

Assessing Ethiopian Primary School Second Cycle Social Studies Textbooks for Adequate Reflections of Multiculturalism

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to evaluate Ethiopian second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks from multicultural perspectives. To this end, a content analysis research method was employed. The findings revealed that Ethiopian second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks reflect multiculturalism. However, females were found underrepresented in the textbooks on some gender related characteristics. It was suggested that MoE shall take the problem of gender inequality observed in the textbooks seriously while revising or producing new textbooks in the future.

Keywords: multicultural education, multicultural curriculum, textbooks, gender

Introduction

Diversity is an integral part of the basic characteristics of today's world and an effective factor in interactions between individual and social life. The emergence of diversity in the society is involuntary. Thus, these diverse ethnic and cultural groups should understand differences and similarities of each other and try to improve inter-ethnic relations and cultural work in order to live peacefully. To this end, the role of education in creating a society that respects both differences and commonalities is paramount.

Anahita and Hassanreza (2014) and Javad et. al. (2014) contends that an education that is multicultural would be indispensable to create awareness and tolerance between cultures so that all human beings regardless of their race, gender, language, socio-economic status, color, ethnic background, enjoy a decent and democratic life.

Emphasizing Anahita and Hassanreza's notion, Arnetha (2006) also asserts that globalization, technological advances, and the increasing number of students in classrooms worldwide, who are from various racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds make multicultural education an imperative in the 21st century. Banks (1997, 2010) further explained that multicultural education is an education for freedom that helps students to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to participate in a democratic and free society. He adds, multicultural education promotes freedom, abilities, and skills to cross ethnic and cultural boundaries and to function properly in other cultures and groups.

On the same vein, Sleeter and Grant as cited in Mhlauli (2014) also pointed out that multicultural education refers to those educational policies and practices that recognize, accept, and affirm human differences and similarities related to gender, race, disability, class and (increasingly) sexuality. Bennett as cited in Mhlauli (2014) further stated that multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs and that affirms cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies in an interdependent world. In other words, multicultural education focuses on diversity and pluralism.

According to Banks (2010), multicultural education requires revising the structural, procedural, substantive, and evaluative components of the educational enterprise to reflect the social, cultural, ethnic, racial, and linguistic pluralism of a given society. On the same line of argument, Sleeter & Grant (2007) asserted that the goals of multicultural education are said to revolve around reforming schools and other educational practices so that students from diverse groups will experience educational equality and give all students with diverse background equal chance to experience educational success and mobility.

Ethiopian community contains an amalgam of diverse ethnicities and cultures and its demographic and geographic composition comprises various cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. In order to have peaceful coexistence, these various ethnic and cultural groups should avoid prejudice and ethnocentric behaviors and move toward respecting cultures. Thus, they should recognize the similarities and differences between themselves and others and try to develop intercultural and inter-ethnic relations. On this regard, Semela as cited in Margo (2014) states that the reality in Ethiopia today demands the adoption of democracy and the recognition of both individual and group identities. It demands more intercultural understanding and respect for people with different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. For this purpose, education is often considered as the best means to instill in the new generation basic humanitarian values such as peace, tolerance and equality.

Thus, providing education that offers school children with the opportunities to appreciate their differences, while enabling them to acquire the skills, attitudes and knowledge essential for making a living within diversities, is incontestable for Ethiopia. Accordingly, the FDRE's government has adopted an education and training policy in 1994 which includes provisions that address the need to promote democratic cultures of equality, justice, unity and cooperation among peoples; equality and respect of diverse languages and linguistics

groups; the promotion of gender awareness in the society; and the equality, tolerance and mutual coexistence among followers of different religions in the country.

The study is framed in terms of the understanding of multicultural education involving approaches that promote the understanding of the ethnic groups' cultures, histories, and contributions; human right; current states of the earth; and enabling students to become multicultural in their attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors. This requires, according to Banks (1997, 2010), among other measures, curriculum reforms. Banks (1997, 2010) identified five components required for ensuring a multicultural education: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and an empowering school culture and social culture.

The first dimension, content integration refers to the integration of new, multiculturally based content into the existing curriculum. To put it differently, content integration necessitates the infusion of ethnic and cultural content into the subject area instruction. However, the opportunities to integrate multicultural content are not equal in different subject areas. In other words, more opportunities exist for the integration of ethnic and cultural content in some subject areas than in others (Rosabal-Coto, 2010; Sinagatullin, 2003; and Christine, 2002). Subjects like *Social Studies*, language arts, and music are more appropriate for incorporating diversity than sciences and mathematics (Banks, 1997 & 2010; Lutzker, 1995; Rosabal-Coto, 2010; Sinagatullin, 2003; and Christine, 2002).

Bennett as cited in Clark (2010) has developed a model for a comprehensive multicultural curriculum. She pinpoint four core values of comprehensive multicultural curriculum: respect for human right and human dignity, acceptance and appreciation and diversity, responsibility to the world community, and respect to the earth. She further identified objectives of a multicultural curriculum. six major goals of comprehensive multicultural curriculum: (a) valuing multiple historical perspectives; (b) possessing cultural consciousness (understanding of one's own culture); (c) strengthening intercultural competence; (d) acquiring intercultural competence; (e) increasing awareness of the state of the planet and the global dynamics; and (f) developing social action skills.

Thus, this study is informed by the perspective of the progress of multicultural educational practices in Ethiopia through the integration of contents in to the curriculum. Therefore, this study intends to investigate the adequacy of second cycle primary school social studies textbooks in reflecting multicultural perspectives. To this end, the following research questions were raised.

1. Do the second cycle primary school Social Studies textbooks reflect multiculturalism
2. Do females have equal representations with males in the textbooks?

Multicultural Curriculum

Banks (2010) defines multiculturalism as a philosophy that appreciates ethnic diversity, within a society and encourages people to learn from the contributions of those of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Nieto as cited in Aydin (2013) further argues that it challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers represent.

By and large, researchers like Sleeter (2005), Banks (1997 and 2010) agree that multicultural education aims at teaching students to accept, understand and appreciate different cultures, races, social classes, religions, genders, and geographical line differences, and instill in them, according to Manning and Baruth as cited in Aydin (2013), a "sense of responsibility and commitment to work toward the democratic ideals of justice, equality and democracy. Banks (1997) further emphasized that multiculturalism affirms our need to prepare students for their responsibilities in an interdependent world. It challenges all forms of discrimination in schools and society through the promotion of democratic principles of social justice. It is built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity (Banks 1997).

Similarly Wilson as cited in Aydin (2013) contends that multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning based upon consensus building, respect, and fostering cultural pluralism within racial societies. In addition Tiedt and Tiedt as cited in Aydin (2013) also state that multicultural education is an inclusive teaching/learning process that involves all students in emerging with a strong sense of self-esteem. Tiedt and Tiedt adds that by discovering empathy and tolerance for people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and students can experience equitable opportunities to achieve their fullest potential.

It becomes, therefore, as insisted by many scholars, imperative that multicultural education be infused to school curriculum/textbook if indeed schools are to achieve their goal of developing citizens who are knowledgeable, skillful and have desired values necessary to function in a multicultural democratic society (Mhlauli, 2014; Banks 1997, 2007, 2010; Bennett, 2003; Banks and Banks, Ahmedi et. al., 2014). Because, according to Banks (1997) and Sleeter (2005), multicultural curriculum makes students free from cultural boundaries, allowing them to create and maintain a civic community that works for the common good. They argue that a unified and cohesive democratic society should be created only when the rights of its diverse people are reflected in its institutions, within its national culture, and within its schools, colleges, and universities.

However, they stated that a national culture or school curriculum that does not reflect the voices, struggles, hopes, and dreams of its many people is neither democratic nor cohesive. Similarly, Banks (2010) contends that a curriculum that focuses on the experiences of the dominant group and largely ignores the experiences, cultures, and histories of other ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and religious groups has negative consequences for both students of the dominant group and students of the neglected group. Banks further stated that a mainstream-centric curriculum has negative consequences for mainstream students because it reinforces their false sense of superiority, gives them a misleading conception of their relationship with other racial and ethnic groups, and denies them the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge, perspectives, and frames of reference that can be gained from studying and experiencing other cultures and groups.

Therefore, the aim of multicultural curriculum, according to Sleeter and Grant (2007), is promoting cultural diversity, promoting human rights, promoting alternative life choices, promoting social justice and equal opportunity, and promoting equity in the distribution of power. A multiculturally transformed curriculum affirms all students and levels the playing field (Banks & Banks, 1997; Nieto as cited in Christine, 2002; Javad et. al., 2014).

Similarly, Youngdal & Yunkyong (2014) contends that multicultural curriculum should target at promoting respect for human right which includes social justice, human rights, equality, minority, and discrimination. Each includes the concept, and/or various types, and/or present condition of the specific subcomponent, and/or endeavors to improve unjust situation and so on.

Besides, Garcia as cited in Aydin (2013) also added that the goals of multicultural education is creating a safe and accepting and successful learning environment for all; increasing awareness of global issues; strengthening cultural consciousness; strengthening intercultural awareness; teaching students that there are multiple historical perspectives; and encouraging critical thinking preventing prejudice and discrimination between all students. In addition Anahita and Hassanreza (2014), stressed that a multicultural curriculum should enable the students understand and appreciate the diversity of ethnic, race, environment, religion; other culture and people of the world and their nations; strengthen the spirit of tolerance and acceptance of different ideas; having national and global communication between all cultures and participation of the people from all over the world. Multicultural curriculum should also develop positive attitudes within learners to promote protection, preservation and sustainable use of the environment (Keene, 2013).

In other words, multicultural curriculum should develop ethnic, language, and cultural literacy of the students, nurture the personal esteem and development of the students who may not often see themselves in the materials they are studying, teach important values of inclusiveness and tolerance, prepare students for interacting and working with people who are different than themselves, and inform students about the state of the world they are living in.

Emphasizing this, Sinagatullin (2003) argues that today, it is unwise to say, for example, "water pollution is not a problem in our country, our rivers and lakes are clean and teeming with trout and other fishes," or "We live far from sub-Saharan Africa, and HIV/AIDS is not yet urgent in our culture, therefore, let us attend to more immediate problems." Today it becomes abundantly clear that there is no "Asian greenhouse effect," or "Brazilian deforestation," therefore, it is the role of multicultural curriculum to create understanding of these and other related problems that humanity is facing and the need for global initiatives and global participation by common efforts of all racial, ethnic, and cultural groups to solve the problems.

On the same line of argument, Aydin (2013) contends that a multicultural education should encourage students think critically world's problems, such as dictatorship in the Middle East counties, communism in China, capitalism in the United State, corruptions in African countries, and other traditionally untouchable subjects of critique. The other variable that multicultural curriculum must address is Gender equality. A multicultural curriculum should promote gender equality (Banks, 2010; Hayat, 2014; Sleeter and Grant, 2005; Jabeen, Chaudhary, and Omar, 2014; Engebretson, 2014). According to Jabeen et. al. (2014), gender inequality is the most known notion all over the world, though neither a developed nor a developing country could omit it from their social set up.

Recent studies of textbooks revealed that the construction of gender in textbooks is still purely stereotypical (Jabeen et. al. 2014, Engebretson, 2014; Chick as cited in Engebretson, 2014; Keene, 2013; Hayat, 2014). There studies found that females are underrepresented or misrepresented in textbooks. The textbooks present the gendered picture of the world and thus encourage girls and boys to take up the stereotypical positions constructed for them by these books.

Generally school curriculum/textbooks have an important role in grooming the minds of children in a way that help them live in the diversified and global community. Thus, for achieving the goals, actual understanding of equality, justice, acceptance of diversity and pluralism, one's responsibility in the world of interdependence, must be inculcated in the brains of the children through textbooks. With thin in mind, this study aimed at evaluating Ethiopian primary level (Grade 5-8) Social Studies textbooks from multicultural perspectives and elements discussed above.

Social Studies Textbooks and Multiculturalism

According to certain commentators (Apple, 2000; Giroux as cited in Jebadiah and Arthur, 2014; and Pattnaik as cited in Tarman and Tarman, 2011), textbooks are the dominant form of content delivery in classrooms and provide the framework by which students receive information. Since textbooks are used as a tool in the classroom to provide a dependable knowledge (Issitt, 2004 as cited in Jebadiah and Arthur, 2014), they are often viewed as truth and sources of authority by those who read them (Apple, 2000).

However, many scholars have argued that school knowledge in textbooks is frequently constructed, selected, and presented out of the interests and values of dominant groups while ignoring or distorting those of marginalized groups (Sleeter and Grant, 2007; Banks 1996 as cited in Yiting, 2015). These practices reinforce and reproduce domination and inequity through knowledge selection and construction (Apple and Smith as cited in Yiting, 2015; Apple 2000; and Paxton as cited in Paechter, 2006).

Sleeter and Carl Grant as cited in Brian (2002) also argued that when textbooks ignore the experiences and perspectives of a certain group of people, they often perpetuate prevalent prejudice, discrimination, and negative stereotypes. Moreover, Ahmedi et. al. (2014) asserts that students of minority groups whose value, culture and history ignored and/or underrepresented in textbooks can develop feelings of inferiority, rejection, and loss of identity. They further elaborated that they feel that they do not belong and they are not part of their country's culture and civilization

Therefore, according to Yiting (2015) and Brian (2002), textbooks should provide all students with authentic and accurate information about ethnic minorities from their own perspectives in order to empower them to understand and appreciate cultural diversity and equity, especially the dominant ones. It is equally important to reduce ethnic, racial, and cultural stereotypes and prejudices in textbooks and present the cultures and lives of ethnic minority groups in holistic and dynamic ways (Banks, 2010; Sleeter, 2005).

Furthermore, Osler (2006) argues that textbooks should be future-oriented, with a central goal of promoting responsible and critical citizenship that will enable the evolution of societies and encourage the development of and respect for universal human rights. Likewise, Paechter (2006) contends that school curricula and textbooks in national educational systems should acknowledge differences within society, address global issues and common humanity, and develop a consciousness of global citizenship beyond nationalism.

As Marker (2006) underlined, if children are to grow up with the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for effective living in a complex and diverse world, our textbooks and curriculum should be multicultural and free of bias. It is important to use books that allow students to see how other people think. Strengthening this, Paechter (2006) stated that if we open young children's minds with an anti-bias curriculum, they may be forever free from the stigma and limitations of prejudice. Paechter further explained that the essence of an anti-bias curriculum comes in teaching tolerance and appreciation.

Emphasizing the role of textbooks in the development of open-mindedness and tolerance among students, Pattnaik as cited in Tarman and Tarman (2011) stated that school textbooks that are multicultural can make a significant difference for respect for diversity. They are key factor to help children construct an understanding of different cultures, respect for differences, and at the same time, overcome racial and ethnic barriers.

According to Journell (2009), a liberal conception of education places as its primary goal the preparation of future citizens for life in a multicultural, democratic society. Therefore, as explained by Guttman as cited in Journell (2009), ideas of diversity and tolerance are valued and should be emphasized in all areas of the curriculum, but particularly in the social studies, which deal with historical narratives and responsibilities of citizenship (Anderson, 2011; Keene, 2013). Within social studies education many scholars advocate a thematic approach where curriculum is student-centered, deliberative, and focuses on issues of social justice and equality (Ross, 2006).

A major goal of multicultural social studies education, according to Sinagatullin (2003), is to help students acquire attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to successfully function within their own microculture, mainstream culture, and the global community. Sinagatullin added, developing active and reflective citizens of a nation-state, as well as active participants in improving socioeconomic and cultural life of the whole planet are goals of multicultural social studies education. To achieve this, Parker as cited in Sinagatullin (2003) suggested, for instance, that elementary- and middle-grade levels' social studies textbook shall include topics such as the history, geography, and culture of the pupil's neighborhood, community as well as of the their entire home country and the world; the foundations and principles of democracy; human-environment interaction; current events in the home country and the world; and gender issues.

In addition, Kahne and Westheimer (2006) and Ross (2006) argues that Social Studies should embody the main principles of democracy such as freedom, equality, human dignity, justice, rule of law, and civic rights and responsibilities. Similarly, Youngdal & Yunkyoung (2014) argues that the Social Studies curriculum should provides students with multidisciplinary lens through which they examine issues affecting their lives from personal, provincial, national, academic, pluralistic and global perspectives.

The social studies curriculum which is multicultural promotes students' growth as individuals and citizens of their nation and an increasingly interdependent world. Yiting (2015) emphasized that Social Studies should provides opportunities for students to explore multiple approaches that may be used to analyze and interpret their own world and the world of others. He further stated that multicultural Social studies should present unique and particular ways for students to view the interrelationships among Earth, its people, and its systems. Marker (2006) asserted that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed through the Social Studies curriculum empower students to be informed, responsible citizens of their nation and the world, and to participate in the democratic process to improve society.

Multicultural Social Studies textbook contents reflects the principles of world culture, including respect for the rights of minority groups, cultural diversity, and educational equity regardless of the actual level of ethnic diversity in a given nation-state (Ross, 2006). By and large, the incorporation of cultural and ethnic diversity in the school curriculum at all levels of education is to enable the learner feel and think that cultural differences are an asset (Ireyefoju and Ireyefoju 2010). It is our task as educators to help foster a belief that diversity is an asset in our society. Pupils should learn tolerance and acceptance of others' cultures and traditions that represent their distinctive voices and forms and offer varied perspectives (Marker, 2006; Paechter, 2006). Thus, this study examined the extent to which multicultural components and elements are reflected in the Ethiopian second cycle primary level (grade 5-8) Social Studies textbooks.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to assess the appearance, frequency, and distribution of multicultural contents in textbooks. Second cycle primary school social studies textbooks content were analyzed to determine the extent to which the textbooks reflect multiculturalism. In other words the populations of this study were four (grade 5-8) Social Studies textbook that Ministry of Education has published in 2011. Content analysis research method was employed. In the content analysis, both "manifest content" i.e. the surface structure present in the message and "latent content" or the deep structural meaning conveyed by the message in the content of the textbook was examined. The units of analysis used in this study include words, phrases, pictures and paragraphs and headings. Frequencies, percentages and chi-square are employed to analyze the data collected.

Analytical frames

In order to analyze the textbooks for the reflection of multiculturalism, multicultural content analysis frame was employed. The structure and distribution of multicultural content elements in primary school social studies textbooks were examined. In other words, the "presence or absence" and the "extent of coverage" of multicultural content elements in the textbooks was assessed.

To this end, a conceptual model of comprehensive multicultural curriculum suggested by Bennett as cited in Clark (2010) was used. According to Bennett, there are four core values (principles) of multicultural education that should be addressed in multicultural curriculums: a responsibility to the world community, respect for the earth, acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity, and respect for human dignity and universal human rights. She continues by identifying six major goals of comprehensive multicultural curriculum: (a) valuing multiple historical perspectives; (b) possessing cultural consciousness (understanding of one's own culture); (c) strengthening intercultural competence; (d) acquiring intercultural competence; (e) increasing awareness of the state of the planet and the global dynamics; and (f) developing social action skills. Thus, this study used Bennett's goals and core values of comprehensive multicultural education to frame the analysis of textbook. In addition to this, although gender representation in the textbooks could have been treated under Bennett's second core value i.e. appreciation and acceptance of diversity, the researcher examined it separately. Accordingly, the textbook analysis was done by referring the representations of male and female characters in texts as noun (names), pronoun (she, he, her, his etc), and common noun (boy, girls, men, women etc) and their visual representations. A checklist based on the Bennett's model and the literature was developed. The checklist was reviewed and commented by a person whose second degree is in Multicultural and Multilingual Education.

Result and interpretation of data

The study examined the content of Ethiopian second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks for reflections of multiculturalism. For this purpose, a content analysis research method was employed and the data collected was analyzed and interpreted using percentages and chi square. This section presents analysis and interpretation of the data.

Table 1 Multicultural variables representation in the textbooks

Variables/Grade level	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	N	%
Human dignity & Human right issues	13	5	22	40	80	8.37
Appreciation & acceptance of Diversity	41	12	18	26	97	10.15
Responsibility to the	38	15	15	17	85	8.89
Respect to and state of the earth	17	12	13	30	72	7.53
Gender related	161	99	67	295	622	65.06
Total Multicultural Variables	270	143	135	408	956	100

As indicated in Table 1, second cycle primary school Social Studies textbooks reflect multicultural issues such as respect to human dignity, appreciation and acceptance of diversity/pluralism, responsibility to the world community, and respect to and current states of the earth. However, the degree of representation varies with each multicultural issue and in each grade level. Accordingly, gender related variables representation outshined more than other multicultural variables. Grade eight, seven, five, and six textbooks ranked from one up to four in dealing with issues of human dignity and human right. Similarly, multicultural issues informing students about the state of the earth represented more in grade eight's Social Studies textbook followed by grade five, seven, and six respectively. In representation of multicultural issues dealing with one's responsibility to the world community, grade five textbooks comes first while the remaining grade levels' textbooks portrayed it almost in a similar proportion. Furthermore, diversity or pluralism related issues are more represented in grade five's social studies textbook than others grade level whereas grade eight, grade seven, and grade six textbooks took second, third, and fourth rank respectively. Moreover, gender related variables are more represented in grade eight textbooks whereas grade five, six, and seven constitute the second, third, and fourth ranks. By and large, Table 1 revealed that the primary school Social Studies textbooks reflect multiculturalism. The extent to which the four multicultural curriculum values reflected in the textbooks are also analyzed. The result presented in the following table

Table 2. The distribution of the four core values in the textbooks

Core values	O	E	df	X ²	P value
Respect for human right	80	83.5	3	3.94	>0.05
Diversity	97	83.5			
Responsibility	85	83.5			
Respect to Earth	72	83.5			

As can be seen in table 2, there is no significance difference in the representation of the four values in the social studies textbooks. The chi square test found that there is no significance difference in representation among the four values of comprehensive multicultural curriculum in their representation in the textbooks ($X^2 = 3.94$, $df = 3$, $p > 0.05$). This implies that the four multicultural values were fairly distributed in the Ethiopian second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks.

The other purpose of the study was to examine whether both sex i.e. male and female represented equally in the textbooks. For this purpose, gender representation was analyzed in terms noun (name), pronoun, common nouns, and pictures. The result is for each of the subcategory are presented in the following tables.

Table 3. Gender representation in terms of nouns (names)

Nouns	O	E	O-E	X ²	df	P-Value
Male nouns	188	107	81	122.64	1	< (0.05)
Female nouns	26	107	-81			

As shown in Table 3, there is significance difference in representation of gender with regard to nouns (names). The chi square test between males and females representation in terms of noun was statistically significant at $X^2 = 122.64$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$. There is no fair distribution of male and female names in the textbooks. This shows that male names are represented more in the Social Studies textbooks than their counterparts. In other words female names are underrepresented in the textbooks. The other characteristics that reflect gender representation is pronouns. The extent to which gender is represented by pronouns in the

textbooks was examined and the chi square result is presented in the table below.

Table 4. Gender representation in terms of Pronouns (she, her, his, he etc)

Pronouns	O	E	O-E	X ²	df	P-Value
Male pronoun	134	85.5	48.5	46.76	1	< (0.05)
Female pronoun	43	85.5	-42.5			

As clearly indicated in Table 4, there is a significant difference in representation of gender in Social Studies textbooks in terms of pronouns (e.g. he, she, her, etc). The chi square test between male and female pronouns was statistically significant at $X^2 = 46.76$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$. This shows that male still outshined in representation than females in terms of pronoun. To put it differently, the primary school social studies textbooks are male dominated with reference to pronouns.

Table 5. Gender representation in terms of common nouns (boys, girls, man, woman, etc)

Common nouns	O	E	O-E	X ²	df	P-Value
Male referenced	73	92	-19	7.85	1	< (0.05)
Female referenced	111	92	19			

As shown in table 5, the results of the chi square test clearly demonstrated that there is a significant gender representation difference by common names in the textbooks. The chi square test is found to be significant at $X^2 = 7.85$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$. This shows that in terms of common nouns (girl, boy, women, man, king queen etc), females are more represented than males. In other words, there is no fair representation of gender with reference to common nouns. The other gender related variable was pictorial representation. To what extent males and females are represented by pictures was analyzed. The chi square test was applied and the result is indicated in the following table.

Table 6. Gender representation in terms of pictures (boys, girls, man, woman, etc)

Common nouns	O	E	O-E	X ²	df	P-Value
Male in picture	21	15.3	5.7	3.44	2	0.18 > (0.05)
Female in picture	11	15.3	-4.3			
Both in picture	14	15.3	-1.3			

As indicated in Table 6, the results of the chi-square shown that there is no significant difference among the frequency of pictorial representation of males, females and both in second cycle primary Social Studies textbooks. The chi-square test found to be not significant at $X^2 = 3.44$, $df = 2$, $p > 0.05$. This result shows that there is no significant gender representation difference by pictures among male, female or both groups in the Ethiopian second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to assess second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks from multicultural components and element. The textbooks were evaluated from Bennett's comprehensive multicultural curriculum core values i.e. respect to human right and human dignity, acceptance and appreciation of diversity, responsibility to the world community, and respect for the earth.

According to Kahne and Westheimer (2006) and Ross (2006), a multicultural Social Studies curriculum should embody the main principles of democracy such as freedom, equality, human dignity, justice, rule of law, and civic rights and responsibilities. Similarly Parker as cited in Sinagatullin (2003) stressed that students should learn history and culture of their neighborhood, community as well as of their entire home country and the world; the foundations and principles of democracy; human-environment interaction; current events in the home country and the world; and gender issues. Yiting (2015) further stated that multicultural Social Studies curriculum should present unique and particular ways for students to view the interrelationships among Earth, its people, and its systems.

Furthermore, Osler (2006) argues that textbooks should be future-oriented, with a central goal of promoting responsible and critical citizenship that will enable the evolution of societies and encourage the development of and respect for universal human rights. Likewise, Paechter (2006) contends that school curricula and textbooks in national educational systems should acknowledge differences within society, address global issues and common humanity, and develop a consciousness of global citizenship beyond nationalism.

Moreover, Sinagatullin (2003) argues that today, it is unwise to say, for example, "water pollution is not a problem in our country, our rivers and lakes are clean and teeming with trout and other fishes," or "We live far from sub-Saharan Africa, and HIV/AIDS is not yet urgent in our culture, therefore, let us attend to more immediate problems. Instead, Sinagatullin continues, today it becomes abundantly clear that there is no "Asian greenhouse effect," or "Brazilian deforestation," therefore, it is the role of multicultural curriculum to create understanding of these and other related problems that humanity is facing and the need for global initiatives and global participation by common efforts of all racial, ethnic, and cultural groups to solve the problems.

Accordingly, as indicated in table 1, second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks Ethiopia

reflect multiculturalism. The textbooks was found to inform students about human rights, their role and responsibilities in their community and the world as a whole (responding to the problems that the world and human being are facing); cultures, histories, languages, and religion etc of people in Ethiopia and the world.

The second research question was about the representation of male and female in the Social Studies textbooks. According to different studies conducted so far by different scholars, gender disparities in textbooks are evident. International literatures analyzing social studies textbooks from a gender perspective have discovered that females are underrepresented or misrepresented with no mention of their views (Kamath & Bhasin as cited in Sumalatha and Ramakrishnaiah, 2004; Jabeen et. al. 2014, Engebretson, 2014; Chick as cited in Engebretson, 2014; Keene, 2013; Sumalatha and Ramakrishnaiah, 2004; Blumberg, 2007). In the process of curricula development mostly male personals have been involved. Only few female personalities are represented in the textbooks and few female images and characters are elaborated in the text (Mirza, 2004). Further, in social studies text book not a single woman has been included from history (Shah as cited in Jabeen et. al. 2014).

Similarly, the study by Zafar and Malick as cited in Jabeen et. al. (2014) reported that the curriculum, especially textbooks is not gender sensitive. It does not relate to the life of girls and women. Female images are less presented. The findings of this study are also in agreement with previous findings mentioned above. It was found that in most gender related characteristics, male dominated the textbooks and that females were underrepresented. For instance, female pronouns constituted only 24.86% of the total pronouns in Social Studies textbook from grade 5-8. Their representation in the textbooks was lower than the male representation. In addition, of the total names mentioned in the textbooks, females make up only 12.15%.

This finding supports previous findings that gender balance is yet to be attained in the textbooks studied. For instance, a study by Sumalatha and Ramakrishnaiah (2004) revealed that Indian secondary level Social Studies textbooks are filled with names of famous men and authors. They found 95% of the names as male and it was difficult for girls to find names of women who were freedom fighters and active in times of national crisis.

By and large, this study revealed that despite the measures taken by the Ethiopian government, in general and the Ministry of education, in particular to provide high-quality education and promote gender equality, male and female representations are still 'problematic'. In general gender is still represented in a way that supports the status-quo. If females are underrepresented in textbooks, there is, as teachers use textbooks mostly in their teaching, potential for females' perspectives and experiences to be forgotten. When the females' experiences are forgotten, the vision of social studies as educating students to live as citizens in a diverse and interdependent world cannot be achieved.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, the Ethiopian second cycle primary level Social Studies textbooks reflect multiculturalism, however, females were found underrepresented in some gender related characteristics. Thus, based on the findings of the study and the conclusion made, the following recommendations are forwarded

- Ministry of education, while revising or producing new textbooks, has to consider underrepresentation of females in the textbooks and revise it in a way to be gender sensitive thereby help shape the children's views on the development of new ideas of gender suitable for the future society.
- Teachers shall promote gender equality in their instruction. For instance, the contribution of women in a struggle for independence in international and Ethiopian context could be entertained in the history related sessions of the Social Studies class.
- A reexamination of the composition of the textbook writing and/or editing staff could be necessary for the staff's conception of male-female equality since the persons who have participated in the writing and editing of the second cycle primary level Social Studies textbook are all males.

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