

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## Effect of Public Secondary Schools Categorisation on Students' Commitment to Democratic Values

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### **Abstract:**

*Nurturing students who cherish commitment to democratic values remains to be one of fundamental desires on the perpetuation of democracy in Kenya since independence. In pursuit for this desire, the categorisation of public secondary schools have remained to be a cardinal instrument toward realisation of this democratic goal. This study was designed to explore the potential of various categories of public secondary schools in influencing students' commitment to democratic values in Kiambu County, Kenya. In so doing the study sort to find whether there were significant differences in commitment to democratic values between students attending; National schools, Extra-County schools, County schools and Sub-County schools. The study was carried out among public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. A total of 384 students were involved drawn from target population of 28,213 Form IV students using stratified proportionate random sampling procedure. The study results revealed that, there were statistical significant differences in commitments to democratic values among students attending; National schools, Extra-County schools, County schools and Sub-County schools at  $F(3, 339) = 16.73, p = 0.001, p < 0.05$  with Tukey's test indicating National schools were significantly different from other three categories of public secondary schools (which did not have significant difference among them). Multiple regression on categorisation of schools yielded a significant regression equation ( $F(4, 338) = 12.790, p < 0.001$ ) with  $R^2$  of 0.131. Thus, confirming that, there were variations in influence of different categories of public secondary schools on students' commitment to democratic values.*

**Keywords:** National schools, Extra-County schools, County schools, Sub-County schools, Commitment to democratic values

### **1. Introduction**

In the history of mankind, there has never been a need for education that instills democratic values to students like in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is so since in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, particularly in most of developing nations such as Kenya, education remains to be fundamental framework for socialization, while democracy thrive as most desired form of leadership. In pursuing this desire among students as future generation, democratic nations across the globe have been integrating inculcation of democratic values in their varied education facets (Haber, 1998). This has been in line with global recognition for the need to enhance commitment to democratic values as expressed through United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (United Nations, 1994).

Despite nations striving towards fulfilling this desire, according to United Nations Global Democratic watch, many nations have continued to record low quality democracy (Diamond, 2002). The low quality democracy which is characterized by high levels of anti-democratic behaviours such as; intolerance, autocratic rule and disrespect of human rights has been attributed to low levels of Commitment to Democratic Values among their citizens (Mattes, 2012). In particular inadequate inculcation of commitment to democratic values among children in critical social behaviour formation stages such as secondary school students (Diamond, 2002).

According to Feldman (2003), in order for students to develop into competent democratic adults, they ought to be given opportunities where they can be exposed to full participation in the democratic process just like adults. Giving students the mandate to interact at different platforms of the democratic engagements helps them gain some sophisticated understanding of how democracy function. This will enable them to claim their democratic space in the wider society.

Harber (1998), argue that in the process of democratization in education institutions, policy makers should encourage schools to empower students rather than imposing measures and tasks on students at expense of democratic engagement. Supporting this view, Campbell (2004), observe that, policy makers can reconstruct school system to become communities of students and laboratories for democratic life. This could be through providing students with varied educational interaction frames such as; categorization of schools, classroom interactions, school leadership programmes and co-curricular activities (Sifuna, 1999). Such education frames may provide students with opportunities to acquire

commitment to democratic values such; practicing common-good, respect for individual liberties, national patriotism and responsiveness to social challenges (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

School system that subscribe to democratic values as means of facilitating interactions are capable of training students to become active and productive citizens whose level of awareness on contentious social issues is pronounced (Jotia, 2011). Concurring with these observations, Fosnot (2005), indicates that schools that cherish commitment to democratic values are those that allow students to question, engage in independent intellectual judgment and provide opportunity to interact with world around them. In this approach students are allowed to become creative thinkers, problem solvers and innovative citizens who can always address issues from multiple spheres of their community, hence building a democratic nation.

### *1.1. Understanding Public Secondary Schools*

A review of secondary schools' establishments across the globe indicate that they are education institutions that offer basic education to students between ages 11 years to 18 years. For instance; In England and Wales, secondary schools are for children from the ages of 11 to 16 or 11 to 18; In India, high school is a grade of education from Standards IX to X. Standards IX and X are also called Secondary Schools. Usually, students from ages 14 to 17 study in this section; In Nigeria, secondary schools are for children from ages 10 to 18. Secondary education is divided into two parts: the junior and senior secondary education; In Kenya secondary schools are for children from ages 13 to 18 (Iwamoto and UNESCO, 2005). Therefore, from these observations, secondary schools in terms of their target group can be described as institutions responsible for nurturing teenagers. One characteristic of teenagers is search for social identity. Hence, they are institutions endowed with fertile ground for laying foundation for commitment to democratic values as personality identity.

According to Gabardi (2001) secondary schools objectives, in democratic countries are known to be focused into three broad purposes; First is to provide basic academic skills and knowledge for education advancement, secondly to help prepare students for employment opportunities and third to prepare students to participate actively in all aspects of democratic life. In his concurrence with third purpose of secondary school objective in democracy, Fraser (2001) based on the findings of John Dewey Project on Progressive Education state that; education should be oriented towards preparing young people to be full and active participants in all aspects of democratic life. Gabardi (2007) expressed education in democracy as that which instil skills and expose students to situations that will ensure they actively participate in all aspects of democratic life. This aspects of democratic life include: the ability to think critically, a sense of efficacy, a commitment to compassionate action, and a desire to actively participate in political life by engaging in local decision-making processes, lobbying, voting, as well as the basic need to be able to read, write and do arithmetic (Jucker and Mather, 2015).

### *1.2. Categorization of Public Secondary Schools in Kenya*

In Kenya, categorization of public secondary schools dates back in 19<sup>th</sup> Century during colonial period. During this period, public secondary school system then was design in such a way that, it perpetuated racial segregation which was the governance policy of then British Colony. The secondary schools which included high schools were divided into three categories; the British settlers' schools, Indian settlers' schools and African schools (Fraser Commission, 1903). This was as a result of increased number of white settlers in the colony, who demand better education for their children hence raising need for provision of separate education along the racial lines.

On the down of independence and subsequent installation of Republic of Kenya in 1964, the public secondary schools categorization was transformed to reflect the governance policy of the new nation which was democratic rule. This was as results of Ominde Commission of 1964 which recommended unification of education system at all level. Most of European settlers secondary schools were transformed to National schools, Indian and other European settlers' schools were transformed to Provincial schools and African schools came to be known as District or Harambee Schools (Eshuwani, 1993).

The nation ideological driven reforms for public secondary schools, resurfaced again after promulgation of new constitutional order in 2010. The new constitution which is seen to be largely pro-human right constitution, it fundamentally departure from old one, by establishment of two-tire government; one (1) National and forty seven (47) County governments (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). In effort to realign with this new order; the National schools remained national but increased from 18 to 103 schools with each county having at least two (2) to four (4) of that kind. The provincial schools at post-independence reforms, were transformed to Extra-County. District schools were divided into two; County schools and sub-county schools. This reforms we basically informed by the need to enhance equity in distribution of public education services under new constitution dispensation.

The national secondary schools are public secondary schools with catchment area of 100% national i.e. they draw the students across the country. These schools are mainly set out as national centres of excellence for secondary school education. They are established for the principle purposes of stimulating education standards and fostering national unity, social cohesion and enhance equitable access to national resources. Admission to these institutions is on quarter system based on performance and regional balancing where each sub-county is given equal number of vacancies. On the other hand, Extra-county schools are public secondary schools that are the second-tier national Centres of excellence for secondary education. Similarly using the quarter system extra-county secondary schools draw 50% of its students nationally (i.e. in other counties) and 50% from the resident county. There were 328 extra-county secondary schools in Kenya by the year 2017. The county schools are public secondary schools that draw all its students from across its resident

county and attract averagely performing students. The sub-county secondary schools draw their students from within its resident sub-county (MOEST Secondary School Selection Guidelines, 2016).

Although the public secondary schools have similar operational structures and undertake similar programmes, this institutions establishes education units with varied social environmental setups and resource capacities. For instant; the national and extra-county public secondary schools bring together high academic performing students from diverse social cultural backgrounds. This two types of schools are also highly endowed with resources right from their inception during colonial period. However, the fact that these institutions are boarding in nature, it means students attending this school rarely interact with general public. In one calendar year the students in this institutions have average of only three months to interact with general public. The rest of the period they remain in schools. This means they have limited opportunity to interact with democratic values as practiced in wider society. On the other hand, the county and sub-county secondary schools bring together average performing students from largely homogeneous social-culture background with moderate and limited resource endowment respectively. However, this institution are generally day schools particularly Sub-County schools. This means students here interact with community on daily basis. Thus, they have higher chances for them to appreciate and embrace democratic values as they are practiced in wider society. These variations in social environmental set-ups of public secondary schools is considered to have varied significant effect on students' commitments to democratic values (Abang, 2016). This study therefore was set to verify the magnitude of the effect of National, Extra-county, County and Sub-County on student' commitment to democratic values.

### 1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to verify whether there were significant differences in commitment to democratic values between students attending different categories of public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The categories under study included; National, Extra-County, County and Sub-County public secondary Schools.

### 1.4. Hypotheses of the Study

Ho: There is no significance difference in commitment to democratic values between students attending; national, extra-county, county and sub-county public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya.

## 2. Methodology

The study used ex-post-facto research design. The target population was Form IV students (of the year 2017) drawn from public secondary schools in Kiambu County – Kenya. Using proportionate stratified sampling procedure, a sample of 384 students was selected which was within  $\pm 0.05$  of the proportion with 95% level of confidence. A self-administered questionnaire with a scale adapted from Abdul Gafoor (2015) *Scale for Commitment to Democratic Values* (SCDV) was used to collect the data. The adapted-SCDV had four (4) sub-scales with each having twelve (12) items making a total of 48 items of five (5) point Likert scales. The four sub-scales were to determine the students' Commitment on; respect to Individual liberties, practicing common good, upholding nationalism and responsiveness to community challenges respectively. The data from adapted-SCDV was first subjected to descriptive statistics to determine means and variations of students' commitment to democratic values for; national, extra-county, county and sub-county public secondary schools. A further analysis using 1-Way ANOVA was applied to determine whether there existed a significant difference between the means generated. This was followed by Tukey's test which was used as confirmatory test for 1-Way-ANOVA. Multiple Regression was finally used to weigh the magnitude of the effect of the four types of schools (National, Extra-County, County and Sub-County) on students' commitment to democratic value. The level of significance for the three tests was set at  $\alpha=0.05$ . The results for the mean scores, ANOVA, Tukey's test and Multiple Regression analysis are shown in tables 4.15, 4.16 and 4.18 respectively.

## 3. Results and Discussions

Out of 384 questionnaires administered to students who participated on the study, 343 (89.32%) questionnaires were considered for analysis, since they met all conditions for the study. In the first analysis mean scores and variation of students' commitment to democratic values for the 343 students attending National, Extra-County, County and Sub-County were analyzed. The results for analysis are presented as shown on table 1.0.

| <b>Categorization of Public Secondary Schools in Kenya</b> | <b>M</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>N</b> |
|--|----------|-----------|----------|
| National Schools   | 70.94    | 8.81      | 35       |
| Extra-County School  | 77.85    | 8.63      | 53       |
| County School  | 79.82    | 6.55      | 77       |
| Sub-County School  | 81.12    | 8.13      | 178      |
| Total  | 79.29    | 8.49      | 343      |

*Table 1: Mean Scores and Variations of Students' Commitment to Democratic Values in Accordance to Categorization of Public Secondary Schools in Kenya*

Results in table 1.0 revealed that, the means of commitment to democratic values for students' attending the four categories of public secondary schools in Kenya were different; ( $M=70.94$ ,  $SD =8.81$ ) for National school, ( $M=77.85$ ,  $SD =8.63$ ) for Extra-County School, ( $M=79.82$ ,  $SD = 6.55$ ) for County School and ( $M=81.12$ ,  $SD =8.13$ ) for Sub-County School. In

order to determine whether the means differences observed from the descriptive analysis (mean & standard deviation) as indicated in table 1.0 were significant, using the same data a 1-Way ANOVA test was conducted. The results of test are tabulated in Table 2.0.

| Source          | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F         | P – value |
|-----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| Intercept       | 1452584.039    | 1   | 1452584.039 | 22929.756 | 0.001     |
| School          | 3168.586       | 3   | 1056.195    | 16.673    | 0.001     |
| Error           | 21475.414      | 339 | 63.349      |           |           |
| Total           | 2180819.000    | 343 |             |           |           |
| Corrected Total | 24644.000      | 342 |             |           |           |

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA for Effect of Categorization of Public Secondary Schools on Students' Commitment to Democratic Values

Results in table 2.0 showed that, there was a statistically significant difference in students' commitment to democratic values between students who attended National, Extra-County, County and Sub-County public secondary school at  $F(3, 339) = 16.73, p = 0.001, p < 0.05$ . The study using Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test, went further to find out which categories of public secondary schools were different from each other. The results of the test are as shown in table 3.0.

| Categorization of Public Secondary Schools (I) | Categorization of Public Secondary Schools (J) | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. (p-Value) | 95% Confidence Interval |             |
|--|--|-----------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------|
|  |  |                       |            |                | Lower Bound             | Upper Bound |
| National School                                | Extra-County school                            | -6.91*                | 1.734      | .0001          | -11.38                  | -2.43       |
|  | County school                                  | -8.88*                | 1.623      | .0001          | -13.06                  | -4.69       |
|  | Sub-County school                              | -10.18*               | 1.472      | .0001          | -13.98                  | -6.38       |
| Extra-County school                            | National School                                | 6.91*                 | 1.734      | .0001          | 2.43                    | 11.38       |
|  | County school                                  | -1.97                 | 1.421      | .509           | -5.64                   | 1.70        |
|  | Sub-County school                              | -3.27*                | 1.245      | .044           | -6.49                   | -.06        |
| County school                                  | National School                                | 8.88*                 | 1.623      | .0001          | 4.69                    | 13.06       |
|  | Extra-County school                            | 1.97                  | 1.421      | .509           | -1.70                   | 5.64        |
|  | Sub-County school                              | -1.31                 | 1.086      | .626           | -4.11                   | 1.50        |
| Sub-County school                              | National School                                | 10.18*                | 1.472      | .0001          | 6.38                    | 13.98       |
|  | Extra-County school                            | 3.27*                 | 1.245      | .044           | .06                     | 6.49        |
|  | County school                                  | 1.31                  | 1.086      | .626           | -1.50                   | 4.11        |

Table 3: Tukey's' HSD Multiple Comparisons Test for Students' Commitment to Democratic Values in Percentages in Respect to Categorization of Public Secondary Schools  
\* The Mean Difference Is Significant at  $P < 0.05$  Level.

A comparison of National schools with Extra-county schools, County schools and sub-county schools (see table 3.0) revealed that there was statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.0001, i.e. p < 0.05$ ). A further comparison of Extra-County schools and National schools revealed there was statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.0001, i.e. p < 0.05$ ). In addition a comparison between Extra-county schools and County schools revealed there was no statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.509, i.e. p > 0.05$ ), while a comparison between Extra-County schools and Sub-county schools showed there was statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.044, i.e. p < 0.05$ ).

Another comparison between County schools and National schools revealed there was statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.0001, i.e. p < 0.05$ ). A further comparison was undertaken between County schools and Extra-county schools, which revealed there was no statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.509, i.e. p > 0.05$ ). Comparison between County schools and Sub-county schools also revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.626, i.e. p > 0.05$ ). The study went ahead to compare Sub-county schools and National school and there was statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.0001, i.e. p < 0.05$ ). A further comparison between Sub-county schools and Extra-county schools showed that statistically significant difference existed between them ( $Sig. = 0.044, i.e. p < 0.05$ ). Finally, a comparison between Sub-county schools and County schools revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between them ( $Sig. = 0.626, i.e. p > 0.05$ ). The summary of these comparative analysis is provided in table 5.0, which shows where similarities and differences between the groups lies.

| Categorization of Public Secondary Schools | N   | Subset for $p < 0.05$ |       |
|--|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|  |     | 1                     | 2     |
| National School                            | 35  | 70.94                 |       |
| Extra-County school                        | 53  |                       | 77.85 |
| County school                              | 77  |                       | 79.82 |
| Sub-County school                          | 178 |                       | 81.12 |
| Sig.                                       |     | 1.000                 | .109  |

Table 5: Tukey's Homogeneous Subsets for Means of Students' Commitment to Democratic Values in-Respect to Categorization of Public Secondary Schools

According to results of table 5.0, the homogeneous sub-sets calculated by Tukey's test revealed two set in respect of the variable "Standardized mathematics score": National schools and (Extra-county schools, County schools and Sub-county schools). This meant that the Tukey's test indicated that the means for students' commitment to democratic values for National schools ( $M=70.94$ ,  $SD =8.81$ ) was statistically different from those of Extra-county schools ( $M=77.85$ ,  $SD =8.63$ ), County schools ( $M=81.12$ ,  $SD =8.13$ ) and Sub-county schools ( $M=79.82$ ,  $SD = 6.55$ ). However, it also meant that, the means of students' commitment to democratic values for; Extra-county schools ( $M=77.85$ ,  $SD =8.63$ ), County schools ( $M=81.12$ ,  $SD =8.13$ ) and Sub-county schools ( $M=79.82$ ,  $SD = 6.55$ ) were not significantly different. To weigh the magnitude of effect of categorization of public secondary schools on students' commitment to democratic value, the Multiple Regression analysis was applied. The results of the analysis are shown in table 6.0.

| Independent Variables | Unstandardized Coefficient |            | Standardized Coefficient<br>Beta | t-ratio | p - Values |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|---------|------------|
|                       | B                          | Std. Error |                                  |         |            |
| (Constant)            | 75.583                     | 1.320      |                                  | 57.247  | 0.001      |
| National              | -.055                      | .026       | -.139                            | -2.109  | 0.036      |
| Extra-County          | .037                       | .023       | .115                             | 1.597   | 0.111      |
| County                | .069                       | .023       | .232                             | 2.997   | 0.003      |
| Sub-County            | .085                       | .021       | .343                             | 3.988   | 0.001      |
| $R^2 = 0.131$         |                            |            |                                  |         |            |
| F-ratio = 12.790      | P < 0.001                  |            |                                  |         |            |
| n = 343               |                            |            |                                  |         |            |

Table 6: Multiple Regressions for Effect of Categorization of Schools on Students' Commitment to Democratic Values

Results in table 6.0 revealed that, the adjusted  $R^2$  (0.131), ANOVA ( $p < 0.001$ ) and the standardized  $\beta$  coefficient of each component variable ( $\beta = -0.139$ ,  $p = 0.036$ ), ( $\beta = 0.115$ ,  $P = 0.111$ ), ( $\beta = 0.232$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ) and ( $\beta = 0.343$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This implies that relative to each other, Sub-county schools exerted the greatest positive influence on students' commitment to democratic values followed by County schools and Extra-county schools. National schools exerted the weakest but negative and statistically significant influence on students' commitment to democratic values ( $p < 0.05$ ). Hence overall, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and alternative hypothesis ( $H_A$ ) that there is significant difference in commitment to democratic values among students attending National, Extra-County, County and Sub-County Public secondary schools was accepted.

These results confirmed that, categorization of schools indeed had significant influence on students' commitment to democratic values. The findings corroborate with Abang (2006), who observed that; categories of schools are instruments for propagating national goals which in this case include inculcation of commitment to democratic values as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya. The difference in influence could be due to variations in terms of level of interaction with community, students' academic entry behaviour and composition of students' population in terms of gender among other factors. For instant majority of Sub-County and County schools in Kiambu and indeed in Kenya are day schools. These means students in these schools interact with community on daily basis, since they go back to community on daily basis. Hence, readily appreciate, adopt and practice desirable behaviour changes emanating from their community. In concurrence Lickona (1993) observe that, continuous interactions of students with community enhances their abilities to adopt critical aspects of democratic values such as honesty, hard work, kindness, patriotism and courage. On the other hand the National and Extra-County schools are majorly boarding schools, which means, the day to day interactions between students and community are limited. In turn the adaptation of students in these institutions to community behaviour change demands such as need for commitment to democratic values is limited.

Further to the interaction effects, establishment of National and Extra-County schools in Kenya, fundamentally are based on need to set-up national and regional academic Centres of excellence for secondary education respectively. For instant, according to MOEST Secondary School Selection Guidelines (2016), the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Candidates who scored 400 Marks out of possible 500 Marks were given first priority in securing admission to National and Extra-County schools. In commiserate to admission of high performing students, National and Extra-Counties over the year have also been the best performing schools in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. In 2016 - KCSE analysis for Kiambu County the 10 best performing schools were either National or Extra-County schools (MOEST – Kiambu, 2016).

According to Oluoch (1998), skewedness to academic achievements weakness development of social behaviour adaption attitude among students. This, explaining why students in these institutions exhibited weaker commitment to democratic values than their counterparts in Sub-County and County schools. Hence the findings of this study; categorization of schools influence students' commitment to democratic values are plausible.

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Categorization of public secondary schools influence students' commitment to democratic values, where sub-county schools exhibited highest influence followed by county, extra-county and national schools respectively. This means the unique nature of sub-county schools which is mainly 'day-school' should be adopted in all categories of schools which are 'boarding-school'. This will enhance interactions between the students and community thus enabling to appreciate the society democratic values in practice.

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