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## **THE IMPACT OF DIFFERENT HISTORY CURRICULA ON SOMALI STUDENTS' PATRIOTISM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the perception of secondary history curricula among Somali students in Malaysian institutions of higher education. To the researcher's knowledge, no study has examined the impact of different history curricula on Somali students' patriotism. This study developed a questionnaire survey based on two research questions. The research participants were undergraduates selected from different Malaysian institutions of higher education: International Islamic Universiti Malaysia (IIUM), Utara Universiti Malaysia (UUM), Universiti Technology Malaysia (UTM), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) and others. This study explored three latent constructs of secondary history curricula underpinning the integration among students: (i) knowledge, (ii) loyalty and (iii) behavior. The covariance correlations were statistically significant among the three factors for secondary history curricula. This study employed exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to examine latent constructs underlying the dimensions of secondary history validity. It also found that the three constructs have a direct influence on Somali students' patriotism. For the study, 450 survey questionnaires were disseminated, of which 350 were returned. With regard to theoretical contributions, the research contributes by promoting a number of new, consistent and suitable construct estimations within an academic application. This research has showed that the underlying dimensions explored influence students' perceptions towards loyalty to their country. Teaching common or standardized History syllabuses which carry similar knowledge, loyalty and behavior can enhance the sense of nationalism among students and foster integration and peace among them. The assessment structure of underlying dimensions was comparatively invariant across the three different groups. The finding of this research also contribute to the body of



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knowledge by exploring the factors in history curricula that influence patriotism among students in Malaysian institutions of higher education.

## 1. BACKGROUND

The notion of patriotism refers to the 1789 French revolution, when, for the first time, a state was built based on language and culture. This event was followed by several emerging nations in western Europe, such as Britain, Italy and Germany. The notion then penetrated globally, carrying with it different aspects and names. It emphasized national language, culture, loyalty and belief (John, 1993).

Andrews (2008) notes that people are reminded of their nationhood through “flagging by national identifiers such as flags, coins and other symbols”. Such nationalism is so common that it is not included directly in the syllabus but reaffirms a feeling of national community, which means that its linked identity may not be primary, but it is rarely forgotten (2008).

According to John (1993), the words state and nationalism are derived from the Latin term “Natus”, which means a devotion, love, and patriotic sense for one’s own country that is often called patriotism. It is a sense of political awareness and harmony between a country’s communities.

According to Gurdon (1994), there are two modern theories of the nation state: one is Herder’s Germanic perception, originating in its notion of *blut und boden* (blood and soil) and emphasizing a shared heritage; the other is the Latin notion illustrated by Ernest Renan based on the will to live together (*la volonté de vivre ensemble*), or a conscious historical process that results in a state. History teaching mediates between these two ideas of patriotism as partly inherited and partly a process of continuing creation, knowledge, culture, loyalty and behavior (Gurdon, 1994).



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However, social science textbooks are the main assets that instill educational citizenry into young generations in the majority of countries.

According to Ernest G (1983), a state is the conclusion of an extended history of events, sacrifice and loyalty. National heroes, respected men, and famous figures are common factors on which people base national thought. To share a common sense or spirit in the present time, to share outstanding collaborative achievements, and to aim for still greater achievements are the vital circumstances of being a nation. A country is, for that reason, a high-level unity (Riyaz, 1993).

History is a record of legacy, identity, traditions, and religious experiences of all different people all over the world. For example, social or community matters are difficult to understand without a deep understanding of history. Teaching history in schools is the backbone of any syllabus because we give students a “past history, present and future and how they are connected with each other” (Salah, 2007). History is more than the study of ancient times. It is the method of recording, re-evaluating and analyzing the past by examining a mix of resources. It is a discipline that provides societies with an understanding of their origin and ancestor (Hallima, 1994).

The Somali language has no equivalent expression for the English word patriotism. The closest expression for patriotism is “Tol”, meaning one father ancestor (Dualeh, 2002). In other words, some Somali historians consider that the Somali people are homogenous, adhere to one religion and share a traditional cultural heritage, which is an important part of their nomadic or rural way of life (Abdi, 1993). Somali patriotism can be defined as cultural nationalism, which means a society without a central government but bound together by common cultural facets (Shaikh, 2008).<sup>29</sup> Every clan has its own poets, who are the clans’ main elements or factors, and they are the ones propagandizing this false myth (Dualeh, 2002).

Abdulahi (2007) argues that the tribe in Somalia is greater than any other factor such as a religion or a political ideology. Tribalism represents prehistoric cleavages and cultural disintegration. As a result, the major culture or factors that unite Somali society are religion and language.



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Since its independence, the country has implemented different curricula in its education system. This fact has caused problems in the system rather than solving them. These curricula have also been constantly in transition. This problem was compounded by the sudden shift of the curricula, which was previously written mainly in English and Arabic, to the Somali language in 1972.

Thus, teaching history leads students to learn about various tribes and conflicts between them. It also guides students to interact with each other through daily experiences provided by a common history syllabus.

Today, Somalia is separated into three administrations: South Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland. Each region follows a different history syllabus. Furthermore, the available history syllabuses are offered through international organizations and borrowed from countries such as Sudan, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Britain.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL MODELS AND EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

The theoretical framework of this study is the theory of national history in England developed by Phillips and Wood in 1999. It is also identified as Four Histories, One Nation. This pedagogical model explains the relationship between the teaching of national history in schools and the strength of the sense of loyalty and identity. History content portrays an important tension about a country's aptitude to promote a consistent sense of nationalism within the history syllabus (Rhys, 2008).

Teaching history in schools is believed to assist with community building and, to a broader extent, with local knowledge, nationalism, good behavior and integration among students (Kodi, 2000). Thus, governments aim to emphasize patriotism in history curricula, which reflects the common knowledge of the state's national history, culture, loyalty and behavior.



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This research explores the probable impact of different history curricula on Somali students' patriotism. This study examines the level of the conceptualized underlying dimensions underpinning the integration among students. Second, the study tests the covariance relationship among the latent constructs of the underlying dimensions of secondary history curricula.

The national education policy aims to instill seeds of harmony among students. Including united history in a national curriculum is believed to be important because the subject encourages the inculcation of integration among students who represent different tribes and ethnic groups. It also endorses the development of internal peace and harmony in the minds of young generations. Throughout their school years, pupils construct their own interactive structure toward peace and living together (Fakhri, 2012).

History has a fundamental role in improving a students' understanding of his identity, culture, legacy and social background. The subject educates students to create a link between the past and the present and to make decisions concerning their lives and existences in the present and the future (Report, 1990). At the same time, history shapes national identity and national patriotism, factors that do not exist in other subjects on the syllabus (Report, 1990). Somali students are raising many questions such as why history should be taught and why it is important. They realize that Somali students have various attitudes, identities and new ways of thinking due to the different history syllabuses that have been taught in their secondary schools.

According to Ruhela (1993), secondary syllabuses, particularly history syllabuses, established for secondary schools are complex and incomprehensive. They emphasize communist ideology such as the Marcos and Lenin perception. Although some Somali history was included from form one to form four, this material did not completely meet the basic needs of Somali students who have unique traditions, cultures and histories. Finally, the teaching of history, geography and modern social subjects has not been given its due place in secondary schools or at the university level. The only subject that fulfilled Somali students' needs was literature. The government made great efforts to accumulate and print Somali literature. These were incorporated as part of the



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syllabuses. This and geography were the two positive subjects that emphasized Somali nationalism, culture and unity.

According to Al-Roubaie (2004), culture is a vital element of a people's facts, and it has to be developed if the people are to move forward. He also argues that the vanishing of a customary legacy and tradition will broaden a society's gap and erode the nationwide identity.

To deeply understand the myth of Somali social homogeneity, it is crucial to understand the culture, belief, thoughts and behavior of Somali people in general and of Somali students in secondary schools in particular. Indeed, the aforementioned factors have influenced Somali students' patriotism, which has emerged in recent years due to the different history curricula. This patriotism has created boundaries between Somali students not only in Somaliland, Puntland and Southern Somalia but among all Somalis scattered around the world.

Behavior: History develops analytical logic skills and mental training. It gives students a feeling and a sense of who they are and where they are positioned among their own people. At the same time, nearly every subject in the curriculum is linked to history. For instance, Somalis teach their children to eat a lot of food and defend themselves from other young students. They are also taught to memorize their origins or ancestors, heroes, clan history and famous poets.

UNESCO documents on learning (Report, 1990) demonstrate four values of learning, namely, learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. These principles can create integration and citizenry among students. They can also be included in history curricula to build young generations who are loyal to their country.

Finally, to the researcher's knowledge, Somaliland is the only Somali region to establish an independent integrated curriculum approach to meet students' needs after the collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991. Despite the poor material resources and technological facilities, Somaliland has been able to establish curriculum components and syllabuses from the primary level to the secondary level.



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### **3. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS, METHOD AND PARTICIPANTS**

The research questions are: a) what are the underlying dimensions in history curricula underpinning patriotism? b) are any covariance relationships among the identified underlying dimensions?

As far as the method is concerned, we have employed survey and data Analysis. To the researcher's knowledge, no articles or studies have been written about this topic in Somalia. The researcher developed the 40 items from the research questions. The first part of the questionnaire relates to students' demographics, including gender, age, region, university and marital status. The second part has 40 items representing four dimensions: knowledge, culture, loyalty and behavior.

Respondents were asked to rate the significance of 40 items according to their experience, employing a 7-point scale (Likert scale) that included (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Slightly Disagree, (3) Disagree, (4) Neutral, (5) Agree, (6) Slightly Agree, and (7) Strongly Agree. Respondents were given only two pages of written explanation for the hypothesized constructs. Given the environment of this study's questions, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to examine the latent factor structure of the survey items in students' patriotism.

This study's population was 1330 undergraduate students from four public universities and several colleges in Malaysia. Of this population, 350 undergraduate students were selected as research participants. The research sampling method had a 95% confidence standard and a 3.5% margin of error (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). As a result, 450 questionnaire surveys were disseminated and handed out to the respondents to obtain the rich sample size. Of these, 350 questionnaires were completed and recollected successfully. Twenty-nine were lost, 45 were not completed, and 26 had one scale ticked or were only partially completed. Then, raw data were keyed into SPSS v.16.0. No missing data were observed, but eight questionnaire items had outliers and were eliminated from the data.



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Regarding gender, more male undergraduates participated in this study. Male undergraduates comprised 272 of the participants (77.7%), compared female undergraduates who comprised 78 (22.3%). Regarding age, 39.1% of participants were between 24 and 26 years, 33.4% were between 21 and 23, 19.4% were between 27 and 30, and only 7.7% were between 18 and 20 years old. This distribution implies that the participants had reached an adequate age of understanding to estimate their perception of secondary history curricula among Somali students in Malaysian institutions of higher education.

Regarding region, that with the highest number of participants, 139 participants (39.7%), was Somaliland. This was followed by Southern Somalia (130 participants) with 37.1%, and the lowest number, 81 (23.1%), was from Puntland.

#### **4. PROCEDURES AND RESULTS**

The researcher administered the data collection with the assistance of several students representing different regions. First, a meeting was held with student heads to provide permission letters explaining the proposed research to all Somali students in Malaysian institutions of higher education. The researcher met student heads in the different universities and requested the number of students from the universities. Second, the students were encouraged to ask questions on any item that was not clear. Lastly, the completed questionnaires were gathered in the meeting area by agreement between the researcher and the participants or through assistants located at the universities or colleges studied.

According to Pallant (2007), there are two major requirements for deciding that the data are fit for EFA: sample size and the robust correlation between variables. Pallant stated that the data from both the small and the large sample sizes do not generalize their results. However, some scholars such as Tahachnick and Fidell (2007) re-examined this matter and recommended a sample size of 300. The sample size in this research was n=350 respondents, including students from the three regions of Somalia, which



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emerged after the central government collapsed in 1991. The second requirement that needs to be identified is the strength of the relationship between the items (Pallant, 2007). Two statistical assessments are required in SPSS to support the construct ability of the data, namely, Bartlett's test and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. Pallant (2007, p.181) stated that Bartlett's test should be significant ( $p < .05$ ) for EFA to be measured a suitable fit. For the KMO test, a case 109, which is between 0 and 1 with .6, is recommended as the minimum value for an excellent EFA (Tahachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The value obtained for the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test when evaluating sample sufficiency was .970, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity value was  $p \leq .001$ ; these results showed the suitability of factor ability analysis. The results of the analysis indicated that all the assumptions were fairly satisfied. The correlation matrix coefficients were larger than 0.3, and many were extremely high (as high as .9 and above). This result was also supported by the determinant value of 7.96E- (0.0196), which is greater than the suggested value (0.00001). Thus, in the major data analysis of this research, factor analysis was conducted for each factor separately to determine the impact of different history curricula on Somali students' patriotism. The first construct conducted was on knowledge, followed by loyalty and behavior. The criterion employed for this research in establishing a cutoff for factor loading is the maintenance of constructs with eigenvalues larger than 1.0. In addition, this research accepted loadings of .50 as significant, while the sample size was  $n = 350$ , and the entire sample was analyzed once using the exploratory factor analysis. Thus, a sample size of 350 was sufficient following a loading criterion of .50 or higher. All these criteria were based on the suggestion of Hair et al. (2010). Table 1 provides the eigenvalues, variance and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling sufficiency for the assessment of the perception toward secondary history curricula among Somali students. This study's analysis indicates that each factor describing the impact of different history curricula on Somali students' patriotism explained more than 40% of the variance. Furthermore, the KMO of each factor was larger than .70, which was the threshold suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Thus, the results confirm the factor validity, as clarified by the percentage of variance explained by each factor that conformed to the threshold of 40% or larger (Allen & Yen, 1979).



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Table 1 Eigenvalues, Variance and KMO for the Effect of Different History Curricula on Somali Students' Patriotism Measures.

<b>Construct</b>	<b>No. of items</b>	<b>Eigenvalues</b>	<b>% Variance</b>	<b>KMO</b>
Knowledge	10	52.863	67.421	0.947
Loyalty	7	5.102	65.096	0.918
Behavior	9	3.203	61.647	0.921
Total	26			

The total variances explained by each construct indicated that only four factors had eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The first construct had an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 (21.14, 2.041, 1.281, and 1.175). The four factors together explained 64.1% of the variance.

The main component analysis showed the existence of four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 that explained 52.9%, 5.10%, 3.2% and 2.9% of the variance. The Scree plot check confirmed the greatest number of constructs extracted. In this research, components 1, 2 and 3 explained more than 1.

The results of the component matrix illustrate that every assessed item of the 40 dormant constructs was recognized in the exploratory factor analysis. The outcomes indicated the item loading on the four constructs, with twenty-six items larger than .3: ten items on component 1 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10), seven on component 2 (21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 28), and 9 on component 3 (31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40). Further tests revealed that the majority of factor loadings were considerably normal and ranged from .500 to .756. According to Kline (2005), larger loadings indicate that



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the variable is a good representative of the construct; this result more clearly shows the confirmation of “convergent validity of the component”.

As a result, the items fitting to every factor were calculated and labeled. The researcher used Pallant’s (2007) method to determine the factor names. Pallant (2007) recommended that the item with the largest loading on every construct must be recognized to create the factor’s name. Based on this direction, the first factor was named “Knowledge”, and the second one, “Loyalty.” The third factor was named “Behavior”.

The knowledge scale analysis comprising 10 items were intended to test the impact of different history curricula on Somali students’ patriotism measures. The ten items effectively loaded on the construct ranged from .647 to .756, as indicated in bold. Furthermore, the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) assessments were between 4.55 and 4.95 and between 1.81 and 1.92, respectively. The value of the sampling adequacy of every assessment (MSA) was larger than .50, thus verifying the construct extraction procedure. For the variance assessment, the construct explained 67.4%, with eigenvalues of  $52.8.1 \geq 1$  (Hair et al., 2010).



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Table 3.5 Underlying Dimensions: Factor Loading, Anti Image, Mean, Reliability, Variance Explained and Standard Deviation

No. S D	Item	Kng	Beha	Loyal	MSA	M
Knowledge 1.87	Kng1	<b>0.749</b>			0.949	4.95
1.89	Kng3	<b>0.739</b>			0.917	4.56
1.90	Kng3	<b>0.691</b>			0.935	4.68
1.87	Kng4	<b>0.741</b>			0.943	4.80
1.85	Kng5	<b>0.756</b>			0.940	4.62
1.88	Kng6	<b>0.700</b>			0.961	4.72
1.90	Kng7	<b>0.672</b>			0.965	4.60
1.81	Kng8	<b>0.716</b>			0.961	4.74



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1.92	Kng9	<b>0.647</b>	0.961	4.55
1.90	Kng10	<b>0.705</b>	0.950	4.72
Behavior 2.03	Beha31	<b>0.524</b>	0.929	4.58
1.87	Beha33	<b>0.645</b>	0.919	4.58
1.94	Beha34	<b>0.661</b>	0.932	4.53
1.95	Beha35	<b>0.678</b>	0.926	4.52
1.98	Beha36	<b>0.617</b>	0.952	4.40
1.95	Beha37	<b>0.656</b>	0.951	5.02
1.84	Beha38	<b>0.691</b>	0.903	4.87
1.95	Beha39	<b>0.737</b>	0.878	4.93
2.11	Beha40	<b>0.522</b>	0.886	4.89



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Loyalty 1.93	Loyal21	<b>0.647</b>	0.903	4.66
1.98	Loyal22	<b>0.673</b>	0.899	4.58
1.96	Loyal23	<b>0.566</b>	0.943	4.64
1.92	Loyal24	<b>0.579</b>	0.904	4.78
1.97	Loyal25	<b>0.613</b>	0.903	4.71
4.32	Loyal26	<b>0.526</b>	0.973	4.79
1.89	Loyal28	<b>0.568</b>	0.952	4.63

Note: Factor loadings  $\leq .50$  have been excluded, and variables have been arranged by loading on each factor. Kng= Knowledge, Beha= Behavior, Loyal=Loyalty, F-L= Factor loading, MSA= Measurement of Sampling Adequacy, M=Mean and SD

## 5. RELIABILITY

Reliability concerns the steadiness and solidity of the estimation outcomes (Sekaran, 2000). It is the main decision of an assessment mechanism's value, and it assists in recognizing irregularities and their influence on the assessment outcomes. Bryman and Cramer (2005) stated that interior reliability is mainly vital if all factors have several



dimension items. For instance, ten items were employed to assess knowledge (Kng), seven items were used to assess loyalty (Loyal), and nine items were used to evaluate behavior (Beha). In this research, the reliability of the items was estimated by investigating the constancy of the participants' answers to the entire items, as advised by Nunnally (1978). The researcher employed Cronbach's alpha to calculate the interior steadiness of each assessor. Cronbach's alphas below 0.6 were considered unacceptable and weak, those equal to 0.7 were satisfactory and good enough, and those larger than 0.8 were considered excellent, as recommended by Sekaran (2000). Nunnally (1978) recommended that Cronbach's alphas of 0.7 or larger indicated sufficient consistency. However, Hair et al. (2006) defined Cronbach's alphas of 0.7 or larger as indicating interior reliability. Thus, the smallest index of 0.7 for Cronbach's alpha was used in this study to establish the consistency of every calculation to observe the whole reliability of each latent factor employed in the model.

To examine reliability, Cronbach's alpha was calculated, and the internal reliability of the location of items loaded on each construct was evaluated. Cronbach's alpha for knowledge was .946, that for loyalty was .851, and that for behavior was .919, all of which were larger than .7 as recommended by Pallant (2007) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Table 2 shows the findings of the reliability analysis of estimation, each factor's alpha and all of the Cronbach's alphas for the overall items.

**Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Index**

<b>Descriptive</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Overall Cronbach's alpha</b>
Knowledge	10	.946	
Loyalty	7	.851	.958
Behavior	9	.919	

**Total Number of Items 26**



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## 6. DISCUSSION

The first purpose of this research was to explore the existence of factors in secondary school history curricula underpinning the integration and sense of nationalism among students. This purpose has been fulfilled in the realization that the factors explored were consistent, effective and valid. This fact has been established by a sequence of findings examined with EFA. The results show that three factors—knowledge, loyalty and behavior—underpin integration among students.

Originally, 40 variables were designed to explore the three constructs of the effect of different History curricula on Somali students' patriotism. However, at a later phase, only 24 items remained and were validated. Ten items were effectively loaded on the first component, knowledge; six variables were loaded on the second component, loyalty; and eight variables were loaded on the third component. The planned model demonstrated three factors of secondary history curricula that underpinned the integration among students and strengthened their sense of nationalism.

Purpose 2 was to examine whether any covariance relationships exist among the underlying dimensions. First, it is important to scrutinize the significant values and explore each variable for which the majority of values were larger than 0.30. Second, the relationship between coefficients was checked if any were larger than 0.9. Most of the relationship matrix coefficients were larger than 0.30, while a small number of inter-connection coefficients were found to be smaller than .30, and only a small number were greater than .7 (Pallent, 2007). In the SPSS output, it is also important to examine the inter correlation by employing Bartlett's test of sphericity that estimates the null hypothesis (Field 2000: 445). In this research, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant; then, the determinant was checked so no single variable was larger than 0.0001. As a result, inter-correlation was found among underlying dimensions.

Based on Tyler's (1949) theory, the objective and goals of the syllabus are to offer students skills, knowledge, culture, loyalty and behavior. These values can be



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transmitted through nationalized syllabuses, particularly united history syllabuses, which contain the common sense of identity, nationality and common citizenry. Here, the school objective is to instill common understanding and national and patriotic feelings in terms of what are thought by the state to be lawful expressions (Waters & Leblanc, 2005). The planned model is evident from the findings. The findings also confirmed that the hypothesized model of the impact of different history curricula on Somali students' patriotism had a substantial descriptive and predictive strength.

## **7. LIMITATIONS**

Even though the results of this research are persuasive and constructive, the study has a few weaknesses similar to the majority of field studies. First, the research was carried out on Somali students in Malaysian institutions of higher education; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all Somali students. Second, the results concentrated on precise underlying dimensions (e.g., knowledge, loyalty and behavior) in secondary history curricula. Therefore, researchers should be cautious when generalizing the results of this research to other dimensions of secondary history curricula and different groups of students. Thus, further research is anticipated to validate and generalize these results to other students who studied history during secondary school.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Based on the exploratory factor, dimensions such as knowledge, loyalty and behavior, which were transmitted through history education, were found to influence the sense of nationalism among students. This research tested the invariance of different history curricula assessments across the three regions sampled: Southern Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland. The assessment structure of the underlying dimensions was comparatively invariant across the three groups. Therefore, this research showed that the underlying dimensions explored influence students' perceptions of loyalty to their



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country. Teaching common or standardized history syllabuses that carry similar knowledge, loyalty and behavior can enhance the sense of nationalism among students and foster integration and peace among them.

This research further develops prior studies in a minimum of two directions. First, it presents strong quantitative data on the sense of nationalism through history. Previous researchers have mainly included normative debates of the competent qualities of diverse understandings of history between students and their perceptions (Phillips, 1998). Second, it creates statistically significant relationships between state arrogance and students' sense of nationalism. This study's findings emphasize the descriptive and factor analysis results.

In conclusion, the research considered undergraduate students in Malaysian institutions of higher education who have studied in secondary schools in three regions of Somalia. The sample size of students differs based on region, age, sex, year of study and university. Despite these variations, significant correlations exist between foundations of state pride and sense of nationalism.

Finally, this research establishes a framework for future research on the history syllabus and the effect of secondary school history curricula on the students' sense of nationalism. A study to examine these matters analytically might be added to the present literature on the utility and content of secondary school history curricula.

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