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NATION VERSUS REGION: SOCIAL LEARNING IN
KENYAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

By

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DISCUSSION PAPER NO. 155

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

NOVEMBER 1972

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ABSTRACT

The issue of interest is whether schools in Kenya contribute to the growth of a national political culture, as is officially assumed, or intensify variations in regional outlook. The guiding assumption is that the interaction between school and society, in which student values are forged, is conditioned by the dual character of the school as part of both a national and a local socio-economic context. Data are drawn from a survey of 1210 secondary students at a national sample of Kenyan secondary schools. Analysis suggests that two distinct types of social condition are simultaneously reflected in Kenyan classrooms. Side by side with a national set of status expectations and job perceptions, which are immune to variations in local circumstance, are socio-political values stemming from distinctive regional outlooks and opportunities.

INTRODUCTION.

At a time of increasing scepticism about the ability of educational institutions to engender social change¹, schools in Africa continue to be charged with the task of 'fostering nationalism' and 'promoting national unity'. One reason for continued faith in an integrative social function of schooling is the fact that the nation continues to be the principal symbolic and practical vehicle for generating development. The appearance in some areas of fissiparous tendencies within the nationalism which was forged in the anti colonial struggle only serves to intensify a concern for national unity and the agencies believed to promote it. In such a situation answers to the lingering question of whether schools contribute to the growth of a national political culture are particularly needed. In Kenya, for instance, what should be a research question is actually an assumption of government policy. Despite the fact that Kenya has no comprehensive statement of national values, or massive attempt to inculcate them through the schools, as is the case in neighbouring Tanzania, it is officially assumed that the social values of the classroom are consistent with nationalist policies. Yet the nature and extent of this consistency are unknowns. This can be demonstrated by putting the question in its sociological context.

Although there is no explicit nationalist ideology in Kenya, there is steady pressure to nationalize, in the sense of centralize, political life. In this intent Kenya exemplifies the second of two stages which are characteristic of the growth of many new nations. The first stage involves capturing political control from the usurping colonial rulers. The story is familiar: the American colonies gaining independence from Britain, the Congo from Belgium and Algeria from France. The second equally familiar chapter is the story of how the new nation must contend with internal centrifugal forces. Thus in American history the loose federation of semi-autonomous states was replaced by the more centralized powers organized under the Constitution. That being insufficient, a half century later the issue of national versus regional power centres was settled in the bloody American civil war. In more recent times we have the example of the Congo - now Zaire - eliminating or at least containing various secessionist movements, and the explosion of Nigeria as it struggled to establish central authority. Pakistan illustrates the unsuccessful case in that the failure to accommodate regional secessionist sentiment led to the creation of another new nation - Bangla Desh. In Kenya, for the most part, the establishment of centralized political power has proceeded steadily. Yet a decade

1. The prototype of such general criticism is I. Illich, Deschooling Society, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).

after independence from Britain, Kenya's national political elite continues to be concerned about centrifugal forces in the society. There is good reason for this concern.

No society is free of regional differences based on the distribution of contrasting and often conflicting social groups, but the partitioning of Africa by the Colonial powers led to exaggerated instances. The varied tribes which make up many of the African nations invariably have their own regional homes, and because the basis of social pluralism is ethnic it is also linguistic and cultural. Such is certainly the case in Kenya. There are fourteen tribal groups which number more than one hundred thousand each, and which together total nearly ninety per cent of the entire population. Each group is highly concentrated in a specific area of the country. Although internal political boundaries need not be respectful of tribal distributions, Table 1 shows that in all but two provinces - the significant administrative political unit - a single ethnic group, or closely related groups, constitute a majority of the inhabitants. The two exceptions are the thinly populated North Eastern Province and the Rift Valley Province which stretches from the Sudan border in the North to the Tanzanian border in the South. Variations in the ethnic composition of provinces are accompanied by relative differences in such indicators of material well-being as the provision of roads, electricity, and medical and educational facilities. More important than these specific differences is the general point that the Province tends to be a framework of symbolic appeal as well as administrative structure.

TABLE 1

Tribal Homogeneity By Province: Proportion of the Total Population of Each Province Belonging to a Single Ethnic Group.*

PROVINCE	PROPORTION IN PRINCIPAL ETHNIC GROUP	PRINCIPAL ETHNIC GROUP
Central	96%	Kikuyu
Western	88%	Luhya
Nyanza	63%	Luo
Coast	61%	Mijikenda
Eastern	55%	Kamba
North-Eastern	36%	Ogaden
Rift Valley	21%	Kipsigis

* Data Source: 1970 Statistical Abstract of Kenya. Nairobi is also a Province of Kenya, but, as the major urban center, has a very heterogeneous population and is not included in the present analysis.

If then the problems of centrifugal forces continue to plague Kenya, what role is played by social learning in the classroom? Do schools contribute to a national political outlook, as is officially assumed, or do they contribute to regional variations? The overlap between social pluralism and regional political jurisdictions can be turned to advantage in answering this question.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

As is well known, a substantial scholarly debate focuses on whether schools contribute at all to student outlook. One view holds that the school in its organization and practices is such an intimate part of the economic and social structure in which it is located that student values inevitably and exclusively reflect social conditions and expectations external to the school.² The contrary claim gives more weight to the ability of the school to inculcate desired values through curriculum and teacher.³ Tanzania's "Education for Self Reliance" is premised on such a claim. Our own broad but untested premise is that student values are simultaneously affected by expectations and opportunities external to the school experience and by peer relations and teacher contacts internal to the school experience. It may be thought that by lumping external and internal factors together in an untested premise we only avoid the hard question. But the strategy is not as evasive as it seems. For we feel that the "either/or" question must be supplemented by a second and perhaps more useful research question.

It is true that the school is part of a national political and social system, and that features of that system might override particular school or local differences in such a manner as to create uniform student outlooks. It is also true that schools are part of a more immediate milieu, and this milieu might well exaggerate regional differences. In either case, it is the school interacting with external social conditions which helps account for student values. We thus leave aside the debate over "school versus society" and turn instead to the issue of "national versus regional" perspectives. Two types of evidence guide analysis.

2. Philip Foster is one of the most articulate advocates of this view. See P. Foster, 'Education for Self Reliance: A Critical Evaluation', in R. Jolly (ed), Education in Africa (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969).

3. For an empirical assessment of this claim in relation to Tanzania see D. Court, 'The Social Function of Formal Schooling in Tanzania', Comparative Education Review, (forthcoming), and Discussion Paper No. 128, Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, 1972.

First there is ample impressionistic evidence to suggest that regions in Kenya differentially perceive basic resource allocation patterns of the central government. These perceptions are not misplaced as will be shown below. If the school is part of its local context we would expect systematic variations from region to region in how students evaluate the development strategy being pursued in Kenya.

Second there are data from other African countries which demonstrate that a selected range of student values are uniform despite differences in school experience and regional outlooks. It is these findings which have led Philip Foster and others to conclude that student orientations are primarily reflections of opportunities and conditions in the larger society, rather than learning experiences in the classroom. It should be stressed, however, that the relevant data are limited to student career aspirations and related values, which is exactly where one would expect to find an homogenizing effect across regional differences. Career opportunities and the reward structure attached to occupational stratification are part of a single, nationalized system. This at least should be so for secondary school graduates intending to take their "rightful place" in the modern job sector. Status mobility is rooted in the prevailing opportunity structure and this structure cannot be divorced from the national economic system. Thus the national system of jobs and monetary rewards should superimpose itself across a wide range of schooling experience and regional variations.

Data come from a sample of secondary schools scattered across Kenya.⁴ For present purposes we collapse these into six provinces. Nairobi is excluded because of its metropolitan character and heterogeneous population. The North Eastern Province was not in the original sample as in 1966, when the survey data were collected, there was only one secondary school in the North Eastern Province with sixty-five students. Using the remaining six provinces we ask firstly whether there is any systematic variation by Province in the socio-political values of students. We then ask whether there are any meaningful and consistent commonalities in the social outlook of Kenyan students which appear to override differences in their regional origin.

4. The survey data are drawn from the Kenya segment of the East African Education and Citizenship Project. A general description of the project as well as related papers can be found in K. Prewitt, Education and Political Values, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971). In Kenya the questionnaire was administered to 1210 secondary students at a national sample of 23 schools. The exclusion of Nairobi leaves a sample of 1124 students divided between the provinces as follows:- Central (303); Rift Valley (147); Eastern (211); Coast (112); Western (129); Nyanza (222).

SOCIETY AND SCHOOLING: REGIONAL VARIATION

It will be readily apparent from what has been said that the conceptual task is to decide the significant dependent variables. Three were chosen as a basis for investigating the existence of regional variation in the socio-political values of students:-

(1) a measure of social trust and appreciation of government;⁵
(2) a measure of elitism-egalitarianism;⁶ (3) a measure of student attitude toward the general strategy for regional development.⁷ The first was chosen because of the ample impressionistic evidence in Kenya that regions of the society do differ in their confidence in government policy; the people of some regions presumably feel more isolated and left-out than the people of other regions. The second measure was chosen for similar reasons. There is impressionistic evidence that different political ideologies characterize different regions of the country; if so, this should be reflected in whether the students are generally elitist or generally egalitarian in social philosophy. The third measure, which is a single item in the questionnaire, asks whether the students feel that the developed parts of Kenya should get less money in order that the undeveloped parts can be improved. If regional variations make a difference in student attitudes, it should be reflected in how they respond to this question for development across the country has been far from uniform.

5. A number of distinctive groups in Kenyan society were identified and students were asked to indicate on a four point scale their degree of trust for each group. The lead-in to the trust items was: "Some people are almost always fair and honest. It is safe to trust them. There are other people who it is better not to trust. We must be careful how we deal with them. What about the following people? In general can one trust them?"

6. The following items were used to index elitism:-
Which ideas do you like more?
1. The Government should listen equally to what everyone says about its work
2. The Government should listen more to educated people than to people without education
Which sentence is more true?
1. Ordinary people should feel free to give advice to our political leaders, or to ask them for help
2. Our political leaders cannot do their work properly if ordinary people are always giving them advice, or asking for help.
Which sentence do you like more?
1. It is not good for Kenya when people criticize the government and its leaders
2. People should be allowed to say or write whatever they want about the government.

7. Students were asked to indicate on a four point scale the intensity of their agreement with the proposition: "The developed part of Kenya should get less money in order that the underdeveloped parts can be improved".

TABLE 2

Social Trust and Confidence in Government Expressed
By Kenyan Secondary School Students: Rank Ordered
by Province

Rank Order on Basis of Proportion:

Province:	Trust Policemen	Trust Government	Trust Fellow Africans	Trust Classmates	Sees Government Doing Many Things for Family
Central	1	2	1	1	1
Rift Valley	2	4	2	2	2
Eastern	3	3	5	3	4
Coast	4	1	3	6	3
Western	6	5	4	4	5
Nyanza	5	6	6	5	6

Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance = .72

Table 2 presents data on the first measure. The Provinces are ranked in terms of how much trust is expressed toward government leaders, classmates, Africans in general, and policemen. They are ranked also according to the proportion of students reporting that the government does many things for them and their families. The pattern is highly consistent across the five individual items, and indeed the coefficient of concordance is .72, which is very strong for data of these types. Moreover, the rankings are consistent with impressionistic evidence. That Nyanza and Western Provinces are least trustful and least appreciative is to be expected in light of the fact that at the time of the survey the receipt of public and private investment by these two Western provinces was far from proportionate to their representation in the national population. That Central Province stands at the top can be explained by the opposite line of reasoning. The comparatively high ranking of the Rift Valley is understandable if one keeps in mind that secondary students in the Rift Valley schools are likely to be similar in ethnic and regional origin to those in the Central Province schools.⁸

It should be stressed that the absolute percentage differences between the Provinces are not great, and indeed would not normally merit interpretation.⁹ What is important is the consistency across the several items and the consistent placement of the extreme cases. If what we are searching for are indications

8. Empirical support for this statement can be found in K. King, 'Primary Schools in Kenya': Some Critical Constraints on Effectiveness'; Discussion Paper No. 130, (University of Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, 1972).

9. The range between the highest and lowest provincial score on each item was as follows:- Social Trust items: Policemen (30%), Government leaders (18%), Fellow Africans (24%), Classmates (26%); Appreciation of Government (17%).

that different traditions and politics from one region to another manifest themselves in differences within the schools, then the table provides evidence to this effect.

That the identical pattern appears when we shift attention to three items tapping elitism-egalitarianism gives added weight to the conclusion. Secondary school students in the Central and Rift Valley Provinces are more likely to contend that government should listen to educated people, that ordinary people should not unduly interfere with the workings of government, and that it is not good when criticism of Kenya's leaders is too actively voiced. On all three counts, the students of Nyanza and Western provinces give less support to these sentiments, and again the Eastern and Coast Provinces fall in the middle.¹⁰

The pattern is understandable. To the degree that there has been mass-based criticism of national leadership, it has come from the western regions of the country, and it is also not surprising that the students of the Central and Rift Valley Provinces would reject this criticism, and along with it reject the egalitarian-populist philosophy on which it rests. Political socialization theory provides at least a partial explanation. Students personalize government, and in Kenya this means seeing government in the strong figure of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. The President of Kenya not only dominates national politics, but he manages to do so in a manner which does not disguise his origin in the Central Province. For students from the Central Province especially, but also for students from the Rift Valley (again because many are Kikuyu), to question the government would be to doubt the leadership of the spiritual head of their own tribe. Students from other parts of the country are less constrained in this respect. They are voicing criticism of a fairly distant national elite, and not an elite which symbolizes tribal traditions as well as nationalism.

TABLE 3

Elitist Attitudes Expressed by Kenyan
Secondary School Students: Rank Ordered
by Province.

Province:	Govt. Should Listen More to Educated than Uneducated	Better if Ordinary People Leave Pol. Leaders Alone	Not Good When People Criticize Govt. & Leaders
Central	1	1	1
Rift Valley	2	2	2
Coast	4	3	3
Eastern	3	4	4
Western	6	5	5
Nyanza	5	6	6

Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance = .91

footnote 10...../p.8

In Table 4 we turn attention from general political and social values to a specific item directly related to Kenya's development strategy. Government services and other social resources are unevenly distributed across Kenya. Students were asked whether these development resources should be more equitably distributed than is presently the case. At one extreme, the Central Province, only 37 percent agreed that money should be taken from the developed regions in order to improve more rapidly the less developed regions. Nearly twice as many of the students in the Western Province supported this goal.

TABLE 4

Agreement With Proposition That Resources Should Be Distributed From the Developed to the Undeveloped Parts of Kenya: Rank Ordered by Province

Province:	Developed Parts of Kenya Should Get Less Money In Order That the Undeveloped Parts Can Be Improved: Percent Strongly Agreeing
Central	37%
Eastern	46%
Rift Valley	49%
Coast	57%
Nyanza	57%
Western	70%

These sharp differences suggest the importance of asking whether the actual distribution of resources varies in any meaningful pattern with these student values. For this purpose we restrict ourselves to educational resources only, though recognizing that these constitute only a part of the total range of government services. The limitation is deliberate, however, Students will be more aware of the number of school places available and the quality of their teachers and teaching materials than they will of the number of health clinics or the miles of paved roads.

The procedure is simple, and is illustrated in Table 5. The six Provinces are first ranked on a measure of educational "merit" - indexed by the proportion of passes among the candidates sitting the Kenya Primary Examination (known as the CPE). This exam is critical in the life of any primary student, and their extended families, for it guards entry into the secondary school system which in turn is the ladder into the modern job

10. The range on items indexing Elitist Attitudes was:- "Government should listen more to Educated than to Uneducated" (16%), "Better if Ordinary People Leave Political Leaders Alone" (13%), "Not Good When People Criticize Government and Leaders" (20%).

sector. It is reasonable to expect that Provinces with the highest proportion of CPE passes - high "merit" Provinces - should also have a greater number of secondary school places. The Provinces are next ranked by the places available in maintained secondary schools, computed as a percent of the 15 to 19 year-old population in each Province.¹¹

TABLE 5

Comparison of "Merit" and "Benefits" in Kenya School System By Province, Rank Ordered*

"Merit"	"Benefits"
Proportion Passes of Entries in C.P.E	Places in Maintained Secondary Schools as Proportion of School Age Population (15 to 19)
Nyanza	Central
Rift Valley	Coast
Eastern	Western
Central	Nyanza
Western	Eastern
Coast	Rift Valley

Spearman's Rank Order Correlation = -.66

*Data Source: Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education Annual Report for 1966.

The results are quite the opposite of what might be expected. Provinces which "earned" more secondary school places have fewer such places available than Provinces with a poorer record of passes in the CPE. Indeed, the rank-order correlation is -.66, a strong indication that educational resources are not being matched with regional variations in performance.

The same phenomenon is illustrated in Table 6, though the pattern is less striking. The rank order of the number of primary age school children is set against the proportion of this age cohort actually in school. Once again the correlation is negative (-.14). Provinces with the greater number of school age children are not necessarily those with the greater number of primary school places.

The data confirm that significant regional variations exist in Kenya. This much we knew. More importantly, the data provide the backdrop against which to interpret Tables 2 through 4. We there showed that systematic

11. Recent data from the Ministry of Education suggest that the pattern of relative advantage contained in these tables has not altered appreciably, although there has been an overall expansion of educational opportunity.

TABLE 6

Comparison of Primary Age Population With Proportion
of Primary Age Cohort Actually in School, Rank Ordered*

Primary Age Population	% in Primary School
Nyanza	Central
Rift Valley	Eastern
Eastern	Western
Central	Nyanza
Western	Coast
Coast	Rift Valley

Spearman's Rank Order Correlation = -.14

*Data Source: Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education Annual Report for 1966.

and consistent differences in student values are regionally based. We now see that these differences might well be connected with actual variations in the social context of schooling. This is especially clear at the extremes, as is suggested in a comparison of students in the Central and Nyanza Provinces. The Province most benefitted by the discrepancy between resources, on the one hand, and demonstrated performance and actual need, on the other, is the Province most appreciative of government, and least tolerant of criticism or popular protest. Understandably, it is also the Province preferring that development resources be retained by the more developed regions.

In contrast, the Province consistently sceptical of government policy and more egalitarian in outlook is clearly penalized by the existing distribution of educational resources. Though Nyanza ranks highest on CPE passes, it is below the median in number of secondary school places. And though it has the greatest number of primary school age children, it again is below the median in number of available primary places.

The data are not entirely consistent as we attempt to match Tables 2 - 4 with Tables 5 & 6 (note, for example, the Rift Valley), and we certainly do not intend to base a general statement about Kenya politics on such limited evidence. Our interests are more modest. If schools and society interact to shape student values, the pattern of interaction need not be uniform across an entire society. Insofar as significant regional variations exist in a society (they do in Kenya) and insofar as schools are affected by local as well as national conditions, then student outlooks will be homogeneous within regions but heterogeneous across regions.

The limited evidence presented in this section gives empirical underpinning to this hypothesis, and we conclude that schools are part of a local as well as national socio-economic system.

SOCIETY AND SCHOOLING: SOCIAL COHESION

It is clear from the evidence of the preceding pages that significant differences in regional condition tend to be reflected in the political values of students. This finding at the very least suggests modifications in the view that schools automatically serve to induce a common sense of national identity and uniform outlook. However it is possible that the potentially disintegrative effect of regional variation in student political values is muted by the homogenizing impact of the national socio-economic system. This latter view is raised by the pervasive assumption that links education to a process of modernization. According to this assumption the growth of formal education has been an integral part of a process of modernization or social change the main feature of which has been the creation of new occupations and a new derivative status system. The distinctive effect of western education has been to diffuse a common hierarchical ranking of the relative importance of different jobs for society and a valuation of schooling itself which is intimately linked to this occupation and status hierarchy. Support for this assumption would be greatly strengthened if in the Kenyan setting there is evidence that a common concept of job prestige is immune to the regional variations the influence of which has just been demonstrated.

Two separate batteries of questions in our survey investigated the issue of job prestige. In one, students were presented with a list of jobs and were asked to indicate on a three point scale their personal preference for doing this job.¹² A further battery presented students with a similar list and asked them to rank the importance of these jobs in the development of Kenya.¹³ Findings are presented in tables 7 and 8.

12. The question asked was: "Here are some jobs in Kenya. Which of them would you like to do when you finish your education?" The jobs presented were: "Farmer with one acre of coffee", "Accounts Clerk in a Government Ministry", "Garage Mechanic", "Assistant Agricultural Officer", "Secondary School Teacher", "Shop Owner".

13. Students were presented with a list of jobs and asked to rank them in answer to the following question: "Which do you think are the three most important jobs to help the development of Kenya?" The jobs listed were: Politician, District Officer, Factory Worker, Teacher, Businessman, Policeman, Farmer, Nurse, Scientist.

The tables reveal a very strong degree of consistency among secondary students from all regions, regarding both the job they would like to have and the job which they see as most important for the development of Kenya. It is not our purpose here to pursue the interesting implications of these choices for manpower planning and employment policy. The more important point for emphasis is the extent of consensus across regions. The impact of regional differences upon student political values, identified in the previous section, is not duplicated in questions relating to job preference and status. Kenyan secondary school students, whatever their regional origin traditions or politics, are agreed on the types of job which they would like to have on leaving school, and in the kinds of jobs which they relate to the national development of Kenya.

It would be possible to conclude from these data that the consensus illustrated in tables 7 and 8 is the product of uniformities in secondary school experience throughout Kenya. However a very similar pattern of preferences emerged from the primary school sample in our study. This suggests that the occupational status hierarchy and its underpinning values are learned before entry to secondary school, and in all probability are not a product of positive classroom learning at all but reflect an external societal valuation which students bring with them to school. The passive contribution of the school is to retain and reinforce a valuation which is national in scope and immune to the effect of regional variation.

TABLE 7

Rank Ordering of Personal Job Preference by Province
Jobs rank ordered on basis of proportion preferring:-

Province:	Assistant Agricultural Officer	Secondary School Teacher	Accounts Clerk in Government Ministry	Garage Mechanic	Farmer with one acre of coffee	Shop Owner
Western	2	1	3	4	5	6
Nyanza	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rift	1	3.5	2	3.5	5	6
Central	1	2	3	4	5	6
East	1	2	3	4.5	4.5	6
Coast	1	2	4	3	5	6

Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance .92

TABLE 8

Jobs Rank Ordered according to their Perceived
Importance in the Development of Kenya by Province

Jobs rank ordered on basis of proportion selecting it as the most important

Province:	Teacher	Farmer	Scien- tist	Nurse	Politi- cian	Police- man	Factory Owner	Business- man	Dist- rict Commiss- ioner
Western	1	2	3	5	4	7	6	8	9
Nyanza	2	1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rift	1	2	3	4	6	5	7	8.5	8.5
Central	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
East	1.5	1.5	3	2	5	6	7	9	8
Coast	1	2	3	4	8	6	7	5	9

Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance .94

CONCLUSION: SOCIAL COHESION AND REGIONAL VARIATION

A number of interesting conclusions seem warranted by the attempt to specify ways in which social conditions influence socio-political values among Kenyan students. The principal finding is that two distinct types of social conditions - one national in origin and the other sectional - are simultaneously reflected in the classroom. In their job preferences and concept of job utility students respond to the national post-colonial opportunity structure and nation-building rhetoric, with no regional variations apparent. This confirms the picture which Philip Foster has drawn for Ghana, and hypothesized elsewhere, but does so with the additional test that student perceptions of opportunity and status are sufficiently strong to override demonstrably significant variations in regional conditions and corresponding differences in the political outlook of students. However side by side with a national set of status expectations are views which are subject to regional variation. Student value orientations are not monolithic or exclusively incorporated within status expectations. Student ideas regarding social trust, their sense of egalitarianism-elitism and their views on the desirable allocation of national resources are significantly associated with variations among the provinces of Kenya. Furthermore they are evidently generalized from a sense of relative deprivation which corresponds to actual relative differences in the pattern of allocation of national resources.

It has become commonplace to stress the essential pragmatism of African students in their job expectations and aspirations. Our data add a new dimension to this picture. Not only is there realistic consensus on the

means to personal and national progress, but there also appears to be a realistic awareness of where national resources are concentrated, both by those whose regional reference group are getting a disproportionate share of the national cake and by those who are getting a smaller share.

It is important to stress that no evidence has been provided for an independent effect of schooling on student values. Schools like societies are not unvariegated entities, and it is certain that student social learning varies according to differential characteristics of schools themselves in ways which are separate from the processes mentioned here. We have elsewhere suggested what some of the important dimensions of school social structure might be.¹⁴ What has been shown here is that two different types of external societal message are reflected in these Kenyan secondary schools.

In discussing two types of societal message we have said nothing about their relative position in an assumed hierarchy of student values. An interesting question arising from the data concerns the extent to which the nationally focussed status expectations, with their implicit commitment to the existing stratification system, serve to absorb or dampen the consciousness of regional inequality and relative deprivation which the data also reveal. It seems likely that awareness of regional inequality among Kenyan secondary students has not up to now developed into a critical or radical consciousness because of an overriding faith in the likely fulfilment of status expectations. The justification for this faith has been the expansion of high status opportunities during the first decade of Kenyan independence. However as access to high status positions is reduced there is likely to be a lag in the adjustment of student expectations. As a result aggressive student interest in resource allocation is likely to intensify. This point can be summarized: Schooling is critical for individual mobility and access to elite roles. It is also significant as a form of regional equalization. When the number of elite roles begins to fall behind the output of qualified candidates, and individual mobility is correspondingly curtailed, collective concern with regional equality of opportunity is likely to increase.

Our findings, then, have implications for understanding the role of the school in social change. Consider a recent official statement of goals for Kenyan schools:-

14. K. Prewitt, G. Von der Muhll, D. Court, 'Schooling Experiences and Political Socialization in Tanzania', Comparative Political Studies, July, 1970.

Education in Kenya must foster a sense of nationhood and promote national unity. Kenya's people belong to different tribes, races and religions, but these differences need not divide them. They must be able to live and interact as Kenyans. It is a paramount duty of education to help the youth acquire this sense of nationhood by removing conflicts and by promoting positive attitudes of mutual respect which will enable people of different tribes, races and religions to live together in harmony and to make a positive contribution to the national life.¹⁵

It is optimistic at best to assign the school a role in promoting national unity without fully acknowledging the sources of disunity and secondly assessing the capacity of the school to counteract them. If the origin of disunity is conditions outside the school it is unlikely that the school can do much to solve them. Our data suggest that national unity is threatened not so much by the existence of 'differences' but because these ascribed differences tend to be associated with varying opportunities, thereby inducing a sense of relative deprivation which in turn serves to diminish faith in the central government. If in reality student views which seem to impugn national unity derive from the recognition of unequal access to national resources it is unlikely that such views can be tempered by curriculum innovation or teacher exhortation inside the school. If as has been implied, the past much-heralded role of the schools in promoting national unity has up to now been largely a fortuitous offshoot of the expansion of employment opportunity and the creation of a national achievement ethic, attention to the socio-political consequences of educational provision in Kenya is overdue. Faith in the instrumentality of education is blind unless it can be attached to an understanding of what kinds of schooling have what effects under what conditions.

15. 'National Goals', Kenya Ministry of Education, (Mimeo) 1972.