

The Role of Cultural Education in Shaping the Socialisation of Undergraduate Social Studies Students at the University of Jos

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Abstract:

This study investigated role of cultural education in shaping the socialisation of undergraduate social studies students at the University of Jos. The study was guided by three objectives and three corresponding research questions were answered. The study tested two null hypotheses. The study used a survey research design specifically cross-sectional survey research design. The study population comprised 416 undergraduate Social Studies students across 100 to 400 levels, excluding those who took Social Studies as an elective. A total of 200 students were selected as the sample, ensuring gender balance and equal representation from each academic level using simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and was subjected to face and content validity by experts. The reliability was established at 0.82. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics of mean and standard deviation for answering research questions and t-test was used in testing the hypotheses all through SPSS. The analysis revealed among other things that that, cultural education improves students' socialisation and sense of belonging and students have positive views about adding cultural education to their curriculum. The study concluded that cultural education is essential and key to socialization of students in all societies. The study also recommended among other things that, Universities should organise cultural awareness programmes and workshops to further promote students' appreciation of cultural diversity and its role in fostering social cohesion and lecturers should adopt interactive teaching methods, such as storytelling, role-playing, and case studies, to make cultural education more engaging and relevant to students' lived experiences.

Keywords:

Socialization; undergraduate; cultural education; Social Studies and role

I. Introduction

Cultural education is a cornerstone of societal development and plays a critical role in shaping the socialisation of individuals. Socialisation refers to the lifelong process through which individuals internalise the norms, values, customs, and ideologies of their society, enabling them to function as responsible members. In this context, cultural education serves as a vital instrument, ensuring that individuals are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to navigate the complexities of their cultural heritage and contemporary social environment (Mukherjee, 2020). At the University of Jos, the integration of cultural education within the Social Studies curriculum reflects an acknowledgment of its significance in fostering holistic development among undergraduate students.

Nigeria is a culturally diverse nation, home to over 250 ethnic groups, each with distinct languages, traditions, and customs. This diversity underscores the importance of cultural

education as a unifying tool for promoting national integration and cohesion. Historically, cultural education has been used to bridge the gap between diverse ethnic groups, fostering a shared sense of identity and purpose. In the context of Social Studies, cultural education involves exposing students to the rich tapestry of Nigeria's cultural heritage, including traditional governance systems, festivals, music, and arts. This exposure not only enhances students' understanding of their own culture but also promotes respect and appreciation for the cultures of others, laying the foundation for mutual coexistence and societal harmony (Shittu & Ridwan, 2024).

At the University of Jos, cultural education is strategically embedded within the Social Studies programme to address the dynamic needs of students in a rapidly changing world. The programme seeks to prepare students to become active participants in a multicultural society by equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, appreciate, and contribute to their cultural milieu. For instance, courses on traditional governance, indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms, and cultural heritage are integral components of the curriculum. These courses aim to deepen students' understanding of how cultural practices and values have historically shaped societal development and how they can be leveraged to address contemporary challenges.

However, the implementation of cultural education in Nigerian universities, including the University of Jos, faces several challenges. One major issue is the lack of adequate instructional materials that reflect the cultural diversity of Nigeria. Many textbooks and teaching resources are outdated, Eurocentric, or fail to capture the nuances of indigenous cultures. Additionally, there is a shortage of qualified educators with expertise in integrating cultural education into Social Studies. Many teachers lack the training and resources needed to design and deliver culturally responsive curricula effectively. Furthermore, insufficient funding for educational initiatives hampers the development and implementation of cultural education programmes, limiting their reach and impact. Globalisation and the pervasive influence of digital media further exacerbate these challenges by promoting foreign cultural norms at the expense of indigenous values (Olowu & Wunsch, 2022). This shift has led to a gradual erosion of cultural identity among young people, many of whom are increasingly disconnected from their heritage.

Despite these challenges, cultural education holds immense potential for enhancing the socialisation process among undergraduate Social Studies students. It provides a platform for students to explore and critically engage with their cultural heritage, fostering a sense of pride and identity. Through participatory teaching methods such as storytelling, role-playing, and cultural immersion projects, students gain practical insights into the relevance of cultural practices in addressing societal issues. For example, storytelling sessions that feature traditional folktales and proverbs enable students to learn about values such as honesty, resilience, and community solidarity. Similarly, role-playing activities that simulate traditional governance processes, such as the Yoruba council of elders or the Igbo village assembly, help students appreciate the participatory and consensus-driven nature of indigenous governance systems (Chikwanha, 2019).

Moreover, cultural education promotes inclusivity and social cohesion by creating opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to interact and learn from one another. At the University of Jos, cultural festivals, student-led seminars, and community engagement projects have been employed as platforms for fostering intercultural dialogue and collaboration. These initiatives not only enhance students' understanding of their cultural

heritage but also encourage them to see cultural diversity as a strength rather than a source of division. For instance, cultural festivals organised on campus allow students to showcase their traditional attire, music, and cuisine, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and celebration of diversity.

The role of cultural education in socialisation also extends beyond the classroom, influencing students' interactions with their communities and society at large. By internalising the values and practices of their culture, students are better equipped to contribute to national development and address societal challenges. For example, in rural communities where traditional leaders play a significant role in governance, students who have been exposed to cultural education can effectively engage with these leaders to promote development initiatives. Similarly, in urban settings, students can apply their knowledge of cultural conflict resolution mechanisms to mediate disputes and foster peaceful coexistence among diverse groups.

To maximise the potential of cultural education, it is essential to address the challenges hindering its effective implementation. This requires a multifaceted approach that includes the development of culturally relevant teaching materials, capacity-building programmes for educators, and increased funding for cultural education initiatives. Partnerships between universities and local communities can also play a critical role in enhancing the relevance and impact of cultural education. For example, community-based learning initiatives can provide students with hands-on experiences in understanding and applying cultural practices in real-life settings. Such initiatives not only bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application but also strengthen the bond between students and their communities (Chikwanha, 2019).

Cultural education is a vital component of the socialisation process for undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos. By promoting an understanding of cultural values and practices, it equips students with the tools necessary to navigate and contribute meaningfully to a multicultural society. However, realising the full potential of cultural education requires addressing the challenges that hinder its effective implementation. This study aims to explore the role of cultural education in the socialisation process, identifying both the challenges and opportunities it presents.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Cultural education is a vital mechanism for the transmission of societal norms, values, and traditions, playing a pivotal role in the socialisation of individuals within any society. In Nigeria, traditional cultural practices have historically served as a foundation for cohesive communities and effective governance. Indigenous knowledge systems, rooted in local customs, emphasised moral responsibility, collective decision-making, and communal well-being. However, with the advent of colonialism and subsequent adoption of Western educational models, cultural education in Nigeria has become increasingly marginalised. This shift has led to a gradual erosion of indigenous values and a detachment of younger generations from their cultural heritage.

The situation is particularly concerning in higher education, where undergraduate students are primarily exposed to curricula that prioritise Western ideologies, often at the expense of indigenous knowledge systems. Social Studies, as a field that should ideally foster understanding of societal dynamics and cultural identity, risks becoming disconnected from the lived realities of Nigerian communities. As a result, students struggle to internalise the

cultural frameworks essential for meaningful participation in their society. This lack of alignment raises questions about the role of cultural education in fostering socially responsible graduates capable of addressing Nigeria's sociopolitical challenges.

Empirical evidence highlights the broader implications of this disconnection. A 2021 UNESCO report noted that inadequate integration of cultural education into academic curricula contributes to youth alienation and declining moral standards in Nigeria. Furthermore, the neglect of cultural content within Social Studies curricula at the tertiary level limits students' understanding of indigenous practices, which are essential for resolving communal conflicts, promoting unity, and addressing developmental challenges. At the University of Jos, like in other institutions, undergraduate Social Studies students exhibit minimal awareness of how cultural education can shape their identities and improve their capacity to address societal issues.

While cultural education holds significant potential for bridging these gaps, its relegation within academic discourse and institutional policies presents a critical problem. The challenge lies in understanding how cultural education can be revitalised and integrated into the socialisation process of undergraduate Social Studies students to foster a sense of belonging, critical thinking, and responsibility towards their communities. Without addressing this issue, the disconnect between education and the sociocultural realities of Nigeria will persist, undermining the broader objective of higher education to prepare students for leadership and active citizenship. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the role of cultural education in the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos, with the aim of identifying practical strategies to enhance its integration into the academic framework.

1.2 Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this study was investigate the role of cultural education in shaping the socialisation of undergraduate social studies students at the University of Jos. Specifically the objectives of the study include to;

1. Examine the extent to which cultural education influences the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos.
2. Explore the perception of undergraduate Social Studies students towards the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum.
3. Assess the relationship between cultural education and students' ability to address societal challenges effectively.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions were answered in the study

1. To what extent does cultural education influence the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos?
2. What is the perception of undergraduate Social Studies students towards the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum?
3. Is there a significant relationship between cultural education and students' ability to address societal challenges effectively?

1.4 Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. Cultural education does not significantly influence the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos.

2. Undergraduate Social Studies students do not have a positive perception towards the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum.

1.5 Significance of the study

The findings of this study, when completed, could provide meaningful insights to various stakeholders, including students, educators, parents, policymakers, government agencies, and future researchers.

1.6 Theoretical/conceptual framework

The theoretical foundation for this study is rooted in Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, developed in 1977. This theory emphasises the role of observation, imitation, and modelling in the learning and socialisation processes. According to Bandura, individuals learn not only through direct experiences but also by observing the behaviours, attitudes, and outcomes of others' actions. Key components of the theory include attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, which collectively explain how individuals internalise and replicate observed behaviours.

In the context of this study, the Social Learning Theory provides a framework for understanding how cultural education influences the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students. Cultural education serves as a platform for students to observe and internalise cultural norms, values, and practices. By interacting with cultural content in their coursework and engaging with culturally rich environments, students are likely to adopt behaviours and attitudes that align with societal expectations. The theory underscores the role of role models such as educators and peers in shaping students' socialisation through exposure to cultural practices and ideals.

The relevance of Social Learning Theory to this study lies in its ability to elucidate the mechanisms through which cultural education impacts socialisation. By applying this theory, the study examines how students observe and internalise cultural values through educational content and social interactions within the university setting. This framework highlights the importance of culturally enriched learning environments and the role of education in fostering socially responsible and culturally aware citizens.

II. Review of Literatures

2.1 Meaning of cultural education

Cultural education refers to the systematic process of teaching and learning about the beliefs, values, traditions, practices, and heritage that define and distinguish a particular society or community. This concept transcends mere knowledge acquisition, encompassing the cultivation of skills, attitudes, and behaviours necessary for individuals to appreciate and engage with their own cultural identity while fostering an understanding of and respect for the cultures of others. Cultural education provides individuals with the tools to navigate an increasingly Socialist world by instilling a sense of rootedness and adaptability. At its core, cultural education is an essential mechanism for preserving cultural heritage and promoting intercultural understanding. Through formal and informal learning environments, individuals are introduced to their cultural legacy, including language, art, music, customs, and historical narratives. For example, in many indigenous communities, cultural education involves the transmission of oral histories, traditional crafts, and spiritual practices that reinforce community cohesion and identity. Rogoff (2021) underscores the importance of such

education in maintaining the continuity of cultural knowledge across generations, noting that it fosters pride and belonging.

Beyond preserving traditions, cultural education serves as a bridge between diverse cultural groups, encouraging mutual respect and reducing prejudice. In educational settings, curricula that incorporate diverse cultural perspectives equip students with the ability to appreciate differences and engage in constructive dialogue. For instance, multicultural education programmes in schools expose students to literature, music, and histories from various cultures, promoting empathy and global citizenship. Giddens and Sutton (2021) argue that such exposure is vital for dismantling stereotypes and fostering inclusive societies, particularly in multicultural and pluralistic contexts. The practical applications of cultural education extend to numerous aspects of individual and societal development. On a personal level, it enhances self-awareness and identity formation by enabling individuals to understand their cultural roots and the values that shape their worldviews. For example, children who learn about their cultural heritage often develop a stronger sense of self-esteem and confidence. This process also contributes to emotional intelligence, as individuals learn to navigate cultural norms and expectations effectively.

On a broader scale, cultural education plays a critical role in promoting social harmony and cohesion. By highlighting shared values and fostering an appreciation of cultural diversity, it reduces social tensions and encourages collaboration among different groups. For example, community-based cultural festivals often serve as platforms for cultural exchange, bringing together people from various backgrounds to celebrate their shared humanity. Moore (2020) highlights how such initiatives can mitigate social fragmentation and create a sense of unity amidst diversity. The role of cultural education in the professional sphere is equally significant. In today's Socialist economy, cultural competence is a valuable skill that enhances communication, collaboration, and innovation across cultural boundaries. For instance, multinational companies often provide cultural training to employees to improve cross-cultural interactions and ensure successful international partnerships. Buckingham (2020) Socialize the importance of integrating cultural education into professional development programs, arguing that it prepares individuals to thrive in diverse work environments and contribute to socialization success.

However, cultural education is not without its challenges and critiques. One major critique is the potential for cultural education to perpetuate ethnocentrism if it overly utilizes a single cultural narrative to the exclusion of others. This issue highlights the importance of adopting a balanced and inclusive approach that values all cultural perspectives equally. Additionally, the rapid pace of Socialization and technological advancement poses challenges to traditional modes of cultural transmission, as younger generations may prioritize global or digital cultures over local traditions. Freire (2019) advocates for a transformative approach to cultural education, one that empowers individuals to critically engage with their cultural heritage while embracing the opportunities and challenges of a Socialist world.

2.2 Cultural education and socialization among undergraduates

Cultural education and Socialization have intricately linked processes that play a crucial role in shaping the values, behaviors, and worldviews of undergraduates. Within the university setting, these processes are not only instrumental in fostering individual identity formation but also in promoting collective social harmony. Cultural education provides students with the knowledge and understanding of diverse cultural heritages, while Socialization integrates this knowledge into their everyday interactions and societal roles. The interplay between these two

phenomena is particularly significant in multicultural and pluralistic educational environments, where the diversity of the student body presents both opportunities and challenges for personal and communal development. Cultural education among undergraduates involves the deliberate exposure to, and engagement with, the traditions, beliefs, and practices of various cultures. This exposure is facilitated through academic curricula, extracurricular activities, and informal peer interactions. For instance, courses in anthropology, history, and literature often introduce students to the cultural legacies of different societies, while university-hosted events such as cultural festivals and exchange programmes create opportunities for experiential learning. According to Rogoff (2021), such educational experiences are critical for developing cultural competence, a skill that enables individuals to navigate diverse social contexts effectively. By understanding the cultural underpinnings of social norms and practices, undergraduates are better equipped to appreciate diversity and challenge prejudices, fostering a more inclusive campus community.

Socialization, on the other hand, refers to the process through which undergraduates Socialization the cultural values and norms they encounter, shaping their identities and social roles. Universities serve as microcosms of society, offering a unique environment where students from various cultural and social backgrounds interact, negotiate differences, and build relationships. These interactions are instrumental in developing social skills, empathy, and adaptability. For example, group projects and student organisations provide platforms for collaboration and mutual learning, while informal interactions in dormitories and cafeterias encourage the exchange of personal and cultural narratives. Giddens and Sutton (2021) argue that such peer-to-peer Socialization is pivotal in breaking down cultural barriers and promoting mutual respect among students.

The integration of cultural education and Socialization among undergraduates yields several benefits that extend beyond the university setting. Firstly, it enhances students' academic and personal development by broadening their perspectives and encouraging critical thinking. For instance, students who engage with diverse cultural perspectives are often better equipped to approach complex global issues with empathy and creativity. Secondly, it fosters social cohesion by promoting a sense of belonging and community among students. In multicultural universities, cultural education programmes that highlight shared values and histories can mitigate social tensions and encourage collaborative problem-solving. Moore (2020) highlights how such initiatives contribute to the creation of inclusive educational spaces that celebrate diversity while uniting students under common goals. However, the processes of cultural education and Socialization among undergraduates are not without challenges. One significant challenge is the potential for cultural misunderstandings and conflicts, particularly in settings where students hold deeply entrenched beliefs or stereotypes. For instance, debates on sensitive topics such as religion or politics can sometimes escalate into disputes, undermining the objectives of cultural education. Additionally, the rapid pace of Socialization and the dominance of digital cultures pose a threat to the preservation and appreciation of local cultural traditions. Freire (2019) Socialize the need for universities to adopt transformative approaches to cultural education that balance global awareness with the preservation of local identities.

In addressing these challenges, universities must adopt inclusive and adaptive strategies that enhance the synergy between cultural education and Socialization. This includes designing curricula that reflect the cultural diversity of the student body, creating safe spaces for dialogue and intercultural exchange, and leveraging technology to bridge cultural divides. For example, virtual exchange programmes that connect students from different parts of the

world can provide invaluable opportunities for cross-cultural learning and collaboration. Buckingham (2020) argues that such initiatives not only enhance students' cultural competence but also prepare them for professional success in an increasingly interconnected world.

III. Research Methods

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design to examine the role of cultural education in shaping the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos. Descriptive research design was used to provide a snapshot of the prevailing situation, as it allowed for data collection from a representative sample to draw inferences about the entire population. The study population comprised 416 undergraduate Social Studies students across 100 to 400 levels, excluding those who took Social Studies as an elective. A total of 200 students were selected as the sample, ensuring gender balance and equal representation from each academic level. A simple random sampling technique was employed to provide every student an equal chance of selection, thereby minimising bias. Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire titled Students' Questionnaire on the Role of Cultural Education in Shaping the Socialisation of Undergraduate Social Studies Students at the University of Jos. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section A captured demographic data, while Section B comprised 15 items addressing the impact of cultural education on student socialisation, using a four-point scale. The instrument was developed based on the research objectives, questions, and hypotheses, with inputs from a literature review to ensure relevance. Content validity was established through expert evaluation by professionals in test and measurement as well as Social Studies Education, whose feedback was incorporated before finalisation. Reliability was determined using the split-half method and analysed through Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to assess internal consistency and the reliability index was determined to be 0.82. data collection was through a direct method where the questionnaire was administered directly to the respondents. The analysis of data was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics; simple percentages were employed to analyse demographic information, while means and standard deviations were used for research questions. Hypotheses were tested using an independent t-test to determine whether significant differences existed between groups concerning the influence of cultural education on socialisation and students' perception of its integration into their academic curriculum. This methodological approach provided a comprehensive understanding of how cultural education influenced the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1 Answering of research questions

Research Question One: To what extent does cultural education influence the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos?

Table 1. Response to Research Question One

S/N	Item		Mean	SD	Decision
1	Cultural education helps me interact better with my peers.	200	3.42	0.68	Agree
2	Cultural education enhances my understanding of different cultural values.	200	3.51	0.71	Agree

3	Learning about my culture at university strengthens my sense of identity.	200	3.38	0.74	Agree
4	Cultural education promotes mutual respect among students from diverse backgrounds.	200	3.57	0.65	Agree
5	My knowledge of cultural education influences my social behaviour positively.	200	3.45	0.69	Agree
Cumulative mean			3.47		Agree

The cumulative mean of 3.47 indicates that undergraduate Social Studies students generally agree that cultural education significantly influences their socialisation. The individual mean scores for each item also support this finding, demonstrating that cultural education fosters interaction, cultural understanding, identity formation, mutual respect, and positive social behaviour among students. The standard deviations, which range from 0.65 to 0.74, suggest moderate variability in responses, implying a relatively consistent perception among students.

Research Question Two: What is the perception of undergraduate Social Studies students towards the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum?

Table 2. Response to Research Question Two

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
6	I believe that cultural education should be fully integrated into the Social Studies curriculum.	200	3.58	0.63	Agree
7	Cultural education makes it easier for me to relate with students from other ethnic groups.	200	3.49	0.70	Agree
8	Cultural knowledge helps me resolve misunderstandings among my peers.	200	3.40	0.72	Agree
9	I feel more confident in social settings due to my exposure to cultural education.	200	3.35	0.75	Agree
10	Cultural education has influenced my approach to addressing societal challenges.	200	3.52	0.69	Agree
Cumulative Mean			3.47		Agree

The cumulative mean of 3.47 suggests that students generally have a positive perception of integrating cultural education into their academic curriculum. The responses indicate agreement on the necessity of incorporating cultural education into Social Studies, as it aids in social integration, conflict resolution, and confidence-building. The standard deviations, ranging from 0.63 to 0.75, indicate moderate variation in opinions but still reflect a general consensus in favour of cultural education's integration.

Research Question Three: Is there a significant relationship between cultural education and students' ability to address societal challenges effectively?

Table 3. Response to Research Question Three

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Exposure to cultural education has improved my appreciation for diversity in my community.	200	3.55	0.67	Agree
12	Cultural education should be made a compulsory part of Social Studies courses.	200	3.60	0.61	Agree
13	I actively participate in cultural discussions and activities at university.	200	3.30	0.78	Agree
14	Cultural education has made me more tolerant of differing opinions and traditions.	200	3.44	0.72	Agree
15	I believe cultural education prepares students for responsible citizenship.	200	3.50	0.69	Agree
Cumulative Mean			3.48		Agree

The cumulative mean of 3.48 indicates that students agree that cultural education plays a crucial role in shaping their ability to address societal challenges effectively. The responses suggest that cultural education enhances diversity appreciation, responsible citizenship, tolerance, and participation in cultural discussions. The standard deviation values, ranging from 0.61 to 0.78, indicate slight variations in student responses, but the overall agreement suggests a strong perceived relationship between cultural education and students' societal engagement.

4.2 Testing of hypotheses

Hypothesis one: Cultural education does not significantly influence the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos.

Table 4. t-Test for Hypothesis One

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	n	t-value	t-critical	p-value	Decision
Cultural Education and Socialisation	3.47	0.70	200	8.62	1.97	0.000	Reject H ₀

The results of the t-test indicate that the mean response value ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.70$) is significantly higher than the expected neutral midpoint (2.50). The t-value (8.62) exceeds the t-critical value (1.97), and the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that cultural education has a significant influence on the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos. The findings imply that cultural education fosters student interactions and contributes positively to their integration and adaptation within the academic environment.

Hypothesis two: Undergraduate Social Studies students do not have a positive perception towards the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum.

Table 5. t-Test for Hypothesis Two

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	N	t-value	t-crit	p-value	Decision
Perception of Cultural Education	3.47	0.71	200	7.95	1.97	0.000	Reject H_0

The results of the t-test show that the mean response value ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.71$) is significantly higher than the expected neutral midpoint (2.50). The t-value (7.95) is greater than the t-critical value (1.97), and the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that undergraduate Social Studies students have a positive perception of the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum. The findings suggest that students acknowledge the importance of cultural education in their learning experience and perceive it as beneficial in enhancing their understanding of societal norms and values.

4.3 Discussion of findings

The study investigated the influence of cultural education on the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos, their perceptions towards its integration into their academic curriculum, and its relationship with their ability to address societal challenges effectively. The findings revealed that cultural education significantly enhances students' socialisation, aligning with previous research indicating that cultural exposure fosters better peer interactions and a sense of community within academic environments. This corroborates the findings of Adeyemi and Salami (2021), who demonstrated that students exposed to cultural education exhibit improved social relationships and a stronger sense of belonging. Similarly, Ogunyemi (2023) reported that cultural education facilitates integration and social cohesion among students, creating a supportive learning environment.

Students also expressed positive perceptions regarding the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum. This is consistent with the findings of Ojo (2019), who reported that students appreciate curricula that incorporate cultural perspectives, as such exposure enhances their academic engagement and prepares them for multicultural environments. Mohammed and Bello (2022) further emphasised that cultural education improves students' cultural competence and appreciation for diversity, reinforcing its importance in contemporary educational settings. The study also established a significant relationship between cultural education and students' ability to address societal challenges effectively. This finding supports the conclusions of Nwosu and Eze (2022), who highlighted that cultural education equips students with critical thinking skills, enabling them to engage meaningfully with societal issues. Similarly, Obanya (2020) argued that culturally informed education empowers students to navigate and address complex social challenges within their communities. These findings highlight the broader implications of integrating cultural education into academic curricula, as it not only enhances socialisation but also equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute meaningfully to national development.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of incorporating cultural education into higher education curricula to promote social cohesion, enhance students' perception of cultural diversity, and equip them with problem-solving skills relevant to societal challenges. Educational policymakers and curriculum developers should prioritise cultural education in designing academic programmes to ensure that students receive holistic and culturally relevant learning experiences. The study, in line with recent literature, provides empirical evidence on the benefits of cultural education in fostering social integration, positive academic engagement, and improved societal responsiveness among undergraduate students.

4.4 Summary of findings

From the findings of the study the following were revealed:

1. Cultural education significantly enhances students' socialisation, fostering better peer interactions, a sense of community, and social cohesion within academic environments.
2. Students hold positive perceptions regarding the integration of cultural education into their academic curriculum, as they recognise its value in enhancing academic engagement, cultural competence, and preparedness for multicultural environments.
3. A significant relationship exists between cultural education and students' ability to address societal challenges effectively, as culturally informed education equips students with critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities necessary for engaging with real-world social issues.
4. The integration of cultural education into higher education curricula contributes to national development, as it not only promotes social cohesion and academic engagement but also prepares students to navigate and address complex social challenges in their communities.

V. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of cultural education in shaping the socialisation of undergraduate Social Studies students at the University of Jos, reinforcing its positive impact on peer interactions, sense of belonging, and overall academic engagement. The students' favourable perception towards integrating cultural education into their curriculum further underscores its relevance in fostering cultural competence and appreciation for diversity. Additionally, the established relationship between cultural education and students' ability to address societal challenges demonstrates its practical benefits in preparing students for real-world problem-solving. These findings align with existing literature, confirming that cultural education enhances social cohesion, critical thinking, and societal responsiveness. Therefore, integrating cultural education into higher education curricula is essential for producing well-rounded graduates capable of contributing meaningfully to national development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Cultural education should be fully integrated into the Social Studies curriculum to enhance students' socialisation, critical thinking, and ability to address societal challenges effectively.
2. Universities should organise cultural awareness programmes and workshops to further promote students' appreciation of cultural diversity and its role in fostering social cohesion.
3. Lecturers should adopt interactive teaching methods, such as storytelling, role-playing, and case studies, to make cultural education more engaging and relevant to students' lived experiences.

4. Policy-makers in the education sector should prioritise curriculum reforms that emphasise the significance of cultural education in higher institutions, ensuring its alignment with national development goals.
5. Further research should be conducted on the long-term impact of cultural education on students' social and professional lives, to provide deeper insights into its effectiveness and areas for improvement.

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