

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FOR AFRICE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

SUB-THEME: HISTORY OF EDUCATION/SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

TITLE OF PAPER: THE INFLUENCE OF STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS ON SOCIAL COHESION

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Abstract: 281 Words

Achievement of Universal Primary Education is one of the Millennium Development Goals. In the quest for this achievement, it is important to highlight the importance of Education in the development of a cohesive society. Human beings have natural social tendencies and have throughout history strived to develop cohesion and integration by enhancing various aspects that bind them together in groups. In pre-industrial societies, an individual's community was limited to people who were similar in most ways. As such, development of social cohesion was not difficult. However, in modern times, the most universal quality to be found in every country is cultural diversity. At times, these diversities lead to intolerance, often translating to untold suffering, loss of life and destruction of property. Under the surface of apparent cohesion, there are student's characteristics such as age, religion, culture, race, ethnicity, language, disability and gender which may in the long run generate tensions and raise new difficult challenges to government and local regional decision makers.

This study was anchored on social structural functionalism theory. This theory is associated with Merton and Durkheim. This theory was relevant for this study because it explains the need for moral order and new means for promoting social cohesion that are necessary. This research used descriptive survey design that employed the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

This study sought to test the following hypothesis: *Learner characteristics do not significantly influence their perceptions and attitudes on the role of CRE in social cohesion.*

Two learner characteristics; Age and Gender were tested and the study found out that gender and age as learner characteristics do significantly influence student perceptions and attitudes on the role of CRE in social cohesion.