

CHAPTER VIII
THE CONCLUSION

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this concluding chapter, is to arrive at a synthesis of ideas on the relationship between society and education in Kenya, as they have been examined in the previous chapters. The need for such a synthesis is to arrive at a better understanding of the relationship between society, schools, and teachers in Kenya on one hand, and continuity and discontinuity in the processes of socialization and education in the Kenyan society on the other. This theme is sustained by focusing constantly on the changing Kenyan society and its consequent adaptation to meet newly emerging socio-cultural needs.

The above inquiry has been carried out from the perspective of sociology of education. Thus, in coming to the end of this exploratory study, it is appropriate to give a brief summary of the overall findings. This is presented in three parts upon which conclusion and suggestions on the study are drawn.

Summary

Part one of this study consisted of chapters one and two. Chapter one provided a general introduction to the concepts of society, education, and teachers from the perspective of the sociology of education. Society in this context, refers to an integration of ethnic groups and of their members with a distinct identity, culture as well as a territorial area known as Kenya. Culture is considered as the total heritage of customs, beliefs, attitudes, philosophies, values, skills, and mode of economic production that are learned by members of the society.

Education as an institution, in any society, facilitates a setting in which approved agents are able to inculcate skills, attitudes, and value - orientations among its members. This is necessary for the society's internal adjustment and external adaptation. However, when education is considered as a process of socialization, it enables individuals, with the help of teachers, to acquire necessary symbolic resources, like language and common social orientation, which are transmitted from one generation to another in order to facilitate day-to-day interactions.

In general, the study assumed that societies and groups would not be possible without conforming to the

commonly held cultural expectations, exemplified by significant individuals in a wide range of situations. It follows, therefore, that, conforming to a social expectation is regarded as a variable and an individual's difference in social orientations is not only acknowledged, but is also considered as a major problem requiring explanation in a given social setting.

The following are the general conclusions arrived at in chapter one :

1. Each society tries to preserve its own culture as far as possible by transmitting it from one generation to another.
2. Socialization is a process whereby individuals acquire personal properties such as knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, needs, motivations and so forth.
3. The nature and type of socialization may vary from time to time in the same society. This is due to the fact that individuals have to adapt to the changing physical and socio-cultural environment. For instance, in the traditional simple societies, the socialization process was by and large informal. But, in modern complex societies, it is a formalized

process which is also known as education. This is true in Kenya also.

4. In the formalized educational institutions, not only the transmission of values and norms takes place, but also some special skills and knowledge are systematically imparted by teachers.
5. There are a number of studies on socialization and child rearing practices. However, very few studies have tried to examine the continuities and discontinuities between the two processes with specific reference to Kenya.

Chapter two traced Kenya's contemporary society back to history. Kenya's physical and socio-cultural setting has been attributed to geographical factors. A diversity of flora, fauna and human settlements comprise the country's terrain.

The following observations on this chapter may be noted.

1. Historically, the Kenyan society has evolved from pre-colonial history through colonial to post-colonial stage.
2. Law, order, and state-craft sustain the Kenyan society which is one of the most heterogeneous countries in the world.

3. Ethnic differences affected political decisions at independence. But, the constitution and able presidential leadership facilitated political stability and governance.
4. Despite a fragile economic base, pragmatic philosophies and ideologies have accelerated national development.
5. Education in Kenya emerges as a crucial social service. It is considered as : the indispensable source of trained personnel, an investment to catalyse the national development, modernization, and standard of living. This is the basis upon which part two of this study probes the relationship between society and education.

Part two covered three chapters which were essentially socio-historical. Chapter three briefly elucidated the relationship between the social structure and education in pre-colonial Kenya.

The following conclusions emerged from this chapter:

1. Society in pre-colonial Kenya mainly consisted of migrant, loosely organized, and stateless tribes.
2. Each tribe was stratified on the basis of ascribed criteria like age and sex.

3. The internal integration and external adaptation of these tribes demanded a form and content of education that enabled their members to acquire adequate knowledge of the physical and social setting.
4. Education began soon after the birth of a person. This consisted of pre-determined stages namely; childhood, puberty, adolescence, and adulthood. This involved a life-long process appropriately termed as socialization.
5. Socialization in pre-colonial Kenya was an informal process, which was particularistic in its objectives and was carried out by conservative socializing agents such as parents and other relatives.
6. The aim of education imparted in the pre-colonial Kenyan society was to socialize the members of a tribe on the basis of ascribed criteria which equipped them with certain skills and attitudinal orientations necessary for their adaptation to their external environment as well as integration within the tribe. Affectivity, and diffused expectations were some of the core values emphasized in the process.

7. Geographical and cultural barriers as well as conservative elders that lacked elements of literacy, perpetuated a static relationship between society and education in pre-colonial Kenya.

Chapter four traced the discontinuity of indigenous socialization. It dealt with a series of socio-cultural changes that followed the colonization of Kenya by the British. It also laid emphasis to the emergence of formal education.

The conclusions arrived at in this chapter include :

1. With the colonization of Kenya by the British, geographical barriers were overcome by the completion of the Kenya-Uganda railway. As for the social barriers, the advent of the missionaries and settlers made social contacts inevitable.
2. As a result of colonization, the nature and type of education imparted during this period changed, both in form and content. With reference to the form, the type of informal socialization was replaced by a formalized system of education, in which the school-class emerged as a central institute of socialization. In terms of content, it became more and more universal, specific, achievement-oriented and affectively neutral.

3. Due to the process of modernization, the system of social stratification also started to change with the increasing emphasis on achievement and education.
4. During the colonial period, education became an important means of social mobility in the achievement-oriented form of stratification.
5. Colonialism evolved a new role of professionally trained agents of socialization such as school teachers. These agents infused modern skills, values and attitudes among their pupils.
6. The impact of colonial education led to resentment from the leaders of native Kenyans. Thus, as a result, the native elites initiated an independent (Harambee i.e. self-help) school movement.
7. The independent school movement finally synthesized traditional and modern skills, values as well as attitudes suitable for national aspirations.

Chapter five probed the relationship between society and education in post-colonial Kenya. It focused on the continuity and discontinuity of certain aspects of socialization. Education in post-colonial Kenya is perceived as a means to achieve national development.

The following observations made in the chapter may be noted.

1. The national independence movement which originated from the colonial period as the independent school movement, finally won national independence in 1963. This event heralded a post-colonial era full of new hopes and aspirations.
2. The leaders of independent Kenya made a declaration to build Kenya as a strong and modern nation. However, since Kenya's natural resources are limited, its development depends much upon the utilization and development of the human resource for which education is a key input.
3. School education has acquired considerable importance in post-colonial Kenya. This is reflected in the numerical growth of both primary and secondary schools.
4. With an increasing emphasis on the professionalization of school teaching, the role of school teachers has also assumed considerable social significance in the post-colonial era.

Part three constitutes three chapters, two of which are based on survey data, whereas the last one is the chapter which incorporates all the findings of the study. Chapter six attempted to examine the socio-economic background from which the school teachers are recruited. The findings are presented in two categories, namely social and economic.

(a) Social Background

- (1) School teachers in Nakuru Municipality were predominantly young, female, natives of Rift-valley, with an upbringing in rural, monogamous and Christian families.
- (2) Most of the teachers were of Bantu ethnic group, and from families where one or both of the parents had low education and were farmers by occupation. Thus, the teachers were recruited from educationally and occupationally low strata of the society.
- (3) Nearly 60 percent of all teachers indicated that they had experienced occupational mobility in comparison with their parents.

(b) Economic Background

- (1) The Survey reveals that although a majority of the teachers complained of the insufficiency of their

salary, this perception was found to be different between primary and secondary teachers.

- (2) There was no clear-cut involvement by teachers in additional economic activity apart from farming.
- (3) An assessment of their economic assets showed that most teachers did not own either land or house. Most of the teachers, however, declined to disclose these assets. Moreover, teachers indicated that they had small families with substantial dependents.
- (4) In general, 43 percent of all teachers counted themselves as low income earners, whereas, over a quarter (28 percent) did not answer the question.
- (5) School teachers mostly found themselves in economically unfavorable conditions at the end of the month. For instance, because they could hardly save, they resorted to borrowing or were left uncertain of their actual economic conditions.
- (6) Almost half (46 percent) of all the teachers indicated that their standard of living had not improved in the last ten years. Nevertheless, the secondary school teachers indicated that they had experienced an improved standard of living.

Thus, in this chapter, it is evident that school teachers were recruited mainly from the low strata of the society ; with diverse socio- economic backgrounds. This has resulted in a differential social mobility between primary and secondary teachers.

The analysis in chapter seven showed that all teachers were not alike. For instance, the findings indicate that,

1. The secondary teachers had a more positive attitude to education than the primary teachers and the difference was statistically significant.
2. The secondary teachers had a more positive attitude to teaching than the primary teachers but the difference was not statistically significant.
3. In terms of individual modernity, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant; both were almost equally high and low on the modernity index.
4. In terms of professionalism, the primary school teachers were more professional than the secondary teachers and this difference was statistically significant.
5. Finally as regards to job satisfaction, it was found that the degree of the difference between the two

groups was statistically not significant, though 54 percent of primary teachers and 52 percent of secondary teachers were satisfied with their job.

In short, it was observed that the school teachers significantly differed only in two criteria: (i) The secondary teachers had more positive attitude to education than primary teachers and (ii) the primary teachers were more professional than the secondary teachers.

The above trend is sustained by two hypotheses

(i) Secondary school teachers are more educated than the primary teachers, therefore, they have more positive attitude to education.

(ii) Primary school teachers are professional because of the quality of training they undergo in teacher-training colleges.

However, these hypotheses need to be tested further in order to confirm them. Since no logical pattern emerged with reference to the relationship between socio-economic variables and teachers' orientation, this study concludes that: although school teachers are expected to play an important role in the modernization of contemporary Kenya, their effects may not be uniform

because of the diversity in their socio-economic background and orientation.

The above view may be attributed to the fact that in post-colonial Kenya, there has been both continuity and discontinuity in the process of education and socialization as discussed in chapter V. That is, the Kenyan leaders want Kenya to be a modern nation, and at the same time they are determined to retain some of the traditional values in the name of nationalism. This conflict between tradition and modernity has created an ambivalence which is reflected in the teachers' orientation as revealed by our data. This is the essence of the diversity of orientations that perpetuates the continuity and discontinuity of the process of education as well as socialization in contemporary Kenya.

Conclusion

In the introductory chapter, it was observed that the theory of socialization (whether Parsonian or Marxist) generally considers the family as the primary agency of socialization, whereas the new trends, emerging from modernization research, indicate the importance of education as a socializing process in modern values. However, most of these studies are synchronic and therefore, ignore the continuity and discontinuity in the

process of socialization. It is this gap that the present study has attempted to fill by taking a broad historical perspective and synthesizing diachronic and synchronic approaches. Thus, it has come to light that the process of socialization is not unilinear and, therefore, a clear pattern of orientation does not emerge. The confusion or rather an ambivalence reflected in attitudinal and value orientations of the teachers may be due to this fact. Nevertheless, school teachers have to play a significant role not only by showing competence and commitment to their role of imparting knowledge and skill, but also by becoming effective socializing agents.

Suggestions for Scholars and Policy Makers

- (i) Although this is an exploratory study, the above findings throw some significant light on the interrelationship between society and education.
- (ii) In the twenty-first century, certain aspects of the modern educational system; such as, the socio-economic background of school teachers, their teaching commitment, professionalization and also their attitudinal orientations may be better understood and efforts may be made to give them a proper direction in consonance with the national goals of modern Kenya.