

The ideological foundations of authoritarian school governance in Kenya: Some evidence from a 1999 study of university undergraduates

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Abstract

Many studies have observed the authoritarian nature of school governance in Kenya over the years. In spite of policies being put in place to try and ensure more democratic governance even very recent studies indicate the persistence of authoritarian tendencies in school management. This paper argues that although some of the authoritarian aspects of school governance emanate from the structure of the education system itself the ideological basis on which the Kenyan political system operates has a very big role to play in reinforcing authoritarianism in the education system. In order to illustrate the authoritarian character of the system this study presents an analysis of data from a survey conducted in 1999 of university undergraduates – a significant proportion of whom were teacher trainees – to illustrate how these authoritarian orientations are transmitted through the education system. The study concludes that for this reason school governance is likely to remain authoritarian in the near future. Although this means that democratic consolidation in Kenyan society will be slow it will nonetheless be incremental and teacher education will change with it. In tandem with these changes school governance will also increasingly become more democratic.

Introduction

Governance has to do with the processes by which decisions are made and implemented and the manner in which authority and power are exercised. As such, democratic governance ought to be consensus-oriented, participatory and must strive to promote and provide for vibrant debates in the decision-making process. And yet virtually all studies of the Kenyan school from the past to the present continue to note the markedly

authoritarian bent of governance in the Kenyan school (Prewitt, 1971; Barkan, 1971; Kinyanjui, 1973; Jwan, Anderson & Bennett, 2010; Jwan, 2011; Jeruto & Kiprop, 2011).

On 24th May 2012, students at Nairobi Primary School participated in their first election of their leaders at the school (Serem, 2012). Perhaps nothing very special in itself but in Kenya it certainly was significant in that it marked a radical departure from the past not only in that school but the vast majority of Kenyan schools where student leaders (usually called prefects) are hand picked by the school administration rather than elected by the student body itself. Serem (2012) reports the enthusiasm of 14 year old Nereah Odhiambo who was vying for school head girl (chief prefect of girls in the school) and how her enthusiasm had captured the attention of her fellow students:

As she speaks on the policies she would like to put in place, her eloquence and confidence reveals leadership qualities and maturity far beyond her years. In Odhiambo's words: "This opportunity has really developed my leadership skills...And I know it will help me relate with others very well.

According to Serem students seemed eager to take part in school governance and she quotes Michael Oduor, the teacher in charge of the students council as noting a great sense of responsibility among the student leaders since the inception of [democratic] school governance. He noted that academic performance had also improved with more interactive learning taking place as outcomes of the students' governance. Significantly, he commented that it would help the students to develop their decision making skills for a more sober electorate in future.

I cite this particular event to exemplify some of the potential benefits that can be derived from a democratically elected student leadership for better school governance. The road to that election at Nairobi Primary School in 2012 can be said to have begun in 2008 when UNICEF in partnership with the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education conducted a survey to establish the relevance of student participation in school governance. The survey indicated that student participation in school management tends to improve learning and instills positive values in the child (Serem, 2012). The survey subsequently contributed to the establishment of the Child Friendly School (CFS) practices by empowering students to take part in decision making processes for a more cohesive school community and conducive learning environment.

It was this survey that paved the way for the formation of the Kenya Secondary School Student Council (KSSSC) in 2009. The formation of that council marked the formal acceptance by the Ministry of Education of the importance of making secondary school governance more participatory. In this new arrangement, students would be part and parcel of decision-making to ensure that their interests are adopted in the administration of the schools (Jeruto & Kiprop, 2011).

However, recent studies (Jeruto & Kiprop, 2011; Jwan, 2011; Jwan, Anderson & Bennett, 2010) report that governance in the majority of schools in Kenya in general and secondary schools in particular are still far from being participatory. Jeruto and Kiprop (2011) for example, found that more than 95 per cent of students were not involved in making decisions on the school budget, on disciplinary matters, school administration, curriculum and student welfare issues, school fees, formation of school rules and teaching

methods amongst other issues. They note that most of the teachers they interviewed were of the opinion that student participation was unnecessary due to their youth and lack of experience on technical issues.

Jwan, Anderson and Bennett (2010), on their part found that although school principals have made efforts to involve teachers and students in decision making in school matters, most teachers and principals were wary of the practicing of “full democracy” for students and instead preferred what they called “partial democracy” based on historical and cultural factors. Perhaps as a consequence of this fact Jwan (2011) found that the student voice was never taken into consideration in the aspects that he studied, namely in student grooming, student meals, the running of the school canteen and their need for hot water. Jwan attributes this to the patriarchal orientations of the teachers and principals that led them to believe that as adults they knew better what was in the best interests of the students and the students therefore did not need to be consulted or involved in making decisions concerning their welfare.

The roots of these attitudes can be explained partially by the nature of the education system itself as well as the attitudes and orientations that emanate from the wider society outside the school itself. Let us begin with the school.

As Harber (1989) notes, the Western education organizational model is essentially authoritarian in nature and apart from being hierarchical it is also bureaucratic and can therefore hardly boast of being democratic in the sense that term is commonly understood. In this system the purpose of the student leadership as exemplified by the prefect is to aid the maintenance of social order, obedience, punctuality and orderliness.

As Prewitt (1971) noted in his study there is therefore a discrepancy between the egalitarian values that are taught in the curriculum and the values that are transmitted by the structure of school governance. As Sifuna (2000) concluded, the combined effect of these oft-contradictory socialization is that the educated Kenyans are more likely to define their citizenship in relation to their duties rather than to their social rights.

That aside, it is important to appreciate the fact that as one of the major social institutions of society, education is situated directly in its social milieu and that the students come into the school after their initial socialization at home and in their play groups with their peers. And even as they progress through the education system they never stop being members of the larger society and to interact with that society. The school, therefore, merely joins other agents of political socialization in shaping the students’ attitudes towards democracy and other political orientations (Dawson, Prewitt & Dawson, 1977).

A recent survey by *Afrobarometer* (an independent, nonpartisan research project that measures social, political and economic atmosphere in Africa) on attitudes towards democracy in 33 African countries as reported by Obbo (2014) is illustrative in this regard. The data of this survey reveals that although most African support democracy, more than one-half are also sympathetic to some form of authoritarian rule. It would therefore perhaps be unrealistic to expect that the incumbents of the education system in Africa in general and in Kenya in particular, would not to some extent reflect this very contradiction. This paper argues that in Kenya this contradiction is born of the ideology of pragmatism that has characterized Kenya’s politics since the colonial era.

Ideology and the Education System in Kenya

According to Marxian conceptualization ideology has three principle functions: legitimation, mystification, and consolation (Scruton, 1984). It seeks to naturalise the status quo and to represent as immutable the persisting social conditions by persuading those who are oppressed that this condition is only natural. As Apter (1964) noted, ideology reflects the presuppositions of its observers.

If there is one ideology that has characterised the Kenyan State since the colonial era then it is the ideology of pragmatism. As Kumalo (1959) noted, it is the ideology that had supremacy throughout the colonial era where the interests of the white settler elite always came out on top of African interests in spite of any stated policies or objectives to the contrary. In spite of most state policies espousing the paramountcy of the interests of the African people, the ideology of pragmatism always ensured that such objectives were sidelined in the interests of the white settler elite.

The carefully crafted independence transition itself was more guided by pragmatism rather than any other ideology although it had as its disguise the notion of national development (Holmquist, Weaver & Ford, 1994). However, the exigencies of independence demanded the adoption of a less amorphous ideology and nationalism that had brought about independence was eagerly espoused. Its clearest vision was that of the elimination of poverty, disease, and ignorance through educational development.

As Apter (1964) has noted, although development embodies in itself hope and a positive notion of the future, development is not an ideology. What was needed therefore was an ideology to package development and this ideology was nationalism. National development at once sought to transcend the negativism associated with colonialism while defining hope in programmatic terms: fight against poverty, ignorance and disease. Thus, the expansion of educational access and opportunities became a major priority as did health provision, and to a much lesser extent, land reform.

David Apter (1964) has noted that ideology performs two main functions. The first is communal while the second is individual. For Kenya, on one hand, the ideology of nationalism sought to bind Kenyans together as a nation in pursuit of its development aspirations through political mobilisation. On the other hand it also sought to organise the role personalities of individual Kenyans as a means of legitimating political authority and the dominant social arrangements (which had changed more in form than content). To a very significant and considerable extent these broad purposes were seen as devolving upon the education system.

However, since the transfer of power was a pragmatic reality (Holmquist, Weaver and Ford, 1994), the ideology of nationalism as sponsored by the new elite had to be subordinated to the pragmatic reality of its own power. Thus was an ideology of pragmatic nationalism born. So long as “nationalism” as an ideology did not mean dismantling the basic structure of privilege it could be used to mobilise Kenyans for political purposes as well as for the more ostensible purpose of national development. In this way the true spirit of “*uhuru*” (independence) was suppressed in the pragmatic interests of the new elite. Where the struggle for independence had been motivated by a desire to break the colonial structure of privilege this new pragmatic nationalism amounted to little more than replacing the white incumbents of privilege with black ones.

What happened then was simply an attempt to legitimise this authoritarianism by invoking the imperative of “national development”. Development, it was argued, could not be attained in an environment where dissent and argumentation in the name of democracy was the norm (Ake, 1993). All people had to be united behind the “father of the nation” in his quest to lead his people to national development: people needed food, education and good health not democracy. In the event development became a pursuit and prerogative of the authoritarian elite in which the common Kenyan had only a passive part.

Education programmes, especially the expansion of the system through self-help (*harambee*) became a weapon for the elite in its quest to maintain its authoritarian hold over the Kenyan populace. The basic political values transmitted by the education system could not and did not reflect those in numerous policy documents (Kenya, 1964; 1965; 1978; 1984; 1988; 1999) but rather, the pragmatic political reality.

Thus, as has been noted by Prewitt (1977) and others, whereas the stated policies and objectives of education emphasise egalitarianism and democracy, in practise Kenya’s education system is based on an authoritarian model. The modes of instruction are authoritarian; the prefectural system is authoritarian. The teacher, much as he/she did in the colonial era, remains the Tsar of the classroom whose word must not be questioned. The effect is to produce students who are in constant awe (if not fear) of the authorities. It is not a system that empowers democracy or creates people who are fiercely egalitarian. Instead it produces negative values of complete subservience to authority, scant regard for social justice or equality. The ideological basis of the education system means that its stated policies, goals and objectives are unlikely to be realised unless the pragmatic premises on which they are founded can be meaningfully altered.

The Problem

This study sought to assess the kinds of political values that the education system imparts to university undergraduates by analyzing some data gathered from a 1999 study that included a significant proportion of teacher trainees in the sample. The success with which the stated political goals of the education system can be realised depends much on how well it transmits the vital signals from the political system to its incumbents. One significant way of doing this is through teacher training. Because educational policies in Kenya enunciate democratic values, in ideal circumstances one would expect those students preparing for a teaching career to have democratic orientations.

If the education system is doing this it shows a satisfactory congruence and inter-relationship between the two systems. To the extent that it may not be doing so, this would represent a dysfunction between the education and political systems that would have far reaching repercussions not only on Kenya’s constitutionally stated democratic agenda but on the shaping of individual role personalities suitable for the political system.

Thus the research questions were as follows:

- (a) Can the political orientations of the products of Kenya’s education system be described as democratic or authoritarian?
- (b) What are the implications of these set of orientations towards the long-term objective of democratic consolidation in Kenya?; and

- (c) What are the implications of these orientations on teacher education that ensures that the education system, and to a lesser extent, the political system can reproduce themselves?

Methodology

The data of this study were collected towards the end of 1999 from 879 undergraduate students in six universities in Kenya. Three of these were public universities viz. Kenyatta, Egerton, and Maseno while three were private universities viz. Daystar, Catholic University and University of East Africa-Baraton. The only tool of data collection consisted of a self-administered questionnaire with six Likert-type attitude scales of which the instrument of this study was one. The sample consisted of students pursuing both arts and science courses and approximately two-thirds of them were pursuing degrees in education.

The Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were generated to enable the comparison of the sample across several important categories. These were the students' year of study at the university, their degree courses and their socio-economic status. The hypotheses were:

- (1) The political orientations of fourth year students are more authoritarian than the political orientations of first year students;
- (2) Science students have a more authoritarian political orientation than Arts students; and
- (3) Students of the higher socio-economic stratum have more authoritarian political orientations than those of the lower socio-economic stratum.

The Instrument

The original 26-item Likert-type scale was designed by Edwards (1944) and was titled "Unlabelled fascist attitudes". Thus, the items are meant to measure fascist attitudes. Edwards collected the items from a variety of sources including studies by Stagner and Gundlach and the writings of Childs, Mann and Kolnai (Shaw and Wright, 1967). The seven-item version of the original scale used in this study was found to be appropriate for Kenya and it had high reliability ($\alpha = .9158$) and was derived from a 22-item version from Shaw and Wright (1967). It was modified further into four categories of responses: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly disagree.

The relevance of the scale, although it was constructed prior to 1944, in contemporary times is because the dimension of fascism that it seeks to measure is closely related to what is now called authoritarianism. Both fascism and authoritarianism can be described by a syndrome of personality traits that may be manifested in different ways but that in the final analysis, come from the same root.

The seven items used in this study covered the following attitude domains: inter-personal and inter-generational relations, leadership styles, will to power, gender relations and the place of women in society. A score of 25 and above was considered to represent an anti fascist or anti authoritarian orientation while a score of below 25 was considered to represent a pro-fascist or an authoritarian orientation.

Analysis

The data were analysed first, using simple frequency distributions to describe the general trends within the sample. Secondly, the data were then subjected to hypotheses testing using the t-test. Let us begin with the first.

Item-by-Item Analysis

What follows is a review of each of the seven statements of the scale that were analyzed; a brief background on their significance in testing authoritarian attitudes and orientations; and then a presentation of the results. A detailed discussion of the significance of these results is carried out at the end of this section.

The first statement read as follows:

“What young people need most of all is strict discipline given by their parents”

The regimentation of society and the desire for a pecking order is a hallmark of the authoritarian style and mind set. Part of it therefore has to do with the training of the youth and their subjugation to the direction of the elders to ensure that they grow up compliant to orders and discipline. The first item on the scale sought to find out the attitudes of the students towards this mind set.

As dichotomised data, 54.7 per cent agreed with the statement while 43.4 per cent disagreed with it. A proportion of 1.9 per cent did not respond.

The second statement read as follows:

“A few strong leaders could make this country better than all the laws and compromise”

The basis of both fascism and authoritarianism are the strong leader who holds sway over the whole population. Ideologically, this is the nationalist leader or what Bratton and Walle (1997) call the “big man” in the neo-patrimonial context. The “big man” usually tries to act out the role of the benevolent provider who is above the law for the “good of society”. Indeed in Kenya the president is above the law and that means that he can breach any law with impunity. And yet, the rule of law and the idea that all persons are subject to the law is one of the foundations of democracy.

In response to this item, 67.3 per cent of the students were in agreement while only 30 per cent were in disagreement. Another 2.6 per cent did not respond.

The third statement read as follows:

“Most people who do not get ahead just don’t have enough will power”

A defining characteristic of the fascist and authoritarian mind set is the contempt for “weakness” and “failure” and lack of drive. The tendency to classify the unsuccessful as weak or lacking in drive is therefore a means of sorting out the “pure” from the “impure”, the “weak” from the “strong”, those with will power and those without; those with the will to power and success and those without.

In response to this item, 42.4 per cent of the sample was in agreement while 53.2 per cent were not. Some 4.4 per cent did not respond.

The fourth statement read as follows:

“Women in this country should stay out of politics”

A hallmark of all fascist and authoritarian regimes in history is to confine women to status of second class citizens who are there more to be seen than to be heard. This is often made clear in the political arena where the participation of women is discouraged and frowned upon if not forbidden outright.

Only 10.4 per cent of the sample was in agreement while the majority of 87.2 per cent disagreed with it. A proportion of 2.4 per cent did not respond.

The fifth statement read as follows:

“One main trouble in Kenya today is that people talk too much and work too little”

One of the foundations of democracy is the freedom of expression. The right to express one’s views and one’s obligation to listen to the views of others is a constantly recurring theme in discussions of what constitute democracy. The view that talking is a waste of time therefore goes well with the idea of a strong leader who “knows everything” or knows “what is best” for everyone. Discussions are thus seen as a “waste of time” and of little benefit in the serious business of nation building. Thus, while all the ideas should come from the great leader, it is the responsibility of the good citizen to work hard to realise the objectives of the leadership.

In response, 81.5 per cent of the sample was in agreement with this statement with only 14.9 per cent disagreeing. Another 3.6 per cent did not respond.

The sixth statement read as follows:

“Sex offenders deserve more than prison; they should be whipped publicly or worse”

The “rule of law” is one the conventions of democracy and it is accompanied by the concept of “due process”, that the law shall be applied fairly in all cases. A characteristic of an authoritarian society is the tendency to regard certain types of deviance as being extra-legal or requiring extreme sanctions. These kinds of deviance may be political, criminal, or social e.g. dissidence, rapists (once women are put on a pedestal and denied human status they are inviolable) and poverty or nomadism. The tendency is therefore to treat certain deviant acts as demanding more than legal sanctions.

In response, 63.5 per cent of the students agreed with this statement while 32.8 per cent disagreed. Some 3.8 per cent did not respond.

The seventh and final statement read as follows:

“It is only natural and right that Kenyan women should have less freedom than men”

Another fairly common attitudinal predisposition of fascism and authoritarianism is that of not only an ambivalent attitude towards women as human beings but subsequently as people with a natural second class status to men in society whose activities in politics or freedom to engage in any activity should be subject to male consent. This is often justified using religious teachings or customs and tradition.

In responding to this item only 20.1 per cent of the students were in agreement with this view while the majority of 77.4 per cent disagreed with it. Some 2.5 per cent of the sample did not respond to it. A summary of these responses is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of responses to items in the scale

Attitude Item	Agree %	Disagree %	NR
“What young people need most of all is strict discipline given by their parents”	54.7	43.4	1.9
“A few strong leaders could make this country better than all the laws and compromise”	67.3	30.0	2.6
“Most people who do not get ahead just don’t have enough will power”	42.4	53.2	4.4
“Women in this country should stay out of politics”	10.4	87.2	2.4
“One main trouble in Kenya today is that people talk too much and work too little”	81.5	14.9	3.6
“Sex offenders deserve more than prison; they should be whipped publicly or worse”	63.5	32.8	3.8
“It is only natural and right that Kenyan women should have less freedom than men”	20.1	77.4	2.5

From the foregoing, it is possible to build a narrative of a syndrome of attitudes that to some extent describes the political orientations towards authoritarianism by looking at those statements with which the majority were in agreement (four out of seven). There was considerable acceptance of discipline by elders (54.7%) and admiration for strong overbearing leadership (67.3%) that entertains little or no debate (81.5%) and that sees nothing wrong with the application of extrajudicial sanctions against certain category of deviants that could be regarded as being “abnormal” (63.5%).

Conversely, there were a minority of students who felt that perhaps failure in life may be due to other factors that just having no will power (53.2%) and who felt that women should be part and parcel of the political processes in Kenya (87.2 %) and should have equal rights with man rather than being regarded as second-class citizens (77.4%) This last group describes the minority opinion of what may be called the democratic element of the sample. They are far outnumbered by the group that Jwan, Anderson and Bennett (2010) may have described as “partial democrats”. The analysis then shifted to testing the hypotheses of the study.

Testing the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The political orientations of the fourth year students are more authoritarian than the political orientations of first year students.

There were 237 first year students in the sample and 99 fourth year students. The mean scores for both groups were authoritarian (25 and above democratic, below 25 authoritarian) and although the standard deviation for both groups of students showed that there were some students whose mean scores indicated a democratic orientation, there was no statistically significant difference between the orientations of both groups:

$$t(334) = .646 > P .05$$

Table 2: t-Test comparing years of study

Year of Study	Number of cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Lowest Mean	Highest Mean
First	237	21.628	4.180.	17.448	25.808
Fourth	99	20.888	4.128	16.760	25.016

There was therefore no indication of increasing or declining democratic orientations with increasing level of study. This suggests very strongly that by the time the students get to university their orientations towards authoritarianism and democracy are well set.

Hypothesis 2 The political orientations of science students are more authoritarian than the political orientations of science students.

There were 442 arts and 414 science students in the sample with another 23 who did not indicate their degree course. The mean scores for both groups indicated an authoritarian orientation although once again, the highest mean scores showed the presence of democratic orientations among a minority in both groups. At the same time it is noteworthy that the science students, contrary to the expectations of the hypothesis, actually had a higher mean score than the arts students. However, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant:

$$t(828.68) = .039 > P .05$$

Once again this demonstrated that the course of study was not a significant determinant of political orientations towards authoritarianism and democracy. Such orientations existed in spite of the course of the study rather than because of it.

Table 3: t-Test comparing arts and science students

Degree Course	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Lowest Mean	Highest Mean
Arts	442	21.373	3.769	17.608	25.142
Science	414	21.330	4.208	17.122	25.538

Hypothesis 3 The political orientations of students from upper socio-economic status are more authoritarian than the political orientations of those students from lower socio-economic status.

There were 63 students from higher socio-economic background and 142 from a lower socio-economic background. The mean scores of both groups showed an authoritarian orientation although the highest mean scores showed democratic orientations among a minority of individuals in both groups. However, on the whole, the lower class students tended to have more democratic orientations than the upper class students. In spite of this the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant:

$$t(198) = .295 > P .05$$

The fact that the differences were not statistically significant showed that one's socio-economic status was not a determinant of ones orientations towards authoritarianism and democracy.

Table 4: t-Test comparing low and upper socio-economic statuses

Socio-Economic Status	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Lowest Mean	Highest Mean
Upper	63	20.904	4.276	16.628	25.180
Lower	137	22.007	4.378	17.629	26.385

In order to enable a better appreciation of these findings, sample means were also compared across several important categories. These were by university, by sex, and by all the years of study.

By University

When the mean scores for all the six universities were compared, no university had a mean score showing democratic orientations. However, in all the universities the highest mean scores showed democratic orientations among the minority of the sample. The

differences however, were marginal not exceeding two points difference between the highest mean scores across the universities (Table 5).

By Sex

When males and females were compared, men had a higher mean score than women. Men had a mean score of 21.54 while women had a mean score of 21.15. The mean scores for both showed that they both had predominantly authoritarian orientations. The standard deviations for both group however indicate that in both groups there were a minority with democratic orientations (Table 6).

Table 5: Comparison of the mean scores across universities

University	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Lowest Mean	Highest Mean
CUEA	22.27	3.84	18.43	26.11
Daystar	21.03	3.73	17.30	24.76
Egerton	21.25	4.17	17.08	25.42
Kenyatta	21.10	4.11	16.99	25.21
Maseno	21.65	4.37	17.28	26.02
Baraton	20.71	3.44	17.27	24.15

Table 6: Comparison of means scores of males and females

Sex	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Lowest Mean	Highest Mean
Males	21.54	4.46	17.00	26.00
Females	21.15	3.45	17.70	24.6

By Year of Study

When the mean scores of students from first year to fourth year were compared, although no single year had a mean score showing democratic orientations, there appeared to be a trend of the means to decrease from first to fourth year. This suggests that although the students' orientations are basically authoritarian there is a tendency for them to become increasingly so as one progresses through the four years of undergraduate university education. Given the standard deviations, the least variation in orientations occurred among second and third year students followed by first year and fourth year students respectively. The second and fourth year students had the same highest mean scores followed by the third and fourth year students in descending order (Table 7).

Table 7: Comparison of means scores across years of study

Year of Study	Mean	Standard Deviation	Lowest Mean	Highest Mean
First	21.63	4.18	17.45	25.81
Second	21.31	3.71	17.60	25.02
Third	21.25	3.88	17.37	25.13
Fourth	20.89	4.13	16.76	25.02

Interpretation

From the descriptive data and the results from the test of the hypotheses it is clear that the political orientations of the undergraduate students are predominantly authoritarian rather than democratic. The fact that there are no significant differences between the first and fourth year students would seem to imply that these basic orientations are well established by the time the students get to university. This in turn seems to point at a fairly thorough and homogenous socialization process that takes place before one gets to university. This points to the veracity of the observations of various authors who have described Kenya's education system as being largely authoritarian in approach.

This observation of homogeneity of the political socialization process by the education system is further buttressed by the descriptive analysis that comes from comparing the mean scores across universities. No university registers a mean score indicating a democratic orientation. They are uniformly authoritarian in basic orientations.

Second, although it has been observed elsewhere that arts students are more likely to have a democratic orientation, the results of this study stand this supposition on its head. Although there is no statistically significant difference between the two courses of study, the fact that the means scores point to the science students as being less authoritarian in

orientations is quite an upset of the foregoing assumption. It has often been assumed that the curricula of the arts based courses tend to impart orientations that tend towards the democratic than the authoritarian. The fact that this has not been proved here would seem to suggest the following. It suggests that the impact of all other socializing agents are so inclined towards the authoritarian as to negate the possible effects of the curriculum.

Third, it is not quite unexpected that the lower class and upper class students should both have mean scores indicating an authoritarian tendency given the foregoing scenario. In spite of the differences between the orientations of these two classes not being statistically significant, the mean scores show that the lower class attitudes tend to be less authoritarian in orientation than those of the upper class. This may possibly be attributed to the desire of the lower class to alter the status quo and those of the upper class to maintain it. This is because basically, the scale reflects to a considerable extent the realities pertaining in Kenya generally. That the orientations of students from the lower socio-economic classes are not radically different from the orientations of students from the higher classes point to the effectiveness of a socialization process that is firmly rooted in the ideology of the power elite. It is an ideology based on the justification of the pragmatic interests of the ruling class.

Finally, it would hardly be expected that men would differ greatly from women. The results indicate that the socialization process works just as effectively on men as it does on women. However, the fact that men posted a less authoritarian tendency than women would seem to reflect the situation of Kenyan society generally that on the whole women enjoy less freedom than men in virtually all spheres of life. It may therefore be argued logically that women, because they are used to having less freedom all round than men, are more likely to be less democratic in orientation and to instead reflect the authoritarian attitudes that are responsible for denying them equal freedom to men in the first place.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study it is now possible to offer some answers to the three questions that prompted this study. First, on whether the political orientations of university undergraduates are authoritarian or democratic, the findings indicate that these are predominantly authoritarian. Some fourteen to fifteen years later, it is possible that some of these students are now the teachers whose attitudes are being captured in school surveys today. It is clear that the ideological basis of Kenya's education system, its stated goals and objectives notwithstanding, is authoritarian. It is an authoritarianism born of the necessities of pragmatic nationalism. The education system seems to effectively socialize its incumbents to be subservient and to admire authoritarianism. This is what the expediency of Kenya's pragmatic reality has always demanded on the political front and it is only expected that it should pervade and inform the education system as well. The practice of stating one thing in policy and doing a different thing in practice is well grounded in Kenya's political history and, as already noted, dates back to the days of the colonial settler economy.

Second, on the question as to what implications these orientations have for democratic consolidation in Kenya. As the *Afrobarometer* survey quoted by Obbo (2014) shows, Africans (and Kenyans for that matter) "love autocrats, strongmen and unfinished democrats" This echoes Jwan, Anderson and Bennett's (2010) findings of teachers who prefer to practice "partial democracy" towards students for "historical and cultural reasons". Democratization

will therefore of necessity be a long-term rather than a short-term project. This means setbacks and occasional stagnation but as the findings of the *Afrobarometer* indicate, a continuous process that is more or less irreversible in the long run.

As to the third and final question, namely on the implications of the foregoing for teacher education, we can say the following. It appears inevitable that the erstwhile student of 1999 who may be today's teacher cannot help but continue transmitting the attitudes and orientations that their socialization has bequeathed them. But this is not to say that things are hopeless as far as Kenya's education system is concerned. As Prewitt (1972: 3) observes, Kenya's education system is simultaneously promoting democratic as well as authoritarian orientations. There are clearly those students on whom the socialization of authoritarian orientations does not work (and this is also the beauty of the process of political socialization: that it does not always work uniformly). These are in fact the political "deviants" of Kenya's education system and so long as there are such individuals there is hope that things can change.

Obviously the introduction of democratic innovations in the school should continue. It may be hoped that as society becomes more democratic so will school governance also become more democratic. Pragmatism as an ideology is not the problem but rather the premises on which it has been practiced in Kenyan society. To the extent that these premises can change there is no reason why society and the governance of schools should also not change pragmatically to become more participatory. The successful implementation of the 2010 Constitution will certainly help to realize this kind of society.

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