

Effectiveness of Primary School Co-Curricular Activities in Instilling Democratic Values Among Pupils in Public Primary Schools in Igembe South Sub-County - A Critique Based on John Rawls Theory of Justice

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Abstract

This study focused on the effectiveness of primary school co-curricular activities in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools in Igembe south sub-county. A critique based on John Rawls theory of justice. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 6700 comprising of 5950 standard seven pupils and 750 teachers in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County. Simple random sampling was used to select 325 pupils while purposive sampling was used to select 45 teachers forming a total sample of 370 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires. Collected data was cleaned, coded and entered in the computer for analysis using SPSS version 23. The study used Quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The findings of the study revealed that Primary school co-curriculum activities were found relevant in instilling democratic value of socio-economic equality highlighted in the John Rawls theory of justice. The study further revealed that co-curricular activities promoted democratic value of equal liberty among pupils because they inculcate culture of sharing. Based on this,

the study recommended that, head teachers ought to emphasize on the importance of pupils' participation in co-curriculum activities in the process of curriculum implementation and supervision. This is because the study has exposed that co-curriculum activities are significant in enhancing democratic values.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Primary School, co-curricular activities, Democratic Values

1. Introduction

Education is the process of changing behavior patterns of people by exposing them to a kind of knowledge, which is worthwhile and capable of achieving a voluntary and committed response from the learner (Farrant, 2004). Durkheim (1971) defined education as the systematic socialization of the younger generation by which the later learn religious and moral beliefs, feelings of nation and collective opinion of all kinds. In addition, education guarantees, through its content and procedures that children and young people learn to co-exist in a human world that is characterized by justice and fairness and where democratic rights of minorities are regarded as important as those of the majority (Sifuna & Otiende, 2006). Education thus plays an instrumental role in creating in learners a sense of citizenship and a commitment to democratic values. Education is a total process by which human abilities and behaviors are developed (Bambang, 2019). This is done through imparting appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the learners to enable their awareness, appreciation and preservation of their democratic values and their creativity in modifying and even shaping democratic values for their benefit and that of their society (Ndaloh, 2009). Education is a purposeful activity and those who develop or implement curricula have in mind some intent, which is captured as goals, and objectives. These aspects describe individual and social educational ideals. These ideals are enshrined in a body of values held dear by both the communities and the individuals within the society; education therefore fulfils individual's physical and mental development as well as social function (Ndaloh, 2009).

In educational theory and practice, democratic values in school context is vied as preserve of civic education (Karlheinz, 2005). Co-curricular activities somewhat appears ignored and neglected with much emphasis placed on academics. Objectives of education cannot be realized through academics alone. According to Canham and Ozigi (1984) a pure academician develops a lop-sided personality. This indicates that the objective of developing an all-round individual therefore would remain a far-off dream. An all-round development includes but not limited to mental, spiritual, psychological, physical, and vocational development (Korir, 2015).

Studies have revealed that there is an acceptance that co-curricular activities are fundamental part of the programmes in primary schools. This as per the recommendations by ministry of education of the potential of these activities in developing social skills, a sense of cooperation, team spirit and self-discipline (KICD, 2014). These dispositions are essential for a citizen to function in a democratic society.

A report on re-aligning education objectives in Serbia indicated that co-curricular activities form a major component in the development of democratic values amongst individual learners (Republic of Serbia, 2016). This was a reaction to providing learners with activities, which would allow them to exercise their human rights, such as freedom of thought and expression. Students also required a platform upon which they would participate in governing their schools and fulfilling their responsibilities. In all these respects, co-curricular activities have a potential of serving as a pedagogical guideline in teaching democratic values among the learners. Hartley and Huddleston (2009) noted that extra-curricular nurtures and empowers pupils of their critical and informed participative citizens in a democratic society. Bambang (2019) carried a study on Developing Democratic Culture through Civic Education. In the study, the researcher investigated constraints that are there in democracy education with regard to co-curricular activities programs in schools. The researcher recommended that the organization and activities during co-curricular can be utilized as avenues for developing democratic values in real life. In another study by Gandal and Finn (1992) in USA elementary schools revealed co-curricular activities as opportunities for putting learners into practice of democratic norms. This is because in the practice of these activities, learners are given democracy need to cooperate and collaborate towards achieving common goals, choosing those who will be in leadership positions and in making personal decisions concerning their own interests in co-curricular activities. Their study however did not highlight on any given philosophy, which can inform democratic values developed by students' participation in extra-curricular activities.

Carr (2008) investigated Educating for Democracy: With or without Social Justice among undergraduate teacher trainees in USA. In the study Carr (2008) recommends that Teacher education programs need to be cognizant of the dangers in being too focused on standards, and not enough on the teaching and learning processes leading to social justice and teaching democratic values. The researcher further concluded that teacher-training programs should explicitly address democratic education in the course of study. The study by Carr (2008) examined the aspects of teaching democratic values among teacher trainees before joining service and with no specific context. The current study addressed the views of serving teachers regarding

effectiveness of co-curricular activities in primary schools in Kenya in teaching democratic values. The researcher therefore gathered information regarding effectiveness of co-curricular activities in promoting democratic values as hypothesized by Rawls Theory of justice.

2. Research Question

- i. What is the effectiveness of primary school co-curricular activities in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 6700 subjects, comprising of 5950 standard seven pupils and 750 teachers in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County. Simple random sampling was used to select schools and standard seven pupils while purposive sampling was used to select teachers. A sample size of 370 respondents which comprised of 325 pupils and 45 teachers participated in the study. Validity of the instruments was ensured through expert judgment by supervisors from Chuka University. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient using the test-retest method was used to estimate reliability of instruments. A correlation coefficient of 0.78 was generated for the pupils' questionnaires and 0.82 for the teachers' questionnaires. The data collected from the questionnaires was cleaned, coded and entered in the computer for analysis using SPSS version 21. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Analyzed data was presented using frequency tables and pie charts. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically.

4. Results and Discussion

The study was set out to establish the effectiveness of primary school co-curricular activities in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County?

Analyzed data produced the following results.

4.1 Effectiveness of primary school co-curricular activities in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County?

The second objective sought information on the effectiveness of primary school co-curriculum activities in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools. To achieve this, the respondents were required to indicate with a tick (✓) their extent of agreement or disagreement on the items given in the questionnaire. The items were constructed based on the indicators of democratic values which include equal

liberty and socio-economic equality. These items were based on five level Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Table 1 show responses on the relevance of goals of primary school education in promoting socio-economic equality. The responses from the pupils are as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Pupils' Responses on the Effectiveness of Co-Curricular Activities in Instilling Sense of Equal Liberty

Measurement Scale	N	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Themes in music festivals in primary school helps me to express my views without any fear from anyone	325	4.9	16.7	3.6	47.5	17.3
Participating in games and sports in primary school gives me a right to develop my talents and abilities	325	1.5	1.2	4.0	26.6	66.6
Participating in debate clubs in primary school gives me a right to express my opinion	325	5.2	5.2	11.7	48.0	29.8

The information in Table 1 indicate that 66.6% of pupils strongly approved that participating in games and sports in primary school gives pupils a right to develop their talents and abilities. In addition, 26.6% of pupils approved that Participating in games and sports in primary school gives pupils a right to develop their talents and abilities. Only a minority of pupils (2.5%) disagreed that Participating in games and sports in primary school gives pupils a right to develop their talents and abilities. Further, information in Table 1 show that 48.0% and 29.8% of the pupils agreed and strongly agreed respectively, that participating in debate clubs in primary school gives them a right to express their opinion. Teacher's responses on the effectiveness of co-curricular activities in instilling sense of equal liberty among pupils in public primary schools is as presented in table 2

Table 2: Teachers' Responses on the Effectiveness of Co-Curricular Activities in Instilling Sense of Equal Liberty

Measurement scale	N	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Participation in drama festivals in primary school encourages pupils to express their ideas	40	0	0	0	60.0	40.0
Themes in Music festivals in primary school helps pupils to express their views without any intimidation	40	0	2.5	12.5	55.0	30.0
Participating in games and sports gives pupils a right to develop their talents and abilities	40	0	0	2.5	60.0	37.5
Participating in debate clubs in primary school gives pupils a right to express their opinion	40	0	0	5.0	47.5	47.5

The information in Table 2 shows that all teachers approved that participation in drama festivals in primary school encourages pupils to

express their ideas. This was as indicated by 60.0% and 40.0% of teachers who agreed and strongly agreed respectively that participation in drama festivals in primary school encourages pupils to express their ideas. Results in Table 2 further indicate 55.0% of teachers agreed that themes in Music festivals in primary school help pupils to express their views without any intimidation. Moreover, 30% of the teachers indicated that themes in Music festivals in primary school help pupils to express their views without any intimidation. These findings concurs with the views in Kenya Vision (2030) that education should aspire to realize a democratic political system founded on issue-based politics that respects the rule of law and protects the rights and freedoms of every individual in Kenyan society. Providing pupils with a platform that encourages them to express their ideas can assist in realizing this aspiration.

The results in Table 2 also indicated that, majority of teachers, 60.0% agreed that participating in games and sports gives pupils a right to develop their talents and abilities. Those that strongly agreed that participating in games and sports gives pupils a right to develop their talents and abilities stood at 37.5%. Moreover, an equal proportion of the teachers (47.5%) agreed and strongly agreed that participating in debate clubs in primary school gives pupils a right to express their opinion. Creative arts play a great role in enhancing or promoting these values in the society. Creative arts helps to promote nationalism, patriotism and national unity through art exhibitions, cultural and drama festivals, learning and singing national, patriotic and cross-cultural songs and dances, drawing pictures and learning songs with themes on national and emerging issues. The study also sought to establish from the pupils on the effectiveness of co-curricular activities in promoting social economic equality among pupils in primary schools. Their responses are presented in table 3.

Table 10: Pupils' Responses on the Effectiveness of Co-Curricular Activities in Promoting Social-Economic Equality

Measurement scale	N	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Themes taught during Drama festivals in primary school encourages me to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background	325	6.2	7.1	8.6	52.2	25.9
Participating in games and sports help me appreciate talents of pupils from different social economic background	325	2.8	5.2	5.2	42.2	44.6
Assignment of duties to all pupils in primary school makes me feel equal with other pupils from different social economic background	325	3.4	5.5	7.4	45.8	37.8
Physical Education (P.E) taught in primary school encourages me to share play items with pupils from different social economic background	325	5.8	4.0	7.7	45.2	37.2

The information in Table 3 indicates that 52% of pupils' agreed that themes taught during Drama festivals in primary school encourage them to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background. In addition, 25.9% of the pupils strongly agreed that themes taught during Drama festivals in primary school encourage them to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background. Based on Rawls' theory, participating in drama and other related activities enhance interpersonal relations by individuals from diverse social economic background. It also improves effective communicative competence that is fundamental in establishing respect and amiable coexistence amongst people. According to Kimemia (2013), music and drama are important in inculcating moral values and hence developing interpersonal relationships amongst the learners. This is vital in fostering nationalism, patriotism and national unity as per the national goals of education. Based on John Rawls theory, through sharing, socializing and cooperating found in drama festivals, a feeling of equality might be developed amongst learners. Achievement of social equality and responsibility is also one of the national goals of education.

Further, results in Table 3 show that the combined proportion of primary school pupils in Igembe South Sub County who agreed that participating in games and sports helps them appreciate talents of pupils from different social economic background was 86.8%. The proportion of pupils who disagreed that participating in games and sports helps them appreciate talents of pupils from different social economic background stood at 8.0%. This concurs with Korir (2015) who found that local Kenyans and the leadership are proud of their runners, appreciating their own live on TV during marathon races abroad and on arrival from International sports.

The study gathered information from the teachers on the effectiveness of co-curricular activities in promoting social economic equality among pupils in primary schools and the findings are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Teachers' Opinions on the Effectiveness of Co-Curricular Activities in Promoting Social-Economic Equality

Measurement scale	N	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Themes in drama festivals in primary school encourages pupils to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background	40	0	10.0	10.0	65.0	15.0
Participating in games and sports helps pupils appreciate talents of pupils from different social economic background	40	0	2.5	2.5	47.5	47.5
Assignment of duties to all pupils in primary school makes all pupils feel equal	40	0	2.5	2.5	50.0	45.0
Physical Education (PE) encourages pupils to Share play items with other pupils from less privileged background	40	0	2.5	5.0	45.0	47.5

The information in Table 4 indicates that 52% of pupils' agreed that themes taught during Drama festivals in primary school encourage them to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background. While 25.9% of the pupils strongly agreed that themes taught during Drama festivals in primary school encourage them to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background. This finding concurs with that of pupils, and this would suggest that participating in drama activities as suggested by John Rawls' theory of justice encourages pupils to respect and appreciate pupils from different social economic background. This finding concurs with that of Mounkoro (2005) who found that themes in drama takes care of learners from diverse backgrounds and is a valuable tool that encourages participatory. Kimemia (2013) also found music and drama are important in inculcating moral values and hence developing interpersonal relationships amongst the learners. This is vital in fostering nationalism, patriotism and national unity as per the national goals of education. Based on John Rawls theory, through sharing, socializing and cooperating found in drama festivals, a feeling of equality might be developed amongst learners. More information in Table 4 show that the combined proportion of primary school pupils in Igembe South Sub County who agreed that participating in games and sports helps them appreciate talents of pupils from different social economic background was 86.8%. Sporting activities enhances development of creativity and innovativeness of learners through performances. In addition, sports assure the development of artistic skills at all levels of education as well as problem solving skills (KICD, 2012). The proportion of pupils who disagreed that participating in games and sports helps them appreciate talents of pupils from different social economic background stood at 8.0%.

Information in Table 4 also indicates that 45.8% and 37.8% of the pupils agreed and strongly agreed respectively that assignment of duties to all pupils in primary school makes them feel equal with other pupils from different social economic background. It is only an insignificant proportion of pupils combined, 12.9% who disagreed that assignment of duties to all pupils in primary school makes them feel equal with other pupils from different social economic background. In addition, 45.2% of the pupils agreed that Physical Education (P.E) taught in primary school encourages them to share play items with pupils from different social economic background. Further, 37.2% of the pupils strongly agreed that Physical Education (P.E) taught in primary school encourages them to share play items with pupils from different social economic background. However, a proportion of 9.8% disagreed that Physical Education (P.E) taught in primary school encourages them to share play items with pupils from different social economic background.

When asked to state values that pupils acquire through Religious Education taught in primary school that promote social economic equality, the following thematic clusters were generated: Appreciation of one another, Sharing of personal items for example textbooks, Peaceful coexistence with others and Humility. The respondents were also asked to name values that pupils acquire through participating in games and sport that promotes social economic equality. Analysis generated the following themes: Teamwork, Socialization, Togetherness, Patience, Appreciation of other pupils' social background, Respect for one another, Living with others peacefully, sharing of resources. The themes generated from the respondents also indicate that participating in drama helps pupils in appreciating pupils from different social economic background and sharing of resources. These values when developed into learners can enhance and promote social economic equality.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings the following recommendation(s) were made:

- i) Primary school head teachers should emphasize on the importance of pupils' participation in co-curriculum activities in their process of curriculum implementation and supervision. This is because this study has shown that co-curriculum activities are significant in enhancing democratic values.

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Data Availability: All data are included in the content of the paper.

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