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**Education in Nairobi during the Reconstruction and Transition
Period, 1957-1970**

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Abstract

The purpose this Paper was to expand the frontiers of knowledge on African education in Nairobi, in Kenya, between 1957 and 1970. It posited that increased African demand for education and Government's attempt to meet it after the Mau Mau war led to unprecedented increase of both the number of schools and pupil enrolments, particularly in primary and intermediate schools in Nairobi. The paper also demonstrated that the tempo of educational reforms and expansion that began during the reconstruction period was informed by the human capital and social demand models of education provision. Through an analysis of African education during these periods, the paper not only demonstrated continuity and change but also the nexus between formal education, the rise of out-of-school youth and non-formal education in Nairobi. The paper was based on primary and secondary data which was gleaned from official documents at the Kenya National Archives and public libraries, respectively.

Keywords: *formal education, reconstruction, out-of school youth, non-formal education, educational reforms, Nairobi*

Introduction

The State of Emergency in Kenya, from 1952 to 1956 was characterised by violence, curfew and pass laws as well as destruction of property. The education sector in Nairobi and central Kenya was gravely affected. Some schools were closed. Others were burnt. Some education personnel did not access their work stations due to

violence, pass and curfew laws. However, the end of the state of Emergency paved way for reconstruction and reforms in the education sector; reforms which continued in the first decade of post-colonial Kenya. In the 1957 to 1963 period, reconstruction focused on rebuilding and building of school infrastructure, expansion of pupil enrolments particularly in primary and intermediate schools and structural changes in the education system in Nairobi. Between 1964 and 1970, expansion of pupil enrolments was sustained by increased social demand for education which was mainly based on population increase and a greater awareness of the importance of formal education in Nairobi in particular, and Kenya, in general. The expansion was also informed by human capital requirements, for while the focus for human capital training was secondary school education, primary school education was the foundation of secondary school education. The transition from colonial to post-colonial was also marked by gradual racial integration of pupils and teachers in primary schools in Nairobi. The transition years set the pace and direction of educational development in Nairobi and Kenya as a whole.

Background

The post-Second World war period in Kenya witnessed increased African agitation for independence. Africans demanded for more representation in the Legislative Council, land, more schools, including independent schools and end of pass laws, among others. The agitation culminated in the Mau Mau war and the subsequent declaration of a State of Emergency in Kenya in 1952. Violence, increased crime, segregation and repatriation of some African communities from Nairobi, detention of known and perceived supporters of the Mau Mau, displacement and homelessness were some of the features of the State of Emergency period. These occurrences affected education sector in Nairobi and central Kenya, the main Mau Mau strongholds. But there were reforms too, particularly economic and political reforms. These included land consolidation, growth of cash crops by Africans, and constitutional reforms which among others increased African representation in the Legislative council. The tempo of these reforms increased after the declaration of the end of the State of Emergency in 1956.

Increased African participation in colonial economy in rural Kenya, in turn, aided African participation in formal education and expanded the number of African educated elite who were employed and resided in Nairobi and the rest of urban Kenya. Rural-urban migration, particularly after 1963, also increased the number of African families and African school-age population in Nairobi. Population expansion and a greater appetite for formal education in post-Emergency years, therefore, kept the demand for education in Nairobi high.

Conversely, unemployment and low wages reduced African capacity to access to formal education in Nairobi. Therefore, the Nairobi City Council which was in charge of education in Nairobi introduced various education strategies and policies. These included racial integration of pupils and teachers, reduction of fees in high cost schools, fee remission and bursaries for pupils from poor households and school feeding programmes.

Literature Review

Most studies on formal education in Kenya hardly discuss it in the context of Nairobi and during the post-Emergency years. A few examples will suffice.

S. N. Bogonko and B. M. Raju provided invaluable information the expansion, funding, administration and challenges facing formal education in post-colonial Kenya.¹ However, none zeroed in on the status of education in Nairobi between 1957 and 1970.

D. N. Sifuna and J. E. Otiende discussed a wide range of educational topics in the world.² With reference to colonial Nairobi, in Kenya, they analysed European and Asian education and the establishment of Jeanes

¹ S. N. Bogonko, *A History of Modern Education in Kenya (1895 -1991)*, Nairobi, Evans Brothers Ltd, 1992; B. M. Raju, *Education in Kenya: Problems and Perspectives in Educational Planning and Administration*, Nairobi, Heinemann Education Books (East Africa) Ltd., 1973.

School, in the outskirts of Nairobi. All this information is invaluable to our understanding of the history of education and Kenya. However, there is a yawning gap in African education in Nairobi.

Carl G. Rosberg and J. Nottingham dwelt mainly on the political history of the Mau Mau.³ Their discussion intermittently referred to Nairobi but only in the light of the politics of the day. As such, the gap in the history of education in Nairobi remained unfilled.

In their analysis of adult and youth educational programmes in post-1956 period in Kenya, P. Fordham and J. R. Sheffield argued that such programs were crucial to safety, security and well-being of the out-of-school children and youth.⁴ They also nuanced the nexus between formal and non-formal education in Nairobi.

M. Likimani provided a vivid description of life in the African areas in Nairobi during the State of Emergency.⁵ Non-the-less her work made little reference to the status of education. The knowledge gap in the history of formal education in Nairobi between 1957 and 1970, therefore, persisted.

Statement of the Problem

Most available literature on both the history of Nairobi and the history of education in Kenya Nairobi revealed a wide knowledge gap. Neither the history of educational reconstruction in the post-Emergency period nor the development of education in Nairobi during the transition period has been adequately discussed. This hiatus limits the understanding of Nairobi's educational history and, consequently, the foundation of its educational decisions and policies during the sunset of colonial rule and the first decade of independence. Educational policies made during these periods formed the basis of educational expansion and developments in post-colonial Nairobi.

Scope and Methodology

The paper focuses on the educational history of Nairobi, particularly Nairobi City, between 1957 and 1970. This timeframe is informed by the fact that educational developments in Nairobi during the reconstruction and transition periods formed the basis of educational expansion and developments not only in the post-colonial Nairobi but also in entire Kenya.

The paper is based on primary and secondary data. Most of the primary data was gleaned from various documents at the Kenya National Archives. Secondary data was accessed in public libraries. Qualitative data analysis techniques were employed.

Reconstruction in the Education Sector, 1957-1963

The reconstruction that was going on in the political and economic sectors was also witnessed in the education sector particularly between 1957 and 1963. Educational reconstruction targeted three main aspects. These were the structure of education, quantitative expansion of schools and pupil enrolment, and quality of education.

Structural reforms in education were first introduced in the urban centres. In Nairobi, the City Council established Primary Top V and VI in 1951. The classes were for pupils who did not transit to Intermediate school after Competitive Entrance Examinations in standard IV. Thus primary school education in Nairobi was lengthened from four to six years in Nairobi City schools. The four-year primary and four year intermediate school structure was, however, retained in Nairobi Extra-Provincial District and Nairobi County

² D. N. Sifuna, *An Introductory History of Education*, Nairobi, University of Nairobi Press, 2006.

³ C. G. Rosberg, Jr. and J. Nottingham, *Nationalism in Colonial Kenya: The Myth of "Mau Mau"*, Nairobi, Transafrica Press, 1966.

⁴ P. Fordham and J. R. Sheffield, "Continuing Education for Youth and Adults" in J. R. Sheffield(ed.), *Education, Employment and Rural Development*, Report of the Kericho (Kenya) Conference, 25th September to 1st October 1966, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1967.

⁵ M. Likimani, *Passbook Number F.47927: Women and Mau Mau in Kenya*, Nairobi, Nonis Publicity, No Date.

schools. Nairobi Extra-Provincial District was the area in the neighbourhood of the City boundary while Nairobi County stretched to Thika, Kiambu, Machakos, and Kajiado.

The 1951 structural reform in Nairobi City schools was informed by several factors. These included the increase in the number of adolescent out-of-school and unoccupied youth in Nairobi City; the volatile political climate which preceded the declaration of the State of Emergency; the natural growth of urban population, including school-age population, which exerted pressure on existing primary and intermediate schools; and rural-urban migration, particularly of women and children from central Kenya where the burning of villages, insecurity, drought and famine had adversely affected their livelihoods. Some women also went to Nairobi to look for their husbands and escape abuse and mal-treatment by the home guards.⁶ By 1953, the continuous migration of Africans to Nairobi certainly frustrated the enforcement of Vagrancy laws. The need for social control of Africans was also, therefore, at the core of the educational reforms in Nairobi.

Further structural changes in education were introduced in Nairobi in 1960. Primary Top V and VI classes were operational until 1960.⁷ In 1961, Competitive Entrance Examination which was done at the end of Standard IV was abolished. An eight continuous years' structure of education was therefore, established not only in Nairobi City, Nairobi Extra Provincial District and Nairobi County but also in the entire country. These changes improved pupil retention and completion of primary school education. This was followed by further structural changes which established the 7-4-2-3 (that is 7 years primary, 4 years secondary, 2 years higher and 3 years university education) system. These changes improved pupil retention and completion of primary school education.

Nairobi also witnessed expansion of education facilities. The number of grant-aided primary and intermediate schools rose from 14 and 3 in 1956 to 16 and 5 in 1957 and 22 and 15 in 1960, respectively.⁸ In 1957, two unaided primary schools were also established. By 1960, Pumwani School housed 4 classes of Intermediate school, 1 secondary school class and one class of day teacher training. The number of primary (including Primary Top) and intermediate classes also increased: from 130 and 31 in 1959 to 134 and 49 in 1960, respectively. Notably, in 1960, due to the gradual phasing out of Primary Top classes as Nairobi City education transited to 8 years of primary education, there were 1 Primary V Top in 1959 and nil 1960, and 7 classes in Primary VI Top in 1959 and I class in 1960.⁹ The transition accounted for the decrease in Primary Top classes and an increase in all the intermediate classes, particularly, class V which increased by 10 classes, from 13 in 1959 to 23 in 1960. Class VI classes increased from 7 to 13 while classes VII and VIII increased by 1 class each.¹⁰

Further, 5 new schools were established in Nairobi City, 3 on Race course road and 2 in Makadara. These were St. Philomena, Dr. Aggrey, Musikhalia on Racecourse road and St. Michael's and Christian Churches of Kenya (hereafter CCK) Makadara in Makadara. St. Philomena and St Michael's were sponsored and managed by the Holy Ghost Mission while Dr Aggrey and CCK Makadara were CCK sponsored and managed. Musikhalia was under the District Education Board.¹¹ They were all grant-aided by the Government. By 1961 Nairobi had 22 primary schools and no less than 17 adult education centres, 10 in the City African estates and 7 outside the estates. The adult education centres mainly used non-formal education mode to teach literacy and numeracy to adults and out-of-school youth who, for various reasons, could not enrolled in primary schools.

⁶ KNA, City Council of Nairobi, *Annual Report of the African Affairs Department*, 1953, p. 2; M. Likimani, *Pass Book Number F.47927: Women and Mau Mau in Kenya*, Nonis Publicity, pp. 58-64.

⁷ KNA, City Council of Nairobi, Education Office, *Annual Report, 1960*, 24/01/1961.

⁸ KNA, RN/1/64, Nairobi City, African Education and Schools, MOE, Circular Letter (AFR) No. 19 of 1960, Statistical Information-African Education in Kenya, not paged.

⁹ KNA, Education Office, *Nairobi City and County Annual Report, 1960*, 24/01/1961. pp.13, 16.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹¹ KNA, RN/1/69, City Council of Nairobi, Education Department Annual Reports, 1958, p. 3.

Moreover, Churches in the African areas extended education provision to out-of school children and youth. For instance, the Anglican Church in Pumwani established St. John's Community Centre and Christian Industrial and Training Centre in 1957 and 1958, respectively.¹² The two Centres were located next to St. John's Church Pumwani and offered skills training to young single women and post-primary school boys, respectively.¹³ While the primary schools expanded African access to formal education and opportunities for further education, St. John's Community Centre and Christian Industrial Training Centre started as clubs to cater for the out-of school youth population in Pumwani. Likewise, Starehe Boys Centre started as a club to provide shelter, food, literacy and other vocational skills to the orphaned, displaced and homeless and out-of school youth in Nairobi. The predominant mode of education delivery was non-formal. Nevertheless, by 1959, the Starehe Boys Centre offered both formal and non-formal education to the youth.

Pupil enrolments in primary schools in Nairobi City also increased. From a total of 7202 (5105 boys and 2097 girls) in 1959, the number of pupils rose to 7901 (3283 boys and 2618 girls) in 1960. The highest increases were noted in the former class V and VI intermediate classes, from a total of 558 (414 boys and 144 girls) to 948 (765 boys and 183) girls. Arguably, while the girls' enrolments were far lower than boys' in both years, there was also a noted increase of girls in these classes. A more marked increase of girls in school was in standard I (from 603 to 684) and in all intermediate classes in 1960. In a nutshell, the total yearly enrolments between 1956 and 1960 were; 4339 in 1956, 5146 in 1957, 6140 in 1958, 7202 in 1959 and 7901 in 1960.¹⁴

In 1960, the Nairobi City Council which managed all City schools introduced central enrolment of pupils in Nairobi so as to keep track of all schools' enrolments and to practice fairness "according to denominational needs".¹⁵ There was also a demand for vacancies in standard III and IV by pupils from outside Nairobi who, on failing to get admission to standard V, wanted to repeat the classes in Nairobi where there were more educational facilities and, therefore, opportunities.¹⁶ The youth clubs in Nairobi sometimes became transit points for such youth: the youth enrolled in std. IV in the club in the hope of transferring to std. IV in formal schools later on. The Education Department assisted boys from Starehe Club to transfer to formal schools in Nairobi but was not similarly supportive to boys from outside Nairobi.¹⁷ The Nairobi City Council discouraged pupil migration from rural Kenya to pre-empt or reduce pressure on available schools.

Reforms were also introduced to cater for pupils' health while they were in school. Most primary schools in Nairobi were day schools. There was, therefore, the question of who was responsible for the child's health while the child was in school, especially when it was an emergency that could not wait till evening or the arrival of the parent in school. Who would bear the cost of treatment of a child who was rushed to a health facility by a concerned teacher? Was teachers' mode of response to children's sickness in school sustainable?

To cater for the health needs of pupils while they were in school, the District Education Officer (hereafter DEO) and the Deputy Medical Officer of Health in Nairobi agreed to introduce a ticket system in schools. The DEO was charged with the responsibility of supplying the tickets to schools. The schools issued the tickets (each ticket had a number that remained constant for each pupil and to which all the pupil's hospital expenses were recorded) to children who fell ill while in school. The cost of the treatment was recorded and transferred to the child/parent. The City Council then recovered the money from the DEO on a monthly basis while the DEO also recovered the money from the schools.¹⁸

¹² Oral Interview, P. Njuguna, St. John's Community Centre, Nairobi, 31/07/2013; E. Mwangi, Christian Industrial Training Centre, Nairobi, 26/02/2013.

¹³ KNA, RN/1/69 City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, Nairobi City and County Annual Report, 1958., pp. 3, 4.

¹⁴ KNA, Education Officer, Nairobi City and County *Annual Report, 1960*, 24/01/1961, pp. 18.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁸ KNA, City Council of Nairobi, Education Officer, *Annual Report, 1960*, 24/1/1961, p. 25.

Further, reforms were introduced to improve the quality of education in primary schools. In 1957, Asian and European education curricula were integrated. While the Asian schools remained fewer and less-equipped than European schools, the integration of the curricula broadened Asian opportunity for further education and job opportunities that were hitherto only available to European children. The establishment of a national system of education in later years incorporated these reforms in all schools in Nairobi.

In addition, changes were introduced in the inspection and general check on the quality of education and teaching in schools. During the Mau Mau war, insecurity had incapacitated both the Government and the missions in school inspection. After the State of Emergency, missions continued to bear the schools' supervision responsibility. However, the County District Education Board supervisor was, in 1958, replaced, first by the Education Officer of Nairobi City and County and, in September, by an assistant education officer.¹⁹ By end of 1960, 4 Assistant Education Officers were also appointed to supervise academic work, each for the districts of Thika, Ruiru, Nairobi Extra-Provincial District and Nairobi City. They were based in the respective districts. One more for Limuru- Kiambu area and Forest areas was yet to be appointed.²⁰

Moreover, to improve the quality of teachers/teaching, the Education Department and mission management organised refresher courses for teachers. The content coverage of the refresher courses included Christian behaviour of teachers, spoken and written English and music.²¹ Music was taught in all City schools. Teachers were further trained how to teach arithmetic in class 1 to 4, art and handcraft, religion, woodwork in standard V to VII and procurement of school equipment.²² Schools also organised pupils' competitions in sports and music festivals.²³ These events nurtured a competitive yet unifying spirit in the learners.

Thus teachers were inducted in both the teaching and management of the schools. However, quality assurance was beset by inadequate school inspection staff, particularly in the Nairobi County region and the Nairobi Extra Provincial District. Informatively, by 1962, Embakasi, Karen, Ngong Forest, Langata, Kasarani and Ruaraka primary schools, and Magadi Primary and Intermediate school were within the Nairobi Extra Provincial District.²⁴

Evidently, therefore, although the education sector in Nairobi experienced several challenges emanating from the colonial policies on African education and more immediately from the Mau Mau war, the reconstruction period was characterised by positive reforms. Certainly, the primary-age out-of school youth challenge did not end. But the number of out-of-school youth seeking admission to primary schools was reduced. Further, the race-based structure of education was abolished and a national education system established. It was a case of building back better after the Emergency. Nevertheless, one main challenge persisted and remained largely unresolved even after 1963. This was the unemployment of primary school leavers who did not transit to secondary school and were not employable in the formal sector because of their young age and inadequate requisite skills for employment. Indeed in early 1960s the Education Department of Nairobi City Council was planning to establish a Juvenile Employment Advisory Office.

The Transition Period, 1964-1970

Independence in Kenya inspired hope and reform in all the sectors, including education. Two factors interacted with hope and played a significant role in guiding education reform and implementation of subsequent policies. These were the demand for skilled labour in administration, economy and social sectors, and rapid population growth. Education expansion, therefore, continued to be guided by the human capital and

¹⁹ KNA, *RN/1/69*, , Nairobi City and County Annual Report, 1958., p. 1.

²⁰ KNA, Nairobi City and County Annual Report *Annual Report, 1960*, 24/01/1961, p. 2.

²¹ *Op. Cit.*, p. 1.

²² KNA, Nairobi City and County Annual Report *Annual Report, 1960*, 24/01/1961, p. 5

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁴ KNA, *RN/1/69*, City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, Nairobi City and County Annual Report, 1961 "From DEO, Nairobi City and County to DC Nairobi on 17/02/1962.

social demand models. The Government built more schools, increased the number of streams in the existing schools and supported private and community-assisted schools. Parents were constantly reminded that education was the key to socio-economic mobility of their children and, by extension, their own.²⁵ They invested in their children's education. Provision of formal education in post-colonial Kenya, therefore, continued to be a shared responsibility between parents and the providers such as the Government, private proprietors and missionary bodies.

The strategies to expand education provision contributed to an increase in pupil enrolment in Kenya as a whole. By 1965, Kenya had about 5,078 primary schools with an enrolment of 1, 010,889 pupils and 336 secondary schools with an enrolment of 47,910 students.²⁶ In Nairobi the number of primary schools rose from 22 in 1962 to 110 in 1973 while enrolments therein rose from 9,635 to 76,030 during the same period.²⁷ By 1969, the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools in Nairobi, including the Extra Provincial District, was 60,900 which was above the estimated 41,000 6-12 year old population in Nairobi. The high pupil population was attributed to migration of pupils from rural to Nairobi schools.²⁸ This feature was also evident in transition from primary to secondary school where form 1 enrolment in Nairobi in 1968 and 1969 were 6,262 and 6,415 pupils as opposed to the 6,168 and 6, 018, respectively, who completed standard 7 in 1967 and 1968.²⁹

Viewed in the context of Kenya as a whole, expansion of primary school education also presupposed the expansion of secondary schools and streams to absorb the primary school leavers. This was evident between 1964 and 1970. However, the demand for secondary school education was higher than Government provision. This was evident as early as 1965 when some provinces even surpassed the authorized number of schools. This information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: New Secondary school streams in 1964 and authorized for opening in 1965

Region	Number of new secondary school streams			
	1964			1965
	Authorized by MoE	Government -aided	Unaided	Authorized by Development Plan
Western	4	7	13	4
Nyanza	3	6	—	4
Rift Valley	5	5	2	3
Central	10	11	29	11
Eastern	—	7	4	2
Coast	1	2	—	1
Nairobi Area	—	—	2	3
Total	23	38	50	28

Source: Adapted from *The Kenya Education Commission Report*, 1964, p. 73.

It is noteworthy that in Central Kenya the unaided secondary school streams were more than double the Government aided streams and the number authorized by both the Ministry of Education and the Development Plan. This reflected not only the high demand for secondary school education but also the entry of private and community-based investment in the education sector.

²⁵ M. W. Wanyoike, "The Effects of the Emphasis of science and Technical education vis- a-vis Arts and Humanities in Secondary Schools in Kenya" A Paper Presented at the International Conference and Workshop on Social and Human Development Outcomes of Education and Poverty at Kenyatta University from 12th to 14th November, 2008.

²⁶ ROK, *Economic Survey*, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, p. 89.

²⁷ KNA, City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, *Annual Reports*, 1962, p. 4; annual Report, 1973, School enrolment statistics, p. 1.

²⁸ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1970, pp. 172-174.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 174.

In 1967 and 1968, 31 and 30 Form one streams, respectfully, were started in Government-aided schools³⁰. Moreover from 1968, the Government started adding the new streams to one-stream schools instead of doing so only in large established schools. This education expansion policy shift was informed by Government focus on rural development.³¹

Further, by 1969, the number of unaided schools in Nairobi Extra-provincial District was 36 and had, therefore, surpassed the number Government-maintained and assisted schools which was 15 and 13, respectively.³² The Nairobi Extra Provincial District was the education frontier of primary school leavers who did not get admission in Nairobi City secondary schools. However, since private schools were often more expensive than the Government-subsidised schools, transition to secondary school was influenced not just by their number, but also by the pupils' ability meet the cost of secondary school education, whether in Government-maintained and assisted or private. Then, as today, most of the African population in Nairobi resided in informal settlements where poverty levels were high.

Consequently, although there was a 107 per cent enrolment of 1968 standard 7 pupils in form 1 in 1969 in Nairobi,³³ there were still some pupils who did not transit to secondary school. The transition from standard 7 to form 1 in the entire country indeed shows that only 24 per cent of the 147,544 were enrolled in form 1 in 1968. Further, only 146,784 standard 7 pupils 1968 were enrolled in form 1 in 1969.³⁴ It is this category of pupils who did not transit to secondary school that had, in 1966, attracted the attention of the National Council of Churches in Kenya (hereafter NCCCK). Subsequently, NCCCK, Government and other education stakeholders mooted the establishment of village polytechnics to provide non-formal education and training to such primary school leavers.

Structural Reforms

The education reform process in post-colonial Kenya started with the establishment of the Kenya Education Commission in 1964. The Commission spelt out the goals of education in independent Kenya and recommended structural and curriculum reforms in the education sector to facilitate the achievement of those goals. The Commission, and political goodwill, led to the integration and replacement of the hitherto three racially-based structures of education with one national structure of education. The abolition of Competitive Entrance Examination and Standard 8 shortened primary school education by one year. The 7-4-2-3 structure of education in Kenya which was hitherto reserved for Europeans and Asians was thus established for all races.

In 1963, Government European, Asian and aided non-African primary schools were placed under the Ministry of Education while African schools were under the City District Education Board. In 1964, the management of primary school education in Nairobi was transferred from the City District Education Board to the Nairobi City Council. The cost of education in all the school categories was subsidized by public funds. For instance, in 1963, while the fee in African primary schools was Ksh. 60 per year, the cost per pupil from public funds in Nairobi was £4.6. Government European and Asian primary schools whose fee was Ksh. 525 and 171 per year, respectively, also got comparatively higher amounts (£37.10 and 20 annually per pupil). The higher cost of education per pupil in the European and Asian schools was attributed to pupil/teacher ratio, higher grade of the teachers and nationality of the teachers, that is, whether they were local or expatriate. In 1963, the Asian and European schools had about 99 expatriate teachers.³⁵

³⁰ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1968, p. 141.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³² ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1970, p. 174.

³³ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1970, p. 173.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 73.

³⁵ KNA, *RN/1/107*, Nairobi Area Primary Schools Policy, 1964, District Education Office, "Some notes on primary education in the Nairobi Area", 11/11/1963, p. 1.

Importantly, in the 1963/64 year, the Government reduced the Ministry of Education budget by £750, 000. To meet the shortfall, the Government increased in fees and decreased grants in European, Asian and non-African assisted schools in 1964.³⁶ Schools were classified into A, B and C categories on the basis of cost, physical infrastructure, quality of teachers and teaching learning resources. In Nairobi, Type A schools were about 52 and had the highest pupil population, estimated to be 18,150; type B schools were 12 and had an estimated population of 9,120 pupils; and type C schools were 7 with an estimated 2,270 pupils. The recommended fee per child per annum in the schools (A, B C in that order) was Ksh. 65, 270 and 840 while Government subsidy per child per annum in the respective schools was £7.6, 12.8 and 17.4.³⁷ An additional £10.9 was set aside for pupils in assisted schools.

To discourage the “influx of children from other areas” to Nairobi, the education fee was also increased in Central Kenya, Nyanza, and Rift Valley as per school category. In Central Kenya, the fee in the, A, B, and C schools in Fort Hall (Muranga) was the same as in Nairobi while in Kiambu it was Ksh. 51 and 63 in A and B schools, respectively. In Nyanza the fee was K.sh. 50, 70 and 270 in A, B and C schools, and 30 and 80 in A and B schools, respectively, in Kakamega. In Nakuru, the fee was ksh. 55 for A schools and, 270 for B schools and 840 for C schools in the rest of the Rift Valley. In addition, the Government gave an equal education grant to all schools.³⁸ Thus the fees had been increased by Ksh. 5, 99 and 315 in A, B and C schools, respectively. In the assisted schools the fee was increased by Ksh. 99.³⁹

By 1971, there were 69 A, 12 B and 7 C schools under the Nairobi City Council and a further 15 assisted schools. The Nairobi City Council schools had 1, 417 streams and 56,195 pupils distributed as follows: 1,060 streams in A schools with 44,240 pupils, 245 streams of B schools with 8,635 pupils and 112 streams of C schools with 3, 320 pupils. The 15 assisted schools had 250 streams and 8,777 pupils.⁴⁰ Thus the number of pupils per stream ranged from approximately 30 in C schools to about 42 in A schools. In the same year additional streams opened in the following primary schools: Eastleigh, Dr. Aggrey and St. Brigid’s in Eastleigh area; Heshima, Dr.Krapf, Dr. Livingstone, Morrison, Bahati (Uhuru), St. Michael’s, Martin Luther in Eastlands; and 3 new schools were opened, Marurani in Kaloleni and 2 in Kariobangi. The number of pupils per stream was 50. Evidently, the low-fee schools in the former African areas in Nairobi continued to attract a larger pupil population than the B and C schools. Population expansion, low wages and unemployment and distance from residence to school restricted access to B and C school and also accounted for the lower retention and completion of primary school education.

Curriculum Reforms

The 1964 Kenya Education Commission also approved the use of New Primary Approach method of teaching which emphasised practical and discovery pedagogical techniques. This approach had been in use in Asian school and African schools since 1957 and 1962, respectively.⁴¹ In Nairobi, NPA was piloted in 1961 in Pumwani school which was by then “a good medium-level school, neither outstandingly good nor outstandingly bad, but old-established.”⁴² From 1964 English was introduced as the medium of instruction in lower classes in primary schools. In 1966, the Kenya Institute of Education, now Kenya Institute of

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 11/11/1963, p. 2

³⁷ KNA, *RN/1/107*, Nairobi Area Primary Schools, 1964, “Minutes of the Education Committee, Nairobi City Council on 24/10/1963. The fees were approved and enforced in 1964. The boarding fee for Nairobi Primary School was set at Ksh. 2,400 per annum and Woodley and Kilimani schools were combined.

³⁸ KNA, *RN/1/107*, Nairobi Area Primary Schools Policy, 1964, District Education Office, “Some notes on primary education in the Nairobi Area”, 11/11/1963, p. 2.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 11/11/1963, p. 2.

⁴⁰ KNA, *RN/1/69*, City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, Annual Reports, “City Education Committee Report” on 11/01/1971, not paged.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁴² KNA, *RN/1/69* City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, Annual Reports, “Speech by the City Education Officer on the Occasion of Second Annual Conference of Head Teachers on Monday 30th November 1970”, in City Hall, Nairobi.

Curriculum Development, was established to initiate and oversee reforms in primary as well as secondary school curriculum. KICD launched “Tujifunze Kusoma Kikwetu” Series which aimed at promoting the learning of Kiswahili, the preferred national language, and the local dialects in primary schools in 1967. It also revised and published primary school syllabus for implementation in 1967.⁴³ However, the implementation of the new syllabus was slowed down by shortage of trained teachers, text books and teaching guides.

To facilitate the implementation of the curriculum, the Ministry of Education organised short-term refresher in-service and vacation courses in different subjects for teachers in Nairobi. In the first term of 1968, for instance, New Primary Approach courses for lower primary teachers were held once a month at Riruta Holy Ghost Mission, St. Michaels and Park Road centres. Each month, about 420 teachers were trained. During the same period 115 upper primary school teachers in standard 4 and 5 were also inducted in New Primary Approach content and methods each month at Riruta Holy Ghost Mission and City Primary School. Further, Kiswahili lessons were offered once a week from 4.00 to 5.00 p. m. to teachers in B, C and Assisted schools. About 30 teachers attended the course between January and March 1968. Two courses in Music were also organized during first term to acquaint the teachers with the set pieces for the Kenya Music festival.⁴⁴ It is informative that by 1968 Music was taught in all City schools. During the same year, other refresher/induction courses were offered during the school vacation. These included lectures to head teachers in primary schools, a reading course for standard 1 teachers from 8th to 11th April 1968, and a science course for standard 7 teachers from 23rd to 24th April 1968.⁴⁵ Formal teacher training was, therefore, supplemented by non-formal training during the evenings and/or school holidays. It was also done via in-service training.

Integration of Teachers and Pupils in Nairobi Schools from 1964

In Nairobi, the Government also applied an integration policy in schools. This was informed by the Government's desire to bridge the racial segregation gap, achieve racial parity in schools and cultivate national unity. Country wide, national schools were also expected to play this role. Under the pupil integration policy, former European-only and Asian-only schools were opened to Africans. The integration was gradual. This was mainly because there were cost and distance from home to school implications especially in the day schools. See Table 2 for pupil integration in primary schools in Nairobi.

Table 2: Integration of African Pupils in Former Asian and European Primary Schools in Nairobi

Year	Former Asian Schools				Former European Schools			
	African	Asian	European	Total	African	Asian	European	Total
1964	513	17312	65	17890	121	169	1925	2215
1965	1017	16576	81	17674	314	271	1638	2223
1966	1965	16441	134	18143	529	339	1569	2437
1967	2166	16193	138	18497	703	416	1569	2688

Source: KNA, City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, *Annual Reports*, Notes on the 1967 Annual Report for the City Education Department p. 3.

Further, in Nairobi, the Government embarked on the integration of teachers in the former European and Asian-only primary schools. In 1967, for instance, 19 Asian and 3 European teachers were employed in former African schools while 15 Asian and 4 African teachers were employed in former European schools,

⁴³S.N. Bagonko, *A History of modern Kenya*, p. 118.

⁴⁴ KNA, *RN/1/69*, CITY Council of Nairobi, Education Department, Nairobi City and County Annual Reports, City Education officer's Report for First term 1968, not paged; Annual Report 1958, p.4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* City Education officer's Report for First term. 1968, not paged.

and 43 African teachers were employed in former Asian schools.⁴⁶ In 1968, 50 African teachers were appointed to teach in former European and Asian schools while another 7 were appointed Deputy Heads in similar schools so that they “understudy the present Heads and gain suitable experience.”⁴⁷ Racial, ethnic, religious and other forms of integration in education continued in Nairobi and entire Kenya after 1970.

Bursaries and Fee Remission

Other reforms recommended by the Kenya Education Commission to improve African access to education included establishment of a bursary scheme, and remission of fees for poor students.⁴⁸ These were strategies were intended to remove social and economic barriers to education access: barriers that had also hitherto excluded Africans from the better staffed, better equipped and high cost schools. In 1964, for instance, 62 pupils in various classes in CCEA primary schools in Nairobi, including Canon Apolo, Morrison, Dr. Livingstone, Dr. Krapf, Martin Luther, Dr. Aggrey, Waithaka, Ruthimitu, Mutuini and Gitiba benefitted from fee remission.⁴⁹ Further, in 1967, the Kenya Government doubled 1966 bursaries for needy students in high cost and other secondary schools from £55,000 to £110,000 while in primary schools, fee remission stood at £300,000.⁵⁰ Fee remissions were administered at local level by the boards of individual primary schools and were provided by the Central Government which also availed bursaries and scholarships for secondary and higher education.⁵¹

School Feeding Programmes in Nairobi

Inadequate nutrition affected pupils’ participation in school. This was especially the case in the peri-urban areas of Nairobi. To alleviate this challenge, the Nairobi City Council introduced a programme for providing school meals to pupils. The meals were a mixture of beans and soup (then referred to as “supro”). The Maize and Produce Board, in support of the programme, offered to sell 140 bags of mixed beans to the City Council at the rate of Ksh. 52.75 per bag of 200lbs, excluding a Ksh.3 railway charge.⁵² The school lunches continued to be one of the strategies that formal and non-formal schools used to improve pupil retention and completion of primary school education in Nairobi and Kenya as a whole.

“Education Wastage” in Formal Education

The quantitative expansion of education in post-colonial Kenya was accompanied by its flip twin: “education wastage”, a phenomenon that was experienced by most Third world countries at the time. For instance, a UNESCO study conducted in Latin America in the 1960s revealed the incidence of “education wastage” in both rural and urban Colombia; that in every 1,000 children entering primary school in 1962, only 273 and 37 in urban and rural areas, respectively, were expected to complete five grades.⁵³ In 1972, another UNESO Report noted that world- wide “all pupils admitted to the first grade of an education cycle do not complete that cycle within the prescribed minimum period. Some drop out before the end of the cycle and some repeat one or more grades before dropping out or completing the last grade of the cycle successfully.”⁵⁴ These Reports succinctly echo the experiences of the education sector in post-colonial Kenya. In spite of the measures taken by the Kenya Government, NGOs, CBOs and FBOs to improve education access both in rural and urban

⁴⁶ KNA, *RN/1/69*, City Council of Nairobi, Education Department, Annual Report, Notes on the 1967 Annual Report for City Education Department, p. 2.

⁴⁷ KNA, *RN/1/69*, Annual Report, 1968.

⁴⁸ ROK, *The Kenya Education Commission Report*, Nairobi, Government Printer, 1964, p. 39.

⁴⁹ KNA, *RN/1/165*, Minutes of Meetings, Private and Confidential, 1964, CCEA Education Secretary to City Education Officer, “Remissions- 1964 Return”, 05/5/1964.

⁵⁰ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1968, p. 144.

⁵¹ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1971, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Statistics Division, p.196.

⁵² KNA, *RN/1/69*, Annual Reports, 1960.

⁵³ M. Ahmed, *The Economics of Non-formal Education Resources, Costs and Benefits*, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1975, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁴ UNESCO, *A Statistical Study of Wastage at School*, Paris, UNSECO Office of Statistics, 1972, p. 11.

Kenya, the number of out-of-school youth continued to rise. By 1967, there were 168,000 primary/junior secondary (form 1 and 2) school leavers in Kenya.⁵⁵

Education wastage in primary and secondary schools in Nairobi presented itself in three forms: class repetition, drop out in the course of primary school, and failure to transit to secondary school due to lack of enough secondary schools, cost of education and, or, truancy on the part of the pupil. Class repetition was occasioned by poor performance in internal as well as national examinations, or by poor parents who wanted to buy time to be able to support the pupil in secondary school with the hope of increasing job opportunity for the pupil upon the latter's completion of secondary school education.⁵⁶ An analysis of Repeaters in primary schools in Nairobi in 1972 revealed that in some primary schools the repeaters formed over 15 per cent of the school population.⁵⁷ The highest repeater rate was at Garden estate, in Kasarani Division, (19 per cent) and the lowest was at Ndururu (0.4 per cent). Evident also from the Report was the fact that the majority of the repeaters were in standard 7. This was because by the 1970s the minimum educational requirement for obtaining formal employment had risen from primary to secondary education. This subsequently increased competition for the few available secondary school places. Moreover, not all school-age children were enrolled in primary schools on schedule, that is, at six years' age. This led to the incidence of late entry and the probable high rate of withdrawal by such pupils.

In 1969 primary school enrolment in Kenya also reflected regional disparities, with the highest enrolment percentage of the 6-12 years old population recorded in Nairobi (134 percent) and Central Province (102 percent) and the lowest in North Eastern Kenya (05 percent).⁵⁸ The 1969 regional enrolment variations were attributed to "relative incomes, population density and parental attitudes" to formal education.⁵⁹ In the case of Nairobi, disparities were evident in the informal settlements/slum areas such as Mathare and Majengo in Kasarani and Pumwani districts, respectfully, vis-à-vis the formal settlements. Late entry into school often led to high rates of withdrawal owing to age-gap of the learners and subsequent failure of the late entrants to fit in with the younger, on-schedule learners. In Nairobi the bulk of late entrants, and drop outs from school, resided in the informal settlements which manifested the highest levels of household poverty in Nairobi.

Low transition from primary to secondary schools was yet another cause of out-of school youth. Country wide, the opportunity index to secondary schools was less than 30 per cent from 1964 to 1970 and 44 per cent in 1978.⁶⁰ In Nairobi, there were 16 Government -maintained secondary schools in 1968 and 15 in 1969; 13 assisted schools in 1968; and 36 unaided in 1968 and 1969.⁶¹ That compared poorly with the number of primary schools, and Kenya Certificate of Primary Education candidates therein awaiting absorption in secondary schools. By 1975 the opportunity index for secondary education in aided schools revealed that of the 11,100 children aged 13 years in Nairobi, only 1,900 (17 percent) were admitted to form 1.⁶²

Yet among the eight provinces, Nairobi posted the highest opportunity index. The second best province was Central at 12 percent and the worst was North Eastern at 3 percent. Opportunities for primary school leavers who did not transit to Form 1 included training as teachers, entry into commercial colleges and technical and trade schools, teaching as untrained teachers, and wage earning employment in industry, agriculture and domestic service. These sectors absorbed only a few of the leavers.

⁵⁵ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1968, p.145.

⁵⁶ ROK, *Economic Survey*, 1969, p. 155.

⁵⁷ KNA, City Council of Nairobi, "Analysis of repeaters in primary schools of Nairobi-March 1972", Education Department, *Annual Report 1972*.

⁵⁸ *Op. Cit.*, p.156.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁰ S N. Bogonko, *A History of modern Education in Kenya*, p. 128, 130.

⁶¹ *Op. Cit.*, p. 174.

⁶² ROK, "Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies", Nairobi, Government Printer, 1976, p. 49.

In response to the out-of-school phenomenon, the Government established non-formal education programmes. These included the National Youth Service and Village Polytechnics in 1964 and 1967, respectively. Although the two programmes were eventually formalised in the 1980s, they continued to serve as the safety valves for out-of school youth in Nairobi, in particular and Kenya, in general. Other non-formal education and training centres were established by Faith-based and community-based organisations and individual proprietors after 1970.

Conclusion

It has been argued that the reconstruction period witnessed physical expansion and increased pupil enrolments in African education at all levels. It has also been demonstrated that this expansion of the education sector continued after independence owing to increased demand for labour force and the continued growth of African population which then placed a demand for education at all levels. Inability of the formal education to meet the demand, rising unemployment during the reconstruction and transition periods and increased cost of education contributed to the rise of out-of-school youth in Nairobi and Kenya at large. Further, although curriculum and structural reforms in education alleviated some of these challenges, the number of primary school leavers in independent Kenya continued to rise. This prompted the Government to establish non-formal institutions to cater for their educational and training needs. Non-Governmental Organisations also established non-formal education and training centres in Nairobi to offer rehabilitation and/or vocational training services to out-of-school youth. Thus the paper also teases out the nexus between formal education, out-of-school youth and non-formal education in Nairobi.

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