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## Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools: Implications On The Business Studies Curriculum In Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*Since the inception of the 8-4-4 education system in Kenya, Economics has been offered as a distinct and optional subject in secondary school. This curriculum design might have had a negative effect on student choice of Economics as a preferred subject from other subjects in the secondary school curriculum. Consequently, recent curriculum changes have resulted in integrating Economics into general Business Studies. The focus of teaching and coverage of the subject in terms of concepts and skills is not clear. Besides, the ability of the economics teachers to cope with this curriculum had not been ascertained. It was therefore necessary to establish the perceptions of teachers of Economics/Business Studies, towards the teaching of economics in secondary schools so as to determine the implications for the Business Studies curriculum. Specifically, this study investigated secondary school teachers' perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum and the adequacy and relevance of the Economics content in the curriculum. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. Data was collected from a sample 68 teachers of Business Studies drawn from 33 schools in Nakuru District. A questionnaire containing items measured on a five-point Likert scale was used to collect the required data. The collected data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics at a significance level of  $\alpha=0.05$ . Generally, the results of the study indicated that teachers held positive perceptions towards the teaching of economics in secondary schools. However, the nature of the syllabus affected its implementation in secondary schools. The results of the study may have implications on future restructuring of the business studies curriculum in Kenya.*

### **1.Introduction**

Economics has generally been accepted as a subject of study whose importance ranges from helping individuals in critical thinking and value judgment to creation of good citizenship and employment. In Kenya, Economics as an interdisciplinary subject was initially taught to European and Asian children during the colonial days (Kerich, 1990). The subject was introduced to African children after independence following the recommendations of the Ominde Education Commission (Republic of Kenya, R.O.K, 1964). This was necessitated by the need to produce manpower for managerial and administrative duties in both private and government establishments after the departure of the colonial government. It was only taught to Forms Five and Six in a few senior secondary schools.

In the early 1970s, a problem of 'educated unemployment' was highly felt by most African governments, to which most of them responded with curriculum reforms by which the school curricula were diversified and vocationalised so as to offer broad based education, leading to competency in a variety of skills (Bosire, 1991). There was also need to shift from the British curriculum to a localized curriculum that was suitable to the interests of the East African region (Kenya Institute Education, K.I.E, 1984). This therefore saw a change in the Economics curriculum to include ordinary economic principles or theory with what was generally referred to as Development Economics. Because of the demand for personnel with Economics knowledge and skills, Economics became popular with secondary school students thus recording high enrolment levels. The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Republic of Kenya, R.O.K, 1976) recommended an adjustment to the secondary school curriculum to include Economics in the programme of all secondary schools if self-reliance was to be achieved. Curriculum developers did not adopt this

recommendation. However, following the same recommendation by the Mackay Report (R.O.K, 1981), Economics was for the first time included at the 'O' level in the secondary schools curriculum in Kenya under the 8-4-4-education system. It was placed in Group V of the optional subjects offered to secondary school students in Forms Three and Four together with French, German, Music, Accounting, Commerce, and Typewriting. This grouping is done for the students' career choices. However, Bosire (1991) pointed out that most teachers, who had been used to teaching Economics at 'A' level were not comfortable with teaching it at 'O' level. According to Bude (1982), the introduction of Economics at the 8-4-4-education system in Kenya implied that new and revised instructional resources were needed, and teachers needed to be retrained to teach Economics and be adequately prepared on the newly introduced assessment and evaluation procedures in Economics. Besides, teachers were not adequately involved, neither were their perceptions or opinions towards teaching Economics at this level sought before the changes were introduced.

The introduction of Economics at the 'O' level saw Economics as one of the subjects with the highest student enrolment during the initial years. For instance, the Kenya National Examinations Council, KNEC (1990) puts the enrolment figures at 25,385 out of the total candidature of 131,809 (19.3%) at the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education, KCSE, in 1989. This figure rose to 26,130 out of 133,240 (19.6%) in 1990. However, student performance in the KCSE examination was discouraging in both years. The high enrolment in Economics later drastically dwindled so that by the year 2002, only 0.32% of KCSE candidates enrolled in Economics (KNEC, 2003). Bosire (1991) pointed out that those schools, which had dropped the subject, argued that the subject was too difficult and too abstract for the level and age of students. The placement of Economics in Group V also meant that it was not a must for a student to opt for it, or any other subject from this group (K.I.E, 1992). Furthermore, for purposes of student career choices and admission to university, several schools blocked Group V subjects with those of Group IV comprising of Agriculture, Home Science, Woodwork, Electricity, Drawing and Design, Building and Construction, Power Mechanics, Metalwork, and Art and Design. This resulted in Economics facing a stiff competition from other subjects considered relatively easy.

There have been further changes in the Economics curriculum effective from the year 2003, which have seen Economics being taught as part of an integrated Business Studies curriculum, together with Accounting and Commerce (K.I.E, 2002). This move concurs with the viewpoints of Wallace (2007) and William & Reisberg (2003) who suggest that curriculum integration leads to increased student engagement due to relevance of learning and the meaning created. Besides, Guthrie (2000), and Matangi-Hulls (2010) agree with the above assertions stating that an integrated curriculum leads to increase in the learners' intrinsic motivation to learn.

However, curriculum integration has been criticised by Audet (2005) and Ellis (2005) who argue that it leads to distorted content knowledge that lacks depth and integrity. Further, the researchers also argue that the learning developed is random, haphazard and lacks education value to students. Besides, it makes teachers spend extensive time preparing and organising the content for instruction. From the foregoing, this integration of economics into the business studies curriculum might further complicate the placement of Economics teachers, especially those with little or no background in Accounting and Commerce. It is also noted that the changes made in the secondary school Economics curriculum have not involved much of the teachers' input or perceptions.

The term "perception" has been defined differently, but basically, it refers to an individual's attitudes, beliefs and opinions towards a phenomenon. It refers to the way an individual regards something and his beliefs about what it is like. The reason for studying the views and attitudes of teachers is grounded in the assumption that these have a significant influence on their thinking and actions. According to Ponte, Matos, Guimaraes, Leal, and Canavaro (1991) views and attitudes act as a sort of filter. They are indispensable in forming and organizing the meaning of things, but on the other hand, they block the perception of new realities and of the identification of new problems (Ponte et al., 1991).

Studies indicate that people's behaviour- what they will say and do and what they won't say and do is dictated by their perceptions. According to Ajzen (1988), an attitude is a person's "evaluative reaction" to some object of interest (1988, p.23). Ajzen suggested that attitudes "predispose" the person to creating a cognitive response (a belief) about the object, and a potential to act on the object (an intention). According to Ajzen therefore, positive attitudes towards teaching Economics and even positive intentions to teach it may be influenced by what Ajzen called "subjective norms" and "perceived behavioural control" (p. 133). Ajzen defined "subjective norms" as an influence on intentions arising from a person's "perception of social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour under consideration" (p. 117). For secondary school teachers in Kenya therefore, sources of subjective norms would be their training, the curriculum content and course structure. Ajzen defined "perceived behavioural control" as "the extent to which people have the required opportunities and resources" to do something (p. 127). Thus, teachers may be hindered in teaching Economics or Business Studies by "internal" and "external" factors of perceived behavioural control (pp. 128-130). Examples of Economics/Business Studies secondary school teachers would be adequate training in Economics/Business Studies methodologies and content; and teacher involvement in curriculum change. Pajares (1992) outlined that the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more complex it becomes to alter. It was therefore necessary to establish the perceptions of teachers of the economics/business studies teachers towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum. Furthermore, Business Studies as an integrated curriculum still remain in Group V, which is optional. This may compound further the problem of student choice of Economics as a career, and placement of Economics teachers in the future.

## **2.Statement Of The Problem**

Economics is an important subject in the secondary school curriculum. In the Kenyan education system recent curriculum changes have resulted in integrating Economics into general Business Studies, to be offered in Form One to Form Four, perhaps as a way of attracting students to opt for it. However, even in the new curriculum structure, Business Studies continues to be offered as an optional curriculum. Since Economics is integrated in the Business Studies curriculum, in addition to being optional, the focus of teaching and

coverage in terms of concepts and skills is not clear. Besides, the opinions of the teachers regarding these changes have not been ascertained. This study therefore sought to establish teachers' perceptions towards the integration of economics in the business studies curriculum. It also sought to establish their perceptions towards the adequacy of the Economics content in the curriculum with regard to the needs of secondary school students.

### 3.Purpose Of The Study

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics and the implications of the Business Studies curriculum in secondary schools in Kenya. It also aimed to establish whether there are differences in teachers' perceptions by gender, years of experience, level of training, and between Majors and Non-majors in Economics.

### 4.Objectives Of The Study

- To establish teachers' perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum in secondary schools in Kenya.
- To establish teachers' perceptions towards the adequacy of the Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum with regard to the needs of secondary school students.
- To determine whether there are differences in teachers' perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum and adequacy of the Economics content in the integrated curriculum by gender, years of experience, level of training, and between Majors and Non-majors in Economics.

### 5.Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses in the study were stated as follows:

- Ho1- There are no significant gender differences in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Kenya.
- Ho2- There are no significant differences in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Kenya by years of experience.
- Ho3- There are no significant differences in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Kenya by professional qualification.
- Ho4- There are no significant differences in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Kenya by Majors and Non-majors in Economics.

### 6.Methodology

The research design used was descriptive survey. The study was conducted in Nakuru District, Kenya. The district was selected since it had a high catchment of both public and private secondary schools. The district is also metropolitan with people of diverse cultures and social inclinations.

The target population for the study was all teachers teaching Economics/Business Studies in secondary schools in the district. The district had a total number of 163 secondary schools falling under 13 education divisions, namely, Bahati, Elburgon, Gilgil, Keringeti, Lare, Mauche, Mbogoine, Molo, Naivasha, Nakuru Municipality, Njoro, Olengurueni and Rongai. The Ministry of Education (Nakuru District Education Office, D.E.O, 2003) had given an estimate of two (2) teachers of Economics and/or Business studies in every school giving a total population was 326 Economics/Business Studies teachers.

The scheme for determining sample sizes from different population sizes by Nwana (1982) was used to determine the number of schools and educational divisions to constitute the sample. The scheme explains that for a population size of a few hundreds, a sampling scale factor of 40% (0.4) or more could be used; for more hundreds a scale factor of 20% (0.2) or more; for a few thousands, a scale factor of 10% (0.1); and for several thousands, a scale factor of 5% (0.05) or less may be used to give a representative sample size. Consequently, the study used a scale factor of 40% (0.4) to determine the sample size of educational divisions while a scale factor of 20% (0.2) was used to determine the sample size of teachers. Given that the population of teachers was 326, 20% gave a sample size of 68 respondents while 40% of 13 divisions gave rise to five (5) educational divisions.

Purposive sampling was used to select the five divisions that had a high number of schools. Consequently, Bahati, Gilgil, Molo, Naivasha and Nakuru Municipality (N/M) divisions were selected. Proportionate sampling was used to determine the number of schools to constitute the sample from each division. A summary of the estimated sample sizes is presented in table 1.

Division	Number of Schools (n)	Prop. Sample n/112x33	No. of Economics/ Bus. Studies teachers
Bahati	32	10	18
Gilgil	18	5	8
Molo	15	4	8
Naivasha	18	5	10
NM	29	9	24
Total (N)	<b>112</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>68</b>

Table 1: Summary Of Actual Sample Size

Source: Research Data

Individual units of the sample of schools were selected by simple random sampling using the ballot (lottery) method. According to Kathuri and Pals (1993) and Lund and Mark (2010), random sampling gives every member of the universe an equal chance of being included in the sample, thus a randomly selected sample is representative of the population from which it is selected. This involved the following steps.

- Every subject (school) was given a number and the numbers were written on pieces of paper.
- The pieces of paper were then placed in a small container, closed and thoroughly mixed.
- The lucky schools were drawn to constitute the sample for the study.

All Economics/Business Studies teachers in each of the sample schools participated in the study. This was so as to counterbalance with cases where there was only one subject teacher.

Data for this study were collected by means of a questionnaire for Economics/Business Studies teachers. The questionnaire contained items for Economics/Business Studies teachers. The questionnaire was in three parts, namely;

- Part one- Teacher's personal characteristics
- Part two- Items measured on a five point Likert scale to measure perceptions on the teaching of Economics in Kenya, in view of the new integrated Business Studies curriculum.
- Part three- Open-ended items to measure perceptions on the teaching of Economics with regard to the curriculum content, and the new integrated Business Studies curriculum; and their recommendations on how the teaching of Economics could be improved.

Before engaging the instrument in the main study, they were pre-tested to determine their validity and reliability. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999); and Borg, Gall & Gall (1996) recommend pre-testing of research instruments before use in research. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was verified by two experts in research in education from the Faculty of Education and Human resources, Egerton University. A pilot study was then conducted to determine its reliability on 10 schools in Njoro Division which was not involved in the study. Cronbach's coefficient Alpha formula was used. This is because it can be used to assess reliability for both multiple choice and essay questions (Borg et al., 1996). Wiersma (1986) points out that a reliability coefficient level of 0.7 and above is acceptable. The teachers' questionnaire had a reliability coefficient of 0.76.

Before data collection, permission was sought to conduct the study from the Ministry of Education and the District Education Office in Nakuru District. At the end of the data collection exercise, all the raw data were assembled and organised for analysis. For the closed items, each item was coded in order to obtain the magnitude of teachers' perceptions with strongly agree (SA) being the highest score of 5 points while strongly disagree (SD) was the lowest score with 1 point.

The collected data were analysed by applying quantitative techniques. This involved the use of descriptive statistics (means, frequencies and percentages) while inferential statistics in form of independent samples t-test, to test the hypotheses was used.

## 7.Results And Discussion

### 7.1.Perceptions Of Teachers Towards The Business Studies Integrated Curriculum

The study sought teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of economics in Business Studies as an integrated curriculum. This objective intended to get teachers' opinions on the effect the Business Studies curriculum was likely to have on the Economics subject. Five items were used to collect the required data. The results are presented in table 2.

Descriptor	Rating (%)				Total
	A	U	D	N/R	
1) Integration of Economics in Business Studies makes the teaching of Economics more interesting	27	10	60	3	100
2) Business Studies is likely to be more popular than Economics in students choice of subjects	40	12	44	4	100
3) Topics of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum have been sequenced logically for students easy understanding	27	13	58	2	100
4) I am comfortable teaching business studies because I am trained to teach all the subjects in it	43	4	53	-	100
5) Business Studies is easier to teach than its subjects taught separately	18	10	64	8	100

Table 2: Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Business Studies Integrated Curriculum (N=68)

Note: A=Agree; U=Uncertain; D=Disagree; N/R =No Response

Source: Research Data

The results in table 2 reveal that teachers have a low perception of the Business Studies curriculum. A majority (60%) of the teachers were of the opinion that the integration of Economics may not make the teaching of Economics more interesting. Remarkably

however, 40% of the teachers were of the opinion that the Business Studies curriculum is likely to be more popular in students' choice of subjects than Economics, while 44% did not think so.

In perceptions towards sequencing of Economics topics in the Business Studies curriculum, only 27% of the teachers' thought that topics of Economics have been logically sequenced to ensure flow of information, while a majority (58%) thought otherwise. The teachers were of the opinion that the Business Studies curriculum content and arrangement of topics is not appropriately done.

The study also sought teachers' opinions on teaching the Business Studies subject as per their training. Only 43% of the teachers were comfortable teaching the integrated curriculum because they were trained to teach all the subjects in it, while a majority, (57%) were not.

The results also revealed that a majority (64%) of the teachers felt that the subjects making up the Business Studies curriculum should be taught separately to make teaching easier. Only 18% of the teachers were of the opinion that Business Studies integrated curriculum is easier to teach than its subjects taught separately.

This view concurs with those of the critics of curriculum integration, such as Lederman and Niess (1997), who argue that despite the call for integration, there is little, if any, empirical research supporting the notion that it is more effective than the traditional discipline based curriculum. However, Lake (2000) disagrees by arguing that the movement towards integrated curriculum is a move away from memorization and recitation of isolated facts and figures to more meaningful concepts and the connection between concepts, and should therefore be encouraged. In addition, Czemiak, Weber, Alexa Ahem (1999) stated that the idea of connecting subject areas seems like common sense, because in the real world, people's lives are not separated into separate subjects. Advocates of curriculum integration also cite the many advantages it holds in helping students deeper understanding, seeing the 'big' picture, make curriculum relevant to students, make connections among central concepts, and become interested and motivated in school.

### 7.2. Perceptions Of Teachers Towards The Adequacy Of Economics Content In The Business Studies Curriculum

Four items were constructed to seek teachers' perceptions towards the adequacy of the Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum. The results were as presented in table 3.

Descriptor	Rating (%)				Total
	A	U	D	N/R	
1) Topics of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum are adequate	22	32	44	2	100
2) The depth of coverage of Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum is adequate	22	34	51	3	100
3) More topics of Economics should be added to the business Studies curriculum	51	23	24	2	100
4) All topics of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum currently are relevant for secondary school students	62	20	16	2	100

Table 3: Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Adequacy Of Economics Content In The Business Studies Curriculum (%) (N=68)

Note: A=Agree; U=Uncertain; D=Disagree; N/R =No Response

Source: Research Data

The results in table 3 indicated that teachers strongly felt that the topics of economics in the business studies curriculum were inadequate. The results revealed that only 22% of the teachers perceived that the number of topics of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum were adequate. However, 44% and 51%, of the teachers were of the view that the content and depth of coverage of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum respectively, was not adequate.

The results also revealed that on average, 51% of the teachers were of the opinion that additional topics of Economics should be added to the Business Studies curriculum, while 24% felt that topics of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum were adequate. A majority (62%) of the teachers were of the opinion that the topics and content of Economics in the current Business Studies curriculum were relevant to the expectations of secondary school students.

From the findings of the study, it may be concluded that teachers of Economics have a low perception towards the adequacy of Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum in secondary schools. This implies that despite the good intentions of the integrated Business Studies curriculum, the teachers felt that the content and topics of economics is scantily covered. This observation agrees with Venville et al (2004) remarked that teachers thought curriculum integration leads to loss of the status of the discipline. According to Lake (2000) an integrated curriculum is a means, not the end result; and poorly designed units do not achieve their end of deeper understanding and thorough learning. Lake is of the view that rather than move from a traditional, subject specific curriculum to an integrated curriculum in one sudden sweep, there is more success when gradual changes are made, making sure that everyone involved feels a sense of ownership of and commitment to the changes; adding that there are instances in which curriculum integration is not the most appropriate way to go.

### 7.3. Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools In Kenya By Sex

It was hypothesized that there were no significant differences between the perceptions of male and female teachers towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools. The perceptions focussed on the Business Studies integrated curriculum, and the adequacy of the Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum. Each individual item's mean rating score on perception was computed. A t-test was then used to test whether there were differences in perceptions between males and females. The results of the study are presented in table 4.

	Male (N=28)		Female (N=40)		T-test	Sig.-level (p)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
a) Business Studies integrated Curriculum	2.379	0.789	2.615	1.083	0.986	0.328
b) Economics content in Business Studies	2.935	0.892	2.938	0.579	0.013	0.990

Table 4: Gender Differences In Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools (N=68)  
Significant At  $P < 0.05$

Table 4 indicates that there were no significant gender differences in teachers' perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum and the economics content in business studies ( $t=0.986$  &  $t=0.013$   $P > 0.05$ ) respectively. This led to the acceptance of the first hypothesis. This implies that perceptions of teachers towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools were the same irrespective of gender.

### 7.4. Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools In Kenya By Years Of Experience

The second hypothesis stated that there were no significant differences in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools by years of experience. This aimed at establishing whether teaching experience had an influence on the teachers' perceptions. Teachers were dichotomised to two groups; those below five (5) and those above five (5) years of experience. Each individual item's mean rating score on perception was then computed. A t-test was then used to test whether there was a significant difference in perceptions between the two groups. The results of the study are presented in table 5.

	0-5 Years (N=14)		Over 5 Years (N=54)		T-test	Sig.-level (p)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
d) Business Studies integrated Curriculum	1.985	0.614	2.663	1.003	2.329	0.230
e) Economics content in Business Studies	2.904	0.826	2.962	0.689	0.263	0.793

Table 5: Differences In Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools By Years Of Experience (N=68)  
Significant At  $P < 0.05$

Table 5 indicates that there was no significant differences in teachers' perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum and the economics content in business studies on the basis of years of experience ( $t=2.329$  &  $t=0.263$   $P > 0.05$ ) respectively. This led to the acceptance of the second hypothesis. This implies that perceptions of teachers towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools were the same irrespective of years of experience.

### 7.5. Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools In Kenya By Professional Qualification

The third hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Kenya between trained and untrained teachers. To achieve this objective, the respondents were asked to indicate their professional qualification as- Diploma in Education, Bachelor of Education/Post Graduate Diploma in Education, Bachelors' Degree in other areas, and other qualifications in addition to Education. Those with Diploma in Education, Bachelor of Education/Post Graduate Diploma in Education and other qualifications in addition to Education were treated, as trained teachers while those without were untrained teachers. Each individual item's mean rating score on perception was computed. A t-test was then used to test whether there were differences in perceptions between trained and untrained teachers. The results of the study are presented in table 6.

	Trained (N=61)		Untrained (N=7)		T-test	Sig.-level (p)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
a) Business Studies integrated Curriculum	2.531	0.952	2.400	1.222	0.335	0.738
b) Economics content in Business Studies	2.910	0.726	3.210	0.579	0.975	0.333

Table 6: Differences In Perceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools By Professional Qualification (N=68) Significant At  $P < 0.05$

Table 6 indicates that there were no significant differences in teachers' perceptions on both the Business Studies integrated Curriculum and Economics content in Business Studies ( $t=0.335$  &  $0.975$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). This led to the acceptance of the third hypothesis.

#### 7.6. Teachers' Perceptions Towards Teaching Economics In Secondary Schools In Kenya Between Majors And Non-Majors In Economics

The fourth hypothesis stated that there was no significance difference in teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of Economics in secondary schools in Kenya between Majors and Non-majors in Economics. To achieve this objective, the respondents were asked to indicate their subject combination. Those with Economics as one of their teaching subjects by training were treated as Economics Majors while those without Economics were treated as Non-majors. Each individual item's mean rating score on perception was then computed. A t-test was used to test whether there were differences in perceptions between Majors in Economics and Non-majors in Economics. The results of the study are presented in table 7.

	Majors (N=29)		Non-majors (N=39)		T-test	Sig.-level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
a) Business Studies integrated Curriculum	2.407	1.010	2.573	0.952	0.670	0.505
b) Economics content in Business Studies	2.857	0.753	3.000	0.684	0.793	0.431

Table 7: Differences Between Economics Majors And Non-Majors In Economics Inperceptions Towards The Teaching Of Economics In Secondary Schools (N=68) Significant At  $P < 0.05$

The results in table 7 reflect no significant difference between Majors in Economics and Non-majors in perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum and the Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum ( $t=0.670$  &  $t=0.793$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) respectively.

## 8. Conclusion

Generally, the teachers were of the view that the content and depth of coverage of Economics in the Business Studies curriculum were not adequate. They were of the opinion that more content of Economics and other topics in business, such as 'Information Technology', 'Business Finance' and 'Agricultural Economics' should be added to the Business Studies curriculum.

From the findings of the study, it is generally concluded that the teachers of Economics/Business Studies have a low perception of teaching Economics in other subjects. Over 80% felt that the content of Economics is more organised, and more adequately covered when taught on its own. Over 65% of the teachers were of the view that topics and content of Economics as a separate subject were carefully selected and organised to ensure easy understanding of concepts by learners; and is consistent with students' career needs and expectations. The teachers were of the opinion that Economics should be taught separately on its own to ensure better flow of concepts.

Lastly, findings of the study indicate that there were no statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions towards the Business Studies integrated curriculum and the Economics content in the Business Studies curriculum by gender, years of experience and professional qualification and between majors and non majors in economics.

## 9. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, this study made the following recommendations which aim at improving the secondary school Economics/Business Studies curriculum.

- There is need for the Ministry of Education to organize skill up-grading and in-service programmes for Economics/Business Studies teachers. This will assist in up-grading and updating teachers about new developments in their subjects.
- There is need for curriculum developers to develop an up to date teachers' guide for teaching Business Studies. The guide should contain the topics of the syllabus, and the depth of coverage for each topic. In addition, the guide should direct the teachers on how to appropriately infuse the content for the benefit of the learners.

- Curriculum developers need to reorganize/rearrange the content in the Business Studies curriculum so as to ensure logical sequencing. An appropriate approach could be an infusion of the content of the different subject areas of the Business Studies curriculum. Miller (1988) and Burt Saxon (2012) stated that infusion is the dominant means of including Economics in the secondary school curriculum.
- Since teachers were of the opinion that more relevant topics needed to be included in the curriculum, it might be necessary to include some new topics, for instance, 'information technology', in the Economics/Business Studies syllabus.

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