



Investigating Perceptions of Secondary School Teachers Regarding Social Cohesion: A Descriptive Study



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Abstract

The Social cohesion is vital for peaceful coexistence, inclusive societies, and sustainable development. Schools play a key role in fostering tolerance, respect, cooperation, and unity among students. In multicultural Pakistan, issues such as ethnic, socioeconomic, and sectarian differences impact social integration, making schools essential for developing responsible citizens. This study examines secondary school teachers' perceptions of social cohesion in Punjab, Pakistan, using a quantitative phase following qualitative exploration of key aspects through literature and expert discussions. Based on these findings, a structured 52-item questionnaire was developed to measure teachers' perceptions of social cohesion. Experts ensured content validity, and pilot testing confirmed the instrument's reliability and scale. An overall Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.964 for the instrument showed that it had excellent internal consistency. Data was collected from 641 secondary school teachers from public sector schools in various districts of Punjab, including Rawalpindi, Attock, Lahore, Sargodha, Multan, and Bahawalpur. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results indicated that, the teachers held a high rating of social cohesiveness in school. School belongingness, environment, diversity, national unity, trust, teamwork, cohesive curriculum, conflict management, and student well-being were rated as factors. Interdependent factors include trust, inclusive environment, and collaboration. Improvements: teamwork, diverse interaction, global citizenship, gender equality. The study concludes that there is significant potential to promote social cohesion in schools in Pakistan; however, efforts are needed to improve these initiatives. The results are highly significant for policymakers, curriculum developers, and educationists to improve social harmony and national integration.

Key Words

Social Cohesion, School Climate, Inclusive Education, School Belongingness, National Unity, Collaborative Learning

Introduction

The cohesion of society refers to a state whereby close-knit members and groups enjoy each other's company, uphold similar values, and work together to add value to each other's lives. It offers a favorable climate that supports equity, stability, and even growth, making the members feel they belong to a particular circle (Oetzel et al., 2021). A socially cohesive environment is equally important in learning environments since it engenders support, efficient conflict resolution, and overall belongingness among the learners. Oddone Paolucci et al. (2021), pointed to the importance of promoting social inclusion in school contexts as essential for students' practical academic, moral, and social learning. Schools are extended families, and concepts of oneness, togetherness, and

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interdependence can be exemplified through practice in the institutions. Social integration is the cohesiveness in interpersonal associations and groups and the individual's readiness to participate for a common focus. Trespalacios et al. (2021) defined social integration as having more than one component, including trust, no exclusion of any group in a society, and belongingness. This concept is related to the quality of interaction and the relationships between individuals and groups while stressing the importance of openness and tolerance.

The educational context for promotion of social cohesion has headed towards expansion of policies and plans for social cohesion in classrooms and schools, ultimately, leading many researchers to define complex nature of social cohesion in schools. Veerman and Denessen (2021) enumerated some of these as a sense of belonging (Healy, 2019), national unity (Osler & Starkey, 2006), mutual trust (Dinesen, 2011), mutual tolerance (Hewstone, 2015, Hughes, 2014), and strong social networks (Lott & Lott, 1965). The researchers broke down social cohesion into school belongingness, inclusive environment, valuing diversity, trust development, team collaboration, student well-being, national unity, cohesion focused curriculum, conflict management, global citizenship, gender equality, environmental awareness, and peer relationships, considering the extant literature. Considering multidimensional construct of social cohesion, educational researchers were more inclined to lay emphasis on peculiar indicators which were more relevant in schools and classrooms settings. These indicators guide how different schools act as societies, solve relationship issues, and enhance social welfare. (Arslan, 2021).

Cohesion of society is defined as a situation where the people in society live in harmonious relationships with one another, share common values, and work together towards the betterment of society. Social cohesion is important because it leads to social stability, peaceful coexistence, and sustainable development, as it enhances the relationship between individuals and groups. A society that is cohesive allows individuals to feel a sense of belonging and encourages their active participation in social, political, and economic activities.

International organizations like UNESCO and the OECD have highlighted that education systems play an essential role in building social cohesion by developing values of inclusiveness, democracy, and respect among people (UNESCO, 2020; OECD, 2021).

In the context of educational institutions, social cohesion is believed to create a conducive learning platform where students are able to develop interpersonal skills, empathy, cooperation, and tolerance. Oddone Paolucci et al. (2021) pointed out that the school is a small society where students learn how to be social and how to cooperate with one another. In this case, the students are able to acquire the skills that help them interact with people from different social and cultural backgrounds. Studies indicate that students who enjoy a sense of belongingness and trust in schools are more likely to display high levels of academic engagement, social competence, and civic duty (Clark et al., 2018).

Social integration in educational settings refers to the quality of relationships between students, teachers, and educational administrators. Social cohesion has been viewed as a multifaceted construct that encompasses trust, inclusiveness, respect for others, and a sense of belonging. The above factors are a measure of how well individuals in a community are able to cooperate with or assist each other.

The idea of social cohesion in the context of the school setting has been extensively researched by various educational scholars, and they have identified the key aspects of social cohesion as school belongingness, inclusive environment, trust building, valuing diversity, collaboration, and student well-being, as identified by Veerman and Denessen (2021).

Recent international literature again emphasizes the point that a cohesive school setting is marked by curriculum consistency, a non-discriminatory school culture, and a participatory leadership style, which promotes cooperation and mutual respect between the students (Janmaat, 2011; Putnam, 2007).

The importance of social cohesion in the Pakistani context:

Social cohesion assumes a significant role in the Pakistani context, as the social structure of the country is diverse. Pakistan is a country of ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity, and its educational system reflects a dual structure.

These structural differences often lead to a fragmented social experience for the students. This, in turn, could undermine the process of national integration, unless values of inclusiveness and a sense of common identity are actively promoted (Nayyar & Salim, 2003, Rahman, 2004).

Schools, therefore, play a very important role as a social institution for the promotion of national unity and social harmony by fostering dialogue, tolerance, and citizenship amongst young learners.

According to educational theorists, the curriculum, teachers, and the school as a social institution influence the effectiveness of the promotion of social cohesion and national integration (Banks, 2009, Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

Considering the significance of education for social cohesion, a growing emphasis has been put on the need to incorporate social cohesion principles within the school system.

However, there is a need for further research on the perceptions of teachers regarding social cohesion within Pakistani schools, which makes this area an area for further research.

The present study thus attempts to investigate the perceptions of teachers regarding social cohesion within public secondary schools of Punjab, Pakistan.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives have been concentrated by the researchers:

1. To explore dimensions of Social Cohesion
2. To investigate Teachers' perceptions regarding Social Cohesion in schools.

Research Methodology

This section encompasses an ample account of research methods, research design details of population, sample and sampling technique, instrument development and its validation, pilot testing, data collection, and analysis. The following is the research methodology of the study:

Research Design

Being descriptive in nature, the quantitative approach was opted.

Delimitation of the Study

By considering temporal and financial constraints and scarcity of resources, the proposed study is delimited to:

1. The Province of Punjab as the province is the most populous and diversified in social perspective.
2. The public sector secondary schools in Punjab, as secondary school students are in a critical age of socialization.

Population of the Study

The population of our study included all public secondary schools in the province of Punjab. The target population comprised all public sector secondary school teachers in Punjab. All secondary school teachers of the Government sector, including Rawalpindi, Attock, Lahore, Sargodha, Multan, and Bahawalpur, were the accessible population for this study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a representative sample for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure a representative sample. Punjab was divided into three regions, including North, Central, and South regions, while districts were chosen accordingly based on geographic and demographic factors. From these strata, districts were randomly selected to ensure diversity. Schools were selected proportionally based on the number of secondary schools in each district. Teachers were conveniently selected from chosen schools for fair representation. A total of 140 secondary schools were selected proportionally from these districts. From these schools, 800 teachers were conveniently chosen.

Development of the Instruments

The instrument was developed with the help of extensive literature review as well as focused group discussion with school administrators, head teachers, and university academic scholars. The previous literature and discussions helped identify key themes and dimensions of social cohesion in the educational context. Therefore, based on the analysis of previous literature and focused group discussion, a structured questionnaire was developed to quantitatively explore the perceptions of secondary school teachers regarding social cohesion. The questionnaire was developed based on 5-point Likert scale, including such aspects as inclusiveness, trust, appreciation of diversity and conflict management.

Research Tools Validation

A rigorous validation process was done to ascertain the validity of the research instruments. Expert opinion was the major validation technique and it entailed education experts, academic scholars, and academic professionals. These professionals went through the concentrated discussion protocol, structured questionnaire, and structured interview guide to determine their clarity, relevancy, and the relevance to the objectives of the study. They were necessary as they indicated changes to enhance the applicability and comprehensiveness of the tools.

Pilot Testing

The pilot study was conducted with an aim to point out the implementation of the real research study and to determine the reliability of each scale. The total Cronbach's Alpha value (0.964) implied that the measurement tool employed in gauging the social cohesion in schools possessed good internal consistency. This reliability indicates that the 52 items in all the factors are relevant in the sense that they are able to measure the intended constructs and the questionnaire is a powerful and reliable instrument in the study. Even though, not all of these individual factors have strong reliability like National Unity (0.678), Inclusive Environment (0.658), and Conflict Management (0.667), the values remain within the acceptable range. Some small revisions in these parts would enhance the instrument. On the whole, the high internal consistency will mean that responses obtained will be reliable, meaningful, and valid in analyzing social cohesion in the secondary schools in Pakistan.

Data Collection Process

This study adopted a systematic approach to the collection of the data in order to get a comprehensive picture of social cohesion in the secondary schools. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was developed in accordance with identified themes. The questionnaire was sent to teachers in selected districts of Punjab in secondary schools. This was to measure the perception of the teachers about the social cohesion in schools.

Data Analysis Process

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used in data analysis. The summarization of the perceptions of social cohesion among teachers was performed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency

and percentages). To determine internal consistency of the questionnaire reliability analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha) was performed.

Data Analysis and Interpretation.

- ▶ This section entailed detailed quantitative research of the nine dimensions that are focal in assessing social cohesion in learning institutions. These dimensions were school belongingness, conflict management, inclusive environment, valuing diversity, national unity, trust development, team collaboration, cohesion-focused curriculum and student well-being. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data of 641 respondents. The descriptive statistics revealed that a majority of the responses were skewed to agreeing and this indicates a positive perception of social cohesion in schools in general. The following is the analysis of the descriptive part of the study.

Demographic Profile of the Study

The following is the demographic profile of the study:

Table 1

Demographic Profile of the Study

Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage
Gender	Male	353	55.1
	Female	288	44.9
	Total	641	100.0
School Location	Rural	413	64.4
	Urban	228	35.6
	Total	641	100.0
Qualification	Undergraduate (B.A./B.Ed.)	72	11.2
	Graduate (M.A./M.Sc./BS)	375	58.5
	Postgraduate (M.Phil./ PhD)	194	30.3
	Total	641	100.0
Teaching Experience	1-10 Years	284	44.3
	11-20 Years	211	32.9
	Above 20 Years	146	22.8
	Total	641	100.0

Table 1 represented that the sample consisted of 353 male respondents (55.1%) and 288 female respondents (44.9%), indicating a slightly higher proportion of male participants. A majority of the respondents (64.4%) were from rural schools, while 35.6% are from urban schools. The majority of respondents held a graduate-level degree (M.A./M.Sc./BS), comprising 58.5% of the sample. Postgraduate-qualified respondents (MPhil/PhD) made up 30.3%, indicating a considerable proportion of highly educated teachers. Meanwhile, undergraduate-qualified teachers (B.A. /B.Ed.) accounted for 11.2%, showing that a smaller fraction of educators in the sample held only a bachelor's degree. The respondents exhibited a diverse range of teaching experience. The largest group (44.3%) had 1-10 years of experience, followed by 11-20 years (32.9%) and above 20 years (22.8%).

Descriptive Statistics of Overall Social Cohesion

The following are the descriptive statistics of social cohesion dimensions.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Social Cohesion Dimensions

S. No	Statements	N	Mean	S.D	Remarks
School Belongingness					
1	Students in my school feel attached to their class-fellows and teachers.	641	4.23	0.722	Very High
2	My school has a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for students.	641	4.23	0.633	Very High
3	Students experience a supportive atmosphere in my school.	641	4.2	0.635	Very High
4	Students in my school feel pride in wearing their school uniform.	641	4.2	0.729	Very High
5	Students of my school consider themselves important members of school community.	641	4.11	0.757	Very High
6	Students in my school have the feeling of affiliation with different social groups.	641	3.84	0.819	High
Conflict Management					
7	Students comfortably express their opinions in my class.	641	4.23	0.763	Very High
8	Curriculum of my school considers tolerance as an important value.	641	4.13	0.667	Very High
9	Students accept and respect difference of opinion in classroom discussion.	641	4.08	0.686	Very High
10	Students learn conflict resolving skills in my school.	641	3.88	0.827	High
11	The curriculum ensures assessments to evaluate students' understanding of social cohesion in my school.	641	3.86	0.804	High
Inclusive Environment					
12	Students of my school respect culture, sect and religion of other students.	641	4.22	0.667	Very High
13	The school supports students from different backgrounds to interact with each other.	641	4.2	0.678	Very High
14	My school authorities take quick and effective action if any case of intolerance or prejudice is reported.	641	4.2	0.739	Very High
15	My school helps students from different social backgrounds feel included.	641	4.12	0.623	Very High
16	Students feel included in school activities irrespective of their background.	641	3.98	0.848	High
Valuing Diversity					
17	Our school focuses on national unity through common values and history.	641	4.26	0.71	Very High
18	Our school encourages respect for different cultures to promote national unity.	641	4.24	0.751	Very High
19	The curriculum teaches respect for different cultures.	641	4.17	0.683	Very High
20	In my school, textbooks present lessons regarding multi-cultures of Pakistan.	641	4.08	0.657	Very High
21	In my school, teachers get support from curriculum to teach about cultural diversity and inclusion.	641	3.99	0.732	High
National Unity					
22	School events celebrate what we have common as a nation.	641	4.24	0.741	Very High
23	In my school, textbooks teach national unity to students.	641	4.19	0.652	Very High
24	Co-curricular activities in my school are helpful for students for their social networking.	641	4.17	0.722	Very High
25	Students in my school develop friendships through clubs and social activities	641	3.55	1.022	High
Trust Development					
26	Students in my school interact with one another in school events.	641	4.23	0.562	Very High
27	Our students have trust in school staff that they can control acts of bullying and discrimination with justice.	641	4.18	0.692	Very High
28	When students are in some sort of problem, their class-fellows help and motivate them.	641	4.16	0.598	Very High
29	Students in my school respect opinions and feelings of their classmates.	641	4.1	0.722	Very High
30	Conflicts are settled in such a way among students that their mutual trust gets strong.	641	4.09	0.718	Very High
31	Our students trust each other regardless of any difference in their background.	641	4	0.775	High

S. No	Statements	N	Mean	S.D	Remarks
32	The school arrange for opportunities for students to build trust through teamwork.	641	3.99	0.856	High
33	Students in this school can depend on their school-mates for emotional help in case of any need.	641	3.94	0.741	High
Team Collaboration					
34	Students of my school are always ready to help their class fellows without considering their backgrounds.	641	4.19	0.661	Very High
35	The school encourages teamwork to build social relationships among students.	641	4.12	0.767	Very High
36	Students in my school make friends to help one another in learning.	641	4.11	0.669	Very High
37	My school encourage group activities to promote culture of help and support among students.	641	4.09	0.708	Very High
38	Teachers use group learning activities in my school.	641	4.06	0.843	
39	Students in my school do not hesitate to work with students outside their friend's circle.	641	3.94	0.816	High
40	Students in my school make friends from other social groups and support them.	641	3.84	0.796	High
Cohesion-Focused Curriculum					
41	Curriculum in my school focusses on importance of social justice.	641	4.12	0.709	Very High
42	Textbooks show positive role models (heroes) from different backgrounds.	641	4.11	0.727	Very High
43	Lessons on environmental responsibility are included in textbooks.	641	4.09	0.667	Very High
44	In my school, teachers are allowed to adapt lessons to promote social cohesion.	641	3.98	0.812	High
45	Global citizenship is given much importance in the curriculum of my school.	641	3.91	0.843	High
46	In my school, gender equality is significantly included in the curriculum.	641	3.9	0.811	High
47	In my school, formative assessments are used to evaluate student's understanding of social issues.	641	3.89	0.884	High
Student Well Being					
48	Students feel easy when they ask for help from other students in my school.	641	4.17	0.607	Very High
49	The curriculum communicates about the importance of human rights.	641	4.12	0.677	Very High
50	Students in my school volunteer to cooperate with school or community projects.	641	4.08	0.731	Very High
51	My school provides mentoring and counselling for social support of students.	641	4.05	0.762	Very High
52	My school supports community service activities.	641	4	0.757	High

Table 2 showed teachers' perceptions regarding social cohesion in schools. They reflected that their students generally felt a strong sense of belonging within their school environment. The highest-rated statement ($M = 4.23$) indicated that their students felt attached to their peers and teachers. Moreover, they perceived their school environment as welcoming ($M = 4.23$) and supportive ($M = 4.20$). However, affiliation with different social groups ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.819$) showed slightly lower ratings, suggesting room for improvement in fostering inclusivity among diverse student groups. Participants reported that their students showed a high level of open communication in classrooms ($M = 4.23$), indicating a positive conflict resolution culture. However, while tolerance was emphasized in the curriculum ($M = 4.13$), the actual practice of learning conflict resolution skills ($M = 3.88$) and assessments for social cohesion ($M = 3.86$) received comparatively lower ratings. Respondents observed that their students acknowledged supported diversity and inclusivity, with high ratings on respecting different cultures, sects, and religions ($M = 4.22$). Schools were also effective in addressing intolerance and prejudice ($M = 4.20$).

However, teachers observed that their students felt included in school activities ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.848$) and showed slightly lower agreement, suggesting a need to ensure equal participation opportunities across all student

backgrounds. The most rated item ($M = 4.26$) was the focus on national unity that is promoted by shared values and history. The curriculum also encouraged respect towards other cultures ($M = 4.17$) and had a representation of multi-culture in textbooks ($M = 4.08$). Nonetheless, the support of cultural diversity by the teacher ($M = 3.99$) received a bit less rating, which means that the teacher training and resources should be improved to teach inclusivity more effectively.

Teachers also presented that their students strongly agreed that school events celebrated shared national unity ($M = 4.24$), and textbooks emphasized national unity ($M = 4.19$). Co-curricular activities were seen as helpful for networking ($M = 4.17$).

However, teachers reported that students' developing friendships through clubs and social activities ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.022$) was the lowest-rated item in this category. Trust was rated highly among students, with many agreeing that they trusted their school staff to handle bullying and discrimination ($M = 4.18$). Respondents opined that their students also helped and motivated their classmates ($M = 4.16$). However, trust development through structured teamwork ($M = 3.99$) and students' dependence on peers for emotional help ($M = 3.94$) were rated lower. Teachers revealed that their students were willing to help their peers regardless of background ($M = 4.19$), and teamwork was actively encouraged ($M = 4.12$).

However, teachers reported that their students' hesitation in working outside their friend circle ($M = 3.94$) and making friends from other social groups ($M = 3.84$) suggested that while teamwork was encouraged, social divisions might still exist within student groups. The curriculum strongly focused on social justice ($M = 4.12$) and presented positive role models from different backgrounds ($M = 4.11$). However, global citizenship ($M = 3.91$), gender equality ($M = 3.90$), and assessment of social cohesion ($M = 3.89$) received slightly lower ratings. They stated that their students felt comfortable asking for help from peers ($M = 4.17$), and the curriculum promoted human rights awareness ($M = 4.12$). However, community service support ($M = 4.00$) was rated lower than other items.

Discussion

The results obtained in this current research indicate that secondary school teachers generally believe in a high level of social cohesion in public secondary schools in Punjab. The teachers indicated a high level of agreement on all aspects such as school belongingness, inclusive environment, valuing diversity, national unity, trust development, team collaboration, cohesion-focused curriculum, and student well-being.

These findings are in line with international research that highlights the significance of schools in developing cohesive societies through the promotion of trust, inclusivity, and democratic values among students (OECD, 2021, UNESCO, 2020).

These findings also reinforce previous research that highlights students' perceptions of belonging and trust within their school community are important factors in developing students' academic engagement and positive social behaviors (Clark et al., 2018)

One of the most prominent findings of the research is related to the concept of school belongingness, where the teacher reported that the students are emotionally connected to their peers and teachers. Having a sense of belonging is beneficial for the motivation, participation, and well-being of the students.

These findings are consistent with previous research that highlighted that school belongingness is vital in facilitating positive academic and social outcomes for students (Arslan, 2021).

Another significant aspect that emerged in the present study is the inclusive environment. The teachers reported that the students respect cultural, religious, and social differences, and that the school authorities handle intolerance and prejudice effectively.

These findings are in accordance with previous studies that emphasized that inclusive school environments are vital in preventing social fragmentation and building collective identity among students (Putnam, 2007; Janmaat, 2011).

In a situation where diversity in ethnicity, language as well as socio-economic status has to characterize the social interaction as seen in the case of Pakistan, then the necessity of encouraging inclusive schools becomes even more significant.

According to the findings, it is also important to ensure that national unity and diversity is encouraged as a constituent element of social cohesion within schools as indicated by the teachers on how curriculum and events within schools facilitate national values and culture knowledge.

The result is an extension of the present theoretical approaches that demonstrate that national unity is a key determinant of promoting social cohesiveness in the developing nations that have different social structures (Green et al., 2006).

The other important aspect of social cohesion that was realized in the context of this study pertained to the emergence of trust. The teachers stated that students have confidence in their classmates and teachers to address certain problems like bullying and discrimination.

The level of trust within the students brings about the emotional security and enhances the social cohesion within the school environment.

However, there were slightly lower scores in the area of systematic collaboration and intergroup friendships which means that the students might be playing within their circles only.

This is consistent with previous studies, which have shown that “collaborative learning activities and co-curricular programs are the key to building social ties between diverse student groups” (Johnson & Johnson, 2014).

The findings also point to the significance of a curriculum centered around cohesion. Teachers reported that the curriculum included “content related to social justice, human rights, and the environment.”

However, the relatively low ratings for global citizenship and gender equality imply a need to reform the curriculum to better match the needs of the present social challenges.

Finally, the dimension of student well-being scored high, implying the provision of emotional and social support to the students through mentoring, counseling, and cooperation.

Such findings further reinforce the argument that the school environment plays an important role in the emotional development of the students (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016).

In conclusion, the findings indicate that schools in Punjab have good prospects for developing social cohesion, with further improvement needed in the development of collaborative learning, teachers, and the curriculum.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the study is that secondary school teachers in Punjab tend to view their schools as socially cohesive environments where students develop a sense of belongingness, inclusivity, trust, and collaboration. The results of the study indicate that schools in Punjab encourage positive social relationships among students through supportive environments, curriculum content, and activities.

These results align with the international views that acknowledge that education systems would significantly contribute to the formation of social cohesion and empowering citizenship in a democratic country (OECD, 2021, UNESCO, 2020).

The aspects that require enhancement, as pointed out in the study are teamwork, group to group interaction, and curriculum content on global citizenship and gender equality.

Social cohesion in Pakistani schools can be established by addressing such gaps in terms of the curriculum, the training of teachers, and the school policy.

In general, the research demonstrates that education may be a useful instrument in developing social harmony and national integration in Pakistan.

Implication

The research results confer significant implications on the educational policymakers, curriculum developers, school administrators, and teachers.

To begin with, the conclusions of the study emphasize the need to explicitly consider the issue of social cohesion when it comes to the national educational policies and curriculum development.

According to the international systems of education, values-based education, inclusive education, and collaborative learning play a significant role in the development of socially responsible citizens (UNESCO, 2015, OECD, 2019).

Second, the training programs of teachers should concentrate on the ability of teachers to handle the issues of diversity, inclusiveness and classroom conflict.

Third, co-curricular activities, group activities, and collaboration should be given more importance whereby students of different social backgrounds will interact.

Fourth, the policymakers ought to advance curriculum reforms that are based on the introduction of savings such as human rights, global citizenship and environmental protection in order to enhance the degree of social awareness among students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are postulated on the basis of the research conducted:

1. The school curriculum needs to be modified by curriculum developers to incorporate the following themes: social cohesion, tolerance, diversity, and national unity.
2. The teacher training programs must be carried out in the form of courses that should entail the following: inclusive pedagogy, managing diversity and resolving the conflicts.
3. The schools are supposed to foster cooperative learning tasks and group projects which facilitate interaction among the students of different backgrounds.
4. Learning institutions must promote co-curricular activities like debates, cultural events or community service programs in order to promote collaboration and mutual respect amongst one another.
5. National policies should be developed by policy makers to encourage social cohesion via education in accordance to the global initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals.

The research should proceed by getting the views of students and school administrators to get a better idea of what is meant by social cohesion.

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