The study is concerned with the History and Government syllabus and textbooks used in secondary schools in Kenya. The main area of focus is on the content of the syllabus and textbooks; whether they are in line with changes taking place in education and history. Specifically, it focuses on research findings in General History of Africa series and the present gender sensitivity in education.

The research constitutes a survey, which has made use of questionnaires and checklists for documentary analysis. The sample of the study includes six hundred and sixty four (664) history students and eight-one (81) History teachers from rural and urban schools represented by Nairobi and Western provinces. It also consists of ten (10) History and Government textbooks used in secondary schools and the 1992 History and Government syllabus. The data are analyzed using descriptive statistics and evaluative discussions.

The findings indicate that the History syllabus and textbooks in use do not live up to the research findings by renowned African scholars as presented in General History of Africa series, nor are they sensitive to gender issues in the writing and teaching of history. In fact, there is a gap between the knowledge produced by academic historians and that consumed in the schools.

The syllabus, for instances, is based on Euro-centric views of history and on sex blindness of traditional historiography. It is over-national in approach and suffers the most insidious forms of bias of omission in relation to world, Africa, women and cultural history. The content taught fails to give the child a clear perspective of world, continental and a balanced view of male and female roles in history or human development.

Similarly, the textbooks written to facilitate the syllabus objectives and content perpetuate the same views of male-dominated approach to historiographic content. The use of Europe-centric and derogatory words dominate the texts which in turn do not facilitate exposure to historical awareness by learners partly because of poor content organization, difficulty of grammar, ineffective illustrations, inaccurate and out-dated content, and lack of gender awareness in the language and illustrations used.

It has been recommended that the present history syllabus and the textbooks be revised to reflect the emphasis and findings of General History of Africa series and gender as a new dimension of history teaching and writing. The history taught should impart knowledge of cultural diversity and a world perspective. The importance of African past, African perspective of history, African culture and African contribution to world civilizations should not be over emphasized.

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 sets the study in focus by giving an introduction. Chapter 2 reviews literature on important features of the study, while chapter 3 deals with research methodology. The fourth chapter is divided in three sections and focuses on data analysis and its interpretation. The last chapter is on summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.