CURRICULUM AND ETHICS: A DECONSTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF KENYAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract
One of the objectives of education is to promote ethical behaviour among learners. The African educational system inculcated ethics among members of society and produced ethically and morally upright individuals for generations. With the introduction of formal education, the responsibility of inculcating ethics to children was taken up by schools. Despite the enormous investment in education over the years and the high academic qualification of graduates leaving the school, the level of impunity, corruption, negative ethnicity and intolerance has remained a major concern among educationists and stakeholders. There is need to investigate the influence of deconstruction and reconstruction of Kenyan education curriculum on ethics among learners. The study established that, deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum with inclusion of practical-oriented activities in classroom, community based approaches and co-curricular activities would help influence ethics. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide useful information to curriculum developers, implementers, planners, policy makers and other stakeholders on ways of integrating African indigenous education into contemporary education to influence ethical values.

Key words: Deconstruction, Reconstruction, Curriculum, Ethics, Education system

1.1 Background Information

Ethics is defined as a philosophical study of morality. Morality is understood as a set of social rules, principles and norms that guide or are intended to guide the conduct and behaviour of people in a society. According to Singer (2001) ethics is the standard of good and bad distinguished by a certain community or social setting. Bewaji (2004) defines ethics as the character or attribute of an individual dealing with what is good and evil. Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) define ethics as what you derive for yourself that is right and good and benefits all people involved. Ethics relates to values commonly adhered to and fundamentals in the immediate surroundings (Knowles & Smith, 2006). Ethics dictate the working of a social system by pointing out the application of principles of morality and laying down a set of codes that people must follow (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2008). Ethics can be defined from different angles and perspectives but all of these definitions can be considered as fundamentally relevant to each other. All of the definitions focus on ethics as the study of the human conduct and its special aspects as well as the morality of human acts. In this study, ethics is defined as a set of guidelines that define acceptable behaviour and practices for a certain group of individuals or society.

Ethics is important in the society because it is an essential part of the foundation on which a civilized society is built (White, 2016). Ethics safeguards the total way of life, which forms the culture of people. According to Knowles and Smith (2006) individuals consider ethics as a manifest of rules of behaviour to which their culture demands compliance in order to ensure a peaceful order and co-existence. Through ethics, individuals find it easy to live with the family and other members of the society and even advance in their careers because of harmonious co-existence. Ndichu (2013) observes that ethics is concerned with social norms that guide human conduct. The fabric of any society is held together by the standards of ethics including respect, responsibility integrity, tolerance and justice that are maintained and practiced by individuals as well as groups. Therefore ethics play an important role in governing the collective human behaviour in society by determining the social relationships in which people live in the community and the links of authority indicating the proper courses of conduct and behaviour.

The concern over the proper induction of the younger generation by the elders into the norms and principles of good conduct is probably a universal goal of the human experience. Every society strives to instill and nurture what it upholds as morally good to its members. According to Goodman and Lesnick (2001) ethics is a broadly shared goal that is facilitated by the work of socializing agents such as family, religion, peer group, mass media and school in every contextual setting. Human beings learn how to think, behave and act through agents of socialization that influence self-concept, attitudes, behaviors and other orientations towards life (Berkowitz, 2002). Every agent of socialization plays a role in the collective process of education. Stefaan (2012) in the work of Peters aptly observes that schools have a major responsibility to nurture those youngsters whom they are entrusted with. For that reason the school is the primary transmitter of information and knowledge while at the same time assuming many of the functions of other socializing agents.

African traditional communities conceived ethics as an integrated whole (Kinoti, 2010). For instance, an honest person was described as one who could be relied upon because he or she was truthful, generous, courageous and had sense of justice. The concept of ethics implies that a good person was one who possessed all the virtues, not just a few but all of them. The communities conceived ethics as the reasonable order of things. Members had a highly organized system of sanctions for maintaining order of things. According to (Kinoti, 2010) this system consisted of

human agents (parents, peer groups, warriors, elders, kinsmen and the local community) and supernatural agents (God and ancestral sprits). The whole system was an integrated one where human agents worked together harmoniously and assisted the individual in their different ways to conform to the moral and ethical code. Reward, punishment and taboos played an essential role in influencing ethics. This shows that ethics could be cultivated through knowledge and appreciation of morals.

The United States system of education was founded with ethics education as one of its primary goals. Ethics was viewed as the key to the progress of humanity. Development and promotion of ethics however, is no longer a priority in institutions of learning. The tremendous success of science and technology in the late 19th and early 20th century led to a declining concern about teaching broader questions of human values and morality. In many African countries, development of ethics is a key component in laying proper and sound foundations for the improvement of character, conduct and attitudes towards oneself as well as society (Blasi, 2005). For instance, in Nigeria one of the objectives of education is to instill moral values among learners. Nevertheless, Nigerian education is threatened by a number of factors such as the existence of secularism and excess quest for materialism and religious unbelief. With that effect Ilechukwu and Ugwuozor (2014) consider this to be a serious problem in the country by arguing that school system need to create conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning of ethics. Historically, theologians, philosophers, politicians, and educators all over the world have long concerned themselves with character, morality, ethics and values such as honesty, compassion, loyalty, respect, trust, integrity and responsibility.

In Tanzanian education system, one of the aims of education is to inculcate moral and ethical values in order to prepare useful, responsible and moral upright individuals in the society. Anangisye (2008) presents the problem of lack of integrity among the youths in Tanzania and argues that the use of system regulations and the teaching of religious code of conduct would be the best approach to reduce immoral cases in the country. Anangisye (2008) further indicates that without a well-defined education policy and system in favor of promoting ethics, efforts to that effect are doomed to fail. Young people have to be nurtured in the right way, lest they grow into the scare that the world is experiencing in the face of terror gangs and organizations such as the Al Shabaab, Boko Haram and the Islamic state of Iran and Syria extremist group. This indicates that there is need to examine the place of ethics in education system.

In Kenya, the notion of ethics dates back to pre-independence period. Indigenous education emphasized on normative and expressive skills through instilling the accepted behavior and creation of unity respectively (Sifuna & Otiende, 2006). Indigenous education forms part of African heritage and therefore it is inseparable from African way of life. Nsamenang (2005) indicates that African indigenous education wedged the childrens daily routines and the livelihoods of their family and community together, integrating skills and knowledge about all aspects of life into a single curriculum. According to Isanda (2016) African indigenous education curriculum emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, spiritual and moral values. From studies by researchers on African indigenous education, it is clear that indigenous education was grounded on specific aims of education which were realized through a well thought out curriculum intended to guide social and moral behavior. But, like African philosophy itself, the ideas and beliefs of the African society that acknowledge ethics have not been given detailed investigation and clarification in the Kenyan education system and thus, stand in real need of insightful and extensive analysis, interpretation and implementation. Attempts have been made by contemporary African philosophers

to give continuous reflective attention to African moral ideas however; this has not been fully achieved.

The Kenya Education Commission Report (RoK, 1964) identified the national goals of education which formed the philosophical foundations of education all related to promotion of ethics among learners in the education system. The Commission proposed an inclusive review of education in Kenya by dealing with numerous policy issues that confronted the young nation and others that were specific to education at the time. The Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (RoK, 1976) recommended among other issues the teaching of ethics in secondary schools based on the values of the traditional African society. The report sought a distinction between the teaching of ethics and that of religion. As a result the Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (RoK, 1988) recommended that Social education and Ethics be taught to all students at all levels of education and training in Kenya. This was in recognition of the place of ethics among individuals who form the society.

Chapter Two of the contemporary Constitution (Article 10) identifies the national values and principles of governance as: human dignity, equity, social justice, equality, human rights, good governance, integrity, transparency, accountability and sustainable development (RoK, 2010). These values and principles revolve around the concept of promoting ethics among citizens. The same constitution dedicates the whole of chapter six to the consideration of the question of integrity, which is a key component of ethics. The Basic Education Act 2014 views education as an avenue for promotion of peace, integration, cohesion, tolerance and inclusion as an objective in the provision of basic education as well as elimination of hate speech and tribalism through instructions that promote the proper appreciation of ethnic diversity and culture. All these point to a country that has a social vision in regard to ethics for her citizens.

The International Commission on Education for the 21th century decried the declining respect for human values and relationships, terming it as one of the grim pictures of the global scenarios on education (UNESCO, 2005). Development and promotion of ethics in Kenyan education system is a major concern for stakeholders, yet it has not been well implemented and defined as revealed by rampant moral decays by school leavers and graduates in different parts of the country. With a huge expansion of education, there has been a marked decline in the characters and moral values among the educated people (Njoroge and Bennaars in Chukwu, 2002; Jain, 2012; Fechter, 2014). The Kenyan society is suffering from severe social and moral problems which are most visibly reflected by the citizens through negative ethnicity, mismanagement of public funds and property, hate speech, intolerance, lack of integrity, terrorism by the educated among others. Such circumstances and happenings cannot be neglected in hopes that they will correct themselves. This shows that there is need to deconstruct and reconstruct the Kenyan education system to focus on implementation and redefinition of ethics through integration of the African indigenous education.

Postcolonial Kenya needs to transform through educational deconstruction and reconstruction. To deconstruct the Kenyan education system is to displace them into the fabric of historicity out of which they have been shaped and to become involved in the unmaking of a construct (Swartz, 2006). Deconstruction of colonial school curriculum requires rupturing the hegemonic structures of Western defined knowledge. From this perspective, school knowledge is transformed, reconstructed and rewritten to celebrate difference, diversity, pluralism, multiplicity and heterogeneity without

portraying any one form of knowledge as the culture of reference. Kenya adopted a colonial type of education at independence in 1963. Fifty five years after independence, the government of Kenya continues the struggle to reconstruct the country's formal curriculum in order to incorporate the multiple ways of promoting ethics. Wa Thiong'o (1986) saw postcolonial education as full of inadequacies and advocated for the decolonization of not only the African minds but also the education systems that continued to oppress Africans.

According to Owuor (2007) an examination of education reports, such as the Ominde Report of 1964, Gachathi commission of 1976, Kamunge commission of 1988 Constitution of Kenya 2010 and Basic education Act 2014 indicates that the government fully recognizes the importance of promoting ethics in the formal education system. While these reports seem to be inclined towards inclusion of indigenous discourses and perspectives in the education system, there have been obstacles at the implementation stage. There exists a glaring mismatch between the goals of education and the expected outcomes. The current study sought to determine the influence of deconstruction and reconstruction of Kenyan education system on ethics among learners.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Education is critical in producing ethical people in the society. The African educational system inculcated ethics among members of society and produced ethical and morally upright individuals for generations. With the introduction of colonial education the responsibility of inculcating ethics to children was taken up by the new education system. Ethics has been a key focus for educational policy in Kenya since independence. An examination of education reports including Ominde, Gachathi, Kamunge, constitution of Kenya 2010 and Basic education Act 2014 indicates the desire to promote ethics in the formal education system. Despite the enormous investment in education over the years and the high academic qualification among graduates, the level of impunity, corruption and intolerance manifested in theft of public resources, nepotism, ethnic hatred, religious intolerance, hate speech among others has remained a major concern among educationists and stakeholders. Efforts through reforms and commissions have not yielded much in developing ethics among learners. The current study sought to investigate the influence of deconstruction and reconstruction of Kenyan education system on ethics among learners.

1.3 Objective of the Study
To determine the influence of deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum on ethics among learners in the Kenyan education system.

2. Methodology
The study utilized a cross sectional descriptive survey and correlational research designs. The use of the two designs was suitable because the study used both descriptive and inferential analysis of data. Cross sectional descriptive survey design is concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting conditions that exist. Application of cross-sectional survey means information was collected from a predetermined population at just one point in time (Fraenkel &Wallen, 2008). The study was conducted in universities and communities in Kenya as it focused on Kenyan education system. The location of the study was preferred because issues related to ethics have affected the Kenyan system of education and the society in general. The target population for this study was 537,211 subjects made up of 520,893 students and 16,318 academic staff from universities in Kenya. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used for data collection. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data with the aid of Scientific Package for Social

Sciences version 25.0. Research hypotheses were tested using regression and correlation analysis at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

3. Results and Discussions

The objective of this study sought to determine the influence of deconstruction and reconstruction (D & R) of curriculum on ethics among learners. The respondents were required to give responses on the indicated aspects of both contemporary and deconstructed and reconstructed curriculum.

3.1 Contemporary Curriculum

An item was included that sought information on contemporary curriculum. Contemporary curriculum involves the content or body of knowledge currently acquired by learners in all levels of education. The respondents were asked to indicate the rate in which they agree with several aspects on the contemporary curriculum in the education system. Data was analyzed using means and standard error. Information in Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1

Means Distribution for Contemporary Curriculum

Statement	N	Mean	SE
Curriculum helps learners become responsible	384	3.87	0.051
Curriculum content enhances acquisition of desired knowledge	384	3.92	0.051
Subjects taught promote learner to learner interactions	384	3.86	0.052
Learners are given opportunity to engage in co-curricular activities	384	3.77	0.055
Co-curricular activities promote teamwork	384	4.23	0.045
Music and drama is included in the curriculum	384	3.66	0.058
Music and drama promote acquisition of desired values	384	3.70	0.056
Ethics is integrated in the curriculum	384	3.70	0.057
Curriculum promotes moral values	384	3.70	0.056
Communal culture is emphasized in the curriculum	384	3.31	0.062
Learners are encouraged to join religious movements of their choice	384	3.87	0.058
Co-curricular activities promote a culture of hard work	384	3.85	0.056
Overall Mean score		3.79	0.055

Results presented in Table 1 indicate an overall mean score of 3.79 with a standard error of 0.055. The overall mean score of 3.79 shows that the respondents had a general agreement with and understanding on aspects used in the contemporary curriculum. Curriculum helps learners become responsible had a mean of 3.87 and SE of 0.0051, Curriculum content enhances acquisition of desired knowledge had a mean of 3.92 and SE of 0.0051, Subjects taught promote learner to learner interactions had a mean of 3.86 and SE of 0.0051. Co-curricular activities promote teamwork with a mean score of 4.23 and SE of 0.045 had the highest rating among the aspects. Music and drama is included in the curriculum had a mean of 3.66 and SE of 0.058, music and drama promote acquisition of desired values had a mean of 3.70 and SE of 0.056, Ethics is integrated in the curriculum had a mean of 3.70 and SE of 0.057, Curriculum promotes moral values had a mean of 3.70 and SE of 0.056. Communal culture being emphasized in the curriculum was rated lowest with a mean of 3.31 and SE of 0.062.

Learners are encouraged to join religious movements of their choice had a mean of 3.85 and SE of 0.056. Co-curricular activities promote teamwork had the highest rating among the other aspects. This is in line with a study conducted in Malaysia by Mancha and Ahmad (2016) where the researchers acknowledged the importance of co-curricular activities in promoting teamwork through the interaction between the students and at the same time promoting integration between the races as well as nurturing decencies, independencies, hard work, disciplined and obedient to the law which develops the students into becoming a useful citizen. Therefore, co-curricular activities are capable of improving social skills and ethics among students which will also help them in the future career prospects.

3.2 African Indigenous Curriculum

An item was included that sought information on African indigenous curriculum. African indigenous curriculum entailed the content of education whose origin was African and which was practiced in Africa before the introduction of formal education. The researcher analyzed the data using means and standard errors and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Means Distribution for African Indigenous Curriculum

Statement	N	Mean	SE
Learning content that promote desired values	384	4.14	0.042
Integrating sex education in the curriculum	384	3.89	0.056
Including moral education in the curriculum	384	4.28	0.038
Engaging learners in communal activities	384	4.05	0.049
Including native language education	384	3.50	0.067
Including social education in the curriculum	384	4.14	0.042
Integrating games and sports activities in the curriculum	384	4.27	0.040
Learning community history in the curriculum	384	3.92	0.050
Focusing on manual activities in the curriculum	384	3.79	0.057
Integrating cultural music and drama in the curriculum	384	4.16	0.042
Promoting the spirit of hard work in the curriculum	384	4.38	0.036
Promoting cultural diversity through the curriculum	384	4.19	0.044
Overall Mean score		4.06	0.047

The results in Table 2 show that the overall mean score was (mean score= 4.06, SE=0.047) indicating that the respondents strongly agreed that the listed ways enhance the Kenyan education system. Learning content that promote desired values (mean score=4.14, SE=0.042); including moral education in the curriculum (mean score=4.28, SE=0.038); engaging learners in communal activities (mean score=4.05, SE=0.049); including social education in the curriculum(mean score=4.14, SE=0.042); integrating games and sports activities in the curriculum(mean score=4.27, SE =0.040); integrating cultural music and drama in the curriculum (mean score=4.16, SE =0.042); promoting the spirit of hard work in the curriculum(mean score=4.38, SE =0.036) and promoting cultural diversity through the curriculum (mean score=4.19, SE =0.044) were rated as most important ways of integrating African indigenous curriculum in enhancing contemporary education system. Including native language education (mean score=3.50, SE =0.067) was rated least among the various ways of integrating African indigenous curriculum in enhancing contemporary education system.

The findings are in line with a study by Okoro (2010) who found out that the content of the African indigenous curriculum was quite comprehensive and based on the philosophy underlying the various job responsibilities in the society. The occupation of the individual, the social responsibilities, the political role as well as the moral and spiritual values was targeted in all educational considerations. The African indigenous society expected the child to grow up and behave according to some established standards and ethical values. The content or subject matter of African indigenous educational systems emanated from the physical, social and spiritual situations of pre-colonial African societies (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). This indicates that The African traditional education curriculum was quite elaborate, embracing all aspects of human development.

3. 3 Correlation of Curriculum and Ethics

Pearson's product moment correlation was used for data analysis to determine the relationship between curriculum and ethics. This was meant to identify the magnitude, direction, nature and strength of the association between curriculum and ethics. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Correlation of Curriculum and Ethics

		Ethics	Contemporary curriculum	D & R of curriculum
Ethics	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	384		
Contemporary curriculum	Pearson Correlation	.435**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		
	N	384	384	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.440	0.001	
	N	384	384	
D & R of curriculum	Pearson Correlation	.354**	.795**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	
	N	384	384	384

The results of the Pearson's product moment correlation analysis as presented in Table 3 show varied degrees of interrelationships. The contemporary curriculum was statistically significantly correlated with ethics (r=0.435; Sig. 2tailed (P-value) =0.000<0.01). Similarly the D & R of curriculum was statistically significantly correlated with ethics (r=0.354; Sig. 2tailed (P-value) =0.000<0.01). According to Woolman (2001) reconstruction is an ongoing, never-ending process. It works in the context of the present crisis, but moves to transcend this by creative integration of past successes with future goals. A fully-indigenous reorganization of curriculum is essential in promoting ethics among learners. Curriculum needs to be diversified to be relevant for the great variety of social contexts found in the country especially in influencing ethics. Deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum cannot be achieved by old formulas but in responding to developments that aim at better quality of livelihoods (Dei, 2002). That means deconstruction and reconstruction of the school curriculum can be achieved by ensuring that it is in line with the global developments that aim at improving the quality of livelihoods.

3.4 Regression for D & R of Curriculum and Ethics

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum on ethics among learners in the Kenyan education system. To assess the relationship between curriculum and ethics, the following hypothesis was tested.

H_0: *There is no statistically significant influence of deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum on ethics among learners in the Kenyan education system.*

In order to test the hypothesis, a linear regression analysis was done at 95% confidence level ($\alpha=0.05$). The contemporary curriculum and deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum were regressed against ethics to establish the goodness of fit, the overall significance and individual significance of the model. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
The Individual Significance of the Model

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	SE	Beta	T	Sig.
Contemporary	(Constant)	1.117	0.242		4.618	0.000
	Contemporary curriculum	0.595	0.063	0.435	9.450	0.000
D & R	(Constant)	0.483	0.392		1.234	0.218
	D & R of curriculum	0.735	0.099	0.354	7.405	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Ethics

The results in Table 4 shows that the contemporary curriculum was considered to be statistically significant with regression coefficient of 0.595 with a t-value=9.45 and p-value=0.000<0.05. This implies that one unit increase in the contemporary curriculum, corresponds to an increase in ethics by a factor of 0.595. The regression model for the prediction of ethics can be stated as follows:

$Y=1.117+0.595X_{11}$

Where;

Y=Ethics

X_{11}=Contemporary curriculum

1.117 is an estimate of the expected value of ethics where contemporary curriculum is zero.

0.595 is an estimate of the expected increase in ethics for a unit increase in contemporary curriculum.

Further the study revealed that the D & R of curriculum was considered to be statistically significant with regression coefficient of 0.735 with a t-value=7.405 and p-value=0.000<0.05. This implies that for one unit increase in D & R of curriculum, ethics increases by a factor of 0.735. The regression model for the prediction of ethics can be stated as follows:

$Y=0.735X_1$

Where;

Y=Ethics

X_1= D & R of curriculum

0.735 is an estimate of the expected increase in ethics for a unit increase in D & R of curriculum

In conclusion, the study revealed that the contemporary curriculum and D & R of curriculum contribute significantly towards ethics. The null hypothesis that there exist no significant influence of curriculum on ethics is not supported in the current study. On the basis of these findings, it is concluded that deconstructed and reconstructed curriculum (regression coefficient=0.735) significantly influences ethics more than the contemporary curriculum (regression coefficient=0.595). These findings are in harmony with a study by Angioni (2003) who notes that the paradigm shift toward promoting education for ethics gravitates toward alternative approaches to school curricula in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is argued that solutions to problems that currently plague the continent and with reference to the Kenyan context must proceed from understanding of local capacities such as the role of indigenous knowledge in influencing ethics. This can be achieved by integrating indigenous knowledge into the formal education system to address some of the knowledge deficiencies for promotion of ethics that is currently formulated from the western perspective. This approach challenges the dominance of western knowledge in Kenya's school system that makes education disembodied from context.

Dei (2002) stated that deconstructing and reconstructing African indigenous curriculum has been perceived as necessary in de-emphasizing the contemporary curriculum that has been viewed to be too abstract, not relevant, and more examination oriented. The strategy requires the adoption of an endogenous approach to education that involves the contextualization of the school curriculum by integrating indigenous knowledge with other relevant and useful knowledges into formal education. This is summed up in a UNESCO (2005) document as follows; "it is especially an attempt to promote education for ethics in African societies where cultures and ways of life are balanced with global and international pressures and demands". Education is therefore, acknowledged as being instrumental in harmonizing the different forms of knowledge bases and creating a social fabric for societies to promote ethics. The current dominating discourse on indigenous knowledge in the Kenyan education context for instance arises from the recognition of the need to address deficiencies of knowledge of development that is formulated in western contexts. With the integration of local knowledge that is more appropriate to the needs of the indigenous communities it is hoped that local problems can be addressed effectively.

Conclusion
The study established that, the contemporary curriculum was broad, theoretical and exam oriented hindering the development and influence of ethics. Pressure was exerted on teachers to ensure learners performed well academically and there was less concerned about learners' code of conduct. Deconstruction and reconstruction of curriculum to include aspects of practical activities and community-based approaches in learning would contributed to a significant influence of ethics among learners.

Recommendations
There is need to deconstruct and reconstruct curriculum through inclusion practical oriented activities in classroom, community-based approaches and co-curricular activities to promote ethical behaviour among learners.

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