“Obey God, obey your teacher…”

Teaching and learning methods experienced in three Kenyan schools

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Abstract

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One of our interests, as future teachers, is which role different educational strategies and methods have in the everyday teaching and how that contributes to pupil’s social and cognitive development. Every pedagogical system and culture is time bound. Pedagogical ideas used in prevailing schools are changing continuously because of social and economic changes and are always influenced by the actual social, political and economic ideology in respective country.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to find out how education is taking part and how it is outlined in three schools in Kenya. We are interested in teachers’ and pupils’ opinion and reflections about the existing education, everyday teaching and the role school plays in the Kenyan society.

Based on our interviews and observation we have made we can state that the education in Kenya is more behaviouristic and collectivistic focusing on fact knowledge and because of the widespread use of rewards and punishments and the role of the teacher as a model, a mediator of knowledge and an authority for the pupils. Besides the dominant behaviouristic pedagogy, we have even seen some elements of cognitive and interaction pedagogy.

Keywords: assessment, behaviouristic, collectivistic, discipline, education, individualistic, learning methods, pedagogy, school democracy, teaching methods
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1 Preface

We are two students who by receiving Sida’s (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) Minor Field Studies scholarship have gotten the opportunity to visit three Kenyan schools during our 8 weeks in the country. The Kenyan school system is very different from the western, Swedish one because of many reasons: the one very obvious difference is the hard economic situation of the country which results in the lack of material and personnel resources of the schools. During our stay in Kenya we have been accommodated at a child centre in Nairobi district, which was focusing on helping children with difficult social background in their school attendance and learning process. Being with these children after our school visits gave us a wider view on the Kenyan school system.

One of our interests, as future teachers, is which role different educational strategies and methods have in the everyday teaching and how that contributes to pupil’s social and cognitive development. Every pedagogical system and culture is time bound. Pedagogical ideas used in prevailing schools are changing continuously because of social and economic changes and are always influenced by the actual social, political and economic ideology in respective country. All these visions are formulated in Curriculums and used in practice in schools and classroom learning situations. Teaching obstacles have always existed and have been solved in various ways in different times. We came to Kenya with the interest to see how and which pedagogical methods are used and how education takes part in a developing country like Kenya.

We have experiences of school situations from two countries: the communist and post-communist Romania and the democratic and postindustrial Sweden. In the communist and post-communist Romania there was a formal perspective on teaching like the widely used pedagogical method behaviorism where reward and punishment were the reaction on pupils’ action. On the other hand we have experienced a more non-formal perspective on education with other pedagogical methods in Sweden like Dewey’s progressivism, Vygotskij’s social-constructive pedagogic, Piaget’s cognitive pedagogic and different alternative pedagogies like Montessori, Waldorf etc. The society in high-income countries is more individualistic and education is more learner centered and teachers pay attention to pupils’ former experiences and different conditions. This mostly leads to an open and flat social relation, direct and informal between teacher and pupil, where pupils get the help and opportunity to learn easier.
Moreover schools are striving to adapt the education to every individual’s condition and background and the teacher has more a role of a tutor and mentor.

After having these experiences we decided to examine which pedagogical methods are used in a couple of schools in a third, developing country. We have chosen the post-colonial Kenya because it has become democratic only in the past few years and this might have a different affect on its pedagogical evolution. Kenya is under continuous development where needs and views claims new demands on school and pedagogy. We are curious what ideas and methods are predominant in Kenyan schools.
2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this study for us is to find out how school is organized and how it is outlined in three schools in Kenya. We are interested in teachers’ and pupils’ opinion and reflections about the existing education, everyday teaching and the role school plays in the Kenyan society. Our questions are as follows:

- How school is organized in three different schools in Kenya?
- What do some involved teachers and pupils think about the role and importance of education, teaching and learning methods, testing and evaluation?
- What are the teachers’ and pupils’ views on discipline and democracy in their Kenyan classroom?
3 Outline of the study

We begin our study with a Background where we present the history and the philosophy of education in Kenya, the schools and the national curriculum. This part is followed by the Written materials, where we present some educational theories, teaching methods and assessment. Both in the Background and the Written Materials we refer to or quote some Kenyan authors who all are active teachers at the Teacher-Trainee College of Nairobi. Furthermore in our Methods description we sum up the methods we used and how we proceeded with them. We even discuss the ethical aspects and the reliability and validity of the study here. In the Result and Analyses section we present what we have found out with our study, divided in four topics: the role and importance of education, teaching methods, assessment and testing, discipline and democracy. In this presentation we analyse our results and make a connection with the facts and the theories presented in the Background and the Written Materials. Moreover we present an observation of school textbooks to give a wider view of the education in Kenya. In the final Discussion part we make some comments and interpret our own opinion about the process and the result of this research. In addition to this we make a brief comparison between the Kenyan school system and the Swedish one. Finally we also highlight some positive aspects we can take advantage of in our future carrier and some negative aspects we want to avoid as future teachers.
4 Background

4.1 History of education in Kenya

4.1.1 Establishment of Western education before 1963

The missionary work in Kenya had started as early as 1846. Missionary schools were at first established along the coast with the aim to win converts, rehabilitate the free slaves, westernize the Africans, teach literacy, so that they could read the Bible, teach hygiene and European medicine, introduce western commerce and industry. The colonial government began to think seriously about education due to reasons like pressure from the white settlers who wanted to see their children educated, since they were contributed to the growth of the country’s economy. The colonials realized that they needed skilled labor that was cheap, instead of engaging extensive labor from Asians. The colonial government invited J. Nelson Frazer in 1908, a man who had education experiences from India, to survey the education system in existence and recommend ways of organizing it. It is after recommendations made by Frazer that the government started to participate in education in 1910. In the beginning of the 20th century Africans began to build their own independent schools. The aims with these schools were that the Africans wanted to provide themselves with academic type of education denied them and which they saw as an avenue to economic prosperity and high social status. These independent schools were closed down in 1952 under the pretext that they were training grounds for militant political action (M. Ngaroga, 2006).

4.1.2 Education after 1963

After Kenya's independence on December 12, 1963 the Ominde Commission was set up to make changes in educational system with more focus on national identity and unity. There several changes were made in the content of the subjects like history and geography considering the building of a national identity. Between 1964- 1985 the system of 7-4-2-3 was adopted which stays for seven years of primary, four years of lower secondary, two years of upper secondary, and three years of university education. In 1981 Presidential Working Party reformed the entire education system. The committee recommended that the 7-4-2-3
system be changed to an 8-4-4 system: eight years in primary, four years in secondary, and four years in university education (internet).

4.1.3 Present Day Education in Kenya
The 8-4-4 system was launched in January 1985 and vocational subjects were set off. This was considered to enable school dropouts at all levels. The graduates had the opportunity to be either self-employed or to get employment in the non-formal sector. In January 2003, the Government of Kenya introduced the free primary education. As a result, primary school enrolment increased by about 70%. However, secondary and tertiary education registration has not increased proportionally due to the fact that payment is still required for attendance. According to the Ministry of Education Statistical Booklet (1999-2004), these children received instruction in 17 804 public and 1 839 private primary schools. Another 103 628 primary school-aged children are enrolled in non-formal schools and centers. Since the official language is English both the teaching and the school books are in English. Every school year has three terms of 13 weeks each.

In standard eight of primary school the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination (K.C.P.E.) is written. The result of this examination is needed for placement at secondary school. In standard four of secondary schools the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (K.C.S.E.) is written and students do examinations in eight subjects (Ssekamwa, Lugumba, 2001).

During our stay in Kenya, the election campaign was going on. Among other political parties, the present president Kibaki’s political program promise free secondary school education, and the development of education in rural and slum areas (Kibaki’s election speech, 1 may 2007).

The Strategic Plan 2006-2011 of the Ministry of Education includes 19 objectives which will serve for accelerating the “attainment of Education for All in Kenya” (Ministry of Education, 2006). Among these objectives we can find inclusion of learners with special needs, to integrate ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in education, to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the human resource function, strengthen the national assessment system etc.
4.2 The schools

There are some special routines of the schools. According to Omwoyo (2003) there are activities that have been planned to take place in the school every day. Each school has its own program of activities from Monday morning till Friday afternoon. On Monday morning there is an assembly there the teachers on duty and the head teacher remind the pupils what they will be doing throughout the week. It is also during the school assembly that the pupils are checked on their cleanliness. The classes begin at 8:20 a.m. and end at 3:10 p.m. for standard 4-8. In between two 35 minutes long lesson there is break time. From 3:10 p.m. to 4:10 p.m. there are games or other social activities. “Sports can make you have a good life just like being a doctor or engineer” (Omwoyo, 2003). Only the national language Kiswahili and the official language English may be used in the schools. According to one headmaster we interviewed, the school is open for every child, even if they do not have uniform or if they brake against the rules. Nobody can be excluded from school. This is a governmental law and was implemented 2003, when president Kibaki offered free primary education. Only 60 % of the pupils go to secondary school.

The Government spends as much as 30 per cent of its national budget on education alone. This is indeed a large sum of money, but it is not sufficient to meet all educational requirements. Parents are therefore called upon, form time to time, to supplement government efforts by rising funds to meet shortfalls.

4.3 Philosophy of Education in Kenya

4.3.1 Western influence

According to Joseph M. Ngaroga (2006) the education practice in Kenya was influenced by several western philosophers in education:

The ideas of Comenius have greatly influenced education practice in Kenya: religious education is still emphasized to lay a moral foundation for the learner, reward rather than punishment is used to motivate learners, topics in syllabuses of various subjects take into consideration the learner’s interest.
Rousseau’s thinking has influenced education practice in Kenya in the way that the curriculum developers have focused on the child’s growth and development. The class teacher for each grade is expected to plan and cater for individual differences. However the enlarging classes often limit a teacher of giving attention to every child.

Pestalozzi’s thinking has influenced the education in Kenya in the following ways: the emphasis in teacher education is on the child as the center of the learning process, the involvement of all the child’s senses in learning is emphasized, the induction method is one of the many methods used in the teaching in order to engage the learner in the learning process.

Dewey’s theory about learning-by-doing and the teacher’s role as a guide to a child has influenced education practice in Kenya. His project method is considered a useful mode of teaching and learning in upper primary and higher levels of learning. “However it is rarely used in primary schools due to either lack of experience by the teachers or as a result of an overloaded curriculum which spares no time for such projects” (Ngaroga, 2006).

Montessori’s thinking has reached also the Kenyan education, but it is not widely spread because of the shortage of properly trained teachers and poor provision of the variety of materials required in schools (Farrant, 2004).

4.3.2 African influence

According to Ngaroga (2006) there were even African philosophies which influenced the Kenyan education. The Harambee philosophy is associated with the founding “father” of the Nation of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. This philosophy is the guiding principle of working together and pooling resources according to individual ability and willingness to bring about development in education and other areas of the national development. He used the word Harambee as a clarion call to pool efforts and recourses for development of an independent nation. Harambee has contributed immensely to the development of education in Kenya in the following ways: the majority of primary and secondary schools have been built through Harambee efforts. Money raised in Harambee meetings and by parents has been used to build the required classrooms and workshops.

The African socialism influenced the development of education in Kenya in the way that one of the goals of education is to foster a sense of nationhood and promote national unity. Another goal which states that education should meet the needs of social and economic development has been given consideration. The pupils would be expected to carry out certain
duties for the school while the school has responsibility to the pupil in return. These are to:
represent the school in inter-school competitions such as in drama, music, sports and games,
promote the image of the school in both academic and disciplinary matters, take part in
keeping the school compound and classrooms clean and take care of school properties. The
school on the other hand has responsibility to the child and is expected to provide: suitable
learning opportunities, guidance and counseling services, security and service, emotional,
social and security needs (Ngaroga, 2006).

The Nyayo is another educational philosophy and its pillars are peace, love and unity. The
word Nyayo is a Kiswahili word that means footsteps. The word was given an impetus by
President Daniel Arap Moi when he took over Kenya’s leadership from the late president M.
J. Kenyatta in 1978. The Nyayo philosophy is founded firstly on African Socialism, which
recognizes human dignity, equality and sharing of resources produced by people’s efforts
through self-help; and secondly on Christian teaching, which stresses the themes of peace,
love and unity. Example for some specific educational issues that were emphasized under the
Nyayo philosophy are: teachers are good examples by loving their pupils as they love their
own children and cooperating among themselves in an atmosphere of peace, highlighting the
themes of peace, love and unity when teaching subjects such as Religious Education,
encouraging pupils to be mindful of other people’s welfare through assisting the less
privileged members such as the disabled pupils, encouraging pupils to join clubs and societies
which provide for them an opportunity to serve others, such as scouting and girl guides,
encouraging pupils to share learning resources and experiences in a learning situation, self-
reliance in the 8-4-4 system of education (Ngaroga 2006).

4.4 Primary Education Curriculum of Kenya

The curriculum is a planned course of study that provides the learner with some learning
experiences under the guidance of the school. There is one national curriculum in Kenya,
which can be found at every school. And it contains national goals and objectives. The
national goals are the following:
Education in Kenya should:
- Foster nationalism and promote national unity
• Promote the social, economic, technological and industrial needs for national development
• Promote individual development and self-fulfillment
• Promote social equality and responsibility
• Promote respect and development of Kenya’s rich and varied cultures
• Promote sound moral and religious values
• Promote positive attitudes towards good health and environmental protection
• Promote international consciousness and foster positive attitude towards good health and environmental protection

Objectives of primary education in Kenya

Primary education should provide the learner with opportunities to:

• Acquire literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills
• Enjoy learning and develop desire to continue learning
• Develop ability for critical thinking and logical judgment
• Appreciate and respect the dignity of work
• Develop desirable social standards, moral and religious values
• Develop into a self-disciplined, physically fit and healthy person
• Develop aesthetic values and appreciate own and other people’s cultures
• Develop awareness and appreciation of the environment
• Develop awareness of and appreciation for other nations and international community
• Instill respect and love for own country and the need for harmonious co-existence
• Develop individual talents
• Promote social responsibility and make proper use of leisure time
• Develop awareness and appreciation of the role of technology in national development

The syllabus is an outline of subject topics and their objectives planned to be covered by each class in each subject. Each syllabus contains national goals of education, objectives of education, the subject to be covered, the general and specific objectives for every subject, the outline of topics per subject and class, time allocation per subject per week, modes of assessments and methods of approach. The purpose of the syllabus is: to control the nature of education provided in all the schools by ensuring that all pupils in the country receive similar education, to plan topics in languages, mathematics and science in progression or in a pyramidal structure - each piece of new learning depends on the learning of the previous step
and the syllabus therefore builds the topics in a logical order. The rest of the subjects are planned in “plateau nature”, so to say the order of the topics is relatively unimportant. Furthermore the syllabus provides appropriate methods of teaching a given topic and its assessment techniques.

5 Written Materials

Our presentation is divided in two parts. The first part presents some theories on how cultural and psychological issues affect educational strategies and visions. The second part deals with more concrete ideas, including teaching and learning methods and evaluation in the classroom.

5.1 Various Pedagogical Perspectives

In our theoretical background we start to describe some educational perspectives and through this explain some background factors on learning and teaching. These are the following: behaviourism, the cognitive perspective and the interaction perspective. We will also present some different cultural aspects on education.

5.1.1 Behaviourism

The Russian psychologist Pavlov claims that human beings’ behaviour is a consequence of environmental influence. His theory studies how people learn things and the importance of rewards and punishments. The roles of positive and negative strengthening are central, because they are the driving forces of the development of a child. If the response to certain behaviour is punishment then the child tries to avoid that, and if the strengthening is positive then the child wants to repeat that behaviour to get the positive response from his or her environment. A main idea of the social behaviourism is that children learn values and social
skills through observations and participation in a social environment. Moreover adults are models for children who imitate the behaviour they see.

The main characteristic of the behaviouristic pedagogy is the reproductive thinking, which means that the children gains only fact knowledge and there is no focus on skills and confidences. Control, like tests and papers strengthen reproduction. In addition there is a grading system which signifies that the pupils are placed in order after their skills of correct reproduction. The belief that there is only one right answer strengthens same as the acceptance of an absolute authority, which can be the teacher, prefect and so on (Svedberg, Zaar 2003). This perspective got critiques because no unconscious factors are accepted and it has a perspective that human beings should be passive and easily influenced (Hwang, Nilsson 2003).

5.1.2 The cognitive perspective

This perspective focuses on how the thinking processes of human beings are build up and how they develop, moreover how they influence the understanding and the perception of the environment. Human beings are seen as a thinking, rational and conscious being, who builds up his or her own picture of the environment through own experiences. She actively searches knowledge to build up a meaningful picture of the outer reality. Jean Piaget is a represent of this perspective who contributed with four stages of cognitive development (Svedberg, Zaar 2003). Another great represent for this theory is Lev Vygotskij, who beyond Piaget’s ideas states that the child develops in a social interplay with parents, siblings and teachers. The adults are supposed to let the child meet demands, challenges which the child is supposed to deal with through effort and help from experienced persons. The demands should always be above the cognitive level of the pupils’ but never too high. This level is called for proximal development zone. The role of the adults in the child’ cognitive development is to raise interest, ask questions but do not give answers.

The disadvantage of this theory according to critics is to be too optimistic and the proximal development zone is difficult to measure.

5.1.3 The interaction perspective

This perspective focuses on the communication and relations between people. It does not consider that humans are driven by inner instincts. Instead of personality, motives and attitude
there are different acts in interaction with others which gives the best description of an individual. All behaviour is decided by expectations, roles and status which are decided by the surrounding social system. The group’s roles, norms and aims have a large impact on the individual’s self-image. George Herbert Mead is a representative for this theory. The psychologist Bronfenbrenner’s also claims that not only the family and school but the wider environment like the society, politics etc. influence the child’s situation and development. Time is an important factor, because both the individual and the environment can change during time which has an effect on the child.

The critique of this perspective is that it is too philosophical and there are only few research made on this field.

### 5.1.4 Cultural perspectives on school and society

School, education and society have always been connected to each other. The school is supposed to be responsible for the education in different subjects which serve the society. According to Lorentz and Bergstedt (2006) during the history the school was even responsible for education and the citizens’ socialization into the society. During a long period of time the task of the school was to give knowledge about the country’s geography, culture, history, language, religion, literature and the history of the leaders. This had as a consequence that the pupils obtained certain values and behavior which led to entity cultures. The schools were supposed to bring up individuals who love their country and the nationalism was the most natural goal. The consequence was that the pupils got biased world picture which had a negative effect on their learning and world understanding because it gave a wrong, narrow perspective. In multicultural societies people consider that it is better to break the traditions because it is more instructive and democratic. When nationalistic and ethnocentric traditions are not generally applicable anymore it influences even the education. In the last two decennials there has developed a demand on an intercultural pedagogic and a form of teaching which can be called inclusive and intercultural teaching.

The social psychologist Triandis (1994) differentiates four patterns of beliefs, attitudes, self definition and values in the society: individualism, collectivism, tight cultures and loose cultures. The complex culture occurs in information societies, where the social stratification is complex, the population is dense and there is a high complexity political integration.

In tight cultures people are expected to behave according to norms, rules and customs and deviation from them is likely to be punished. In very tight cultures according to Pelto
(Triandis 1994) there are strong (religious) leaders, corporate control and it is characterized by loyalty, which leads to correlation with collectivism.

A recent research has suggested that there are two kinds of collectivism: the horizontal collectivism which emphasizes interdependence and oneness and the vertical which emphasizes serving the group. In collectivist cultures the self is defined in terms of membership in in-groups which influences a wide range of social behaviors. Collectivists often are organized hierarchically and tend to be concerned about the results of their actions on members of their in-group, share resources with in-group members, feel interdependent with in-group members and feel involved in the lives of in-group members. People in collectivistic cultures give priority to in-group goals. People in individualistic culture often give priority to their personal goals, even when they conflict with the goals of important in-groups, such as the family, tribe, work-group or fellow countrymen. Collectivism can be found in parts of Europe: rural Greece, Southern Italy, and much of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Individualism is very high in the United States and generally high in the English-speaking countries.

According to Jonsson and Roth (2003) there was a change in education from a collectivistic one to a more individualistic one. Education as collectivistic was representative during the after war time where equality creating and civic fosterage were the main objectives of the school system. Education as individualistic characterizes a school system where parents and their children are prioritized; they have the right to decide about their child's education process and content. Moreover this type of education even offers free choices for the pupils.

Beck (1994) has a theory about the development of the societies. He set up a 7 steps' scale marked with different colors which stays for the different level of evolution that shape communities. In educational approach the first level is the purple one which includes paternalistic teachers who follow routines and treats pupils as passive learners. The next level is the red one, where teachers give reward for learning and pupils face challenges. The blue level is the following one, which is characterized by only one right way of thinking, moralistic lessons in schools, and punishment for errors, discipline and duty, and obeying rules. There are roles and rules for all and authorities have a large control. The orange level comes after the blue one, which is characterized by experiments and high tech, the teacher is a mentor and a guide and the education is goal oriented. At this level the individualism prevails and the community seeks autonomy. The green level follows the orange one and it is characterized by the expression of the feelings, social understanding, learn cooperation,
participative activities and everybody is equal. The rules are set by the collective and not by an authority. The yellow level is the next one, where the society is aware of the inevitability of change. The education is characterized of non-rigid structures and diverse idea sources. Living is considered as learning and people appreciate variability. The last level is turquoise which is characterized by a sustainable world, where the harmony is restored. The education has access to the whole world, feelings are blended with technology and the goal is to maximize the minds. The community is highly diversified and supports wise ones.

5.2 Teaching and learning methods

There are two main ways of teaching: formal or separated and informal or integrated. The formal teaching is an approach, the teacher acts as an instructor, taking up a position at the front of the class where he can exercise firm control over his pupils. Lessons are planned to last for a set length of time and everything is done according to a timetable. Routine procedures ensure that everybody knows what they should be doing at any time. This way of teaching makes greater use of rewards and punishments in exercising discipline (Farrant, 2004). The school knowledge is mostly book knowledge and subject knowledge, with little connection to everyday knowledge. This knowledge is verbal, abstract, theoretical aimed and certain subjects are considered more important then others. This perspective treats pupils like receivers of given knowledge. Obedience, diligence, docility are main attitudes which makes knowledge reproduction easier. The typical working method is mediation pedagogy. In this perspective there is not much corporation between school and society. Every subject is learned by itself, every teacher is an expert of a subject. Teachers and pupils have totally different rolls. Every pupil works for itself and they are placed in order. (Svedberg, Zaar, 2003).

Informal teaching is an approach that deliberately avoids the instructor’s role inherent in formal teaching and structures the classroom environment in such a way that each child is encouraged to use time, space and available school material to progress along a path of learning, that is initiated by his own interests and inquires. The teacher control the pupils’ behaviour more by good planning then by recourse to rewards and punishment (Farrant, 2004).
Brown and Atkins (Nsubuga, 2000) claim that teachings may be regarded as providing opportunities for pupils to learn. It is an interactive process as well as an intentional activity. Moreover Nsubuga (2000) also claims that the content of learning may be facts, procedures, skills, ideas and values. There are probably as many approaches, interpretations and definitions of how to teach as perhaps there are school teachers. Each person learns to use a style suited to his or her individual skills, the pupils’ capabilities and the expectations of the head teacher and parents.

School knowledge is life knowledge, which includes all aspects of the human being’s equipment: emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, moral and creative. The school subjects are integrated in topics. However there is a great emphasize on basic knowledge like writing and counting. Every subject is important. In this tradition manual activities have a central role. The pupil is an active searcher. It is important that he is engaged, active, creative and critic. The way of working is analytical and experimental. The activity in school is similar to the society’s activities. The pupils cooperate, the teacher takes part in the work and has the role of a helper and leader, but everything takes part in democratic forms. The starting point of the work is the pupil’s interests, needs and skills. The school is the society, that is to say an integrated part in it. The same activities which exist outside school should also exist within it. The school aims to improve the society, its institutes and processes. There is almost no placing in order between the pupils (Svedberg, Zaar, 2003). Integrated learning is commonly introduced in the primary school as a thematic approach with life themes such as food, travel and exploration crossing subject barriers (Farrant 2004).

5.2.1 Teaching methods

There is a variety of general methods which can be briefly discussed. It is also important to note the importance of having a variety of methods. The importance of a variety of methods is based on the fact that a teacher may change the teaching style to reach each pupil and to develop the pupils’ knowledge and understanding to the maximum. In general sense all teaching methods are used to implant and develop ideas and conceptual skills in the pupils. As pointed out above the methods we discuss here are not the only methods which can be used to tea

*The activity method* includes activities such as observing, recording, ordering, classifying, listening, writing, drawing, experimenting, playing a game, performing a physical skill etc. It is important to include pupils activities in the lesson, because pupils learn better by doing
then from what a teacher does as they involve more of their sense in the perceiving their environment. Pupils’ interest and curiosity is aroused and thus they become even more motivated to learn. This method encourages creativity and fosters a good teacher-pupil relationship and even a low ample freedom for the child to express itself and create opportunities for pupils to interact in pairs or small groups to share experiences and assist one another (Ngaroga 2006).

Discussion method is the most widely used and most popular method of teaching in the modern school. The teacher in this case does not transmit knowledge to the pupils; the pupils learn through an active effort on their own part. This method teaches on two levels at the same time. The first is the learning of subject matter, and the second is the development if the skill in the pupil to learn on his own without constant help from a teacher. Discussion in the classroom requires the teacher to organize the room for the best results. A good discussion requires that a number of pupils participate. Most teachers like to have 12 or 20 pupils in a group, usually some form of circle arrangement will permit then to be close enough to hear each other and have eye contact among the pupils. One of the most desirable aspects of the discussion method is that it helps pupils develop logic through comparison of their own ideas with those of their peers, to stimulate and develop the thinking ability and co-operation, listening skill, and respect for other pupils’ opinions. By expressing their concepts, asking for clarification and engaging in arguments their understanding becomes sharper and more accurate. This is the real value of discussion (Nsubuga 2000). According to Ngaroga (2006) there are some limitations of using the discussion method. Pupils with language problem or deficiency may shy of from taking part in the discussion. If it is unplanned can easily grounds to a halt.

The project method is a cooperative study of a real life situation by a class or a group under the guidance of the teacher. It stems from the work of John Dewey and aims at bringing pupils into real contact with the activities of their school’s neighbourhood, presenting pupils with real life problems to tackle by thinking and working together and developing further knowledge and skills in school subjects. This method encourages use of a variety of research methods, e.g. interviews, questionnaires, and library study and captures the pupils’ enthusiasm and stimulates their initiative as well as the spirit of inquiry. Through this method pupils’ planning and cooperative skills increase (Ngaroga 2006).

Recitation and questioning method is commonly used in school. This important tool is misused quite often. The questioning can serve two purposes. Firstly, it can be used to test the previous knowledge, in which direct factual questions are asked. Secondly, the questions may
be asked to stimulate thought. Recitation is performed by pupils, but they do not act without
the teacher asking a question or posing a problem to which they are expected to respond. The
success of recitation depends on the skill with which the teacher asks the questions (Nsubuga
2000).

**Demonstration method** is a practical display of a process which involves the showing of a
process or the action involved in it. It is learning through imitation, whereby the teacher gives
several demonstrations of the complete operation with explanation giving a clear picture of
what pupils are expected to know at the end of the lesson. The teacher demonstrates elements
which are followed by the pupils’ practice of each element (Ngaroga 2006). Nsubuga (2000)
adds that there should be a post-demonstration discussion to permit pupils to understand and
apply what they have seen.

**Lecture method** involves delivering of information that the teacher intends to communicate
to the pupils. It may involve reading out the notes step by step by the teacher followed by
some explanations and illustrations, or verbal exposition of a well thought out lecture plan.
This method is for most part teacher-centred and the learners have very little participation in
the lecture (Ngaroga 2006). The body of the lecture should present the subject in a logical
order based on what the pupils already know and going towards the new knowledge which is
expected to be reached. The lecture should end with a conclusion, when the teacher sum up
which has been presented and the pupils are expected to remember. An important point of
view is to keep the pupils interested which can be reached by keeping them amused and
involved in the subject. The advantage of this method is the possibility to present a large
number of information in a short period of time. The most common critic for this method is
that the pupils do not participate in the lecture much enough (Nsubuga 2000).

Educational visits, dramatisation, games, discovery or resource based learning and
independent study and practice methods are other alternatives of teaching which can make the
learning of pupils enjoyable and helps to develop their intellectual skills.

5.3 Assessment and testing

If any innovation is to be successful, there must be a system by which its effects can be tested
and the degree to which it has achieved its objectives can be assessed. This process of testing
and assessment is called evaluation. The effectiveness of education depends on clear objectives and efficient instruments for measuring the extent to which change has taken place towards these objectives (Farrant 2004). There are two different types of evaluation, the formative and the summative. According to the Kenyan author Ngaroga (2006), whose book is used as course literature at universities, formative evaluation is applied at specific points in the process of implementing a programme, so as to provide the necessary feedback. This feedback provides information to the teacher for modifying instructions and prescribing individual and group remedial work. It also identifies learning errors and corrections can be made to help pupils perform well. On the other hand summative evaluation is only applied at the end of a programme to determine in which extent the objectives have been reached. Its main purpose is grading or certification of pupils’ achievement. On the contrary Björklund, Jönsson, Kjellström (2005) claims that the summative aim with the evaluation is to look behind, so to say to control if the pupils reached the goals, give foundation for the grading, development and sample. The formative aim with the evaluation is to look forward, guide the pupils, give feed-back on learning and follow the pupils' development. According to Ngaroga (2006) the assessments are good because they motivate the learners and it enables teaches to give an objective report of an individual child’s performance.
6 Methods

To research this area we used qualitative methods which lie on three pillars: ethnography and participating observation, qualitative interviews with both pupils and teachers and literature observation. We choose a qualitative case study as our research strategy which is focusing on the understanding of the social reality starting out from how the participants in a certain environment interpret this reality (Bryman, 2002).

6.1 Case study

An ethnographic case study is more than an analysis of a social unit or occurrence. It is a socio-cultural analysis about the unit being studied. When doing an ethnographic case study the surrounding community, the school culture and socio-economic factors are important viewing points and should be taken in consideration. The employees’ attitudes towards educational and pedagogic values should also be reviewed when doing a study. Ethnographic qualitative case study on location opens possibilities to gain information on more subjective factors, thus the focus expands, and the investigation of an authentic issue is the main object. When doing a case study it is important to take in consideration that a lot of surrounding factors might influence the object of study. Researchers should start with the whole picture and narrow the focus on details gathering them into a descriptive result that answers the questions what, how and why something happens (Merriam, 1994).

Case studies in education and other social sphere of activities are a valid way for investigation and survey. According to Merriam (1994) a case study is an investigation about one specific occurrence, in our case the education in Kenya.

6.2 Qualitative interviews with teachers and pupils

To achieve a higher validity we used qualitative interviews where our interest appeals the interviewed persons’ standpoint. The qualitative interviews allow the interview to move in different directions which the interviewed person feels relevant. This kind of interview method is flexible and makes it possible to deviate from the interview guide and there is an
opportunity to ask new questions as a follow-up or further-build of what the interviewed persons has answered. With this kind of interview our aim is to get detailed answers. There are two types of qualitative interviews. Mostly our interviews were semi-structured where we had a list over specific topics which are going to be gone through during the interview (Bryman, 2002).

As Nsubuga (2000) suggests creating a friendly, permissive atmosphere directing the discourse in to the desired channels, encouraging the respondent to reveal information, and motivating him or her to keep presenting useful facts was important during our interviews. To achieve this kind of atmosphere our ambition was to show a sympathetic and non superior attitude knowing that they are conscious about the higher level of the Swedish system.

Since we discussed with the teachers besides the semi-structured interview we made some unstructured interviews. In this case the interviewed person had to answer and associate freely. Our role in this unstructured interview is to only react at those points which are worth to follow up. We made individual interviews in a private setting with one person at a time so that the subject feels free to express oneself fully and truthfully. Some interviews with the pupils were made in groups with the purpose to produce more useful data. The participants of the group may help one another recall, verify or rectify items of information (Bryman, 2002).

6.3 Participating observation

As the second method of research we chose the participating observation, that is to say ethnography. This kind of observation is more than just notice, because beside this observation we even made interviews and used written resources as curriculum, philosophy of education etc. We made observations in two different environments. One month we made observations at the children centre where we stayed, and the other month we made observations at schools. During this time we wanted to develop an understanding of the respective group’s culture through continuous observations and discussions with the actors (Bryman, 2002). We also made literature observations by analysing literature for teachers and textbooks.

During our interviews and observations we made a detailed summary by using short phases, citations, and keywords and similar. To not loose data we transcript it in the computer on the same day interviews and observations took place. Both of us were present at every interview and observation to get a wider perspective and to not lose any details and get a
reliable picture. By combining these we can make use of all the advantages from all methods and still be able to control their weak points. The opportunity to use several methods when gathering information is the strength in a case study (Merriam, 1994).

### 6.4 Sample

The research includes 13 pupil interviews and 13 teacher interviews from three different schools. We were focusing to choose interviewees from a large scale to be able to achieve a larger variety of perspectives and through this a greater validity and transferability. In the pupil interviews we had both male and female interviewees with different cognitive capacity. In this selection we got help from the teachers in the schools. Because of the language barrier and the pupils’ short school experience we could not make interviews with pupils in lower primary.

Those teachers whose lessons we have visited are included in our interviews. Our aim was to interview teachers with different teaching experiences to get a larger view on our issue.

### 6.5 Ethical aspects

When we visited the schools, we informed the headmasters about the scholarship we have gotten from Sida and that we were going to do a field study as a part of our university programme. Furthermore we informed them about the aim of the study, which is to raise the level of our knowledge and interest in international development and to learn about other countries. At our first visit in every school we had a meeting with the head teacher when we introduced ourselves, our study and its aim and the methods we were going to use. After this meeting the head teachers introduced us to the school personnel and informed them about our purpose. When visiting lessons and classes we asked the teachers for their consent. The headmasters considered and assured us that there is no need to ask for parents’ permission, since our issue is not private.

We informed both teachers and pupils that the interviews are voluntarily and anonymous, so they could feel safe and open up freely. Furthermore we treated all the collected data with respect. We experienced that the teachers considered us as colleagues with similar competence which resulted that beyond the interview questions we had a deeper conversation
and got more detailed and valid information about the Kenyan education, school system and circumstances.

Moreover we were in contact with an educational officer, who was willing to take part in our interview and provided us with different educational materials from the Ministry of Education.

### 6.6 Reliability and validity

Qualitative studies give social scientists much useful information, but verbal symbols which describe objectives, administration or other factors lack precision because words do not hold the same meaning for all people, for all times and in all contexts.

As Lincoln and Guba suggest (Bryman, 2002) to achieve a higher validity we put three criteria: credibility, transferability and objectivity. To get a higher credibility we used a technique called triangulation, which means that we used three methods to could interpret things from more perspectives. The aim with visiting minimum three different schools in two different districts was to get a “thick description“, as Geertz (1973) mentions and throughout this to fulfil the criteria of transferability that the result can be valid in other Kenyan schools, too. Being conscious about the negative effects of the qualitative research, so to say that it is too subjective, because the research builds on the researchers’ perception of what is important and significant our ambition was to be as objective as possible. According to Bryman (2002) it is also important to realize that you cannot find a case that will represent the whole object group, the result from a case study is not the norm for similar cases.

To avoid misunderstanding we observed that it is better to describe different terms like pedagogy, society, community and so on very detailed, because either they do not have the same meaning in the Kenyan culture or the interviewees did not understand the terms. Our interview contained the same topics to help us getting information of the same field from different interview subjects. We asked several questions about the same subject to get valid information and more precise answers. To strengthen the reliability of our paper we tried to write descriptions as detailed as possible to get the reader draw their own opinions and conclusions.
Since our interviewed subjects all spoke English on a high level, there were no misunderstandings or non-understandings caused by language.

We were focusing if there is any contrast or coincidence between the interview answers and observations to see if they give a real picture in the interviews or they try to describe the reality better then it is. After finishing every interview and observation in all the schools we could establish that all the interviewees and observation subjects gave a real picture without finding contrast between their answers and teaching behaviour. That is why we can draw the conclusion that we get high validity level.
7 Result and Analyses

We have been visiting two primary schools in Nairobi district and one in Kikuyu district. In each school we have made observations and interviews with both pupils and teachers. The interview questions were focusing on the same area, but were formulated differently to teachers and pupils. To get a picture about the used teaching methods in the school, we asked the pupils about their lesson forms and learning ways while teachers got questions about the teaching methods they use in the classroom. The first part of the result is a presentation of the schools we have visited and in the second part we present and analyze our result in four larger topics: the role and importance of education, teaching and learning methods, assessment and evaluation, discipline and democracy. We summarize the results which are relevant for our aim and we study the connections between them and the facts of the theoretical background. Our aim is to examine how education takes part in two districts in Kenya and why. Moreover we want to see how this affects pupils and their perception about school and learning. To reach a higher validity and to get a more complex picture about the reality in Kenyan education we analyse and compare our research triangle: teacher interviews, pupil interviews and observations. Our research includes 13 teacher and 13 pupil interviews. The interviewees are both males and females from lower and upper primary. As a supplement we add a small text book observation as well, to present a part of the content.

A. primary school
This school is situated in the area Dagoretti, Nairobi district. The school was built in 1974, during Kenyatta’s time, like almost all the other public primary schools. It has 18 classrooms, 800 pupils divided in two classes in every standard with totally 14 teachers. The density of pupils varies from 40 to 60 in one class. Some of them may even come from slum areas. The school has different problems: shortage of teachers – because the Ministry of Education stopped the employment of teachers although there are many trained teachers unemployed and because financial problems, lack of facilities – no electricity at all in the school, no teaching materials, not enough books, pencils and no laboratories. The school gets 180 Kenyan Shillings per child per year from the government (18 Swedish Crowns). If one of the teachers happens to be absent the solution is that the best student in every class has to hold
the lesson. All the pupils of the school wear uniform. There are rules regarding hairstyle and wearing of jewelers, all this for a more equal looking because of the different economic backgrounds of the pupils. The use of mother tongue like Kikuyu, Luhya, Kamba, Maasai etc. is prohibited. There are rules regarding be punctual, do the homework, wear clean clothes and regarding good behavior. If the rules are broken the consequence is punishment.

B. primary school
The second school we visited was a private school. It is also situated in Dagoretti, Nairobi district. This school was started last year, in 2006. It was founded and is sponsored by three retired teachers. In the lower primary section there are 150 pupils and 14 teachers and in the upper primary there are 160 pupils and 8 teachers. In the lower primary there are around 10-14 pupils in one class and sometimes there are some lessons held by two teachers. In upper primary there are around 20-40 pupils in one class. The parents have to pay 1200-2000 Kenyan Shillings as school fee which includes the transport to and from school and lunch. Most of the children come from higher working class or lower middle class. The school lies in two different buildings at a walking distance from each other. The lower primary is in a yet unfinished local that is why there is no electricity in some classrooms, or any windows and doors. The schoolyard is small so they do not have possibilities to organize outdoor lessons. As compensation the school organizes trips to a field every Friday afternoon. The upper primary is in a building with same conditions. The school has an own uniform, but there are no rules regarding the hairstyle and jewelry. The teachers get three time’s lower salary then their colleagues working in public schools; 4 500 Kenyan Shillings respectively 12 000 KSh. There is pray time from 8:15 to 8:30 for those who arrive earlier, and the school starts at 8:30 and it is accepted to be late.

C. Primary school
The third school we have visited is situated in Kikuyu district, 20 km westwards from Nairobi. It was built in 1956. It has 600 pupils and 9 teachers. Some of the classes have even 100 pupils, but in general they are between 50 and 60 pupils per class. The lack of money is a great problem in this school too. For one year the school gets 16 thousand KSh for maintenance which is not enough to pay the electricity and telephone bills, or to employ more teachers. The building of the school is dilapidated; the classrooms are cold because of the lack of window glasses and doors. The equipment of the classes is minimal: a teacher’s desk,
one blackboard – black painted wall, uncomfortable benches, the ceiling and the floor are damaged, but the schoolyard is very large and beautiful with plenty of trees and flowers. The school pays a lot of attention that all the rules are followed by pupils.

7.1 The role and importance of education

The interviewed teachers and pupils see the socialization beside identity development as an important role of the school which is in line with Lorentz and Bergstedt’s (2006) statement, that school also is responsible for the socialization of the citizens into the society. Even the Kenyan Curriculum (2003) contains the goal of social equality and responsibility and the national goals mention the importance to promote individual development, self-fulfillment and economic, technological and industrial needs for national development. When Africans began to build their own schools it was with the purpose to provide them with academic education as well, which they saw as a way to economic development and high social status (Ngaroga, 2006).

Both teacher’s and pupil’s interview answers confirm that the largest role of the school beside socialization is the chance to get education and through that get opportunity for a better future and chance to break free from poverty. All of the interviewed teachers believe that schooling is part of the national development and physical, emotional, mental and academic development of a child. Pupils say that the school is essential for further studies and see education as a heritage from their parents. Instead of material heritage the education is a key to a good future. Some pupils in school C even point out that education is good for their own economy as well as for their families’ since they would like to help the other members of their family. After finishing primary school they find very important to know Science, Mathematics, Kiswahili and Social Studies because these are the subjects which can help them in the future by passing the exams with good grades.

All of the teachers consider that they have an important role in motivating and encouraging the pupils by using themselves as role models and good examples, telling their own stories: coming from poor background but striving in the school and by that achieving a better social and financial situation. The headmaster of the public school A, states that Mathematics and Science are the most important subjects, because pupils can only get a better future if they are good in them, “the world goes for science”. Most of the pupils have high ambitions regarding
the future for example to become pilots, doctors, engineers, lawyers, so to say the best paid professions. On the other hand some of the teachers in the private school B discuss with them that not only academically educated people are important for the society but even lower educated people have the same value. The teachers in public school C emphasized that another important role of the school is to teach the rules of the society to pupils through reward and “punishment by love”. They even gave examples from the Bible: “spare the rod, and spoil the child”, “if you do what is wrong, you will be severely punished; you will die if you do not let yourself be corrected” (Proverbs 15). These teachers see punishment as guidance to get the children to work more and behave better. These teachers consider that their role beside to be a teacher is to be also a parent to the pupils. Most of the pupils have difficult backgrounds: many of them are orphans or live on the streets, are abused or raped and they sometimes live in extreme poverty and hunger. Because of all these problems the teacher might be the only grown up they can turn to for help. This guidance role is considered to be as important as knowledge mediation.

Our observations correspond with the interview answers. We have seen how conscious pupils work during lessons, in their spare-time and even at night which we experienced at the child-centre where we stayed. These pupils really live and learn for a better future to get out from the bad economic situation and in this process they are guided and motivated by teachers as well, to be able to achieve their aim. A composition written by a pupil in standard 4 shows excellently many pupils situation and feeling about school. “My best friend and I work hard to get good grades. We do what the teachers say and follow the rules. Both my friend and I are orphans and help each other. We have to do the homework and a lot of exercises. I pray to God everyday to help me to pass the examinations and to become an engineer.”

7.2 Teaching methods

According to teacher and pupil interviews, the most widely spread teaching method is the question and answer method. Even our observations made in all of the schools confirm this fact. Nsubuga (2000) consider that the method of questioning is a good one, but it is often misused. It can serve for two purposes: it can be used to test the previous knowledge, in
which direct factual questions are asked. Secondly, the questions may be asked to stimulate thought.

During our visit in schools we have experienced mostly the questioning method, where the teacher addressed him or herself to the whole class or made exercises including all of the pupils at the same time. The structure of all lessons is almost the same: the teacher presents the title of the lesson, discuss the main content of it using questions and make a scheme of definitions, ideas or a sketch on the blackboard strictly following the textbook. After this the pupils have to write the content from the blackboard in their note books and the lesson ends with getting homework.

According to the teachers beside the questioning method they sometimes use the activity method, which includes observation, writing, drawing, experimenting, playing a game, performing a physical skill and classification and thematic corners. According to the lower primary teachers, it is important to include pupil activities in the lesson, because pupils learn easier by doing when they involve more of their senses in the process of perceiving their environment. Even Ngaroga (2006) states, that this method encourages creativity and fosters a good teacher-pupil relationship.

In lower primary in school B and C the method of storytelling also occurs during English and Kiswahili lessons. The teachers think that the language skills of the pupils develop through it. The disadvantage of this method according to both the teachers and our observation is that not every pupil gets opportunity to have a word because of overcrowded classes and short lessons. Hence, in the lower primary in the private school there were no obstacles to carry out such a lesson, because of the small number of the pupils in one class. Here we have seen lessons where the method of storytelling was used and every pupil had the opportunity to sing a song or tell a story.

According to our interview, there was only one teacher who beside the questioning method used the project method. He teaches Science and Mathematics in public school A. and occasionally gives pupils different outdoor project to work with. This method serves for bringing pupils into real contact with the outside world and presenting pupils real life problems to tackle, by working together and developing further knowledge and skills in school subjects, according to Ngaroga (2006).

The method of discussion occurs often in all of the three schools, in form of debates about different topics, like AIDS, family, poverty etc. In this case the teacher does not transmit knowledge to the pupils; the pupils learn through an active effort expressing their opinions
and arguing (Nsubuga 2000). According to some teachers in school A, pupils’ critical thinking can develop by using this method and following the objectives of the Syllabus. According to pupils and teachers they sometimes use group work with the purpose that the better learners help the weaker ones. In these group works they get exercises only to solve and not to discuss. Rarely, they use group works in accordance to write compositions, when all of the group members’ ideas are supposed to be used. This method occurs more often in private school B and less often in the other two public schools.

To be able to give weak learners extra attention, the upper primary teachers often put them in one homogeneous group, otherwise all focus are directed towards the bright and fast learners. Furthermore the school offers help for children with learning difficulties, which can be tuition during break time either from a talented pupil or a teacher. This includes explaining and more exercises and not another approach of the problem. If the parents can afford to pay extra, the pupils can even get help at home or in school on Saturdays. The method of catering the bright pupils in all the three schools includes more exercises on a higher level.

There are almost no teaching materials in the schools, only the textbooks, exercise books, pencils and blackboard. The “teacher is the source” and need to be innovative by for example using local materials, like plastic bottles and balloons on science lesson, or ask pupils bring things from home to make experiments.

Many teachers do not work with alternative methods and blame on the lack of time and place and the overcrowded Syllabus. Regarding subject integration and thematic work some of the teachers consider that they are supposed to do it but it is still not widespread.

Having all these interviews and observations as a foundation, we can conclude that the pedagogy in these schools are mostly behaviouristic because of the widespread use of rewards and punishments and the role of the teacher as a model, a mediator of knowledge and an authority for the pupils. We can even quote that in accordance with Svedberg and Zaar (2003) the focus is on pupils’ fact gathering and there is not much focus on skills and confidences. Besides the dominant behaviouristic pedagogy, we have even seen some elements of cognitive pedagogy in lower primary in both public and private schools. Hence in the upper primary in all of the three schools the lack of resources and the high number of the pupils in the classes make it difficult, almost impossible for the teacher to give attention to every individual and to proceed from their knowledge-level. This often leads to the fact that only the fast learners can keep up with the tempo.

We can even conclude that the education in these schools is formal, so to say the knowledge is book- and subject-knowledge, some subjects are considered more important
than others, like Mathematics, Science and languages. There is no emphasis on Arts or Music
and practical work which can develop skills like fantasy, independence, creativity, critical
thinking. The Kenyan Curriculum demands these skills, but since we did not experience the
focus on these, we can conclude there is a contrast between school reality and Syllabus
prescription. However teachers believe that the general goals of the Curriculum like critical
thinking and logical judgment can be achieve only by following the contents of the Syllabus
and the textbooks. Since the national tests are based on fact knowledge, the teachers have not
so many choices but to concentrate on this. Some of the teachers are conscious about the
advantage of the informal teaching but they have limited conditions and resources to realize
it.

All the teachers have future visions regarding the improvement of their teaching way:
more various methods, continuous assessment instead of one great examination, larger
number of teachers and better physical facilities. Also the pupils would like to have some
changes regarding the teachers’ way of teaching, for example to be allowed to use their
mother tongue, and avoid to be beaten during lessons. Furthermore, according to the pupils
teachers should be more assertive; they should use more alternatives methods, like field trips,
practical work and educational visits. A good teacher understands and helps them, knows
their character and has a good attitude towards education and is not lazy. Those teachers who
give a lot of work to pupils without a good explanation do not seem to be good. As a
conclusion, a good teacher has to value the pupils, be committed, disciplined, and generous,
and has room for failure and ready to correct the pupils.

7.3 Assessment and testing

Examination has a central part in the education in Kenya. There are three main examinations
during a school year and are held at the end of every term, when pupils at every school write
a national test with multiple-choice questions and only the grade of this test is registered. The
examination is in five subjects: Mathematics, English, Kiswahili, Science and Social Studies.
There is one great national exam at the end of Standard 8 which qualifies them to the
secondary school. These examinations lead to concurrence between pupils, which the teachers
see as good for the performing one’s, but has negative effects on those who have learning
difficulties. The schools even reward the first three best pupils with material things like pens, books and so on.

Besides the national exam there are smaller tests after each topic, with the aim to repeat the material and prepare the pupils for the national exam in Standard 8. Moreover it helps the teacher to see how pupils achieved the goals, and if all of them understood the content. The evaluation in these schools is mostly summative, where the teacher uses tests to control pupils’ knowledge. The questions of the tests have only one right answer, and they strengthen reproduction of book-knowledge and do not develop other skills.

Many teachers consider that this type of evaluation is not good because if the pupil is absent at the examination or has a bad day can negatively affect the results and his or her future. Other, formative evaluation should be better alternative according to the teachers, because it has positive aspects, like to look forward, guide the pupils, give feedback on learning and follow the pupils' development as Björklund, Jönsson, Kjellström (2005) also claims.

7.4 Discipline and democracy

The central method to maintain discipline is reward and punishment. If somebody behaves and performs well is praised by the teacher and clapped by the classmates. On the other hand when somebody is “naughty” or break the rules punishment is the consequence, which can be various: being beaten with cane, pinched, cutting the grass, digging pit for trees and flowers, cleaning the classroom or toilets or get scold. In case of doing a greater mistake the parents will be called for meeting with the class teacher or the head teacher. If they complain on the pupil’s behavior or performance also parents punish their children by beating them or with different restrictions: “I may not eat until I finish my job”. The teachers consider that the discipline and moral is important in accordance to educate responsible members of the society. All of the pupils agree that discipline in school plays an important role in successful learning and it prepares them for the rules in society.

To our question about pupil’s influence teachers answered that the rules of the school are decided together with pupils. They have the right to come up with rules regarding common hairstyle, be on time, not be absent etc. According to them, the pupils are even allowed to
complain if they feel that the punishment is unfair. Parents can also criticize teachers’ way of teaching or the school.

The pupils think that the rules to be on time, to have a common hairstyle and uniform are good because they feel more equal. On the other hand to get punished because of breaking them is not good because it makes them to feel bad and embarrassing. At larger rules breaking they might even be send home from school. Another reason they get punishment for is the use of their mother tongue in the school. The symbol for this punishment is the so-called “monto”, a horn of a cow which they have to wear on their chest. The children claim that it is humiliating because it smells badly and the other pupils laugh at the one wearing it. There are few pupils who would like to have changes even in the rule system of the school. Instead of the uniform, they would like to have warmer clothes during the cold season and would like to be allowed to play more in the school field. Most of the pupils do not want any modifications.

Our interviews and observation give us a good picture of democracy and pupils’ influence in the Kenyan school. All of the teachers consider that it is important to have a democratic school, where pupils have the opportunity to influence, to decide rules, to express their opinion and to develop their critical thinking. Our examination shows that in the lower primary of the private school B is a larger tendency to work towards this direction. They try to give pupils the opportunity to choose the order of the subjects during a day and also the content of the lessons and the way they want to learn. This can be realized because of the small number of pupils in the classes and access to teaching materials. The teachers in this school claimed that it is unnecessary to have rules about hairstyle and jewelry, meaning that the children are able to decide what is extreme and what is not. Even in the public schools they want to make education more democratic by having debates where pupils can express their opinion. Our observation does not ponder over this fact. However, we have got the impression that it is the head teachers and the teachers who mostly decide in every issue. Both teachers and pupils are conscious about the illegality of using physical punishment which results in less and less beating and they choose other punishing alternatives like cleaning the classroom or being scold in front of the whole school or class. Most of the teachers agree with Pestalozzi’s ideas that a good learning process can be achieved by setting the pupils in the centre and having fewer rules but at the same time they think that it is difficult without rules in classes with over 50 pupils.

According to Farrant (2004) in many cases the teacher exercises control over pupils, and the pupils need to obey them. To avoid this and to achieve a more democratic form of
teaching the starting point of a lesson or work should be the pupils’ interest (Svedberg, Zaar 2003). In the case of these schools it is almost impossible, because all content and the process of the lessons are prescribed in the Curriculum.

7.5 Observation of school textbooks

We observed different schoolbooks to see what they contain and how the teaching is supposed to go through. Parts from two subjects, Social studies and Moral and Religion are mentioned here, which are interesting for our western approach.

The textbook Moral and Religion for Standard 4 teaches about how pupils should be and behave against others:

“We server our nation when we give service at home, in school and in the community. We also serve our nation by celebrating national holidays. We listen to speeches from the national leaders during national days. (…) We serve the nation by respecting our leaders. We listen to them and follow their advice. We can give service in school by tiding the class every morning, by obeying and respecting our teachers and prefects. We can also help other pupils who have difficulties in doing subjects that we are good at. We give service by sharing what we have with others in school and by caring for the school environment. (…) When I serve others I am following the example of Jesus.” (Ariithi, 2002)

The Bible, religious morals and values play an important role in the education process, since the schools claim that the children’s spiritual education is very important and people see life through these values.

Moreover the book gives examples about good moral: “unselfishness means being concerned about other people. It means putting the needs of others before our own. When we are unselfish, it means that we are ready to sacrifice for others; (…) we care about making other people happy. Selfishness stops us from being kind” (Bible Galatians 5:13, 5:19-23). “We should treat other pupils fairly. We should not tease them. We should play fairly; help one another in schoolwork and share. We can also express peace in school by respecting and obeying the school rules. We should also be polite. We should forgive others. We should accept our mistakes and ask for forgiveness”. As Kenya progressed, population increased classrooms have become overcrowded. Value and moral based education has given way to
rote learning of the 3 R’s only, read, write and arithmetic. In order to deviate from the path of Morality, Value and moral based education has been made a compulsory subject under the National Policy of Education. The values are broadly classified under sensitivity, punctuality, neatness, and gender equality, dignity of labour, scientific attitude, patriotism, national unity, courtesy (politeness), and discipline (Ariithi, 2002).

The same values are further classified in the Social Education book (2006) for Standard 6 as:

A- personal values: cleanliness, self reliance, sense of duty, loyalty to labour, loyalty to science, honesty, kindness towards all creatures, fearlessness, fair play, discipline

B- Social values: equality, fraternity, religious tolerance, love for justice, courtesy, respect and regard for each other, love for truth, non-violence, humanity. Love for nature, spirit of mutual cooperation

C- National values: patriotism, national unity and integration

Furthermore there is claimed that moral science or value education is not a subject to be taught but it is to be caught. The reason is that children should be imbied with the correct values to lead them on the right path and become better citizens by practicing what is learnt in daily life.

This book also suggests everyday duties toward God, towards parents, the government, friends and oneself. It even classifies these duties: towards God to know him, admire him, to believe in him, to adore him and to express this adoration with prayer and sacrifice. Duties towards parents: to honour and love them, and be proud of them. Each of the children must be loyal, to their family. “We must not tell everybody as to what happens between the members of our family. We must be loyal to our school. We must participate in all the functions of the school. We should not speak negative things about our own school. Loyalty is very important in building a good character of a child”.

Besides duties toward parents and God, Soares (2004) mentions duties towards the government: provide all help, loyalty obedience and full respect to the government of one’s country. Each citizen must love his or her country and loyalty is also very important. “We should not make fun of our country”.

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8 Discussion

The aim of our field study was to get a picture how education takes part in three schools in Kenya. To our examination we used the qualitative method which has the advantage to help in understanding of a social reality, starting out from how the participants in a certain environment interpret this reality. The use of the case study was an optimal choice which gave us a picture of social, economic and surrounding factors which affect the Kenyan education. The qualitative interviews gave us the opportunity to not only get answers to our questions but also have a detailed discussion with teachers and pupils. We have also told them about the Swedish teaching and school system. All of the interviewees were very positive to that freedom that the Swedish school system offers. The only thing that they thought was strange and negative in the Swedish school is the lack of the spiritual and ethical education. We tried to explain that the social values permeate the educational system even if there is no concrete religious and ethical education. During our interviews we had some difficulties: there were some terms and questions which they did not understand, for example pedagogy and democracy in the schools, so we had to describe what we mean with them. For pedagogy we used the term teaching methods and theories and for describing school democracy we used terms like pupils’ influence and rights.

This field study in Kenya helped us to get another perspective on education and teaching. We have both seen new and interesting things, but also negative aspects on teaching. Among positive aspects we can mention the pupils’ positive attitude towards the school, appreciating the chance to have free education, the opportunity to learn new things and the social part of the school attendance. Another positive impression was the emphasis on moral education of the pupils, including how to behave towards each other, teachers, parents, old people and respect each other. The climate in the schools was friendly, where the pupils supported each other and had mutual understanding. Negative aspects which we do not want to follow in our future teaching carrier were using physical and psychical punishments, to use too much of behaviouristic methods, the pupils’ qualification after their fact knowledge and performances and the non various lessons. In our eyes most of the lessons were non-various and non-stimulating because the structure of every lesson was the same which could result that the pupils lost their attention and motivation. The behaviouristic and formal teaching has many disadvantages like the focusing on fact knowledge without paying enough attention on improvement of pupils’ oral skills, critical and abstract thinking and emotional, aesthetic,
creative development. The most negative fact in the Kenyan school was the prohibition of using the mother tongue in the school. We think it is important to study on mother tongue because it is a democratic right and it helps one to express his or herself better and even foreign languages learning is easier. Furthermore it is surprisingly positive that there are possibilities for Kenyans in Sweden to have mother tongue education for example in Kikuyu, Luo, and Swahili in the schools.

However we can also find many common elements in the Swedish and the Kenyan schools, namely some behaviouristic elements like the mediating pedagogy, grades and tests. This study helped us to realize the great freedom of the Swedish Curriculum and school system, which offers a great scale of choices, and gives free hands to schools, teachers and pupils to individualize the education. Teachers have great opportunities to choose working ways and content, and freely plan lessons by having the pupils’ interest, background and capacity as a starting point. Unfortunately this freedom in some cases is not maximally exploited and all chances are not taken by the teachers in many Swedish schools.

We have even realized that the goals and objectives of both Curriculums are almost the same with very few differences but there are prominent deviations in both of their interpretation and realization. For instance the goal to develop the pupils’ critical thinking in the Swedish school is achieved by including it in every subject, letting the pupils to have own opinions and allow them to question different statements. On the other hand the Kenyan school works with this aim by allowing the pupils to take part in organized debates.

Hence, the very underprivileged conditions, where the equipment is poor, the classes are overcrowded and the pupils have long schooldays without getting lunch they do work with same goals and objectives that the Swedish Curriculum also has. The success of the learning process depends mostly on the teachers, how they catch the pupils’ attention and get them to work. The poor conditions make that the teacher can awaken interest and make pupils curious more easily. Often it can be enough with a small picture, a song or any other simple material. According to our practice experiences in Swedish schools it is more difficult to catch pupils’ attention, motivate them and get them concentrated than in the Kenyan schools we have visited. In spite of larger resources and a free Curriculum in Sweden, there are many pupils who do not achieve the main goals mostly because of low motivation. The difference can be explained by the different economic situation in Sweden and Kenya. The Kenyan children are more motivated in learning to get a well paid job and have a good future, while the Swedish children are not concerned of this because there is a better social and economic system in the country.
In the Kenyan school the public good prevails, so to say the focus is more on the collective then on the individual, even their rules promote this. In spite of the grading system and the pupils’ placing in order the classes forms good communities where every pupil has place and accept him or herself, others and is accepted even by others. We have not met children who felt badly because of bullying or who have been frozen out by others. Bullying occurs rarely here but as one teacher said “...we Africans are not that sensitive like you white people.” Every pupil has a friend, is open and can easily interact with others. The social climate was good in all the schools we visited where the children went with pleasure. Exception can be those children who we did not have the opportunity to meet because they might left the school due to very low performance or social conditions.

We think that the Swedish school system offers more place to the children’s identity seeking and developing, it is allowed to have extreme hairstyle, outfit and even behaviour. This freedom is limited by the rules in the Kenyan school system. Because of living in an individualistic society, the Swedish pupils have more demand to express themselves and jut to be different from the others. As Triandis (1994) says, in such a society people often give priority to their personal goals, even when they conflict with the goals of the family or the society. Based on our research we can claim that Kenyan pupils like to be more equal, since they are members of a collectivistic society, where according to Triandis (1994) collectivists are often organized hierarchically and tend to act in favor of the group and obey authorities, as for example the pupils feel obliged to obey teachers. We think that the public good and community comes on the first place in Kenya and it is more important than the private good like it does in our more individualistic society. Since this collectivistic society is hierarchically built people with high status job are seemed to have more value than people from lower social class. Some teachers we have interviewed had realized this and strive to change this conception. We think that finding a balance between individualistic and collectivistic systems both in the Swedish and Kenyan school would be optimal. Values like solidarity, collaboration and good relationship we have seen between pupils in Kenya, could contribute to the individualistic system of the Swedish school. This collectivism has a positive effect on the individual: good interacting between people is a condition to the individual harmony because every human has social needs. The relation between individuals and community is mutual, because as we have experienced less individualistic attitude leads to a better community which cares of its members.

Based on our experiences and research we can state that the Kenyan school system belongs to the blue level in Becks’ (1994) 7 steps’ scale theory about communities. This means that
the Kenyan education is characterized by only one right way of thinking, moralistic lessons in schools, punishment for errors, discipline and duty, and obeying rules. There are roles and rules for all and authorities have a large control. In comparison to this, the Swedish school system belongs to the orange level but on its way towards the green level. This means that the teacher is a mentor and a guide and the education is goal oriented. Education is individualistic and characterized by experiments and high technology. We can find some elements of the green level also, like the expression of the feelings, social understanding, learning cooperation, participative activities and the view that everybody is equal.

Our experiences in Kenya widened our perspective on the school reality and made us to realize that there are as many ways of teaching and learning as many countries with different economies, traditions and social conditions. In comparison to the Swedish school the Kenyan schools are simple and relatively poorly equipped, which has effects on the way of carrying out the education but the positive attitude of both teachers and pupils makes it is exemplary.
References


