

## **Internalising and Externalising Social Studies Content of Unity in Diversity among Undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined internalizing and externalising of Social Studies contents of unity in diversity among undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria. The study specifically aimed to find out how undergraduates perceive and manifest behaviour related to unity in diversity within the Social Studies Curriculum based on school types. The research employed a descriptive design of a correlational type. The population for this study comprised of all undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria. 300 respondents were drawn through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data were analysed using frequency and percentage as well as Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that majority of the undergraduates have high level of internalising and externalising Social Studies contents of unity in diversity. Secondly, undergraduates in public universities have more significant levels of internalising and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity than counterparts in private university. Among the recommendations from the study was that concepts of unity in diversity is should be well taught at all levels of education of schooling by qualified, competent and committed Social Studies lecturers*

**Keywords:** Internalizing, externalising, contents, unity and diversity

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is blessed with diverse cultural groups. The groups were stratified into three major sections for socio-economic and political reasons. Yoruba occupies the South West, Hausa/Fulani in the North while Igbo are in the South East. These groups have been interacting and contacting one another over many years at different levels of institutions such as community, schools, markets, churches, mosque, offices etc. This development ought to have united and knitted them together in actions and practices. Aisagbonhi (2009) opined that education is an effective tool for internalisation and externalisation of content of unity in diversity. Social Studies curriculum is designed within educational system to make it possible for citizen to learn concepts of unity in diversity in a multicultural setting (Coleman, 2021). The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (2023) described Social Studies as a planned curriculum to study individual, communities, systems and their interaction across time and place for learners to be civically competent at grass root, national and global strata.

Citizens' consciousness of unity in diversity depends on their levels of internalising and externalising civic competences. DiSanto (2022) observed that Social Studies contents cover varieties of thematic strands such as unity in diversity, cultures and identity, time, continuance and change, peoples, places and environment, individual development and identity, individual groups and institutions, power, authority and governance, production, distribution, and consumption, science, technology, and society, global connection and civic ideals and practices. This study therefore examines levels and significant relationship of internalising and externalising content of unity in diversity because of its utmost importance in nation building. The Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization CBAAC (2021) emphasised need for teaching learners the concepts of unity in diversity in organised formal school environment so as to foster cultural integration. Therefore, DiSanto (2022) opined that the essence of internalising or externalising Social Studies contents is to turn out productive and responsible members of a locality who are ready to live in harmonious groups and exercise cultural competence amidst diversity.

Unity in diversity occupies a prominent position in the quest for nation building. Presbyterian Senior living (2022) described unity in diversity as a phrase that shows how people come together despite many differences in culture, religions, belief, social status and geographical locations. The importance of unity in diversity includes national integration, growth and development and peaceful co-existence. Propagation of inclusivity, understanding and cooperation among multi-ethnics are active drives towards attainment of unity in diversity (Kurusumuthu, 2023). Therefore, the essence of unity in diversity is to make people realise their sense of cohesion despite their difference in culture, races, religions, gender, and socio-economic status. Similarly, unity in diversity is a sort of maintaining peaceful co-existence among dissimilar people or group in the sense that it will portray cohesion without uniformity and diversity without separation (Wikipedia, 2024).

Concept of unity in diversity is reflected in some people's mode of interaction while it doesn't manifest in others disposition and actions. This depends on low or high level of their internalising and externalising idea of unity in diversity. Concept of internalising in Social Studies refer to an individual internal or inward understanding, acceptance and integration of social and cultural values, belief and norms while externalising on the other hand deals with outwards expression of social and cultural knowledge, belief and norms in various context in demonstrative ways. This is buttressed by Wikipedia (2023) that internalization of concept begins from individual learning of why norms are valuable, sensible and worthy of accepting for personal own viewpoints. The pertinent question here is how learners accept inwardly or demonstrate outwardly the understanding of unity in diversity as they are taught in Social Studies curriculum.

Students' positive level of internalising and externalising of concept in the classroom should be the ultimate target of behavioural objective of an ideal teacher in the classroom. This is because it shows how impactful a lesson is in attitude and action of a learner overtly and covertly. Collins (2024) described internalising as act of incorporating

belief, values, norms e.t.c to be part of an individual attitude or manner of thinking or actions. Similarly, Cambridge University Press (2024) defined internalising as a psychological process that involves absorbing emotions or feeling that is not shown. The latter and former submission are showing that inward process of keeping feelings, learning, emotion or knowledge about certain thing to oneself is regarded as internalisation and if it is the other way round outwardly expressed, it connotes externalisation. Therefore, positive internalising and externalising of contents in Social Studies are very strategic in the sense that it marks the point at which the learners get the nitty-gritty of what they are taught. Internalising and externalising of contents of a subject matter could connote positive or negative depending on the situation and context they are being used. Self, peer, observation and performance-based assessments are required tools to evaluate level of internalization and externalization. Internalization and externalization are connected with individual early socialization and thus predict their future behaviour (Wikipedia, 2023). Better Help Editorial Team (2024) opined that internalising of idea deals with ability to keep or cope inwardly with some positive or negative behaviours. This implies that self-thought of keeping good relationship with people of different cultural backgrounds is positive internalising of concept of unity in diversity. On the other hand keeping malice, ill feeling or sense of isolation with other members of cultural backgrounds without showing it are negative forms of internalisation of concept of unity in diversity.

Better Help Editorial Team (2024) also described externalising of idea to mean outward expression of behaviours that are directed towards an individual's environment or people around. This also shows that positive externalisation of unity in diversity is possible when mutual interaction, cooperation, trust and willingness to work together are directed to other people of diverse culture. The negative side of this could occur when verbal aggression, physical aggression, hatred, destruction of property etc are directed to other group of people because of differences in culture and ethnicity. Hermansen et al (2022) conducted study on child internalising and externalising behaviour and found out that higher levels of concurrent maternal symptoms corresponded with higher levels of child internalising and externalising behaviour. They also found out that lower level of inhibitory control predicted a strong association between concurrent maternal depressive symptoms and child negative internalising and externalising behavioural outcome. The take of this study from their submission is that higher and low levels of internalising and externalising of idea connote positive and negative behavioural outcome of such idea respectively. Similarly, Kochanska et al (2010) conducted a study and discovered that the children that exhibited stronger internalization from 25 to 52 months perceived themselves to moral and "good". These self-perceptions, in turn, predicted the way parents and teachers would rate their competent and adaptive functioning at 80 months. This result indicates that if levels of individual self-perceptions of internalizing and externalizing of content of unity in diversity are strong, it is positive sign for attainment of enhancing unity in diversity in multicultural setting like Nigeria

Kidkonnnect (2024) suggested five Bloom Taxonomy levels to achieve innermost to outmost internalising and externalising of ideas affectively ranging receiving, responding, valuing, organising to highest level of characterising. Similarly, Byrnes (2021) highlighted six ways students could be assisted by the instructors to internalise subject matter in the classroom. These include reduction in the loading of the concepts for the learners, summarising and synthesising of new knowledge, making connection with related concept, spacing out the learning concept overtime, tackling conceptual problems from different perspectives and encouraging the learners to be tutors. This could also be applicable to the process of externalising concepts in Social Studies. As a matter of fact, process of receiving to attainment of characterising in learning a concept inwardly or outwardly situation affectively marks the learner ability to create value and appreciating unity in diversity.

Faster Capital (2024) enumerated stress, anxiety and distraction as external factors hindering internalization of learning contents among the learners. In the same vein, Babicka-Wirkus et al (2023) added anxiety, depression, social withdrawal and somatic complaint as problems attached to internalising of ideas. Aisagbonhi (2009) observed that political problems in terms of infrastructural decay, corruption, power struggles etc. have undermined people's willingness to be socially cohesive as contained in the content of unity in diversity. This is to infer that internalizing and externalizing Social Studies contents of unity in diversity could be very low or negative given the political turbulence that people may be exposed to in the polity. Harrison (2023) opined that problems affecting unity in diversity in Nigeria are connected with precedent socio-economic and political events in Nigeria. Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era were marred with several inter and intra tribal wars, political, cultural and economic dominance that constitute threat to achievement of unity in diversity nowadays. It is on record that there are competition and tensions among the ethnic group over allocation of resources and power. The civil war, coups and counter coup d' etat experience still lingers in the mind of Nigerians. Secession missions, religious tussles and protests over marginalisation of resources and desire to control it are seeds of disunity that prompt much of hatred feeling, stereotype and prejudice among the ethnic groups in Nigeria. These developments motivated the researchers to examine the levels of internalising and externalising the Social Studies content of unity in diversity as taught the undergraduates in tertiary educational institution in Kwara central Nigeria.

Internalizing and externalising of Social Studies content of unity in diversity are significant to the process of nation building most especially in multicultural settings like Nigeria. It is disheartening to observe that upon laudable objectives of Social Studies to achieve a united Nigeria, the nation is still plagued with numerous issues of disunity. (CBAAC) (2021) observed that African people give much attention to foreign culture which discourages promotion of unity in diversity. More so, Study.com (2024) observed that lack of positive role models is a threat and causes of bad attitude in the society. Some youths perceive Nigeria as a country with mere geographical expression. This does not show much affinity and unity among the ethnic groups in the country. Thus, there are

struggles for secession. Many youths despite their exposures to positive values of unity in diversity as contained in the Social Studies curriculum at school level, their negative attitudes towards discrimination and segregation in the society are sorts of disconnections from what they have learnt in school. This raises a question of whether the content of unity in diversity has been positively or negatively internalised or externalised among the students while in school. The take of the researchers from these submissions hinges on the facts that some factors could be possibly working against positive level of internalising and externalising concept of unity in diversity among Nigerians. This spurs the researchers' interest in examining internalizing and externalising of Social Studies contents of unity in diversity among undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate internalizing and externalising of Social Studies contents of unity in diversity among undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to examine the;

1. Levels of undergraduates' internalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria.
2. Levels of undergraduates' externalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria.
3. What is the relationship between internalizing and externalising of Social Studies Content of unity in diversity among undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria based on school type?

### **Research Questions**

In order to give focus to this research, the following questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What are the levels of undergraduates internalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria?
2. What are the levels of undergraduates externalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between levels of undergraduates internalizing and externalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria based on school type?

Research question three provides corresponding research hypothesis for this study and presented as follow:

**H0:** There is no relationship between levels of undergraduates internalizing and externalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria based on school type

## **Methodology**

This study was a descriptive and correlational survey. The population for this study comprised all undergraduates in Kwara Central Nigeria. The target population for the study comprised of one hundred and fifty 400 level Social Studies undergraduates in selected 2 public and private universities in Kwara Central, Nigeria, making total of Three hundred (300) respondents engaged in the study. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were considered in selecting one public and one private universities among 2 private and 2 public universities that make up the four existing universities in the locale of this study. Researcher designed questionnaire titled “Levels of internalising and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central Nigeria” (LIESSCOUIDIKCN) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by two experts in test and measurement and Social Studies educators in University of Ado-Ekiti, Ondo State, Nigeria. The content validity index of 0.80 was obtained to make content validity of the instrument acceptable. The reliability of instrument was ascertained through test-retest method in which the instrument LIESSCOUIDIKCN was administered twice on 30 undergraduates in Kwara South. The coefficient of reliability of 0.73 was obtained which thus made instrument reliable. Percentage and Persons Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyse the demographic, research questions 1 and 2 and the hypothetical data respectively. The results were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

The instrument contained two sections that show 24 items each for internalising and externalising content of unity in diversity respectively. The items in the instrument specifying the five levels that representing inward and outward progressive deeper understanding of affective domain of internalizing and externalising of Social Studies content of unity in diversity ranging from basic receiving, responding, valuing, organising and characterising. The respondents were required to identify 24 items each indicating how they internalise and externalise Social Studies content of unity in diversity based on the five levels.

In order to answer this research question, responses of the undergraduates to 24 items based on five levels of internalising of Social Studies contents of unity in diversity were collated. Responses to the items were added together. The highest possible score on the questionnaire was 24 while the lowest was 0. The responses of the undergraduates were categorized into two levels, low and high levels of internalising of unity in diversity. Undergraduates that scored between 0-12 were considered to have low level of internalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity while those that scored from 13-24 were considered to have high level of internalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity.

## **Results**

### **Demographic Characteristics of the respondents**

Percentage was used to describe the personal characteristics of the respondent as shown below:

**Table 1:** School Types Distribution of the Respondents

School Type	Frequency	Percentage
Private	150	50.0
Public	150	50.0
Total	300	100.0

Table 1 shows that out of 300 respondents 150 (50) and 150 (50.0) were from private and public universities respectively. This means equal selection of undergraduates was made in each of the selected universities.

**Research Question 1:** What are the levels of undergraduates internalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Distribution of Undergraduates Levels of internalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria by frequency and percentage

Scores Range	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Levels
13-24	204	68.0	High
0-12	96	32.0	Low
Total	300	100	-

Table 2 showed that out of 300 undergraduates sampled, 204 undergraduates representing 68% have high level of internalising Social Studies contents of unity in diversity while 96 undergraduates representing 32% have low level of internalising Social Studies contents of unity in diversity. Majority of the undergraduates have high level of internalising Social Studies contents of unity in diversity. This implies that level of undergraduates’ inward disposition and understanding of content of unity in diversity as taught them in Social Studies is positively internalised

**Research Question 2:** What are the levels of undergraduates externalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Distribution of Undergraduates Levels of externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria by frequency and percentage

Scores Range	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Level
13-24	290	96.7	High
0 - 12	10	3.3	Low
Total	300	100.0	

Table 3 showed that out of 300 undergraduates sampled, 290 undergraduates representing 96.7% have high level of externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity while 10 undergraduates representing 3.3% have low level of externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity. This shows that majority of the undergraduates have high level of externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity. This implies that level of undergraduates’ outward disposition and understanding of content of unity in diversity as taught them in Social Studies is positively externalised

## Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no relationship between levels of undergraduates internalizing and externalizing Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria based on school type.

**Table 4:** Pearson r Showing Relationship between levels of undergraduates internalizing and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria based on school types.

School Types	Variables	No	Mean	Std	Df	Cal-r-value	Sig(2tailed)	Remark
Private	Internalising	75	89.222		73	.646	.000	Reject
University	Externalising	75	66.811	2.48				
Public	Internalising	75	92.022		73			
University	Externalising	75	71.789	3.48		.768*	.000	Reject

\*Significant,  $P < 0.05$

Table 4 shows that the calculated r-value for the private university is .646 with P-value of .000 at the alpha level of 0.05 significant. Since the calculated r-value of .646 is greater than critical p-value. Also calculated r-value for the public university is .768 with p-value of .000 at the alpha level of 0.05 significant. Since the calculated r-value of .768 is greater than the critical p-value, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between levels of undergraduates internalizing and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria based on school types is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is thus accepted i.e There is significant relationship between levels of undergraduates internalizing and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central, Nigeria based on school types. The above analysis shows that the calculated r-value of private (.646) is less than the calculated value of public university (.768). Therefore, the significance is in favour of public university. This implies that levels of undergraduates internalising and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity are more significant in public university than private university.

## Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, majority of undergraduates have high level of internalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity in Kwara Central Nigeria. This result connotes positive internalising the content of unity in diversity and it is a welcome development in a nation that strives to achieve unity amidst multicultural set of people. This is in line with the submission of Better Help Editorial Team (2024) that internalising of idea deals with ability to keep or cope inwardly with some positive or negative behaviours. Although result shows majority disposition of the undergraduates to content of unity in diversity which is in line with the study, this result is in line with Kochanska et al (2010) study that the children that exhibited stronger internalization from 25 to 52 months perceived themselves to moral and "good". This sounds positive as equally expressed in this study. However, the low level of internalising recorded is still pointing to the fact that there are negative side of internalising as buttressed in opinion of Hermansen et al (2022) that lower level of inhibitory control predicted a strong



association between concurrent maternal depressive symptoms and child negative internalising and externalising behavioural outcome. This result may further establish that the view of Aisagbonhi (2009) Babicka-Wirkus et al (2023) and Faster Capital (2024) that political problems such as lack of infrastructures, corruption, power struggles hinder unity in diversity and factors such anxiety, depression, social withdrawal and somatic complaint might negatively induced internalising of ideas and resulted to low level of their internalising of the content.

Similarly, the finding of the study revealed majority of the undergraduates have high level of externalising Social Studies contents of unity in diversity. This result indicates that there is high demonstration of actions and attitude of unity in diversity towards individuals and groups. It is the good signal to the achievement of teaching and learning of Social Studies content as suggested by Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization CBAAC (2021) that teaching the learners concepts of unity in diversity will foster cultural integration. This result is in line with Hermansen et al (2022) in which higher levels of concurrent maternal symptoms corresponded with higher levels of child internalising and externalising behaviour. The low level of externalising of unity in diversity may show the student disinterest in learning the concept perhaps it looks very abstract to them to comprehend or approaches deployed by the teacher to teach the concepts may further deactivate their passion for learning it. What is understandable that Harrison (2023) identified problems affecting people internalising or externalising unity in diversity to have been connected with precedent socio-economic and political events in Nigeria. Therefore, level of cultural discrimination, disrespect for unity in diversity is possible as in the case of low level of externalising of the concept as shown in this study.

Based on the finding from the research hypothesis, it was concluded that levels of undergraduates internalising and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity are more significant in public university than private university. This does not underrate private university from having a substantial level of internalising and externalising Social Studies content of unity in diversity but the more significance recorded by public university might hinge on the fact that public tertiary institutions have ample opportunity to admit students across multi-ethnic groups compare with the private schools this might influence the result.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the conclusion is that within field of Social Studies, internalising and externalising behaviours encompass the cognitive, affective and behavioural aspect of how individual engage with and navigate the complexities of social, cultural and historical phenomenon.

## **Recommendations**

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Concepts of unity in diversity is very vital aspects of Social Studies education, should be well taught at all levels of education of schooling by qualified, competent and committed Social Studies educators
2. Government, school teachers and administrators at the public and private learning institutions should device effective programmes for the improvement of interaction amidst various cultural setting to boost students understanding of unity in diversity.
3. Parents on their own part should try to inculcate the spirit of love for all, into their children, so that these children will think of other people who differ from them culturally and linguistically.

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