

Factors Affecting Implementation and Perceived Changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum: Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Duhok Regions in Iraq as an Example

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Abstract

This study investigates the factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum across Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions in Iraq. Through semi-structured interviews with twenty social studies teachers, the research identifies and analyzes key implementation factors including resource availability, time constraints, teacher training, student engagement, assessment methods, administrative support, and curriculum alignment. The findings reveal significant implementation challenges related to curriculum complexity, teacher preparedness, and regional variations in resource distribution. Teachers reported evolving professional roles, from content delivery to facilitating critical thinking, fostering historical empathy, and promoting cultural appreciation. The study contributes to curriculum implementation theory by demonstrating how contextual factors in post-conflict settings influence reform efforts, while providing evidence-based recommendations for enhancing professional development, resource provision, and administrative support to improve implementation effectiveness across the three regions.

Keywords: Curriculum Implementation; Social Studies Education; Teacher Perceptions; Regional Variations; Iraq Education

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INTRODUCTION

Educational systems worldwide are undergoing significant transformations through curriculum reform to address the evolving needs of contemporary society. The field of social studies holds particular significance in this context, as it bears the responsibility of developing informed and engaged citizens who understand both sociocultural dynamics and geopolitical landscapes (Ross, 2006). The effectiveness of civic engagement depends heavily on how well curriculum content and teaching methodologies adapt to changing social and political environments. This adaptation process requires careful consideration of current societal challenges and student requirements (Apple, 2004).

The Iraqi education system is currently implementing comprehensive reforms across key subject areas, particularly in social studies, history, civics, and geographical education (Al-Daami & Wallace, 2007). These disciplines play fundamental roles in shaping student identity, developing value systems, and fostering meaningful participation in civil society (Banks, 2008). However, successful implementation of curriculum objectives requires balanced distribution of resources, enhanced teacher capabilities, effective administrative management, and robust assessment systems (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). Thus, understanding the factors affecting implementation and perceived changes during this transformation process provides crucial insights for improvement.

This study examines the factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum as experienced by teachers in three Iraqi regions - Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok. Through detailed semi-structured interviews, the research investigates implementation challenges, adaptation strategies, resource availability, and perceived changes in teaching practices and student outcomes. These findings offer valuable guidance for education policymakers and practitioners working to enhance social studies education and develop socially conscious, civically engaged citizens (Parker, 2003).

The field of social studies encompasses multiple academic disciplines, including history, law, sociology, geography, political science, and economics (Evans, 2004). This multidisciplinary approach aims to help students recognize fundamental human commonalities despite surface-level differences (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Social studies education cultivates essential skills like empathy, tolerance, and critical thinking, which form the foundation for ethical citizenship and meaningful societal participation.

Developing globally conscious citizens requires more than just teaching subject matter (Davies, 2006). Curricula must be adapted to reflect students' specific historical, cultural, economic, and political contexts. This localization strategy enhances educational relevance and student engagement (Schweisfurth, 2013). Simultaneously, educators must expose students to global perspectives, international events, and cross-cultural understanding (Merryfield, 2008). Finding equilibrium between local relevance and global awareness remains a significant challenge in social studies education reform worldwide (Misco, 2007). In Iraq's context, curriculum enhancement focuses on addressing contemporary civic issues while promoting multicultural appreciation (Issa & Jamil, 2010). Recent educational developments in the region have seen increased adoption of interactive teaching methods, including peer discussions, role-playing activities, and collaborative projects. However, various factors may affect the implementation of these approaches, including teacher preparation, resource availability, administrative support, and cultural context. Successful implementation requires

providing educators with specialized training and students with modern, interactive learning resources that reflect real-world complexity (Altinyelken, 2010).

The Iraqi educational system requires comprehensive reform and enhancement of its social studies curriculum to equip students with the necessary skills for active citizenship in today's complex world. The successful implementation of these curricular goals depends significantly on four key factors: fair distribution of educational resources, teacher expertise and preparation, effective administrative supervision, and robust evaluation systems (Alwani & Alsagri, 2014). Within this context, several critical issues have emerged that require thorough investigation: insufficient understanding of the factors affecting implementation of curriculum changes at the classroom level in Iraq; limited research on teachers' perceptions of changes resulting from the new social studies curriculum; and inadequate knowledge about regional variations in curriculum implementation across different Iraqi governorates.

The objectives of the study aim to: (1) identify the key factors affecting the implementation of the New Social Studies Curriculum in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions of Iraq; (2) analyze teachers' perceptions of changes in teaching practices, student engagement, and learning outcomes resulting from the new curriculum; (3) compare implementation experiences across the three regions to identify common challenges and successful adaptation strategies; and (4) generate practical recommendations for addressing implementation barriers and enhancing curriculum effectiveness.

This research addresses an existing knowledge gap through focused qualitative interviews examining factors affecting social studies curriculum implementation in Iraq (Fullan, 2016). The research outcomes provide significant insights for enhancing social studies education through methods that are both culturally appropriate and ethically sound, aimed at improving student engagement and community impact. The study provides policymakers with valuable insights from frontline educators implementing reforms, enabling more informed decision-making processes. The research highlights the critical importance of understanding implementation factors including ongoing professional development, resource provision, administrative support, and cultural context for educators to successfully implement curriculum objectives focused on developing civic engagement and participatory skills (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

The study is bounded by time limits covering the 2022-2023 academic year, spatial boundaries encompassing Iraq (specifically the cities of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok), and human boundaries focusing on Social Studies Teachers for the third cycle of basic education schools.

The implementation of a new curriculum represents a complex, multifaceted process influenced by numerous factors ranging from policy considerations to classroom-level challenges. This literature review examines existing research on curriculum implementation factors and perceived changes, with particular attention to social studies education in contexts similar to the Iraqi Kurdistan regions of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok.

Curriculum implementation is widely recognized as a challenging phase of educational reform that extends beyond simply delivering new content. As Fullan (2016) emphasizes, implementation involves a process of organizational and personal change requiring adaption to new materials, teaching approaches, and underlying beliefs. The distance between curriculum as planned and curriculum as implemented has been a persistent focus in educational research, highlighting the challenges of translating policy intentions into classroom

practice (Snyder et al., 1992). This implementation gap is particularly evident in contexts undergoing significant educational reforms, as teachers navigate between established practices and new curriculum expectations.

Teachers play a critical role in curriculum implementation as the primary mediators between policy mandates and classroom practice. Cohen and Ball (2001) describe teachers as the "mediating agents" who interpret and enact curriculum materials based on their knowledge, beliefs, and capacities. Studies across diverse settings have demonstrated that teacher characteristics—including their knowledge, beliefs, professional background, and sense of agency—significantly influence how curricula are interpreted and implemented (Handal & Herrington, 2003). Research by Troudi and Alwan (2010) in Middle Eastern contexts reveals that teachers actively reshape curriculum policies according to their pedagogical beliefs and contextual constraints, rather than simply functioning as passive implementers.

In the context of social studies education specifically, curriculum implementation faces unique challenges related to content sensitivity and pedagogical complexity. Ross (2006) identifies content selection as particularly contentious in social studies education, where decisions about which historical narratives, cultural perspectives, and civic values to emphasize often reflect broader sociopolitical tensions. Similarly, Thornton (2005) describes social studies teachers as "curricular-instructional gatekeepers" who make critical decisions about content emphasis, instructional approaches, and assessment practices that fundamentally shape curriculum enactment. In post-conflict settings like Iraq, these gatekeeping decisions carry additional significance as social studies education navigates competing historical narratives and visions of citizenship (Vanner, 2015).

Resource availability represents another critical factor influencing curriculum implementation across contexts. Adequate material resources, including textbooks, teaching aids, and technological infrastructure, are essential for effective curriculum delivery (O'Donnell, 2008). Research by Altinyelken (2010) across multiple developing countries has documented the substantial implementation challenges arising from resource shortages, with teachers often struggling to deliver interactive, student-centered learning experiences without necessary materials or facilities. In the Iraqi Kurdistan context specifically, Issa and Jamil (2010) identify resource constraints as a significant barrier to educational reform efforts, with uneven resource distribution across regions creating inequitable implementation conditions.

Professional development emerges consistently in the literature as a crucial factor supporting successful curriculum implementation. Effective implementation requires comprehensive teacher training that addresses both the content knowledge and pedagogical approaches required by new curricula (Penuel et al., 2007). Studies by Spillane et al. (2002) demonstrate that teacher sensemaking—how teachers understand, interpret, and respond to curriculum changes—is significantly influenced by the quality and approach of professional development experiences. However, research by Nabhani and Bahous (2010) in Middle Eastern contexts highlights common deficiencies in teacher preparation for curriculum reforms, including insufficient training duration, limited practical application opportunities, and disconnect from classroom realities.

Time constraints represent another significant implementation challenge documented across educational settings. The time available for teachers to plan, collaborate, and deliver instruction significantly affects implementation quality (Collinson & Cook, 2001). Survey research by Alshammari (2013) with science teachers in Saudi Arabia found that time

limitations represented one of the most significant barriers to implementing a new curriculum, with teachers reporting insufficient time to cover required content while using the student-centered approaches mandated by the curriculum. Similar time pressures have been documented in other educational reform contexts, limiting teachers' ability to fully implement curriculum innovations (Bantwini, 2010).

School leadership and administrative support play vital roles in facilitating curriculum implementation. Principals and educational administrators create implementation conditions through their resource allocation decisions, supervision approaches, and organizational climate (Hallinger & Lee, 2014). Research by Al-Daami and Wallace (2007) in Jordan demonstrates the significant influence of school leadership on curriculum implementation, with effective leaders facilitating teacher collaboration, providing targeted resources, and buffering external pressures. Similarly, Alnahdi (2014) emphasizes the importance of administrative support for successful educational reforms in Saudi Arabian contexts, particularly in establishing supportive implementation structures and addressing emergent challenges.

Assessment alignment represents a critical but often overlooked factor in curriculum implementation. When assessment practices remain disconnected from new curriculum goals and approaches, implementation is significantly undermined (Penuel & Shepard, 2016). Research by Barnes et al. (2000) demonstrate how high-stakes assessment requirements often narrow curriculum implementation, leading teachers to prioritize tested content over broader curriculum objectives.

Student factors, including their prior knowledge, academic readiness, and cultural backgrounds, also influence curriculum implementation processes. When new curricula exceed students' current abilities or conflict with established learning expectations, implementation challenges increase (Schweisfurth, 2013). Davis (2009) documents how student resistance to unfamiliar pedagogical approaches can significantly constrain teachers' implementation efforts, particularly when new curricula require more active student participation than previously experienced.

The physical context of implementation, including classroom environments, school facilities, and geographical location, further shapes curriculum enactment. Practical implementation challenges often arise from classroom configurations that don't support required learning activities or regional differences in infrastructure availability (Benavot & Resh, 2003). Research by DeJaeghere et al. (2006) documents how school facilities and community contexts influence curriculum implementation in rural versus urban settings, with rural schools often facing greater challenges in implementing resource-intensive curriculum components.

Regional variations in curriculum implementation have been documented across multiple national contexts. Studies by Rogan and Grayson (2003) in South Africa demonstrate significant regional disparities in curriculum implementation capacity, with resource distribution, teacher preparation, and institutional support varying substantially across geographical areas. Similarly, research by Halai (2010) in Pakistan reveals how regional differences in educational infrastructure, teacher qualifications, and monitoring systems create uneven implementation landscapes. These findings suggest the importance of examining regional implementation variations within the Iraqi Kurdistan context to understand the differential experiences across Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions.

Implementation of new social studies curricula specifically has been examined in various Middle Eastern contexts. Al-Nofli (2010) investigated social studies curriculum

implementation in Oman, finding that teachers struggled to balance content coverage requirements with expectations for more interactive teaching approaches. These studies highlight common implementation challenges in regional contexts sharing some similarities with Iraqi Kurdistan.

Studies examining Iraqi education specifically have documented unique implementation challenges related to the post-conflict context. Research by Kagawa (2005) highlights how educational reforms in Iraq navigate complex post-conflict tensions, including rebuilding physical infrastructure, addressing traumatic experiences, and supporting social cohesion through educational content. Similarly, Vanner (2015) examines curriculum implementation challenges in post-conflict settings, emphasizing the complex interplay between educational reform goals and local realities that implementers must navigate.

The limited research specifically addressing curriculum implementation in Iraqi Kurdistan provides important contextual background for the present study. Issa and Jamil (2010) document the historical evolution of Iraqi Kurdistan's educational system, highlighting the challenges of educational reconstruction following periods of conflict and noting regional variations in educational resources. However, research specifically examining social studies curriculum implementation in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions remains limited, highlighting the need for the present study.

Teacher perceptions of curriculum change represent another important dimension in understanding implementation processes. Research by Byrne and Ozga (2008) demonstrates how teacher interpretations of curriculum reforms significantly influence implementation approaches, with teachers' prior experiences and professional identities shaping how they respond to change mandates. Similarly, Hargreaves (2005) emphasizes the emotional dimensions of curriculum change for teachers, noting how reform initiatives can challenge professional identities and established practices. Understanding these perceptual dimensions is particularly important for examining how teachers across different Iraqi Kurdistan regions perceive and respond to the new social studies curriculum.

This review of literature highlights the multifaceted nature of curriculum implementation and the diverse factors influencing how teachers enact new curricula in their classrooms. While substantial research has examined curriculum implementation across international contexts, limited studies have specifically addressed the implementation of social studies curricula in Iraqi Kurdistan's distinct regional contexts. This gap in the literature underscores the importance of examining the factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the new social studies curriculum across Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions, accounting for both common implementation patterns and unique contextual influences.

METHOD

Design

This section explores factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum through teachers' perspectives using a structured qualitative questionnaire. The research aims to understand the curriculum's classroom implementation, influencing factors, and the experiences of educators in the third cycle of basic education across the Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions in Iraq. The structure of this questionnaire is anchored in a qualitative research methodology, which is recognized for its depth in

unraveling intricate insights and capturing the nuanced, contextual perspectives of participants, especially in educational settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The incorporation of structured interviews in the questionnaire is deliberate. Structured interviews, as delineated by Patton (2014), are effective in ensuring methodological consistency and reliability, particularly when gathering data from a diverse group of respondents. The essence of this design is to prioritize rigorous data collection, emphasizing the quest for a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the new Social Studies curriculum from educators' perspectives.

Participants

The research population encompasses all social studies teachers in the third cycle of basic education within the Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions in Iraq. From this overarching group, a carefully chosen sample of twenty teachers was selected for the study. The selection criteria were multifaceted, emphasizing diversity in several areas including gender, years of teaching experience, academic specialization, the number of current year social subject classes taught, and the specific governorate of their teaching location.

The study participants (coded as f1 through f20) represented three major cities in Iraq: Erbil (f1-f7), Sulaymaniyah (f8-f14), and Duhok (f15-f20). To maintain participant confidentiality while ensuring transparent reporting, each participant was assigned a unique identifier. Their demographic and professional characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic and Professional Characteristics of Study Participants

Participant Code	Location	Gender	Teaching Experience	Academic Specialization	Classes Taught
f1	Erbil	Male	1 year	Social Studies	3
f2	Erbil	Female	6-10 years	Social Studies	5
f3	Erbil	Female	2-5 years	History	3
f4	Erbil	Male	6-10 years	Geography	4
f5	Erbil	Male	6-10 years	History	5
f6	Erbil	Female	2-5 years	Geography	4
f7	Erbil	Female	>11 years	Social Studies	6
f8	Sulaymaniyah	Male	>11 years	Social Studies	6
f9	Sulaymaniyah	Female	1 year	Geography	3
f10	Sulaymaniyah	Male	6-10 years	Geography	4
f11	Sulaymaniyah	Female	6-10 years	Social Studies	4
f12	Sulaymaniyah	Female	>11 years	History	6
f13	Sulaymaniyah	Male	2-5 years	Social Studies	3
f14	Sulaymaniyah	Male	>11 years	History	5
f15	Duhok	Male	>11 years	Social Studies	5
f16	Duhok	Female	2-5 years	History	3
f17	Duhok	Male	6-10 years	History	4
f18	Duhok	Female	6-10 years	Geography	3
f19	Duhok	Female	2-5 years	Social Studies	4
f20	Duhok	Male	>11 years	Geography	6

The participant distribution demonstrated balanced representation across various demographic and professional variables. The sample included ten males and ten female educators, with teaching experience ranging from first-year teachers to those with more than

eleven years in the field. Academic specializations were distributed among Social Studies (8 participants), History (7 participants), and Geography (5 participants). Teaching loads varied from 3 to 6 classes per academic year, providing a comprehensive perspective of different workload scenarios within the educational system across the three regions.

Translation and Adaptation

Source Inspiration: This questionnaire drew its foundational structure from Lee's (2003) work titled "An evaluation of the new junior secondary science curriculum in Hong Kong."

Initial Translation: Given the target demographic for this research, the questionnaire underwent a meticulous translation into Arabic. This ensured that the instrument was not only linguistically comprehensible but also culturally resonant with the context of Social Studies Curriculum in the Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok regions of Iraq.

Back-Translation Process: Upholding the standards of cross-cultural research, the Arabic-translated version was back-translated into English by a linguist who was not previously acquainted with Lee's original work. Such a step is integral to verify the integrity and fidelity of the initial translation, ensuring no unintended shifts in meaning occurred (Brislin, 1970).

Refinement and Final Translation: Insights gleaned from the back-translation process informed another round of translation into Arabic. This iterative process was pivotal in ensuring the questionnaire remained both contextually apt and faithful to its original intent while addressing factors affecting curriculum implementation.

Validity and Reliability

Face Validity (Apparent Honesty): Ensuring robust research standards, the researcher engaged with an expert panel that had comprehensive knowledge in curricula design, instructional methodologies, and the overarching realm of educational sciences. The feedback and insights garnered from this panel were pivotal in confirming the face validity of the questionnaire. Such a deliberative and consultative methodology, following the recommendations of Patton (2014), was integral in ensuring that the instrument was not only in sync with its target audience but also adeptly gauged the desired constructs related to curriculum implementation factors. After this procedure, it was established that the scale exhibited strong face validity.

Consistency in Data Collection: The uniformity of data collection was deemed crucial for the research's validity. With this in mind, the researcher single-handedly assumed the role of interviewer. This ensured that the process of questioning remained consistent across participants, mitigating the potential disparities or biases that might manifest with multiple interviewers. This approach aligns with the best practices advocated by Yin (2014) that underscore the essence of maintaining consistency, especially in qualitative research modalities. After the data collection, it was found that there was validity in the consistency of the approach.

Reliability through Comparative Analysis: To fortify the reliability of the questionnaire, a systematic comparative analysis was undertaken. Given the distinct nature and specificities of the research context, aligning the instrument with extant measures and insights from the field of curriculum development was seen as indispensable. Informed by the methods delineated by Denzin, Lincoln, Giardina & Cannella (2023), the researcher contrasted emergent themes and responses against the broader academic discourse, thereby affirming the instrument's

reliability for this particular study on factors affecting curriculum implementation. After the analysis, it was confirmed that the scale had strong reliability in its alignment with existing literature.

Test-Retest Reliability: In a supplementary effort to ascertain the questionnaire's reliability, it was administered to 8 teachers specializing in social subjects across the three regions. After an interval of two weeks, the same questionnaire was redistributed to the same cohort. This test-retest method is a recognized strategy to determine the consistency and reliability of a tool over time (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). Following this test-retest procedure, it was found that the scale maintained its reliability over time.

Reliability through Triangulation: In an effort to bolster the reliability of the research findings from the questionnaire, a triangulation approach was employed. Triangulation, as articulated by Denzin (1978), involves using multiple methods, sources, or perspectives to gain a more holistic understanding of a phenomenon. For this study, data from the questionnaire was cross-referenced with information from other sources such as classroom observations and informal discussions with other educators across Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok. This multi-faceted approach ensured that the findings were consistent across different data sources, thus strengthening the reliability of the conclusions drawn from the questionnaire regarding factors affecting curriculum implementation and perceived changes. After this triangulation process, it was determined that there was robust reliability in the findings derived from various data sources.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process followed Lee's (2003) framework, where interview schedules were shared with twenty educators selected from the broader population across Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews, which facilitated a richer and more interactive dialogue while accommodating the availability of both the participants and the researcher. Prior to commencing the interviews, participants were provided with comprehensive information about confidentiality measures and were presented with an informed consent form that detailed their voluntary participation and the research objectives focused on factors affecting curriculum implementation. All participants granted permission for audio recording of their interviews, which ensured accuracy in data transcription and subsequent analysis. This methodological approach enabled the collection of detailed, authentic responses while maintaining ethical research standards and data integrity throughout the process.

Data Analysis

The analytical process began with a comprehensive transcription of all audio-recorded interviews to ensure the precise capture of participants' responses regarding factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the curriculum. The study employed an analytical approach based on Smith and Osborn's (2015) methodology, which is renowned for its flexibility and depth in qualitative research. This methodological framework facilitated the systematic breakdown of transcribed data into thematic elements, enabling the identification and analysis of recurring patterns and emergent themes from the participants' responses across the three regions. The structured nature of this approach provided a thorough and multidimensional examination of the data, particularly suitable for research aimed at developing

a deep understanding of the factors affecting curriculum implementation and perceived changes.

During the interpretation phase, the analysis was strengthened through the careful selection of participant quotations, which served to authenticate and support the research findings. This strategic incorporation of direct quotes enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the conclusions while preserving the authentic voices of the participating educators from Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok. Through this systematic analytical process, the study maintained both academic rigor and authenticity in its exploration of factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the new Social Studies curriculum in Iraqi education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the evolving landscape of educational research and pedagogy, the New Social Studies Curriculum stands as a testament to the dynamic interplay of various influencing factors and their implications for classroom practice. This part, rooted in empirical analysis and educator perspectives, provides an in-depth examination of these factors, both in terms of structural challenges and pedagogical considerations. At the heart of this investigation is Figure 1, which methodically elucidates the myriad factors impacting the successful implementation and the perceived alterations in the curriculum. These factors, ranging from the tangible constraints of resource availability to the more abstract challenges of student engagement and curriculum alignment, offer a comprehensive insight into the multifaceted challenges educators encounter. Beyond the analytical purview of Figure 1, the document is enriched with a series of tables and firsthand accounts from educators. These narratives, steeped in experiential wisdom, offer a granular understanding of the on-ground implications of the curriculum changes. Furthermore, these accounts underscore the evolving roles and responsibilities of educators in navigating this transformative pedagogical landscape. Collectively, the document serves not only as a reflection of the current state of affairs in Social Studies education but also as a beacon for future research, policy formulation, and curriculum development.

Figure 1: Factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum

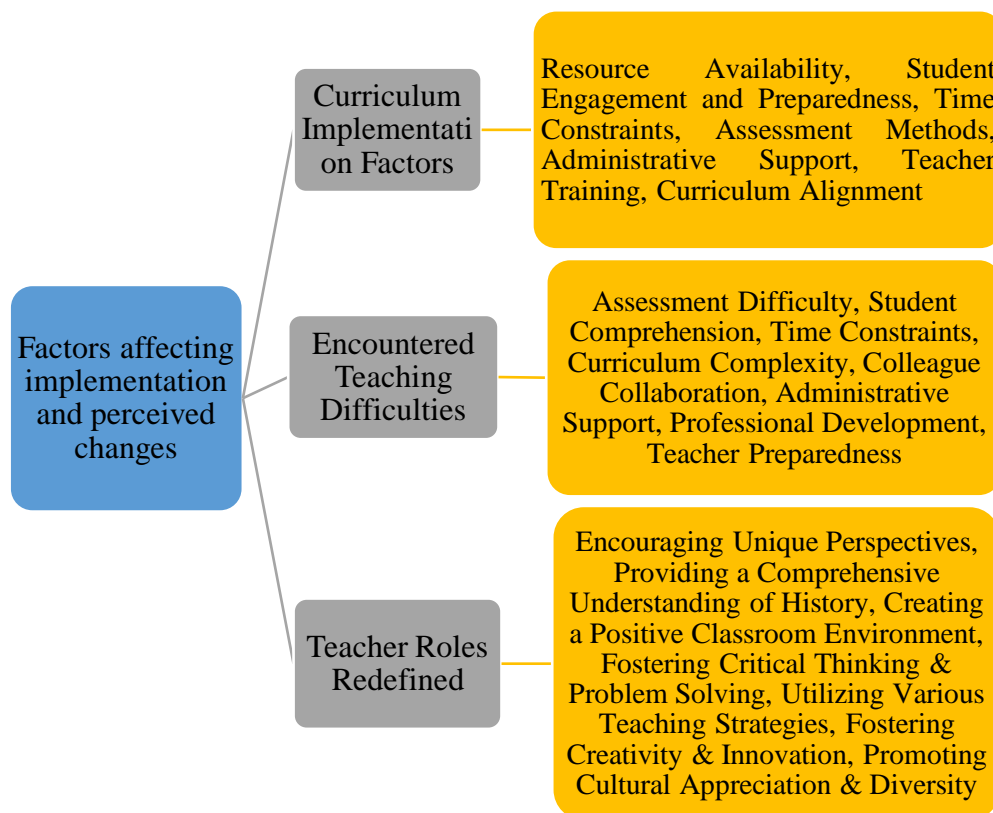


Figure 1: Factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum captures an analysis of the key factors affecting the successful adoption of the new Social Studies curriculum. It explores the challenges encountered by educators, the potential influences on teaching methodologies, and the evolving role of teachers within this new educational landscape. This insight provides a basis for understanding the pedagogical adjustments required for effective curriculum implementation and reveals potential areas for further support and development.

Identifying the Key Factors Teachers Believe Impact the Delivery of the New Social Studies Curriculum: Figure 1 encapsulates the various elements teachers believe can shape their delivery of the New Social Studies Curriculum. Highlighted factors comprise "Resource Availability," "Student Engagement and Preparedness," "Time Constraints," "Assessment Methods," "Administrative Support," "Teacher Training," and "Curriculum Alignment." Each presents unique challenges and opportunities in the educational milieu.

For instance, one of the respondents brings focus to "Time Constraints" and its impact on teaching methods. The respondent asserts, *"Time constraints could be a significant factor affecting my teaching of the new curriculum. It can be challenging to cover all the required material within the given time frame. Therefore, prioritizing topics and adjusting teaching methods is necessary to ensure that students achieve the learning outcomes."*

A viewpoint on "Teacher Training" is provided by another respondent, spotlighting the importance of collaboration and professional development. The teacher shares, *"Teacher collaboration and ongoing professional development could affect my teaching of the new curriculum. Collaborating with colleagues and participating in professional development opportunities can enhance my skills and knowledge of the new curriculum."* These candid responses further illuminate the factors outlined in Figure 1.

Table 2: Teachers' Perceived Factors Affecting the Teaching of the New Social Studies Curriculum

Curriculum Implementation Factors	Participants
Resource Availability	F1, f2, f12
Student Engagement and Preparedness	F3, f7, f9, f11,
Time Constraints	F4, f10, f14, f17, f20
Assessment Methods	F5, f14, f19
Administrative Support	F8, f18
Teacher Training	F2, f6, f9, f13, f15
Curriculum Alignment	F16, f19

In Table 2, we delve into the perceptions of various teachers regarding factors influencing the teaching of the New Social Studies Curriculum. Identified factors include "Resource Availability," cited by Participants 1, 2, and 12; "Student Engagement and Preparedness," brought up by Participants 3, 7, 9, and 11; "Time Constraints," reported by Participants 4, 10, 14, 17, and 20. Further, "Assessment Methods" were emphasized by Participants 5, 14, and 19, while "Administrative Support" was considered significant by Participants 8 and 18. Additionally, "Teacher Training" was a concern for Participants 2, 6, 9, 13, and 15, and "Curriculum Alignment" was a factor for Participants 16 and 19.

Challenges in Implementing the New Social Studies Curriculum: Figure 1 outlines the challenges involved in implementing the New Social Studies Curriculum, highlighting factors like "Assessment Difficulty," "Student Comprehension," "Time Constraints," "Curriculum Complexity," "Colleague Collaboration," "Administrative Support," "Professional Development," and "Teacher Preparedness." Each of these elements represents a potential obstacle to the effective delivery of the new curriculum.

One respondent, exemplifying some of these factors, said, *"I have encountered some difficulties in implementing the new social studies curriculum. One of the main challenges is the lack of appropriate resources and materials."* This struggle clearly falls under the "Teacher Preparedness" category in Figure 1. The respondent also alluded to difficulties relating to "Student Comprehension" and "Curriculum Complexity" when stating that the curriculum's emphasis on student-centered and inquiry-based learning can pose challenges in a diverse classroom.

Meanwhile, another respondent shared, *"I have faced several obstacles while implementing the new social studies curriculum. One of the biggest challenges has been balancing the increased depth and complexity of the content with the limited time we have in the classroom."* These sentiments reflect the "Time Constraints" and "Curriculum Complexity" challenges outlined in Figure 1. Moreover, the difficulty adjusting to new teaching styles and materials aligns with the identified "Professional Development" and "Teacher Preparedness" challenges, further reinforcing the multifaceted nature of these implementation hurdles.

Table 3: Challenges in Implementing the New Social Studies Curriculum

Encountered Teaching Difficulties	Participants
Assessment Difficulty	F4, f12, f17
Student Comprehension	F1, f7, f11
Time Constraints	F2, f9, f20
Curriculum Complexity	F5, f10, f14, f19
Colleague Collaboration	F7, f15
Administrative Support	F8, f16
Professional Development	F6, f17
Teacher Preparedness	F3, f10, f13, f18

Table 3 illustrates the diverse obstacles reported in the implementation of the new social studies curriculum. Participants 4, 12, and 17 highlighted the assessment difficulty, while student comprehension was flagged as a problem by Participants 1, 7, and 11. Time constraints were a common issue among Participants 2, 9, and 20, and Participants 5, 10, 14, and 19 reported the curriculum complexity as a significant hurdle. Issues with colleague collaboration and administrative support were noted by Participants 7, 15, and Participants 8, 16, respectively. The need for professional development was brought up by Participants 6 and 17, while Participants 3, 10, 13, and 18 emphasized the issue of teacher preparedness.

Exploring Teachers' Perspectives on Their Role in teaching the New Social Studies Curriculum: Figure 1 presents an overview of the major factors influencing the implementation and perceived changes associated with the New Social Studies Curriculum. It underscores the diverse roles teachers play in shaping this educational landscape, such as "Encouraging Unique Perspectives", "Providing a Comprehensive Understanding of History", "Creating a Positive Classroom Environment", "Fostering Critical Thinking & Problem Solving", "Utilizing Various Teaching Strategies", "Fostering Creativity & Innovation", and "Promoting Cultural Appreciation & Diversity".

One of the respondents, discussing the role of "Providing a Comprehensive Understanding of History", shared their experience. They stated, *"My role as a teacher in teaching the new social studies curriculum is to foster historical empathy and understanding. I will encourage students to examine historical events and figures from multiple perspectives, challenging traditional narratives and exploring marginalized voices. By doing so, I hope to cultivate empathy and create a more inclusive understanding of the past."* This quote shows how teachers are striving to provide a more holistic understanding of history in the context of the new curriculum.

In another insight reflecting the role of "Creating a Positive Classroom Environment", a respondent expressed, *"As a teacher, my role in teaching the new social studies curriculum is to foster social and emotional learning. I will create a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where students feel valued, respected, and emotionally safe. I will guide them in developing skills such as self-awareness, empathy, and conflict resolution, promoting their well-being and social competence."* This viewpoint emphasizes the teachers' commitment to nurturing an inclusive and supportive learning environment, thereby reflecting another key factor as shown in Figure 1.

Table 4: Teachers' Roles in teaching the New Social Studies Curriculum

Teacher Roles Redefined	Participants
Encouraging Unique Perspectives	F2, f4, f13
Providing a Comprehensive Understanding of History	F1, f7, f16
Creating a Positive Classroom Environment	F5, f8, f9, f20
Fostering Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	F6, f11, f15
Utilizing Various Teaching Strategies	F3, f12, f17
Fostering Creativity & Innovation	F8, f11, f19
Promoting Cultural Appreciation & Diversity	F10, f14, f18

Table 4 delineates the redefined roles of teachers in the context of teaching the New Social Studies Curriculum. The roles include encouraging unique perspectives, a task that Participants 2, 4, and 13 identified with, and providing a comprehensive understanding of history, a role acknowledged by Participants 1, 7, and 16. Participants 5, 8, 9, and 20 emphasized the importance of creating a positive classroom environment, while Participants 6, 11, and 15 saw themselves as responsible for fostering critical thinking and problem-solving. Utilizing various teaching strategies was underscored by Participants 3, 12, and 17. Fostering creativity and innovation was acknowledged by Participants 8, 11, and 19, while promoting cultural appreciation and diversity was emphasized by Participants 10, 14, and 18.

Factors affecting implementation and perceived changes in the New Social Studies Curriculum offer a comprehensive overview of the key factors that teachers believe can impact the successful delivery of the New Social Studies Curriculum. The identified factors, which include resource availability, student engagement and preparedness, time constraints, assessment methods, administrative support, teacher training, and curriculum alignment, present unique challenges and opportunities. Through this study, it becomes evident that while the design of a curriculum is essential, the real-world factors affecting its implementation play an equally significant role in its success. Addressing these factors head-on can ensure smoother curriculum transitions and more effective educational outcomes. The findings from this study align with prior research emphasizing the importance of resources, student preparedness, effective use of time, assessment methods, administrative support, teacher training, and curriculum alignment in the implementation of a new curriculum (Ingersoll, 2001; Odden, 2009).

Time constraints emerged as a significant factor that could impact the teaching of the new curriculum, suggesting the need for efficient prioritization and flexibility in teaching methods. Additionally, teacher training, particularly ongoing professional development and collaboration, was highlighted as an influential factor, indicating the crucial role of continuous learning and cooperation in the successful implementation of the new curriculum. The results reflect the complex nature of curriculum implementation, underscoring the multitude of factors that influence its successful delivery. Time constraints, in particular, necessitate efficient curriculum planning and teaching strategies to ensure learning objectives are met within the allotted time frame.

Specifically, the factor of "time constraints" aligns with the research by Kelly (2009), which emphasizes the significance of time management in curriculum delivery. Likewise, the mention of "teacher training" underscores the importance of professional development for successful curriculum implementation.

The study further identifies the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the New Social Studies Curriculum, with issues ranging from assessment difficulty and student comprehension to curriculum complexity and teacher preparedness. The highlighted struggles suggest that the curriculum's effective delivery requires comprehensive teacher preparedness, underlining the importance of adequate resources and support mechanisms. The challenges faced by teachers during the implementation process reflect the demanding nature of introducing a new curriculum. This stresses the need for comprehensive teacher preparedness, entailing adequate resources, training, and support to manage these obstacles effectively.

The challenges teachers face in implementing the new Social Studies Curriculum also echo the results of previous research. As with previous studies (Ertmer, 1999), this study found that teacher preparedness, curriculum complexity, and time constraints can pose significant challenges in implementing a new curriculum. These insights echo those of Windschitl and Sahl (2002), who found that student-centered and inquiry-based approaches can be challenging in diverse classrooms, correlating with the "Student Comprehension" and "Curriculum Complexity" challenges identified in this study.

Teachers' perspectives about their role in teaching the New Social Studies Curriculum were explored, revealing the multifaceted responsibilities they hold. Teachers perceive their roles to extend beyond mere instruction to include fostering unique perspectives, promoting cultural appreciation and diversity, and creating a supportive learning environment. The teachers' view of their roles in teaching the new curriculum reflects the holistic approach necessary in modern education. Their responsibilities extend beyond knowledge delivery to fostering critical thinking, creativity, empathy, and inclusivity. This multi-dimensional role highlights the need for broad training and support mechanisms for teachers.

The teachers' perceived roles in teaching the new curriculum correlate with the findings of previous research. Scholars have increasingly recognized the importance of providing comprehensive understandings of history (Barton & Levstik, 2004), fostering social and emotional learning (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003), and promoting cultural appreciation and diversity (Banks & McGee Banks, 2019). These elements resonate with the identified teacher roles of "Providing a Comprehensive Understanding of History", "Creating a Positive Classroom Environment", and "Promoting Cultural Appreciation & Diversity", respectively.

Furthermore, teacher training and collaboration are crucial factors affecting curriculum delivery. This suggests that investing in continuous professional development and fostering a culture of collaboration can enhance teaching quality, thereby positively impacting the curriculum's delivery.

The assertion that teacher training and collaboration significantly influence curriculum delivery is consistent with the findings of a study by Darling-Hammond, Hylar, and Gardner (2017). They found that meaningful professional development, characterized by active learning, collaboration, and direct connection to practice, was critical for effective teaching and curriculum implementation. This study also emphasized the vital role of collaboration in promoting professional growth and enhancing teaching quality. Therefore, the insights from this study affirm the importance of continuous professional development and collaboration in improving curriculum delivery.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the diverse factors and challenges impacting the successful implementation of the New Social Studies Curriculum. It highlights the multifaceted roles of teachers and the importance of teacher training and support mechanisms. These findings can inform future research and contribute to policies and practices aimed at facilitating effective curriculum implementation. Address the issue of time constraints with efficient curriculum planning and flexible teaching strategies. Offer training on time management and efficient teaching techniques. Provide broad training and support for teachers, including fostering critical thinking, creativity, empathy, inclusivity, and resources for creating supportive learning environments. Offer ongoing professional development and foster a culture of collaboration among teachers. Provide regular workshops, training sessions, and platforms for collaboration. Improve the teacher induction process by providing a clear outline of roles and responsibilities and offering opportunities for professional growth. Ensure equitable, accessible, and flexible provision of training seminars. Adopt online learning and accommodate different schedules. Adopt a tailored and consistent approach to provide ongoing support. Offer personalized assistance addressing specific challenges faced by teachers throughout the academic year.

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