The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the two-year pre-service social studies course offered in the Teacher Training Colleges in Kenya on the attitudes and teaching performance of primary school social studies teachers. The study also intended to examine some of the issues and problems perceived by teachers themselves as hindrances to effective teaching of the subject.

Three types (groups) of social studies teachers, which differ mainly in their training background, were considered in the study sample for comparison. The first group, which was also the main group of the study, comprised teachers who had undergone the two-year preservice social studies course in the Teacher Training College. The remaining two groups served as control groups against which the attitude, teaching performance and complaints of the main group were compared. Hence in the second group were teachers who had attended a brief in-service course in social studies, and the third group consisted of teachers who lacked any kind of formal training before or after they became teachers.

The sample size of the study amounted to a total of 277 social studies teachers drawn from 60 primary schools located in three Districts in Kenya namely: Kajiado, Machakos, and Murang'a Districts. Of the total, 95 were teachers with two-year preservice social studies course, 120 with brief in-service social studies course, and the remaining 62 untrained teachers.

These teachers were selected by using three different sampling techniques. At the initial stage, to ensure adequate representation of each one of the three groups of social studies teachers in the sample a stratified sampling technique was used. At the same time this was supported by a set of selection criteria at school level which helped to avoid the unintentional inclusion of other types of social studies teachers in each sample group. Finally, wherever many more teachers from either group who met the selection criteria were available at school level a random sampling technique was used.

The data for the study were generated through the use of three different research instruments:

(1) A likert-type Teacher Attitude Scale (Questionnaire)

(2) Teacher Performance Observation Schedule,

(3) Questionnaire for Teachers. The raw data from the field were organized and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study came up with several findings which could be summarized as follows:

(1) The three groups of social studies teachers considered in this study including those who had undergone a two-year preservice social studies course hold an unfavorable attitude towards the subject social studies and some of its main features.

(2) There was no statistically significant difference in attitude towards social studies and some of its main features between those teachers who had undergone a two-year preservice social studies course and each one of the other two groups of teacher namely: (i) teachers with short in-service social studies course, and (ii) Untrained teachers.

(3) The teaching performance of the three groups of social studies teachers including that of the group who had undergone a two-year preservice social studies course was found to be generally low.

(4) Although those teachers with two-year preservice social studies course as a group obtained high average rating, a statistical test revealed that there was no significant difference in teaching performance between these teachers and those teachers who took a short in-service course. On the other hand there was
some significant difference between those teachers with two-year preservice course and untrained teachers regarding teaching performance.

(5) The three groups of social studies teachers seemed to complain over the same kind of problems which they perceive them as hindrances to the effective teaching of the subject. Furthermore there was no significant difference between those teachers who had undergone a two-year preservice course and each one of the other two groups (teachers with short inservice course and untrained teachers) in their degree of complaint.