

**Article Title: Pedagogical Injustices of Private and Public Schooling in Kenya:
Lessons from a Triangulation Convergence Design Study**

Authors: Anne Kanga and Nderitu Kimotho

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Publisher: Mount Meru University

Email: enquiry@mmu.ac.tz

City: Arusha

Country: Tanzania

About the Authors

ANNE KANGA, PhD, is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education, department of Research and Evaluation, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Missio Hall Suite 5, P.O Box 62157-00200, Nairobi, Kenya; ankanga@cuea.edu. She teaches educational research methodologies with a keen focus on qualitative and mixed methods research. She also enjoys mentoring reflective educators, a strand she captures through the teaching and learning of sociology of education. Currently, she is the coordinator of Teaching Practice and Mentoring Program for student teachers. Her research and scholarship focuses on gender equity and policy in education in Sub-Saharan Africa; pedagogical inequalities; and Educators' beliefs about their practice/Educators' teaching philosophies.

KIMOTHO NDERITU Is an Assistant lecturer at school of Education, department of educational management and curriculum studies, Mount Kenya University Mombasa Campus. P.O. Box 42702-80100, Mombasa Kenya; jkimotho@mku.ac.ke. He teaches Education research methods across the various departments. Currently Mr Kimotho is the Coordinator School of Education and Teaching practice Coordinator Mount Kenya University Mombasa Campus. He is also a PhD student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, specializing in Educational Research and Evaluation.

Abstract

In the wake of Education for All (EFA), educational equity and equality, educational researchers and sociologists have continued to raise concerns over savage inequalities that have continued to perpetuate two parallel school categories in Kenya. In particular, the mushrooming of private schools with a concentration at the primary school level has raised issues of critical concern touching on EFA and the question of education as a democratic practice. For more than a decade, academic achievement as depicted by the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) results has continued to register troubling differences between private and public schools in Kenya, with such statements as: Private schools and academies rank first in KCPE; The first 10 students are from private schools...Literature and research studies have confirmed a positive correlation between teaching/learning resources and overall school climate and culture with academic achievement and overall learners' efficacy. Authors in this study adopted a triangulation convergence model to better understand implications of mushrooming private schools to public schooling by comparing and corroborating survey results and interview data from a cross section of stakeholders (head teachers, teachers, pupils, parents and educational officers) drawn from urban and rural contexts. Quantitative and qualitative data from 11 rural and 9 urban schools revealed major differences on school characteristics, social class, school environment, determinants of school choice and overall learners' efficacy. Study further found out the existence of non-formal schools that further complicated the meaning of private schools and learners' efficacy. A t-test of independent sample means on head teachers and teachers' attitudes towards selected variables about public and private schools revealed no significant statistical difference ($t=1.441$, $df 18$, $p>0.05$; and $t=-1.574$, $df 126$, $p>0.05$). The study recommended theoretical, practical and policy implementation strategies to address the savage pedagogical injustices and inequalities.

Keywords: educational equity and equality; public and private primary schooling; learners' efficacy; triangulation convergence design

Basic Education in Kenya: Issues and Trends

In the wake of education for all (EFA), (UNESCO, 2000), and educational equity and equality concerns in Kenya, educational researchers have remotely continued to raise concerns over savage inequalities that for the last two decades plus have been creeping into the educational system. In particular, the mushrooming of private schools with a concentration at the primary school level has raised issues of critical concern that touches on: social justice and education, educational inequity and inequality, social stratification among others. It is common knowledge that school quality impacts significantly on the academic performance (Logan & Oakley, 2012), and overall present and future learner's efficacy.

As researchers in the proposed study contend, if the current mushrooming of private schools is not challenged, the educational system in Kenya will undoubtedly continue to perpetuate classism as opposed to empowering its citizens through democratically planned school structures and curriculum programs. Additionally, the plan to raise the standards of living for all Kenyans by 2030 ((Republic of Kenya, 2007b), and the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (UN, SDG, 2015), risks to be mere rhetoric for a majority of the Kenyan people.

For more than a decade now, academic achievement as depicted by the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education results has continued to register troubling differences between private and public schools in Kenya. Critical statements such as the following abound: Private schools and academies rank first in KCPE; the first 10 students are from private schools (Siringi, 2009). A study by Oketch, Mutisya, Ngware and Ezeh, (2010) pointed out that schooling in the urban context from 2000 to 2012 has shown a higher utilization of informal private schools for the poor despite Free Primary Education (FPE) since 2002.

Further, literature from current studies on state of primary school education in Kenya, has persistently provided perplexing findings related to class sizes, teacher: pupil ratio and paradoxical findings like declining public primary school enrollments especially with the invent of FPE in 2002, among other findings (Bold, Kimenyi, Mwabu, & Sandefur, 2009). Whereas Private schooling offers an alternative of meeting education goals, emphasis on improving public schooling should be a priority for any democratic state. Besides, private schooling accounts for less than 15 % of Kenya's primary school going children (Ministry of Education, 2009). Imagining less than 15 % will transform Kenya now and in the future is a recipe for disaster.

According to Kaimenyi (2015), teachers in Kenya have now gone on strike more than 12 times since independence. The frequency of the strikes has increased since 1997 to almost every year ritual-October 1997, October 1998, October 2002, January 2009, March 2010, September 2011, September 2012, September 2013, January 2015, and September 2015, (Richardson, 2015). These recurrent strikes impact negatively on the majority of Kenyan school going children, making some even with limited income and from low social economic status (SES) families opt to enroll their children in private schools.

Following the release of 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 KCPE results, critical statistics on school representation that were published in the Daily Nation (KNEC, 2009-2014), and also available in the Ministry of Education (2009), show that a very high percentage (85%) of primary school going age in Kenya are in public primary schools, as opposed to a mere 15% who are in private schools. A critical flip of this scenario is the fact that the public schools are never categorized into their other categories such as high, medium, and low cost. As reported in the same media report, learners from high SES families continue to have a clear and a competitive edge in education and to life in general.

In the Kenyan context today, the phenomenon of private schools mushrooming has very negative implications to educational equity and equality in particular, and to social justice in general. While we acknowledge that a "utopian" society requires a process to collapse existing ideologies and other social determinants of inequalities, in this paper, we argue that the school is one true social institution that can be a panacea for perpetuating social justice. Unfortunately, in the backdrop of capitalistic schooling globally and Kenya in particular, this is to the contrary. As pointed out by McLaren (2013), "in the wake of capitalistic schooling, teachers and students alike wallow in absurdity, waiting for the junkyard of consumer life to vomit up yet another panacea for despair" (pg. 15). Further, McLaren (2013) call for education as the social organ through which the mutually beneficial reciprocity between the individuals and their society becomes real even the already uneven schooling arena. Indeed, as we contend in this paper, current public schooling is highly comprised. All Kenyan students deserve equal treatment for them to compete favorably with the rest, first in their country and secondly in the global arena. Otherwise, soon the escalating division will lead to conflict over diminishing resources.

An article in the Standard Newspaper by Oriedo (2009), reported perplexing scenarios in our Kenyan public schools as he reported, “overwhelmed by pupil numbers, teachers call for abolition of the rule that a school should admit every student who turns up” (p.27). As the author further pointed out, in one of the public primary schools he visited in Nairobi’s Eastland area, an average class had over 150 pupils. This state of affairs continues to deteriorate and to cause a perpetual public outcry. A media broadcast soon after the 2009 KCPE results were released on Dec 30th, reported the agony children in public primary schools go through. This was aired live as the entire country watched a standard eight boy who bitterly exclaimed: “sasa mambo si poa shule... yaani, darasani tuko wengi kuliko viti”/now things are not good at school... actually, in the classroom, we are more than the chairs”.

A 2013/14 EFA Global Monitoring Report of a survey carried out in 2010 in selected primary schools in Kenya indicated that, grade 6 teachers scored only 60% on tests designed for their students. Further, the report showed the disparity that exists between the pupil/teacher ratio between the private and public schools. For example, in private schools in some parts of Nairobi, pupil: teacher ratio was 15:1, compared to 80:1 in public schools. As to other resources, more savage inequalities are more critical. All this translates to two classes of learners undoubtedly leading to social reproduction of classes.

Tables 1 and 2 present summaries of some of the inequalities as reflected in one teaching/learning outcome and usually overrated - academic performance.

Table 1

KCPE Results for Top Schools from Public and Private Schools per province (KNEC, 2006)

Province	Number of candidates from public schools	Number of candidates from private schools
Coast	20	93
Central	17	101
Nairobi	16	97
Rift Valley	29	101
Western	57	66
Nyanza	59	55
Eastern	29	94

Table 2

KCPE 2011 Mean Scores for Top Ten Pupils from Public and Private Schools

Position	Public School	Private
1	395	410
2	393	408
3	382	407
4	377	406
5	376	406
6	376	405
7	373	405
8	372	403
9	370	400
10	367	398

Source: <http://serveafrica.info/kcpe-exam-results-2011>

Further, in 2012 all the best 20 schools in KCPE were privately owned (Aduda, 2012). In view of the evident educational inequities and inequalities, two different educational platforms emerge: schools for the “haves” and schools for the “have nots”. In the words of Freire, this is a stage for panacea of despair and social reproduction of classes (Freire, 2010). The proposed study hopes to foreground other effects and critical issues the mushrooming of public private schools (high, medium & low cost] have on public education in Kenya. This is hoped to sensitize stakeholders in education to rethink about the prevailing scenario and to come up with strategies that can inform educational theory, practice and policy in Kenya.

The “Haves” and “Have nots” Schools: A Conceptualization

Low cost primary schools mean all schools that have limited and sometimes poor physical facilities limited and ill equipped personnel as compared to high and medium cost primary schools. Depressed public schools, low cost private schools and Non-formal schools fall under this category. High cost primary schools mean all the schools that have adequate and modern physical facilities to include ICT equipment and usually characterized by admission of learners from high SES families. Private primary schools mean all schools that are owned by individuals, organizations such as religious organizations, and whose employees are not financed by Ministry of Education through the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). Public Primary Schools on the other hand are community based schools that have been established through government initiatives and are currently funded by the government through the tax payers’ money.

In the next section we present a review of studies and other relevant literature on current study. Other sections are: theoretical framework, research questions and hypotheses, study significance, methodology and findings. Finally, we present conclusions, theoretical, practical and policy implications.

Review of Related Literature

Basic Education: A Basic Human Right

Within the last three decades, educational inequity and inequality in Kenya have raised concerns to educational researchers and social scientists due to mushrooming of private schools especially at the primary school level. This privatization of primary school education has raised concerns with regard to social justice, educational equity and equality, social stratification among others.

The right to education is one of the basic human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), which Kenya has ratified. This right has further been endorsed by the 2002 launch of the Free Primary Education (FPE), by the then National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government. For education to fulfill this goal, it has to be equitable and accessible to all. An equitable educational system is also necessary for developing countries because through it, a country is able to accumulate the necessary human capital.

In the Kenyan context today, the phenomenon of privatization of primary schools has very negative implications to educational equity and equality in particular, and to social justice in general. With the mushrooming of private schools, two different educational platforms emerge: schools for the “haves” and schools for the “have nots”. Researchers in this study contend that if the current proliferation of private schools is not checked, educational system in Kenya will undoubtedly continue to perpetuate classism as opposed to empowering citizens through a democratically planned primary school structure and curriculum. Moreover, the plan to raise the standards of living for all Kenyans by 2015 (UNESCO, 2000) may become mere rhetoric. While we acknowledge that a “utopian” society requires a process to collapse existing ideologies and other social determinants of inequalities, we however, in the same vein argue that the school is one true social institution that can be a solution to social injustices.

Privatization of Education: Merits and Demerits

According to Ball and Youdell (2007), a public educational system is one open to all without discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, culture or social class, it is free of charge, publicly funded, and managed and evaluated in accordance with the objectives and principles established democratically by public authorities (government). Its aim is to give each child, the opportunity to develop his/her full potential as a person and as a member of a society. Contrary to this, in practice, privatization of education tends to commercialize education. Hence, education becomes a service sold to clients. Education therefore becomes a ‘private’ good that serves the interest of the economically endowed (Ball et. al. 2007).

McClaren (2013) argues that for meaningful change to happen there is a need to recognize that we need to move beyond capitalism if we ever hope to bring about genuine equality and a greater unfolding of human powers and capacities. It is because of the inequality that McLaren advocates for a socialist education. Arguing that the privatization is usually ‘hidden’. Ball and Youdell 2007, delineate two types of privatization, namely: Endogenous privatization or privatization in public education which entails the importation of ideas, techniques, practices from the private sector in order to make the public sector more like business and more businesslike, and exogenous privatization which is essentially the privatization of public education- the opening up of public education services to private sector participation on a for- profit basis and using

the private sector to design, manage or deliver aspects of public education. A third type of privatization in education involves the direct use of private companies to deliver education services which is a public – private partnership.

According to these authors, privatization changes the way in which education is organized, managed and delivered, how the curriculum is decided and taught, how performance of students is assessed and how students, teachers, schools and communities are judged. It changes how teachers are prepared, the nature of and access to ongoing professional development, the terms and conditions of teachers' contracts, and pay, the nature of teachers' day-to-day activities and the way they experience their working lives. It also challenges the capacity of unions to bargain collectively on behalf of their members, secure favorable, single agreements with employers and more generally participate in educational policy landscape. The language, incentives and disciplines, roles, positions and identities all change what it means to be a teacher, student, learner, parent etc.

Privatization was introduced in Africa in the 1980s and 1990s as part of the structural adjustment programmes [SAPs] (Aseto & Okelo, 1997). These policies were in response to the perceived failure of the state in terms of its capacity to steer economic growth. The SAPs were aggressively promoted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the panacea to this state failure and African countries that agreed to implement the programmes were promised developmental loans in return. Privatization which was an integral element of these programmes was implemented in different forms including the direct sale of public assets, commercialization, and out-sourcing as well as public-private partnerships (Aseto et.al., 1997). It was believed that privatization would bring about greater efficiency, higher productivity and better service delivery. It was also held that privatization would generate wealth and that there would be a trickledown effect to citizens of these countries.

In education, supporters of privatization cite the problems associated with poor educational quality, poorly trained teachers, lack of textbooks, poor teaching, the high pupil-teacher ratio in government owned and run schools, poor school infrastructure and the lack of technology and equipment as well as the lack or insufficient government funding. Besides inadequacy, funds in government controlled schools are often misappropriated at the ministry or school level, often both. Supporters of privatization of education further argue that privatization has the capacity to ensure the financing, delivery and fulfillment of EFA, that it has the capacity to extend educational services to the poor due to the expansion of educational services in that privatization allows for the expansion of institutions offering educational services and at different levels thus expanding educational opportunities as well as choice (Ball & Youdell, 2007). Parents are also able to choose between competing schools. This competition helps to raise educational standards as the 'bad' schools are avoided. Such schools may also be forced to raise their performance in order to keep up.

The opposing school of thought however points out that privatization of education can lead to poor quality and standards especially in the face of ineffective, supervision and control by agencies of the government. In certain instances there are completely no monitoring or quality control inspections by government. Educational services are sometimes provided in unsanitary, unhealthy and incomplete structures which pose hazards to the pupils. Untrained teachers, indifferent caregivers, undefined curriculum and dubious instructional modules as well as unorthodox modes of delivery and unsuitable learning environments become the order of the day.

The proposed study calls into question how the current education system and structures in Kenya expects to have the marginalized learners and communities move from margin to center within the framework of privatization of primary schools at the expense of public education. The “symptoms” and ills of segregation are clearly depicted in the national examinations that are usually romanticized with statements such as “private schools and academies rank first in KCPE; the first ten students in KCPE are from private schools and academies namely, XYZ; the best girl and boy in the KCPE are both from private schools XY respectively (Serve Africa, 2012). This initial and early segregation of students is further reflected in who gets admitted into which category of school, with what type of facilities, under what type of teachers, and under what type of social conditions. All these end up becoming critical determinants in defining who makes it in life and who flounders. McLaren (2013) affirms this when he argues that in its present form, education is successful at creating the conditions of possibility for capitalism to reproduce itself.

Conflict Theory and Labeling Theory as a Conceptual Framework

This study adopted two educational sociological theories namely: the conflict and the labeling theory. The theories were used to help foreground the implications of school segregation along the categories of private vs. public schools. More critically, schools for the rich and schools for the poor.

The conflict theory as propelled by Karl Marx (1818-1883), contend that conflicts will always persist in the society as long as power, economy, prestige and privilege are vested in the hands of the “haves” who will always oppress the poor in order to sustain their privileged positions. Arguably, once a group such as the elite gain control of society’s resources, it tends to establish rules, procedures and policies that will protect their interests at the expense of the underprivileged. If unchecked, the MOE through schools has the tendency to perpetuate competition through examination oriented curriculum programs, tracking, ranking, categorizations of schools to mention but a few. The current phenomenon, where the education system has assumed an asymmetrical categorization with the private schools absorbing the children from the rich families and the public schools being the only option for the poor children is a critical issue that calls for urgent and radical measures to challenge the obvious institutionalized segregation that continues to nurture social injustices in Kenya. With the unequal distribution of resources, stark differences in academic performance, future educational, academic and career opportunities for the learners raise critical concerns that this study foregrounds.

A second lens to foreground this phenomenon is the labeling theory as propelled by Becker (1963) and lately by Eyben and Moncireffe (2007). This theory help to critically examine how people and in particular students are labeled and the negative implications the labels have on them. More critically, this theory help address the following questions: what does it mean to be part of the mass known as “The Poor? What visions and assumptions do students make when they are labeled “Public School Students” or even Private School Students? How do individual students react to these labels? Who develops these labels? What power do the labels carry? How do such labels affect how people are treated? More specifically, what are the implications of segregating schools along the categories of private and public schools in a country that social justice is a priority agenda in development?

Research Questions and Hypotheses

To help understand effects of private schooling to public schooling in Kenya, authors were guided by the following research questions and hypotheses

1. A Grand Tour Question was “what is going on inside Kenyan Primary schools?
2. What are the forms of privatization of primary schools in Kenya?
3. What are the policies governing privatization of primary schools in Kenya?
4. What are the perceptions of teachers, pupils and parents perceptions towards the private and public schooling systems?
5. What are Psychosocial, economic and educational implications of the current phenomenon of mushrooming private primary schools in Kenya?
6. What are the challenges and opportunities inherent in public and private schooling?

Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no statistically significant difference in mean attitude scores between Head teachers from public and private schools on selected variables pertaining to private and public schools

Ho2: There is no statistically significant difference in mean attitude scores between teachers from public and private schools on selected variables pertaining to private and public schools

Study Significance

Current study has endeavored to put into question and further challenge privatization of of education at the primary school level in Kenya. This is hoped to charge dialogue that will sensitize educational researchers, educators, politicians, parents and the Ministry of Education (MOE) to rethink the current practice of privatizing education and the negative implications it has to public education in Kenya.

Further, advanced in this study is a thorough rethinking of the current physical facilities, teaching/learning resources that are glaringly different in the two categories of schools. This is hoped to challenge and sensitize the Ministry of Education in her endeavors to provide equal and equitable education in Kenya.

The study further serves to sensitize the Kenyan community in general to further reflect on the current phenomenon in the light of our history where public education was a priority. It is important to say that our history that prioritized public education is reflected in Kenya’s great women and men currently serving this country in various capacities. Majority are the breed of public schools that were doing very well soon after independence in 1963.

Additionally, the findings in this study contribute to the knowledge base in the study of improving standards of living for the marginalized groups and societies in Kenya in particular, and to educational equity and equality in general. Improvement of educational theory, practice and policy especially in the education of vulnerable and marginalized learners is a strand this study captures.

Finally, current study's adoption of a MMR design and specifically the Triangulation Convergent Model (Creswell & Clark, 2007), is critically important in the study context where contextualized empirical MMR studies are currently a dream yet to be realized. Triangulated research findings have helped to foreground effects of private schooling to public schooling as both sets of data have complemented and supplemented each other.

Study Methodology

To explore the implications and the meanings the current two categories of schooling in Kenya have on public primary school education, the proposed study adopted the Triangulation Convergence mixed method design. Triangulation Convergence mixed method design consist of two distinct phases: quantitative followed by qualitative (Creswell & Clark, 2006, 2007). In this design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed separately on the same phenomenon and then the different results are converged by comparing and contrasting the different results at the interpretation stage. This approach helps to validate, confirm, and/or corroborate quantitative results with qualitative findings (Creswell, 2003; Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

As pointed by Creswell (2014), the key assumption of this approach is that qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information that add depth to understanding phenomena, but limited in terms of generalizability and scope. Hence, the use of a survey in this study to give researchers legitimacy to generalize findings to a larger population within the context studied. The design is represented diagrammatically in Figure 1.

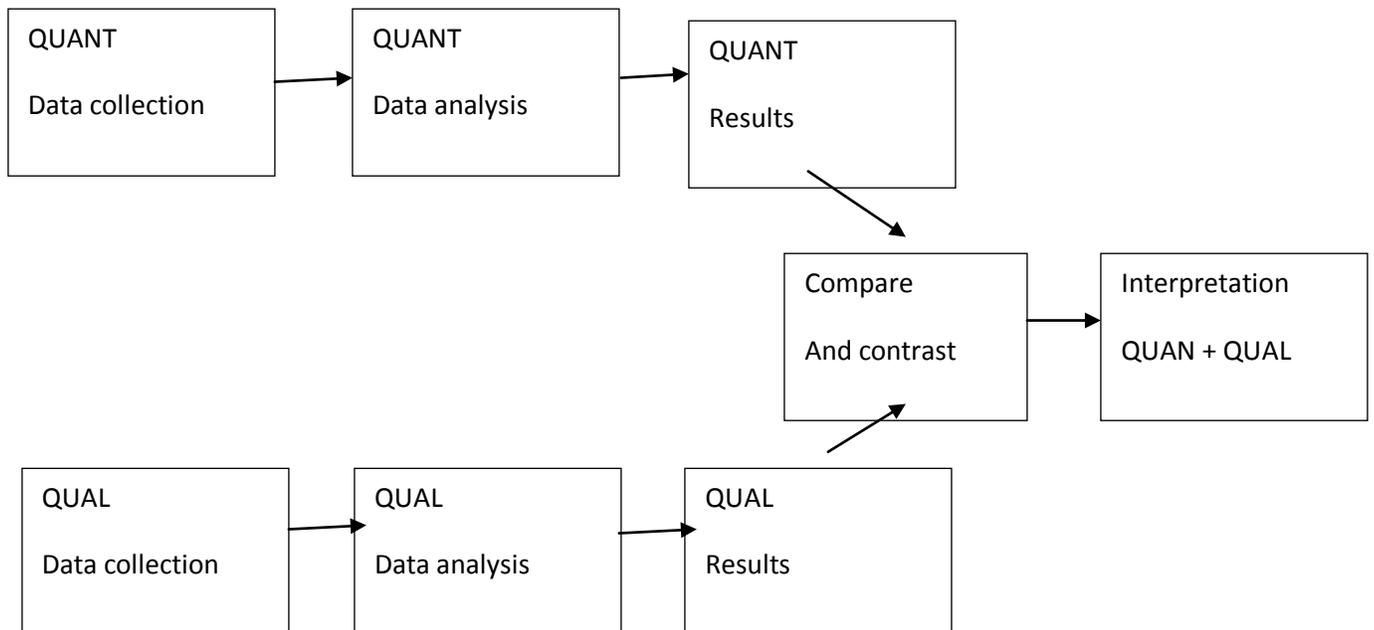


Figure 1: Triangulation Design Convergent Model. Adapted from Creswell & Clark, 2006, online)

Study Sites and Issues of Entry

This study was delimited to two purposefully selected divisions representing urban and rural schools in Kenya. A 10% of sampled schools and participants were used for the study due to time and finances available to conduct the study. This scope is however, hoped to be a starting point in the endeavor to carry out similar studies in other parts of Kenya

Study Participants and Sampling Techniques

Study targeted all the primary schools (private and public), all head teachers, teachers, pupils and parents in two districts (Urban and Rural). Further, Quality Assurance and Standard Officers (QASOs) were also targeted. Hence, study findings can be generalized to the aforementioned target sites, participants and similar contexts in Kenya.

To sample schools, a variety of techniques were adopted (Creswell, 1998; Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996; Mugenda, 2008). Public and private schools were sampled randomly, while criterion sampling was used to sample Non- Formal schools. Study Participants were sampled using maximum variation, random purposeful and criterion sampling. For teachers, a random sample of 10 % was selected from each school studied, while DEOs/DQASOs and parents were criterion samples. For pupils, stratified purposeful and random purposeful were adopted. The overall sample comprised of: 11 rural schools (8 public and 3 private), 9 urban schools (5 public, 3 private and 2 non-formal schools), 20 Head teachers, 141 teachers, Two DQASOs, 19 FGDs with pupils (11 rural and 8 urban) and 4 individual interviews with parents.

Data Collection and Analysis

To solicit quantitative data, the study used questionnaires on the following groups: Head teachers and teachers.. To collect qualitative data, interview guides were used on the following respondents: DEOs/, QASOs, parents and FGDs with pupils.. To further triangulate data sources and instruments, document analysis of key documents such as academic performance records, facilities was carried out during fieldwork. An observation guide was also used to record facilities available in the two school categories.

Both data sets were collected and analyzed separately, presented and compared, and finally, an interpretation based on the two data sets made (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Specifically, numerical data were analyzed using SPSS version 15 to generate outputs on frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Means derived from the Likert's scale items administered to head teachers and teachers were used to test the two hypotheses. Data were further analyzed and presented in tables. For the Likert's scale items, SA and A, SD and D were merged during the data reporting and interpretation stages. Qualitative data were analyzed through a continuous process as field notes were recorded throughout the field work process culminating to analysis of transcribed face to face interviews and FGDs. To capture the nuances of the two study settings, data were transcribed and reported verbatim. Data were coded and thematized. Verbatim excerpts from participants have been used to support the themes that emerged (Wolcott, H. (2001).

Validity and Reliability of Instruments and Study Trustworthiness

The researcher validated the instrument through multiple strategies. Peer review and expert reviews were sought during construction of the instruments. Further, to epitomize validity/dependability and reliability/confirmability, a pilot study was done in two schools (rural and urban). The pilot schools and respective participants were used to test all the instruments

Key ratifications on the different instruments were made like adding salary scales for both head teachers and teachers, deleting a reversed item on both questionnaires and improving on the guides to capture more data. Key ratification on the interview guides was adding an item that solicited how pupils from rural and private schools interacted. Further, data validation was ensured by the thick descriptions of the shared experiences from participants.

In addition, reliability was established through several procedures as advocated by Gibbs (2007). Transcripts were checked to avoid mistakes made during transcription. Further, data codes were constantly checked to ensure consistency. Cronbach's alpha analysis was used on the Likert's scale items from the teachers' instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.728 was obtained.

Table 3

Analysis of Reliability and Test Results of the Piloted Research Instruments

Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
0.728	17

Ethical considerations

To promote integrity of the research, the following ethical considerations were observed: Permission from gate keepers was sought. Informed consent was also observed, while consent of minors was sought from the head teachers (Creswell, 1998; Mugenda, 2008). Pupils were also given an opportunity to assent before participating in the study. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants and schools, pseudonyms such as "Mambo Yote Academy" have been used.

Research Findings

Data are presented as informed by the research questions and hypotheses that guided this study.

Analysis of Selected Demographics of Head Teachers, Schools' and Teachers

School leadership, teaching and available resources are key determinants of school effectiveness (Hammond, 2003). Tables 4, 5, and 6 show dynamics of these variables.

Research question 1: How are schools and what is going on in the schools?

Table 4

Selected Head Teachers and Schools Demographics

Variable	Frequency	%
Sex		
Female	4	20
Male	16	80
Total	20	100
School Location		
Rural	11	55
Urban	9	45
Total	20	100
School Type		
Public	12	60
Private	6	30
Non-Formal	2	10

As depicted in Table 4, there is sex imbalance in the school leadership, with 80% of all head teachers being male. Also, during the school site visits, researchers noted that out of the 20% female head teachers, three were from the urban private schools and only one was from a rural school. Noteworthy is the fact that all the schools headed by females were both private and church sponsored.

Table 5

Head teachers and Teachers Professional Qualifications

Head Teachers	Frequency	%
P1	11	55
Diploma	2	10
Bachelor of Education	6	30
Masters	0	0
Any Other	1	5
Total	20	100
Teachers		
P1	74	52.2
Diploma	26	18.4
Bachelor of Education	13	9.2
Masters	1	0.7
Any Other	24	17.0
Missing	3	2.1
Total	141	100

In both study contexts, there was sex imbalance among the head teachers with females critically underrepresented (Males 80%, Females 20%). At the classroom level, females teachers were overrepresented (Females, 67%, Males 33%). Majority of head teachers had enough teaching experience and so were the teachers. A fairly sizable percentage (19.1 %) of teachers and especially from private schools and non-formal schools were not willing to reveal their professional qualifications.

As pointed out by critical pedagogy scholars (Ball & Younde, 2007; McLaren, 2013), privatization of schooling changes the way in which education is organized, managed and delivered, how the curriculum is decided and taught, how performance of students is assessed and how students, teachers, schools and communities are judged. The high non response rate on professional qualification by teachers from private schools puts into question their credibility to teach. Access to other day-to-day activities such as ongoing professional development, terms and conditions of teachers, contracts, and pay among others are also not assured for such teachers..

Table 6

Head Teachers Salaries per Month

Salary in Thousands	F	%
1-14	2	10
15-20	3	15
21-30	2	10
31-40	2	10
41-50	3	15
51-60	2	10
Confidential	6	30

Head teachers and teachers salary ranged from 20-30 thousand per month, with some head teachers earning more than 60 thousand shillings. Notable also, (30% head teachers and 8.5% of teachers mainly from private schools and non-formal schools preferred to indicate “confidential”. Teaching profession in Kenya is marred with teacher strikes demanding salary increments from time to time (Educational International 2015; Richardson, 2015). From the data, it is evident that teachers are not willing to reveal their salaries. Informed by field work observations and informal interactions with the teachers, it is a considered opinion of the researchers that respondents were not happy with their salaries.

Research Questions 2 and 3: Forms and Types of Primary Schools in Kenya and Policy Governing Private Schools Establishment

With the exception of International and special education schools, current study confirmed the presence of public schools, and private schools. A major change in terms of public schools categorization is the creation of “Centers of Excellence” (COE) (ROK, 2009/2010). The COE are part of the government’s spending plan initiated to boost economic growth and lead the Kenyan economy out of recession at the first decade of the 21st Century following a recession from 7.1 in 2007-1.7 in 2009. Among many projects to undergo economic stimulus was the education sector. The project aimed at upgrading two primary and two

Secondary schools per constituency, currently, sub-counties (ROK, 2010). The upgrading focuses on improved infrastructure, installing running and underground water storage, modern classrooms, computer labs, and planned landscaping. Arguably, whereas this was a good gesture in improving our public schools, it tells so much in terms of the pathetic state majority of public schools are in Kenya. Little wonder, that private schools are mushrooming by the day.

Emerging in the study and never documented in conventional education text books in Kenya were the Non-Formal schools. Also, not in conventional educational literature about schools in Kenya, is how stratified the private schools are. Major classifications and named by the researchers were: High, Medium and Low cost private schools. Non-formal schools though privately owned were found in the urban study context and as one QASO narrated, their establishment is marred with irregularities and contradictions. .

We have so many non-formal schools in this slum, but we cannot tell you their location or even what they do... You know they start as homes for orphans, these people get funding from NGOs and other well wishers and at some point, they convert these homes to schools...Very pathetic schools, some of them!... We only get to know they exist when these owners come to our offices asking to register pupils for KCPE (*a sigh!*)... You know kids are innocent, so we usually register them... (Interview, QASO, Urban Schools).

Policy Governing Private Primary Schools Establishment

Although there is a government (MOEST) circular that stipulates requirements for school registration of schools, researchers accessed only one specifically for "Nairobi County. However, analysis of the circular revealed that it is general and not specific on how different school types should be established. More critical is the fact that QASOs seemed not to be in touch with the reality on private school establishment as one QASO reported:

We don't get to know when and where some schools such as non-formal schools are getting started, let alone where they are located"....The first time we know they exist is when they knock our doors with a list of standard 8 pupils asking for registration of the KCPE Exam!". The officer further noted, "We find ourselves between a rock and a hard place with no choice but to register the innocent kids (Interview, QASO –Urban Schools).

Commenting on challenges pupils, head teachers and teachers in private schools face, a QASO from the rural schools said:

Some school owners have no background in education, so they don't understand the teaching learning process. Teachers miss essential things like syllabi...Teachers and head teachers are underpaid. Some are well managed, but poorly managed ones are doing more harm than good (Interview, QASO, Rural Schools).

Corroborating this information is the low level of agreement head teachers and teachers recorded on two items: "teachers in private schools have more and better teaching facilities than teachers in public schools". In this, 35 % and 44.6 % of the head teachers and teachers agreed respectively.

Research Question 4: Perceptions of Teachers, Head teachers, Pupils and Parents on the Effects Private Schooling has on Public Schooling

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to find out stakeholders views concerning the two school types (Public and private) as running parallel in Kenya. Data from 18 Likert's scale items from 139 teachers and ten head teachers, and their overall means are presented on Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10. Further, qualitative data obtained from interviews with parents, pupils and QASOs are presented. By helping to validate, confirm, and/or corroborate both data types, (Creswell, 2003; Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), a deeper understanding of the phenomenon has been captured.

A general question to find out overall views of teachers and head teachers on whether the mushrooming private schools had any negative effects to public schooling had an overwhelming high response on the "Yes" response as presented on Table 7. Some of the effects mentioned were:

"Unhealthy competition, poaching academically gifted learners from public schools, lowering public schools' populations, thieves stealing books from public schools and selling them to private school parents, teaching for exams in private schools, eroding parents' confidence in public schools, educational inequalities, learner unfriendly schools especially in some low cost private schools (Teachers responses).

To show the magnitude this phenomenon is impacting to education in particular and to the general public in general is the considerably high non-response rate (12.1%) observed from this item especially by teachers teaching in private schools.

Table 7

Teachers and Head Teachers Views on Whether Mushrooming Private Schools Have any Negative Effects to Public Schooling

Statement	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
In your view, do you think there are any negative effects of having many private schools?				
Teachers	98	69.5	26	18.4
Head Teachers	16	80	4	20

Table 8

Perceptions of Teachers on Mushrooming of Private Schools and its Effect to Public Education

	Statement	SA	A	SA	A	SD
		F %	F %	F %	F %	F %
1	Pupils in Private schools are taught better than in Public schools	36 (25.5)	26 (18.4)	8 (5.7)	34 (24.1)	37 (26.2)
2	Pupils in private schools take learning more seriously than in Public schools	58 (41)	38 (27)	19 (13.5)	19 (13.5)	6 (4.3)
3	Pupils in Private schools have access to more resources than in Public schools	53 (37.5)	35 (24.8)	13 (9.2)	21 (14.9)	19 (13.5)
4	Pupils in Private schools are more disciplined than in pupils in Public schools	43 (30.5)	43 (30.5)	17 (12.1)	19 (13.5)	18 (12.8)
5	Pupils in Private schools achieve better in KCPE than in Public schools	71 (50.4)	40 (28.4)	14 (9.9)	8 (5.7)	7 (5.0)
6	Pupils in Private schools have higher aspirations than in Public schools	39 (27.7)	34 (24.1)	25 (17.7)	28 (19.9)	15 (10.6)
7	Pupils in Private schools change school often than in Public schools	34 (24.1)	51 (36.2)	26 (18.4)	22 (15.6)	8 (5.7)
8	Pupils in Private schools transition to high schools more than those from Public schools	36 (25.5)	48 (34.0)	22 (15.6)	21 (14.9)	13 (9.2)
9	Teachers in Private schools are more qualified than those in Public schools	8 (5.7)	6 (4.3)	11 (7.8)	31 (22.0)	85 (60.3)
10	Teachers in Private schools have access to more & better teaching facilities than those in Public schools	36 (25.5)	27 (19.1)	20 (14.2)	19 (13.5)	39 (27.7)
11	Teachers in Private schools have more workload than those in Public schools	31 (22.0)	19 (13.5)	14 (9.9)	31 (22.0)	46 (32.6)
12	Teachers in Private schools are better paid than those in Public schools	13 (9.2)	14 (9.9)	24 (17.0)	32 (22.7)	57 (40.0)
13	Teachers in Private schools are more motivated than those in Public schools	41 (29.1)	40 (28.4)	17 (12.1)	22 (15.6)	21 (14.9)
14	Parents in Private schools are more involved in their children's education than those in Public schools	81 (57.4)	33 (23.4)	11 (7.8)	8 (5.7)	8 (5.7)
15	Parents in Private schools attend school meetings than those in Public schools	69 (48.9)	34 (24.1)	20 (14.2)	11 (7.8)	7 (5.0)
16	Parents in Private schools are more interested in their children's performance than those in Public schools	76 (53.9)	38 (27.0)	8 (5.7)	12 (8.5)	6 (4.3)
17	Parents in Private schools are more financially stable than those in Public schools	44 (31.2)	36 (25.5)	13 (9.2)	19 (13.5)	28 (19.9)
18	Parents in public schools are more financially stable than those in private schools	1 (0.7)	4 (2.8)	77 (54.6)	20 (14.2)	37 (26.2)

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages (%); in bold are statistics emphasized in the interpretation.

Table 9

Private and Public Schools Teachers Overall Means

School Type	N	Mean	SD	Std Error mean
Private	43	2.52	0.53353	0.08136
Public	85	2.68	0.57822	0.06272

Table 10

Independent Samples Test for Teachers

	Levene's Test for Equality of Means		t-test for equality of Means		
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Equal Variances Assumed	032	.859	-1.574	126	.118
Equal Variances not Assumed			-1.616	90.724	.110

$\alpha = 0.05$

Table 11

Perceptions of Head Teachers on Mushrooming of Private Schools and its Effect to Public Education

	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
		F %	F %	F %	F %	F %
1	Pupils in Private schools are taught better than in Public schools	3 (15)	5 (25)	2 (10)	3 (15)	7 (35)
2	Pupils in private schools take learning more seriously than in Public schools	4 (20)	8 (40)	3 (15)	4 (20)	1 (5.0)
3	Pupils in Private schools have access to more resources than in Public schools	6 (30)	7 (35)	2 (10)	4 (20)	1 (5.0)
4	Pupils in Private schools are more disciplined than pupils in Public schools	7 (35)	4 (20)	2 (10)	3 (15)	4 (20)
5	Pupils in Private schools achieve better in KCPE than in Public schools	15 (75)	2 (10)	1 (5)	0 (0)	2 (10)
6	Pupils in Private schools have higher aspirations than in Public schools	5 (25)	5 (25)	1 (5.0)	8 (40)	1 (5.0)
7	Pupils in Private schools change school often than in Public schools	12 (60)	2 (10)	3 (15)	1 (5.0)	2 (10)
8	Pupils in Private schools transition to high schools more than those from Public schools	4 (20)	8 (40)	3 (15)	4 (20)	1 (5.0)
9	Teachers in Private schools are more qualified than those in Public schools	2 (10)	1 (5.0)	4 (20)	3 (15)	10 (50)
10	Teachers in Private schools have access to more and better teaching facilities than those in Public schools	5 (25)	2 (10)	3 (15)	5 (25)	5 (25)
11	Teachers in Private schools have more workload than those in Public schools	9 (45)	2 (10)	4 (20)	4 (20)	1 (5.0)
12	Teachers in Private schools are better paid than those in Public schools	2 (10)	3 (15)	3 (15)	5 (25)	7 (35)
13	Teachers in Private schools are more motivated than those in Public schools	1 (5.0)	3 (15)	10 (50)	4 (20)	2 (10)
14	Parents in Private schools are more involved in their children's education than those in Public schools	13 (65)	3 (15)	3 (15)	1 (5.0)	0 (0)
15	Parents in Private schools attend school meetings than those in Public schools	11 (55)	6 (30)	2 (10)	1 (5.0)	0 (0)
16	Parents in Private schools are more interested in their children's performance than those in Public schools	10 (50)	5 (25)	3 (15)	1 (5.0)	1 (5.0)
17	Parents in Private schools are more financially stable than those in Public schools	7 (35)	2 (10)	5 (25)	4 (20)	2 (10)
18	Parents in public schools are more financially stable than those in private schools	6 (30)	1 (5.0)	4 (20)	5 (25)	4 (20)

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages (%); in bold are statistics emphasized in the interpretation.

Table 12

Private and Public Schools Head Teachers Overall Means

School Type	N	Mean	SD	Std Error mean
Private	10	2.5	0.35538	0.11238
Public	10	2.7294	0.35641	0.11271

To ascertain whether any significant differences existed between the 2 overall means, t-test on the hypothesis, "There is no statistically significant difference on mean attitude scores between Head teachers from public and private schools on selected variables pertaining to private and public schools. T-test results are presented on Table 8.

Table 13

Independent Samples Test for Head teachers

	Levenes Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for equality of means		
	F	Sig	T	df	Sig 2 tailed
Equal variances assumed	0.308	*.586	-1.441	18	0.167

$\alpha = 0.05$

Data analyzed from 128 teachers revealed mean scores of 2.5212 and 2.6872 from private and public schools respectively. $t = -1.118 = -1.574$, $df = 126$, $p = 0.857 > 0.05$. Similarly, there was no statistical significant difference between the two means on how teachers perceived the two school categories. Means from Head teachers perceptions revealed: Observed t-value $P = 0.167$; $t = -1.441$, $df = 18$, $p = 0.586 > 0.05$. Therefore, no significant difference between how head teachers from either private or public schools perceived the presence and establishment of the two school types.

Understandably, this is not unusual since all teachers whether teaching in private or public schools are similar in variables such as nationality, professional training among others. Besides, many teaching in private schools are doing so as they wait to be absorbed by the TSC, which is currently the sole government employer for certified teachers.

Data Convergence and Interpretation

Concurrent data from the perception Likert's scale items and qualitative views gathered from pupils FGDs, parents and QASOs help to show a complete picture of the effects private schooling has on the public education. In many ways, the two data sets confirm and support each other (Creswell & Clark (2007). While details of specific attitude items are in Tables 8 and 11, selected items show key similarities and differences in both data types. Data from an item that read: "pupils in private schools are taught better than those in

public schools revealed perplexing findings. Teachers and head teachers had 50.3 and 50% disagreeing with the statement respectively.

Similarly, in response to a question on what they disliked about their school, data from a FGD with pupils from two private schools had this to say: “there is too much tuition, no mid-term breaks (private boarding), and sometimes no break. We need to play football... (FGD, private school pupils). Data from most public schools had this to say: “corporal punishment, mother tongue usage, indisciplined pupils, poor sanitation, and casual sex” (FGD, public school pupils). Parents on the other hand, especially from the rural context had a common response as to what they disliked most in the public schools: “KCPE results are always very poor, and so we try the private schools” (Interview, Parent, private rural school). Other things parents disliked were: (some uncooperative teachers, poor performance, poor sanitation, shortage of teachers, large classes... (Interview, parents, public schools). Parents from the private schools had also this to say: “high school fees, too much homework, children need to sleep, some rude teachers, many meetings...” (Interview, parents, private schools).

The two QASOs interviewed disliked the following:

Extreme differences among the schools, schools are stratified along SES; emergence of several privately owned schools attracting many pupils, but some schools are pathetic... I write reports to close some, but two days later, I see them operating! When you recommend something, following it up is a problem... (Interview, QASO, Urban schools).

Parents don't participate fully in the development of schools, and especially after the implementation of Free Primary Education [in 2003]. Parents disassociated themselves from the schools. This has brought a lot of problems. Parents believe the government will do everything for them. They don't care to know what goes on in schools. They have nothing to care about; they give a cold shoulder. I think cost sharing can help solve this problem”. (Interview, QASO, Rural schools).

Lack of parental involvement was also reported by head teachers, teachers and the QASOs.

An item to find out head teachers and teachers perceptions on whether parents in private schools are more involved in their children's' education than their counterparts in public schools had 80 % and 80.8 % of head teachers and teachers agreeing respectively. Also, on who attended school meetings more frequently, 85 % of the head teachers and 73 % of the teachers agreed that parents from the private schools were more keen on this..

Poor academic performance stood out as a serious issue affecting public schools as confirmed by 85 % and 78 % of head teachers and teachers respectively. Literature support this rather expected finding (KNEC, 2006, 2010-2014; Serveafrica, 2011).

A question on what pupils liked most about their school further show what meanings pupils give to a good school: “Our teachers teach well” (FGDs from all school types); teachers encourage us and are caring, beautiful compound, (FGDs, all school types), but response was higher from private school pupils). Data from selected parents corroborated pupils' views of what they liked in a school: “teachers in this school are

understanding" (all school types); we like the lunch children are given... we don't pack food". (Interview, parents from public rural and urban schools). Other aspects liked by parents from both school types were "good [academic] performance, security of pupils, caring teachers, discipline etc.

QASOs on the other hand liked the following aspects in schools under their jurisdiction: we have so many schools; pupils don't walk long distances, time is also adequate and resources too" (Interview, QASO, Rural schools). A QASO from the urban context noted: "Government is encouraging access to education...so contributing to fight illiteracy (Interview, QASO, Urban schools).

Research question 5: Psychosocial, Economic and Educational Implications of the Current Phenomenon of Mushrooming Private Primary Schools in Kenya

Items in this question focused on: preferred type of school, experiences pupils from the two school types had, and possible risks inside and outside the school. Data informing this question were mainly qualitative and revealed how pupils from the two school types perceived their schools, their teachers and even each other. Several themes emerged showing Psychosocial, economic and educational implications of the current phenomenon.

Unfriendly and Unsafe School Environments

Scaring stories were narrated by pupils from different school types. Responding to a question on what they disliked about their respective schools pupils noted the following:

Food poisoning, food tastes bitter, our class is near a latrine, these people can't give you water, kitchen water is also dirty, water is a big issue, school is very dusty! Toilets are dirty, classrooms have no windows and doors, compound not fenced, you walk in and out, floor not cemented, electricity not connected, if we come early we buy candles... (FGD, Non-formal school, Urban).

Common problems cited by pupils from both school contexts was sexual harassment of the girl child as they walk to and from school as one girl noted: "the boys they are not good; the matatu people...(FGD, private rural school). Children also feared wild animals and stray dogs they encountered to and from school (FGD, public rural school).Children also mentioned fear of thieves, gangsters, road accidents, and drug peddlers (FGD, public rural school).

Narrations from participants in this study and especially the pupils show how far schools are in terms of meeting UNICEF's (2009) requirements of child friendly school environments. Although there are variations among the schools, observations done revealed that this aspect is wanting in all schools. Whereas public schools have space, the same is unkept, no perimeter walls, toilets inadequate and all together unhygienic among other concerns. Private schools in general lack space and necessary areas like playing fields highly compromised.

Grass Greener on the other Side Phenomenon

With the exception of two responses from two FGDs who mentioned that given a choice they would want to attend neighboring public primary schools, all others wished they would attend one private school or another. As they mentioned different private schools, one after the another, they gave the following reasons:

“Mambo Yote Academy” has educated teachers, it is boarding, good academic performance, well equipped, computers, no quarrels, they go for PE, they perform well and fee is affordable, there are many activities, pupils are well behaved, pupils are disciplined, pupils are hardworking, they don't speak vernacular, they are clean and their uniform is good (FGD, pupils, Public schools)

It is interesting to note that for those who mentioned public schools as their choices pointed on good performance, beautiful uniform and extra curricula activities i.e games. Several studies (Hogue, Smit, & Hanson, 1990; Nadel, 2000; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003), have critiqued the fact that Education departments focus more on the formal curriculum, and less attention is given to “non” school activities. The latter as the authors argue, decrease youth violence, increase social skills, academic performance, and overall, self efficacy.

Critical to the view of “grass greener on the other side” is the fact that, having two parallel schools (private and public) and all the differences in terms of resources, brings to mind a concept experienced in developed countries such as USA decades ago that segregated schools are inherently unequal. Although focus in the USA was racially segregated schools (Lorgan & Oakley, 2012) , in Kenya, from school access, rention to academic performance, two unequal groups of learners are perpetuated– achievers and non achievers ((KNEC, 2006, 2010-2014; Serveafrica, 2011).

The We and They in Our Schools: Stories from Private Urban Schools

In a country struggling with issues of equality, social cohesion, and with the full realization that education should be a panacea to such issues and others (Kibera & Kimokoti, 2007; McLaren, 2013), this study sought to find out how interaction [if any] between pupils from the two school categories was like. The following sentiments were echoed:

Kids from public schools have no shoes, their English is bad, they are rude, they are abusive, they blame their teachers, they are not disciplined, and they are dishonest, “they are not our friends because of bad behavior! Rather have friends from private schools (FGD, pupils, private school, urban)

An interesting response [I think from an optimist] was: “Me, I feel nice cos they have good manners, they like reading, I enjoy playing with them; and they look comfortable”), while another boy said: They talk more about education, they ask questions, they read more; me I feel comfortable interacting with them (FGD, private school, urban).

Such sentiments show that education instead of helping close the gap between the rich and the poor, help to integrate the society is actually perpetuating social inequalities and social stratification in the society.

Theme 4: School Choice: What Matters

Featuring as what mattered most to the pupils were issues of: Security, school feeding programs, lack of corporal punishment, encouraging and caring teachers, more play time, more books and libraries, more toilets, chairs and tables, more teachers (FGD, pupils from all schools). However, response on school feeding programs, more toilets and chairs, corporal punishment were cited more by pupils from rural public schools, and urban non-formal schools.

Public and Private Schools: Challenges and Opportunities

Introduction of privatization in Africa through SAPs recommended by the World Bank (Aseto & Okelo, 1997) were hoped to challenge State mechanisms to improve on their service delivery to the citizens. In education supporters of privatization cited problems of poor educational quality, ill trained teachers, lack of teaching/learning resources among others. What was hoped to salvage a crippling economy resulted to the current problem of mushrooming private schools and a neglect of public schools. Data from head teachers and teachers show some challenges they experience in their respective school types and also inherent opportunities.

Challenges

Head teachers and teachers from public schools noted the following challenges:

Lack of adequate staff and teachers, lack of enough T/L resources, limited of resources to motivate teachers, poor facilities/infrastructure, poverty in the community, uncooperative parents, pupils coming to school without lunch, FPE funds released late and not enough, some pupils have no uniform, private schools returning poor pupils to their schools and poaching good ones, lack of funds to run the school, large class sizes, parents not interested in the education of their children, poor academic performance, truancy, lack of role models, indisciplined pupils, child labor among others (Head teachers and teachers, Public schools, rural).

Responses from Urban Public Primary School Head Teachers and teachers reported the following Challenges: Inadequate funds, frequent transfer of teachers, understaffing, no school fence, roofs broken and leaking, many orphans, parents' negative attitude towards education, uncooperative parents, senior education officers not committed,..

Head teachers and teachers from urban schools noted truancy and insecurity of the children sometimes in and out school.

Opportunities

As data in this study revealed, if all schools in Kenya were funded and managed as the recently upgraded Centers of Excellence, the whole narrative of depressed public schools would change. Head teachers and teachers from two Centers of Excellence were very excited as they talked about their schools:

Our school is a role model in this district, it is accessible, pupils are disciplined, there is good teacher rapport, teachers are committed, there is team work, classrooms are enough, there is piped water, pupils are performing well, pupils come from around, so no lateness, pupils are hard working, parents are cooperating, we have community support, local leaders like the school, the school environment is clean, we get support from the education office etc. (Head teachers and teachers from Centers of Excellence, rural public schools) .

It is evident that rethinking how we plan and manage public schools in Kenya has potential benefits (individual, communal, and civic) worth investing in. Literature on investing on education for the vulnerable youth in Africa attests to this (Lombe & Ochumbo, 2008).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Majority of primary school teachers in Kenya have the relevant academic and professional qualifications to teach in their context. Currently, a certificate in primary education is the minimum requirement. However, data revealed a sizable percentage (17 %) of teachers mainly from the private and non-formal schools who never disclosed their qualifications. Observed also was unprofessionalism in private schools and especially low cost and non-formal schools. This was characterized by unqualified staff, poorly paid teachers, and general school mismanagement. To meet international standards, the Ministry of Education through her relevant divisions should aim at having a first degree for all teachers as a minimum requirement. Additional certification for school leaders is also necessary.

Legality of some private schools establishment is a critical issue in Kenya. Some, especially non-formal schools are not legally registered. This has led to poor resource mobilization, mismanagement, and lack of accountability. This illegality leads to other unethical and unprofessional practices. Deregistering poor performing learners, cheating in examinations to have high mean scores have been reported first in private schools, leading to the current problem of examination cheating in practically all schools.

Poor or the total lack of monitoring establishment of schools has led to the following primary school types/categories: Public schools (Regular and Centers of Excellence); Private Schools (High, Medium, low cost, and Non-formal schools). The most unfortunate thing is how schooling is serving to perpetuate social inequalities and compromising education of innocent children who deserve an equitable and quality education. Poor monitoring has also resulted to unfriendly learner environments contrary to UNICEF's (2009) requirements.

To salvage the education of innocent learners, the Ministry of Education through QASOs and all other mechanisms within her mandate should adopt a grassroots approach to monitoring school establishments, to ensure that all schools are healthy and learner friendly. The Ministry of Education should purpose to make all public primary schools Centers of Excellence. Involving parents and other stakeholders in this endeavor should be mandatory.

From stakeholders used in this study, there is strong evidence showing that the existing two major school types/categories (public and Private), are further stratifying the Kenyan society [which is already a seriously class based society] (Kombo, 2006; Kibera & Kimokoti, 2007; Mwangi, 2012). This sharply contrasts with the purpose of education as a panacea for inequality and other social evils (Schmidt, Burroughs, Zoido, &

Houang, 2015; McLaren, 1998, 2013). In the light of this, the Ministry of Education should purpose to empower and prioritize public education at all costs as this will ensure that learners get an equitable education. Labels (private and public school learners) should be a thing of the past. All are Kenyan children with great potential of becoming great citizens of this great country!

Finally, the Ministry of education should ensure UNICEF's (2009) guidelines on child friendly schools; provide transport; hot lunches; and ensure sustained and effective monitoring of all educational programs. A choice to enroll a child in a private school should be informed by anything else other than depressed, hostile and poor performing public schools. The Center of Excellence Model should inform all public schools' establishment and management.

NOTES

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