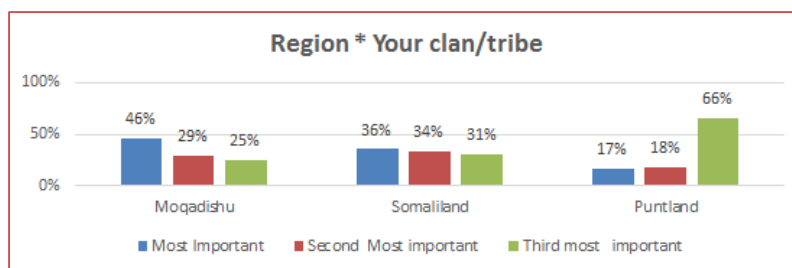


Fig-4: Importance of Clan/Tribe

## RESULTS FROM QUALITATIVE SECTION OF THE STUDY

Educator responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that current history curricula are irrelevant. The historical narrative is completely absent from curricula. There is no coherence, and the content is inappropriate for the Somali context. The advisor of MOE in Mogadishu said, "Current history curriculum is irrelevant to society needs. However, history has a significant role in state building if it's written in an adequate way to discuss the past, present, and national history of Somalia. Unfortunately, the secondary curriculum of schools in Somalia is written by others which is a big loss of Somalia".

## DISCUSSION

According to the findings of the study, the absence of a national policy of education after the collapse left schools with different curricula. Subsequently, different learning outcomes made the education system inefficient and inadequate. This finding was in consonance with the study conducted by Qasim (2013) on the Importance of curriculum in a nation who asserted that Current history curricula are irrelevant to Somalia's context and fail to address different socio-cultural-political needs of the country.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the study affirmed that there is a need for a new history curriculum. An integrated thematic instructional model was proposed to deliver a new content and narrative that seeks to develop social cohesion and reconciliation in order to reconstruct national identity in post-conflict Somalia

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