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Developing ethical and democratic citizens in a post-colonial context: citizenship education in Kenya

Paul K. Wainaina^b, Madeleine Arnot^{b*} and Fatuma Chege^a

^a*Department of Educational Foundations, School of Education, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya;* ^b*Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK*

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Background: Youth citizenship is now on the international agenda with African countries increasingly interrogating their national perspectives on citizenship and citizenship education. In this emergent field of research, African scholars are beginning to challenge the prevailing (Western) theories of citizenship and democracy.

Purpose: The aim of this paper is to contribute an African perspective to the study of citizenship education by exploring the political influences and meanings that shaped citizenship education in Kenya, and how these have evolved from independence to the present day.

Data and Methods: This article is based on a documentary analysis of key policy-related documents, complemented by an analysis of some critical historical moments in the life of Kenya as a postcolonial nation. The policy-related documents include government policy documents, as well as political statements, speeches, development reports, technical commission reports, media articles, research publications and reports, education syllabi and curriculum documents.

Main Findings: Post-independence, the Kenyan government focused on rethinking the colonial concept of citizenship in line with its political-cultural traditions, encouraging new notions of belonging, of civic virtues and of duties in relation to nation-building and economic development. Social Ethics and Education (SEE) programmes in schools were established and then later removed from the secondary school curriculum.

Conclusions: This paper yields important insights into the international and national political agendas that shape Kenya's notions of active citizenship. It indicates the tensions which vulnerable and fragile states such as Kenya experience in negotiating their citizenship education agenda, whilst attempting to win foreign investment and aid for their economy, and whilst addressing regional and ethnic inequalities and high levels of poverty.

Keywords: active citizenship; social ethics education; Kenya

No-one is born a good citizen: no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. (Kofi Annan quoted in WDR 2007, footnote 124, 183)

To change the social consciousness of a people in order to prepare them for a new way of doing things is the most difficult project any society can embark on. (Otieno 2002, 20)

*Corresponding author. Email: mma1000@cam.ac.uk

Introduction

Concern for democratic and citizenship education in Africa dates back to colonial times. A paper published in 1948 by the British government's Colonial Office on 'Education for Citizenship in Africa' (somewhat ironically) proposed that the aim of educating the next generation of African youth should be to achieve a liberal democracy (Colonial Office 1948, 13). Education for citizenship as a curriculum subject was expected to 'take the lead over political and economic development and having done so, be careful to safeguard it' (ibid., 16). All young people should develop an understanding of rights and duties, as well as being informed about foreign affairs, and the economic and social issues that relate to their government. The Colonial Office argued that African children deserved 'the gift of straight thinking, be able to keep first things first, be loyal etc' (ibid., 16), while at the same time they should also know their place as subjects of their colonial masters.

The contradictory nature of this political agenda sets the scene for this exploratory study of post-independence Kenyan approaches to the education of its citizens. Citizenship in Kenya, like that in a number of other African states, continues to reflect this British colonial heritage as well as 'the hasty transition to postcolonial state-society relations' (Ndegwa 1998, 351). Citizenship defines 'those who are, and who are not, members of a common society' and as such it also expresses:

a set of normative expectations specifying the relationship between the nation-state and its individual members which procedurally establish the rights and obligations of members and a set of practices by which these expectations are realized. (Waters 1989, 160, quoted in Ndegwa 1997, 600)

However, as Ndegwa points out, citizenship in practice (and one could argue citizenship education) 'is never fixed' and that as a social process, it is constantly and simultaneously being enacted, contested, revised, and transformed (op. cit., 354). The relationship of the individual to the state in Kenya has been shaped as much by international political frictions and by structural adjustment of the economy as it has by political liberalisation reform movements which brought in new discourses of rights and obligations. Citizenship education, as we shall see, has been equally buffeted by these competing political forces.

This article attempts to identify the ambivalences and tensions that the postcolonial Kenyan government faced in developing the education of its citizens, and to give some indication of how such tensions have played out within the contemporary education system.¹ The Kenyan example, although unique, is symptomatic of the struggle that vulnerable and fragile states have in negotiating their own citizenship education agenda, whilst attempting to win foreign investment and aid for their economy, and whilst addressing regional and ethnic inequalities and high levels of poverty. The Kenyan debates about how to create national unity, promote appropriate civic virtues, and engage with liberal notions of rights and freedoms indicate the challenge of shaping democratic civil society within the context of an increasingly marketised economy (run by powerful political elites) and high levels of poverty. Our aim is to explore from an African educational perspective what Ndegwa (1997, 1998) argued was the tension between *democratisation* and *liberalisation* in twentieth-century African societies such as Kenya.

We begin our analysis by describing the theoretical and methodological approach which shaped our research before outlining some of the government attempts to

educate its citizens in its reformed education system, and the ways in which, in recent periods, it appears to have shifted discursively towards different, more economically inspired goals.

Theoretical and methodological approaches

The study of citizenship education is characterised by its close relationship to Western European political philosophy, with little attention given to the significance of this tradition to non-Western, often postcolonial, educational systems.² In contrast, contemporary African writers such as Bhola (2002) and Nsamenang (2002) refer to the complex range of political discourses that join Western European notions of liberal democracy, civic republicanism and even communitarianism with pan-Africanism, Arab-Islamic influences, Western Christian legacies and indigenous African cultures (Nsamenang 2002). African scholars challenge the assumption that citizenship refers to a single political community, and mainly, if not only, to the relationship of the individual to the modern democratic state. In the predominantly rural African nations, there are a number of *dualities of citizenship* that are at play. Mamdani (1996), for example, identifies the difference between rural, largely unschooled, 'subjects' and educated African urban elites who constitute 'citizens'. This socio-political division (which has its roots in the colonial period) is reinforced by a second duality of citizenship, which, according to Ndegwa (1998), distinguishes between those citizenship rights and obligations individuals and groups hold in relation to their ethnic communities, and those rights and obligations that they hold in relation to the nation state. In Kenya these 'two citizenship spaces' define the form taken by civil society, on the one hand, and by political parties and government, on the other. As a result, the concept of the 'active citizen' has different connotations. Here the tensions created between individual/community and rights/responsibilities in the context of nation-building 'require that the individual's [civic] activities must simultaneously promote the corporate existence of the community. This puts humanity at the centre of nation building or *active citizenship*' (Avoseh 2001, 480; our addition). The relationship between culture and citizenship here is centred on the basic elements of obligations to the community and interpersonal relationships, where such relationships are 'sensitive to values such as the sacredness of human life, mutual help, generosity, cooperation, respect for older people, harmony and the preservation of the sacred' (483). This definition is in stark contrast to the model of the active citizen that dominates 'contemporary understandings of globalisation' and that defines the active citizen as:

... one who acquires more power – especially economic and political, including the ability for coercive force. [Also] ... the emphasis on economic power in the larger society reflects in the learning environment where the acquisitions of certificates are more important than the acquisition of knowledge and skills for personal and community benefit. (Avoseh 2001, 485)

Our research on Kenyan citizenship education has to be set in the context of these African debates and critical reactions to the import of such global notions of active citizenship particularly that encouraged by the World Bank. In 2007, the World Bank contended that educating young people for economic participation alone, although necessary, was not sufficient to remove poverty. Its report, *Development and the Next Generation*, argued that markets could not deliver on their own; they

needed ‘collective action, public accountability, caring for kin and community environmental stewardship’ (World Bank 2007, 160). Attention was turned to young people’s experiences of citizenship as ‘crucial for development outcomes’, and it was argued that in marketised economic systems, young people should be accepted as important stakeholders. Without their active citizenry ‘collective action, public accountability, caring for kin and community, environmental stewardship, the promotion of human dignity, and the creation of shared identity and rights are so much more difficult . . .’ (ibid. 2007, 160). Young people as stakeholders can protest against officials who are not accountable or are inefficient. For this role to work, educating youth into citizenship needs to encourage *pro-active* civic engagement. Thus, schools should: (1) provide opportunities for youth to learn how to practice and to actualise ‘active citizenship’; (2) develop the capabilities of youth as part of the process of identity formation; (3) ensure recognition of the importance of youth identity by those who count; and (4) make sure that youth are given legally recognised second chances to correct mistakes such as taking the wrong direction (e.g. drugs, violence, soldiering).

The political debates surrounding the liberalisation and democratisation of nations in Sub-Saharan Africa are now attracting scholars interested in the role of state-provided education in the formation of modern African citizens.³ Today we can find new research on the political framing of civic education programmes, social studies and history, as well as the political identities and values of young Africans as a result of their schooling and community identifications (e.g. Durham 2007; Kendall 2007; Hunt 2007; Abdi, Ellis, and Shizha 2005; Unterhalter 2000; Burgess 2005a, 2005b). This article contributes to that debate by critically engaging with the historical shaping of the Kenyan government’s education programme. Whilst not comprehensive as an historical account, it offers an opportunity to reflect on the political dilemmas that the government faced but also the contemporary challenges associated with educating its young citizens in a fragile democratic context.

Our research strategy represents an attempt to uncover the citizenship goals promoted by government and non-governmental organisation (NGO) activity. Here we offer a documentary analysis complemented by an analysis of some critical historical moments in the life of Kenya as a postcolonial nation. We are guided by May’s (1997) conceptualisation that ‘documents do not stand on their own, but need to be situated within a theoretical frame of reference in order that its content is understood’ (1997, 171). To this end, selected government policy documents on the role of education for human development, scholarly critiques on the multi-function nature of education and other documents on Kenya and Africa were thoroughly interrogated and, as a result, the shifts on the key role of education were revealed. A range of public documents were then located and purposively selected through a form of documentary snowballing that yielded relevant policy statements, speeches, development reports, technical commission reports, media articles, research publications and reports, education syllabi and curriculum documents. The process of analysis constructed an historical sequencing of the chronology of the education policy cycle relating to citizenship education in Kenya. This strategy enabled us to ‘consider not only the ways in which meaning is constructed, but also the ways in which new meanings are developed and employed’ (May 1997, 173). Concurrent discussions within and across these documents by Kenyan educationalists form part of the methodological technique.

Pursuing citizenship as moral imperative in post-colonial African contexts

The political framing of education, post-independence, is hard to assess. On gaining national independence, the challenge for the newly constituted democratic Kenyan government was to guide a country composed of various ethnic communities with different cultures into a unified nation. However, it is a matter of some debate whether Kenyatta's government, when trying to avoid aligning the nation directly with Western liberal ideologies or socialist ideologies, was genuinely committed to what was officially known as *Democratic African Socialism*. Publicly, this approach underscored the state's efforts to expand the base of social services to the population (Ndegwa 1998, 359).

There are therefore different views about the significance of the publication of the *Sessional Paper No.10: African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya* (GoK 1964), which put a premium on the rights and importance of the community at the expense of the individual (ibid., 4). Democratic African Socialism as defined here was based on pan-African traditions, in which all members of a society have equal political rights and that no individual or group could be allowed to have undue influence on the affairs of state (ibid., 3). The principle of *mutual social responsibility* was represented as an extension of the African extended family to a wider community where each member of the community has an obligation to do their best for his/her neighbour. Mbiti's (1969) maxim of: 'I am because we are' captures the communitarian ethos of this political discourse, which resonated with the widely recognised notion of *Ubuntu* – a shade of democracy, which many scholars in African affairs argue is an appropriate framework to inform governance in Africa (Kubow 2007). If fully implemented through education, Democratic African Socialism would have encouraged a range of goals such as: political equality, social justice and human dignity including freedom of conscience, freedom from want, disease and exploitation, equal opportunities, and high and growing *per capita* incomes, equitably distributed.

Initially, Kenyatta's government was defined as the main provider of 'basic needs' in relation to social welfare, especially when addressing the rights to education and health care and when addressing the rights of non-African immigrants and the landless. As noted by scholars such as Sifuna (2000), this agenda was complemented by the establishment of the famous *harambee* movement in which communities at the local level took charge of their own development. Here, leaders appealed to the *harambee* spirit of 'pulling together' for the common good. Community-led projects were encouraged to bid for government start-up costs to run the project themselves.⁴

Kenyatta's government also tried to establish an educational system for its youth that reflected the aspirations of the new African nation. The teaching of civic virtues had to be located within this context of nation-building. When evaluating the then existing British colonial education system (which still had many of the racial and religious features associated with colonialism), the Ominde Commission on Education (GoK 1964) recommended that a re-structured system of education should focus on several social values that included a sense of nationhood, promotion of national unity, social equality, social obligation and responsibility. At the same time, educational institutions would be expected to eradicate divisions based on race, tribe and/or religion. To inculcate these egalitarian values, the government suggested that primary school teachers should be encouraged to become creative and

progressive in teaching pupils to think and act like Kenyans – thus, helping construct specifically Kenyan identities. It also recommended the use of a common language (mainly English) to teach all young Kenyans, and that a selection of students from different geographical and cultural backgrounds be taught together in national boarding schools (GoK 1964, 28–29). The formal education system was thus to assume responsibility of inculcating inclusive citizenship identities.

This aspiration of nation-building continued to shape educational policy-makers' thinking but it had increasingly to engage with issues relating to economic difficulties and moral decline. In the 1970s, for example, the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (NCEOP), which was established under the chairmanship of Peter Gachathi, then Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education (GoK 1976), focused on three key issues. Firstly, the Committee recognised that educational provision was becoming expensive for the government and yet was not fulfilling its main objectives. Even though education was generally perceived the best guarantee for both personal as well as social advancement, young people coming out from the education system were not obtaining gainful employment. Secondly, the Gachathi Report focused on the need to redefine Kenyan social and ethical values in response to public condemnation of social problems. It recognised the 'corruption, nepotism, tribalism and idleness due to the lack of supporting moral and civics education' (GoK 1976, 6). Thirdly, English (as medium of instruction) and Kiswahili (as opposed to the vernacular languages) were confirmed as common languages that would enhance social integration amongst students from various cultural groups (GoK 1976).

These ethical dimensions of education became even more important in the late 1970s and early 1980s in a context where the economy was in trouble, when political opposition was being oppressed and when the political elites were seen as increasingly out of touch. Corruption and mismanagement were on the rise and the state was unable to deliver on its promised citizen entitlements. Nevertheless, the government sustained its commitment to use education to expound the importance of national unity, to help eradicate social, economic and regional inequalities, and to develop useful citizens, capable of and motivated towards the improvement of the nation as a whole. This national project also addressed concerns about the anti-social behaviour of youth. Hence, the Gachathi Commission Report recommended the introduction of Social Education and Ethics (SEE) as a separate subject within the school system (GoK 1976, 7–8). The justification put forward was that the '... lack of ethical foundations [which if not addressed] will constitute a basis for social disintegration and in the long run, degeneration of quality of life of society and eventual social death' (GoK 1976, 7). The report, in effect, replaced traditional ethics with a new ethical code for modern Kenya (Harber 1997, 57). As a normative curriculum, it prescribed 'correct' social values such as marriage, chastity, virtues such as 'fortitude', 'perfection' and 'active sacrifice', as well as the importance of traditional gender divisions in the home and the policing of peers.

Tribal politics, social ethics and economic turn

In 1978 when Daniel arap Moi was elected President, the political process of decolonisation took a different turn, with single party politics and ethnic tribalism becoming even more embedded in political life. The state, which had been dominated by the Kenyatta's Kikuyu-Luo alliance, was now taken over by the dominance of

Moi's Kalenjin tribe. Political corruption, the decline of civil society and the rise of dangerous levels of ethnic conflict were associated with a sharp economic downturn (Ndegwa 1998, 10).

Civic education in the 1980s initially retained its ethical and patriotic approach but there was increasing reference to the economic value of education, individual development and well-being. Initially, Moi's government appointed C.B. Mackay, a Canadian educationalist, to review the general educational objectives as well as investigate the launching of a second public university. Mackay's (GoK 1981) recommendations reiterated the importance of the general education objectives identified in the preceding education commissions and recommended, within a new 8-4-4 system of education, the inclusion of SEE at secondary school level.⁵

Although the education system was still expected to remove social injustice and disparities between sexes, geographical regions and social and economic groups in a community (GoK 1981), by the late 1980s, there was a definite shift in emphasis which placed citizenship education alongside new economic emphases on self-reliance and self-employment (a shift that reflected the growing unemployment of youth). Notably, the focus on ethical virtues that became prominent in the late 1980s emphasised the need to sustain traditional cultural practices within economic development agendas. A Presidential Working Party under the Chairmanship of James M. Kamunge published a report on *Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond* (GoK 1988), reviewing yet again Kenyan educational philosophy, policies and objectives in light of the changing socio-cultural, economic and political demands of the country. This time, it pointed to the double-edged nature of culture '(...) in the process of change and adaptation, (where) care should be taken to ensure that only positive aspects of cultural practices are retained or adapted with a view to enriching and developing the national culture' (GoK 1988, 6).

The objectives for the four-year secondary education (for 14–17-year-olds) privileged goals that were startlingly similar to that found in many Western European contexts. There was a discursive shift away from ethics towards the development of the individual, formal knowledge and skills, and education for economic citizenship. The ethos of African democratic socialism, if it had ever played a part, was no longer evident in these goals, which sought to:

- provide for an all round mental, moral and spiritual development;
- provide relevant skills towards positive contribution to the development of society;
- ensure balanced development in cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (manipulative and practical) and affective (attitude and value) skills; and
- lay a firm foundation for further education, training and work; and, lead to the acquisition of positive attitudes and values towards the well-being of society (GoK 1988, 27).

In short, an emphasis on the individual cognitive aspect of education at the expense of the affective and practical aspects of democratic national identity (ibid., 14) started to shape Kenyan education for citizenship. This was compounded, in retrospect, by a strong emphasis on the competitive passing of national examinations at the expense of acquiring skills, knowledge, attitudes and expertise that were necessary for national and social development (KIE 1999, 24).

By the 1990s, other economic forces had come into play. The Kenyan government reluctantly had to agree to the terms of structural adjustment, which forced the state to cut back its social welfare functions, introducing, for example, cost sharing on educational fees. Political liberalisation in the form of democratisation encouraged greater claims to political rights whilst economic rights to employment and education were reduced (Ndwega 1998). Significantly, Moi's Government appointed yet another Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya, this time chaired by David Koech (GoK 1999) to recommend ways of enabling the government to facilitate the link between accelerated industrial and technological development, national unity, mutual social responsibility and consolidation, and enhancement of life-long learning (GoK 1999, xix). Yet despite this increasingly dominant economic emphasis, the Commission continued to underscore the ethical need for Kenya to produce, through the education system, a citizenry with the following characteristics: a sense of patriotism and nationalism that transcends ethnic and traditional ties, integrity of character and a vision to uphold the rule of law (GoK 1999, 17). It again emphasised communal *civic virtues*, which individuals share, such as moral virtues of honesty, confidence, work ethics and concern for others' welfare.

This recurring debate between the ethical and development agendas expressed itself differently in the later years of the century. On the one hand, the Kenyan government reduced the status of teaching social ethics, and on the other, it promoted education for all. Significantly, the new curriculum framework in 2002 downgraded SEE. When the subject was first introduced in the 1980s, SEE had been a compulsory secondary school subject for Forms 1 and 2 (normally for 15–16-year-olds). After the end of Form 2, students were required to choose the subjects they wanted to be examined in at the end of Form 4 (i.e. at the end of the secondary school cycle). They were presented with five clusters of subjects from which to choose. In the humanities cluster, a student had to choose either SEE or Religious Education (RE).⁶

The academic value of SEE and its relationship to the more highly valued RE, however, had become increasingly controversial by the late 1990s. Religious leaders lobbied to remove SEE to pre-empt the possibility of students opting to do the subject instead of RE. Further, a Needs Assessment Survey on the Secondary Education Curriculum conducted in 1999 recommended that SEE be dropped from the secondary school curriculum and instead be taught through other 'carrier subjects'. (This meant that teachers were less likely to be accountable for SEE delivery.) Survey findings had shown that parents rated the subject as the 'least useful' in terms of helping young people access the labour market (KIE 1999, 40) and schools had lobbied hard to remove it, thus lessening the number of compulsory subjects. By 2003, SEE was finally dropped from the secondary school curriculum.

In contrast, the egalitarian thrust of the Kenyan government during this period found expression in its strategy on 'education for all'. Considerable efforts were made to deliver the rights to education to all young citizens. The boldest of these attempts saw Free Primary Education (FPE) re-introduced in 2003. The FPE in 2003 raised enrolment rates from 5,874,776 in 2002 to 6,906,355 in 2003, an increase of some 17.6%. This increase affected both boys and girls, although the increase in girls' enrolment in primary education was 16%, lower than that of the boys at 19% (GoK 2005, 2008). There were still, however, approximately one million or more children who could not attend primary school despite its being free – mainly because of family poverty. In 2008, the Government went further and introduced Free

Secondary Education (FSE), which saw secondary enrolment grow from 1.18 million students in 2007 to 1.3 million in 2008, pushing the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) from 38% to 42.5% (GoK 2008).⁷ While FSE relieved families of tuition fees and the purchase of teaching and learning materials, it is common knowledge among Kenyans that parents and guardians have to meet other school-related costs, such as boarding, feeding and their children's school uniform. Although pro-poor, it is not the case that the poor had the same chance of learning how to become equal citizens.

There has been much debate amongst Kenyan educationalists about the democratisation of education, sometimes resulting in calls for 'radical policy reforms' in the education sector [Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR) 2008; Sifuna 2000; Otieno 2002]. National citizenship is seen to be hampered by the government's categorisation of state national, provincial and district schools.⁸ District schools, which are the least well-resourced, admit relatively lowly qualified students – the majority (85%) of whom come from the district where the schools are located. According to education analysts and critics, this 'quota' system of admission to secondary schooling is unlikely to enhance universal national citizenship and should therefore be replaced by 'open admissions of students to any school of choice, regardless of place of origin or ethnic background' (IPAR 2008, 13). The IPAR also observed that, despite the emphasis on democracy in the modern world, school administrators in Kenya have remained autocratic in how they manage their institutions apparently demonstrating an abhorrence of dialogue; they denied students their rights to self-expression. Such authoritarian structures and cultures of Kenyan schools have been found to encourage non-tolerance and a lack of questioning in young people (Sifuna 2000).⁹ Also the lack of democratic participation by pupils in school and classroom cultures is associated with pedagogies characterised by use of threats, verbal abuse and physical punishments (Wamahiu 1999). Both the structure of school governance and the culture of the hidden curriculum continue to raise serious concerns about their ability to promote active, law-abiding, politically engaged citizens.¹⁰

Similarly, questions are raised about the actual interface between local cultures, indigenous knowledge, and liberal Western notions of democracy (e.g. freedom of speech and movement). Gender and ethnic conflicts still shape schooling. The colonial legacy had created a sexual dualism and political marginalisation of women that continues to be sustained (Aubrey 2001; Nasang'o and Ayot 2007). As a consequence, the empowerment of women is difficult to attain:

State power in Africa remains conspicuously male power ingrained with predominantly male values, ideology and vision of the world. This male constructed machinery codifies, institutionalizes and legitimates patriarchy, a system that manifests itself not only in social and economic life but also in the law and biased political and legal statuses of women. [Nzomo (1998), quoted in Nasang'o and Ayot (2007, 170)]

The gender inequalities in Kenyan society have an ethnic cultural base that Kenyan teachers in Kubow's (2007) study had difficulty addressing. Teachers were cautious about challenging what were seen as oppressive gender/ethnic practices. They found it hard to encourage girls to ask questions confidently in class in a culture where they were taught not to answer back in the home. Such female assertiveness is inconsistent with early marriage and where serving men was constructed as the feminine norm. The implications are that more needs to be done to ensure that young Kenyan women are 'able to benefit from the dissemination of knowledge about the universal

principles of human rights and the advantages of their unalienable rights as human beings' (Nasang'o and Ayot 2007, 189). Encouraging recognition amongst youth of the role of gender in acquiring citizenship status and ways of tackling gender discrimination has, therefore, become a major concern, mainly amongst women's organisations such as the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA 1990), the Law Society of Kenya and the League of Kenya Women Voters (1992/1997).¹¹

Conclusion

This article has elicited some of these historical tensions in the Kenyan context where there was a need to retain a specifically African political orientation, to promote collectivism over and above individualism, and to unify diverse ethnic cultures. Although frustratingly brief, our account demonstrates considerable national faith in the importance of educating youth, despite the fact that some 46% of Kenyans live below the poverty line (GoK 2008, 2010). This situation has been compounded by low economic growth, following recent post-election violence in Kenya. However, even in this short account, it is clear that over the last 50 years the Kenyan government has had to try to:

- (1) shake off the educational and social inequalities associated with the legacy of the British colonial education system and the building of a new ethnically and racially unified nation;
- (2) address the tensions between liberal democracy and cultural and local educational practices associated with collectivism; and
- (3) resolve the conflict between economic and social goals of development.

Our investigation reveals the various ways in which consecutive Kenya governments under Presidents Kenyatta and Moi attempted to redistribute education to all, and provide a common curriculum that included (initially through a separate subject but latterly through mainstreaming) the teaching of civic values and national ethics. The ethical dimension of citizenship education at points addressed democratisation, national unity and, at other points, moral decadence and social disorder issues. At the heart of this curricular history is the desire to use schooling to sustain a democratic society even at a time when economic and social rights were repressed. According to the World Bank (2007), democratisation enhances development outcomes 'reducing corruption, improving governance, increasing demand for human capital investment, preparing for disaster and preventing disasters' (World Bank 2007). However there are tensions between Western and non-Western understandings of the link between citizenship and development which are not likely to lessen, especially if Western values entail the promotion of market-driven economies, which lose touch with social values and the social outcomes intended for schooling in African contexts (Bhola 2002).

The reorientation of education as simply a private good without equal emphasis on its potential social good in the latter half of the twentieth century in Western Europe has resulted in a different highly individualised model of citizenship for young people. In Jordan's (2006, 117) view:

In the new model of education urged by the World Bank, WTO and the large education companies, this culture (the social good) is seen as a cost, not a benefit. Commercialisation and the 'choice of agenda' in education ... erode loyalty and

interdependence, encouraging autonomy and competition rather than sharing. This may damage the very public culture on which democracy and citizenship rely. (Jordan 2006, 117)

The growth of such individualism amongst youth and the consequent rebalancing of social and individual demands are as problematic as bad governance and economic mismanagement and a weak citizenry (Otieno 2002, 16–17). Along with others, Kanyinga (2002) argues for the importance of developing a civil society in Kenya to retrieve the relationship of the individual to the state that has been undermined since independence and economic/political failure. Although neo-liberal reforms promote stakeholder governance, they are associated with a withdrawal of rights and entitlements, increasing social inequality and a rolling back of the welfare state. Comaroff and Comaroff (2004) argue that African nations are ‘both seduced and pressed into a capitalist economy that offered them cash and commodities’ but which also disempower them since this ‘Euromodernity’ demands self-willed subjects. An alternative approach emphasises that endemic poverty such as that found in countries like Kenya can only be addressed if communities, especially the poor, are able to achieve empowerment. Such empowerment needs to engage young people in thinking critically through ‘new imperialist’ (Tikly 2004) impositions of Western development and political philosophies within their society.¹² The question that this approach then raises is: what is the most appropriate model of citizenship education today for a country such as Kenya?

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Notes

1. This paper draws on Arnot et al. (2009).
2. See Harber’s (1997) account of political education in African countries, which explored the ways in which schools were organised and how they socialised youth, and Preece and Mosweunyane (2004)’s study of citizenship education in Botswana.
3. See World Development Report (2007) for the views of Kenyan youth on this agenda.
4. Political figures gained legitimacy from supporting such projects. Moi’s governments seized control of *harambee*, centralising the funding and thus undermining civil society organisations and ethnic coalitions in communities (Gibbon 1995).
5. The 8-4-4 system entailed eight years primary, four years secondary and four years university. See Otiende and Njoroge (2001), and Otiende, Wainaina, and Waiyaki (1986, 1987) for details of the SEE syllabus content.
6. When students chose RE, they could then select from a range of separate Christian, Islamic or Hinduism examination papers.
7. In 2009, secondary enrolment rose to 1.5 million, which is a drop compared with the increase in 2008 (GoK 2008). The 2010 Economic Survey also indicates that secondary school enrolment increased by 6.2% – from 6566 (2008) to 6971 (2009); the number of secondary school teachers rose by 11.8% from 43,016 to 28,087, while the student–teacher ratio increased nationally from 28:1 (2008) to 30:1 (Gok 2010).
8. There were attempts to develop local citizenship within the community through the use of district secondary schools under Moi’s 24-year rule. As a result, the establishment of

district secondary schools increased considerably compared with the number of national schools. This had far-reaching implications on citizenship identities that cannot easily be explored here.

9. Researching findings from 92 schools found a close relationship between democratic school administrative and pedagogic practices and students' social capabilities (Wakhulia 2004).
10. The Centre for the Study of Adolescence found that more than half of all the convicted criminals in jail were between 16 and 25 years (*Daily Nation*, 18 August 2007). A survey carried out by the BBC on 10 cities worldwide, and involving some 3000 youth in the 15–17 age group, revealed a lack of citizenship identity and national belonging among 81% of Nairobi youth in the sample who said they would emigrate if the opportunity arose.
11. The FIDA booklets offer basic education on voting rights and procedures as well as how to support women's inclusion into mainstream politics. These kinds of 'easy-to-read' civic education documents play a key role in persuading men and women to work together and hence model a gender cohesive citizenship for the youth. The League of Kenya women voters addressed issues of gender discrimination in laws that denied women the right to property, land and child custody etc. By the mid-1990s, it had pushed the women's political agenda forward to include agitation for constitutional reforms that would embrace women's agendas and the education of female citizens.
12. Tikly (2004, 194) argues that citizenship education in postcolonial contexts could, at least in theory, be used to expose such Eurocentric assumptions and values, particularly around development discourses by rethinking the issues of inequality and social transformation in African contexts.

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