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RESERVE

EDUCATION AND INEQUALITY IN KENYA: SOME  
RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND ISSUES

(6/11) Kabiru Kinyanjui  
Institute for Development Studies  
(11) University of Nairobi

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1 INTRODUCTION:

Not many countries in the world today, even the capitalist countries, which do not subscribe to some <sup>form</sup> of egalitarian goals. Kenya is in the category of the countries which <sup>have</sup> chosen a capitalist path to development, but at the same time subscribing, in its policy statement commitment to some elements of equality in economic, political and educational spheres.<sup>1</sup> However, the most explicit expression of the commitment to equality in provision of education since independence, was made in 1976 in the report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies which recommended inter alia, the removal of social and regional inequalities.<sup>2</sup>

Given the various policy statements in regard to provision of equality of educational opportunities, between regions and among social groups<sup>3</sup>, a number of research questions and tasks do arise. First, there is need for an analysis of the concrete reality in which provision of education is carried, and then contrasted with the policy pronouncement. In other words,

The Sessional Paper on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya (1965) which was intended to end debates on theories and doubts about the aims of our society" represents the most systematic policy statement on Kenyan egalitarian principles to be pursued within the framework of a post-colonial capitalist structure. The principles were seen as part of African socialism. In the seventies the use of the term "African socialism" became a less fashionable political vocabulary, and policy statements in this regard became less explicit. For instance see "The Kenya We Want" statements of 1978 (The weekly Review, January 30, 1978). The Kenu Manifesto of 1979 states this goal in the following manner: "the primary purpose of attaining human dignity in freedom was to strive increasingly for nationwide social justice and the welfare of every family".

2. Kenya, Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies Nairobi, December 1976. PP4, and PP42 - 49.

3. Kenya, Development Plan 1979 - 1983 Part 1 Nairobi Kenya 1979. The relevant section points out that "during this plan period the quality and relevance of educational opportunities will be substantially improved... In order to reach the target groups ( pastoralists, small farmers, landless rural workers, urban poor, and the handicapped p.21) it will be necessary to increase educational opportunities and assure their wider distribution particularly to remote areas". p.152.

what is the status of the /<sup>distribution</sup> of educational resources and opportunities in the country, regardless of what policy statements say it should? An analysis of this kind calls therefore, for research into the economic, political and social reality of the country and then showing how this relates to, and interacts with the provision of education between regions, among the sexes and social classes. Underlying this kind of analysis is the assumption that the education system is to a large extent a product, although at times exhibiting some elements of independence from the political and economic structure of the society where it is situated. This is a complex relationship, an understanding of which is critical in any educational analysis which aims at coming to grips with the intricate process of the emergence and reproduction of inequality in the last two decades, accompanied by rapid increase in unemployment among the educated, demonstrates clearly to the complex nature of the relationship between education and the economy, and the overall process of economic development.

The second research task which is closely intertwined with the research question raised above, is an analysis/<sup>of</sup> how changes in economic, political and social sectors of the society influence and conditions the way inequality in provision of education is perceived, defined and measures to deal with the problems are formulated<sup>4</sup>. This fact assures a particular significance in situations where rapid expansion of education has been achieved, and the rates of participation in the educational system by the various social groups is uneven. This situation tends to make the management of conflicts emanating from the education sector more complex and involved. The measurement of educational demand, ~~access~~ access to schooling, the quality and outcomes of schooling become then areas of conflict not only in academic circles but also in the political arena<sup>5</sup>.

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4. The definition given to equality of educational opportunity differs from country to country depending on historical, economic and political circumstances. The definition and meaning given to the concept is the outcome of struggles between social groups to share educational opportunities. For example of this experience in U.S.A see James Coleman, 'The Concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity' Harvard Educational Review, 38 (1)1968 7-22 and Christopher Kencks, et al Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America, Basic Books, New York 1972.

5. Jerome Karabel and A.H. Halsey, Power and Ideology in Education Oxford University Press, New York 1977 pp 16-26; Brian Simon, Educational and the Labour Movement, 1870 - 1920 Lawrence & Wishart London 1974 and for a review of Kenyan experience see K. Kinyanjui, "Regional and class Inequalities in Provision of Education: Social - economic Background" mimeo December 1977.

Research in this field can go along way in formulating and defining a concept of equality of educational opportunity which is both relevant and applicable to the social -economic context in which it is to be implemented. In this way the concept can be formulated and operationalized to take into consideration the overall level of development attained in the society, the resources available for education, the forces that are contending for educational resources and opportunities, and the direction the developmental efforts should take to maximise the equitable sharing of education.

A third task which arises from research concerns of this kind is the inevitable question of measurements and units of analysis to<sup>be</sup> used in dealing with educational inequality. This brings us once again to the issue of political-economic/<sup>context</sup> in which research is carried out and where eventually the research outcome, are to be implemented. The choice of measurements of inequality, units of analysis, and the<sup>data to be collected,</sup> cannot be separated from the intended use of the research findings<sup>6</sup>.

To illustrate the application of this approach, a brief outline of the<sup>patterns</sup> of educational inequality in urban Nairobi will be given, followed by a discussion which attempts to deal with the three research questions raised. The discussion of the data from urban Nairobi will<sup>therefore</sup> attempt to show the relationship land interaction of inequality in the society with the way the provision of education is distributed.

The choice of Nairobi is not meant to minimise the problems of rural Kenya, but rather to emphasize the complex nature of education inequality in the relatively more advanced areas of the country.

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6. For a discussion of this issue see Walter Hancy, The Measurement of Educational Inequality Harved University Doctoral Thesis 1977. The use of statistical data to support a particular social policy viewpoint is more pronounced in a country like U.S.A. where social science research findings are used in the struggles of various interest groups to have dominance in the formulation of social policy.

II. Inequality in Provision of Education: The Case of Urban Nairobi.

A. Historical Introduction.

No other part of the country represents the tempo and rhythm of Kenya's economic, social and political life as does the city of Nairobi. Today, as in the colonial period, the "city in the sun" as Nairobi is often called, mirrors and in some cases magnifies the political economy of the whole society. The establishment of Nairobi at the turn of the century, as the political, economic and administrative centre of what was then called East African Protectorate, heralded the penetration into the hinterland of the capitalist mode of production based on settler capital. The completion of the Kenya-Uganda railway in 1902 and the rapid white settlement that occurred thereafter not only stimulated the growth of the city but shaped the social and economic character of Nairobi. The town's growth was not only shaped by the internal dynamics of the development of capitalism, but also by the linkages established at the international level by the British imperial power and other metropolitan interests. The position of Nairobi has thus exemplified the penetration and incorporation of the country into the world capitalist structure. The anecdotal remark that Nairobi is a European city in the hinterland of Africa expresses perhaps in a profound way the extent to which the process of incorporation and penetration of international capital has oriented the development, not only of the urban centre but also the country as a whole.

As the process of accumulation was established in the Highlands, the role of Nairobi as the centre of settler capital and commercial enterprises was enhanced. The settlers' attempt to control the colonial state was often fought out here. At the local government level this was translated into European control of the city administration. Although the European population in the city in the whole of the colonial period never exceeded 10 per cent, they exercised an inordinate amount of power and influence in the planning and organisation of the city. Asians, who until 1962 formed about a third of the town population, remained on the periphery of the power structure and attempts to translate their numerical strength into substantive representation on the city council was often blocked by Europeans.<sup>8</sup>

7. Herbert H. Werlin, Governing an African City: A Study of Nairobi, African Publishing Company, New York City, pp. 36-67.

8. Ibid., pp. 41-43.

Africans, who since 1906 formed more than 50 percent of the population of Nairobi, were not regarded as permanent residents of the town and therefore not entitled to its services (education, medical and housing) or representation of their interests. The situation did not change until in the 1905s when African interests in the city started to be taken into account in the organisation and planning of utilities and social services.<sup>9</sup>

The organisation of Kenyan society on a racial basis in the period of the establishment of colonialism was particularly evident in the way residential quarters were planned and allocated in Nairobi. The European residential areas were allocated in what was called Upper Nairobi (Muthaiga, Lavington, Bernard Estate, Kilimani, Kileleshwa and Nairobi). Asians were allocated residential areas between Europeans and African (Parklands, Eastleigh, Nairobi South and Central) and the Africans were placed in Eastlands close to the industrial area<sup>10</sup>. Although the area of Nairobi was changed substantially in 1962 (from 35 to 266 square miles), and the population increased from 118,976 in 1948 to 266,794 in 1962 and in 1969 from 509,286 to 835,000 in 1979, the basic socio-economic residential pattern has remained the same. However, it has assumed a nonracial class structure, something that has happened to the rest of the society.<sup>11</sup>

And since the racial ideology of colonial Kenya had a marked impact on the development of the social structure of Nairobi, the reforms and changes that occurred in the transition to post-colonial society were clearly pronounced here. The assumption of state power by African nationalists had a tremendous psychological, economic, social and political impact on the population of Nairobi, let alone the rest of Kenya. The control of the state and state apparatuses

9. Kenya, African Affairs Department, Annual Reports, 1954-1957, give outline of the limited social services that were provided to Africans in this period. The Report of the Committee on Africans' Wages (1954) argued specifically for a change in urban policy to stabilise African labour, which was brutalised by harsh working conditions in the urban areas: "It follows that, if we are to induce the African worker to sever his tribal ties, and convert him into an effective working unit we must be prepared to offer him, in his new environment, advantages at least as favourable as those he already enjoys in the reserve," p. 15.

10. Dorothy M. Halliman and W.T.W. Morgan, "The City of Nairobi," in W.T.W. Morgan (ed.), Nairobi: City and Region, Oxford University Press, Nairobi, 1967; pp. 98-120. This gives an outline of the evolution of the residential pattern in the colonial period.

11. For the present residential structure of Nairobi I have benefitted from Samuel M. Kobia's "Origins of Squatting and Community Organisations in Nairobi," M.A. Thesis. M.I.T. 1978.

by Africans in 1963 allowed the entry of Africans into the economic and social life of Nairobi which was previously exclusively reserved for Europeans or Asians. Reforms recommended by reports like the Carpenter Report (1954), the Lidbury Report (1954) on the structure of wage in the public service, 1954, the Dolton Report (1957), and the World Bank Report (1963)<sup>12</sup> were intended to create institutions and<sup>13</sup> social structure that would hasten and smooth the incorporation of African workers and the emerging salariat and petit-bourgeois class into the existing political economy. The achievement of political independence in 1963 quickened this momentum and gave the emergent petit-bourgeois class the state power which was critical for consolidation of its political and economic position in the post-colonial social formation. In essence, what was happening in the countryside through the Swynnerton Plan (1953), the settlement schemes and the buying of large-scale farms by Africans, was part and parcel of the penetration of capital in Kenya and the continued incorporation of indigenous people in all sectors and at all levels<sup>14</sup>. The transformation that occurred in the two sectors is often reflected in the politics and social structure of Nairobi.

In the colonial period, Nairobi reflected a class structure demarcated on a racial basis. Today, the distinguishing features of the class structure in Nairobi are its nonracial character and the extent into which social differentiation has crystallised. At the top of the national class ladder is the national

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12. We have already referred to the Carpenter Report and the Worlds Bank Report elsewhere. The other reports are: Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of the East African Territories and the East Africa High Commission, 1953-1954 (Lidbury, chairman, 1954); Report of the Social Security Committee, 1957 (Dolton Report).

13. Examples of institutions that were created in this period to facilitate this process are the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (1965), the National Construction Corporation (1968), and trade unions. These organisations were backed up by legislation which favoured African over other racial groups. In 1950s, social institutions (multi-racial) were also set up to achieve these same goals; e.g., Capricorn Society, Kenya United Club, and schools like Hospital Hill School.

14. Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya, 1975, op. cit., and International Labour Office, Employment, Income and Equality, Geneva, 1972, offers the best summary so far on the changes that occurred in rural and urban Kenya in the period between 1958-1975.



bourgeoisie, which has accumulated capital by farming, trading and more recently through manufacturing. The cooperation of this fraction with international capital in the industrial sector is now a common feature. This alliance is often facilitated through state commercial institutions or through joint ventures with indigenous capital, thereby playing an important role to some extent subservient to foreign capital. The alliance of the national bourgeoisie with international capital has facilitated further accumulation by this class, thereby strengthening their position in relation to international capital, as well as the local petit-bourgeoisie fraction.<sup>15</sup> This fraction maintains a close relationship with the post-colonial state which often mediates their alliance with international capital. Below this segment of the national capitalist class is the petit-bourgeoisie, which is engaged in accumulation through trading and distribution of commodities. Because of increased penetrations of international capital through multinational corporations, this fraction finds its area of operation constricted by the presence of foreign capital. Hence, it displays hospitality towards the multinational corporations and the segment of national bourgeoisie. The hostility shown in East Africa towards the Asians is partly traceable to the competition this fraction has experienced from Asian traders.<sup>16</sup>

Closely intertwined with the above two segments is the salariat class, a notion that implies involvement in permanent employment, particularly in the state apparatuses, while straddling private accumulation -- through farming or commerce. This was a phenomenon of the colonial period, but what distinguishes between the two periods, for the Africans, is the level at which it is carried (usually by senior state bureaucrats and / <sup>parastatal</sup> employees) and the compulsive nature of the straddling.<sup>17</sup> In post-colonial Kenya, this fraction has expanded exceedingly as the state apparatuses have expanded into commercial and industrial sectors. By 1972, the salariat class formed more than 50 percent of the 65,000 high - and middle-level personnel enumerated in Nairobi.<sup>18</sup> The salariat class is concentrated in Nairobi, but because of their straddling into private accumulation, their interest are spread all over the country. The importance of this segment in the emergence of an indigenous capitalist class is important not only in the social structure, but also in the structure of schooling, as it will become clear later on.

15. Nicola Swainson, "The Rise of National Bourgeoisie in Kenya," Review of Radical Political Economy, No. 8, January-April, 1977. For more detailed discussion see Nicola Swainson, The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, Heinmann London 1980 chap.5 pp. 173-211.

16. Mohamood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda, Monthly Review, New York, 1976, pp. 302-316, and Kinyanjui and Gakuru.

17. Cowen and Kinyanjui, op. cit.

18. Kenya, Statistical Abstract, 1977, p. 284.

The class segments described above form what might be termed the national capitalist class. Although there are internal conflicts between the different segments and ethnic components of each group, there is a unity of purpose shown in their control of the state and the need to ensure that the process of accumulation is not disrupted.<sup>19</sup> In terms of residential areas, they live in the former European and Asian residential areas, although new estates (Loruso, New Muthaiga, Ruda, Kyuna et.) have been built to accommodate the expansion that has occurred since independence.

Between 1973 and 1976, the labour force in Nairobi was between 200,000 and 230,000. About 70 percent of this labour force is what we would call the urban working class. They formed just over a quarter of the total number of people in wage employment in the country. In class terms they fall below the salariat class and live in the Eastern part of the city of Nairobi. There is also a group of self-employed workers who operate small enterprises in what has been termed the informal sector/<sup>of</sup> the economy<sup>20</sup>. These people also fall in the category of what we have called the urban working class. With increasing unemployment in urban areas, there is a large segment of the Nairobi population /<sup>which</sup> is not gainfully employed and tends to settle in urban squatters' settlements. It is estimated that more than 25 percent of the population of Nairobi (1979 population figures were 835,000) now lives in the squatter settlements. These settlements provide inadequate housing for the working poor, self-employed and urban unemployed. Social amenities -- housing, water facilities, health and educational opportunities are limited or nonexistent.<sup>21</sup>

#### Class structure and Access to Education

What is important for our discussion is how this class differentiation is related to the structure and patterns of access to Nairobi primary schools. Two factors determine the mode of allocation of educational opportunities in Nairobi. First, the financial ability of the family to pay for high-cost pre-school education and then high-quality primary education. Second, competency in English,

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19. The importance of this question figured closely with the death of Kenyatta and succession of President Moi--For the importance of this issue President Moi's Succession and Contents.

20. ILO, Employment, Incomes and Equality, op. cit. Informal sector is usually defined as the sector in the urban areas which is not under formal control and regulations of the state in the way business and services are provided.

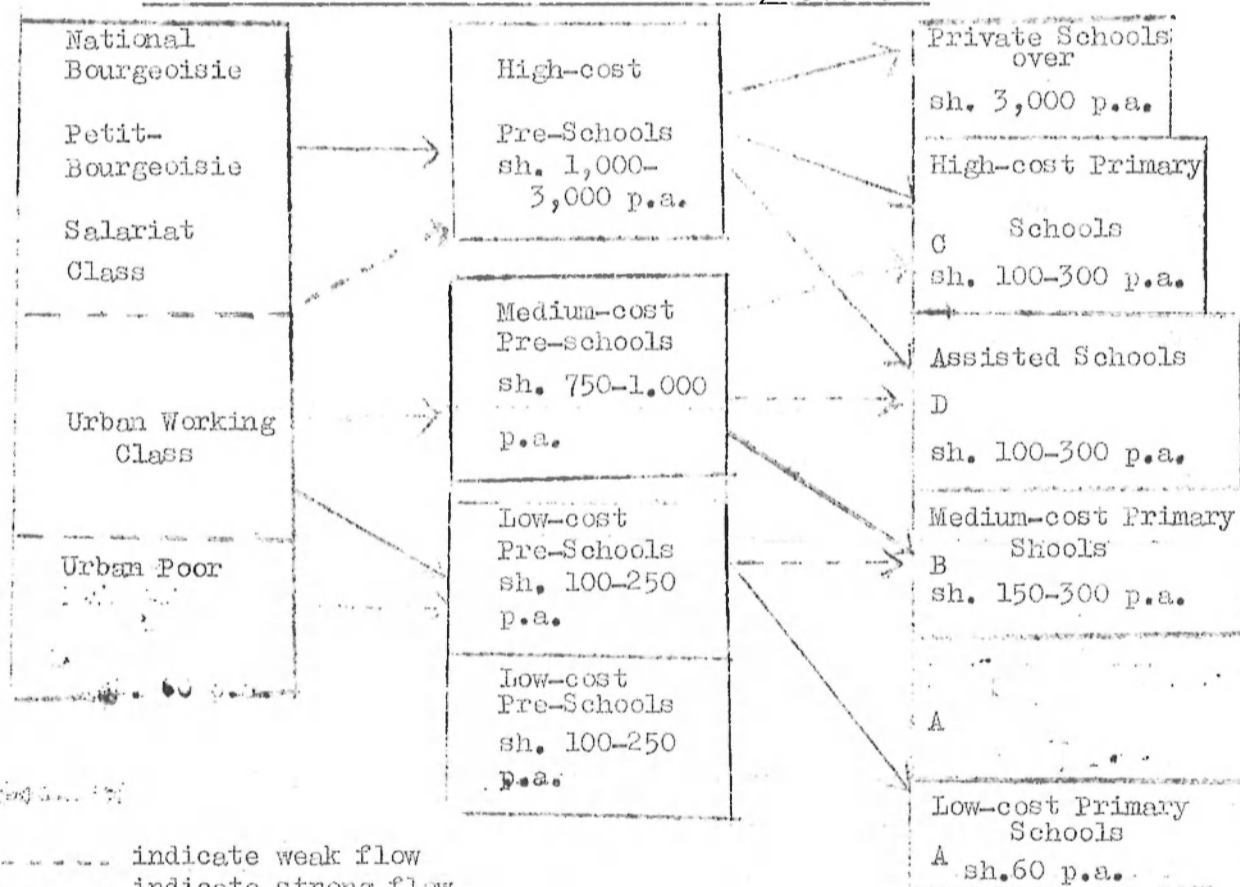
21. Kobia, "Origins of Squatting and Community Organisation in Nairobi," op. cit.

which is tied closely to the income and educational backgrounds of the parents. In this situation, pre-school education assumes importance beyond itself and becomes an instrument of allocation of the scarce opportunities for entry into

high-quality public primary schools. The parents in Nairobi, therefore, go to great pains to send their children to high-cost pre-school institutions as a means of having the children admitted in high-quality primary schools.<sup>22</sup>

Below we give a diagrammatic presentation of the relationship between class structure and the structure of schooling opportunities in Nairobi. The mechanics of how this relationship works will be discussed thereafter as more analysis of the primary schools is done.

Class Structure and Schools in Nairobi, 1974-1977



----- indicate weak flow  
 ----- indicate strong flow

The figure in boxes refer to fee paid annually in each category of schools.

In Nairobi, Mombasa, <sup>23</sup> Nakuru and Kisumu the primary schools maintained through public funds are grouped into three categories -- A, B and C. There is

22. For a discussion of this see Mr. N. Gakuru, Pre-school Education and Access to Educational Opportunities in Nairobi, M.M. thesis University of Nairobi, 1979.

23. For a discussion of schools in Nakuru see Andy Wachtel, Aspects of the Performance of Nakuru Schools on the Certificate of Primary Education I.D.S. Discussion Paper No. 236 1976. No similar work has been done in other municipalities.

also the category of schools which receive partial public support. We shall call this category D. In addition, there is a category of private schools which cater for both citizens and non-citizens. These schools do not, however, receive public funds. Below we give a table showing the number of each category of schools in the main towns in Kenya.

Table I. Number of Primary Schools with class Seven in 1976.

	Nairobi	Mombasa	Nakuru	Kisumu
A	75	29	11	8
B	12	7	2	5
C	8	1	1	1
Assisted Schools				
(D)	14	10	3	-
Private Schools	5	5	4	-
All Schools	114	52	21	14

Sources: Annual Reports of Departments of Education of Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru and Kisumu; and my investigations in 1975-1976.

Table II. The Distribution of Nairobi Schools sitting CPE by Category, 1978 and 1979.

Category	1978		1979	
	No.	%	No.	%
A	77	64.2	79	64.8
B	12	10.0	12	9.8
C	8	6.7	8	6.6
Assisted Schools				
'D'	14	11.7	14	11.5
Private Schools				
'E'	9	7.5	9	7.4
All Schools	120	100.1	122	100.1

Sources: Department of Education, City Council of Nairobi, Annual Reports. Note these data are based on number of schools and not enrollments. The data on enrollments were not available to include in this paper.

Our discussion here will be, however, focused on schools in the city of Nairobi which are maintained or assisted from public funds.

The A schools were the former colonial primary schools catering exclusively for African pupils. Although technically open to pupils of all races, today these schools are still predominantly African in their intake. Their students are, however, from urban poor and working class backgrounds. The B schools were the Asian schools in the colonial period which after independence started enrolling children from the petit-bourgeoisie and segment of the salariat class. In 1974, the enrollment in B schools in Nairobi showed that 14.1 percent of the children were Asian Kenyans and 68.7 per cent were Africans. The other 17.2 percent were non-Kenyan citizens. In the colonial period, C schools catered to the ruling class, the Europeans. Today, these schools still carry out this function, but without the racial distinctions of the colonial past. While in the past the most important criterion for admission into this category of schools was racial, today the criteria are competency in English and the income of the family.<sup>24</sup>

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24. O.N. Gakuru, "Pre-Primary Education and Access to Educational Opportunities in Nairobi," Working Paper No. 321, Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, 1977; and "Masharubu's World," Sunday Nation, July 11, 1976.

In 1974, C Schools in Nairobi enrolled 81.3 percent Africans, 11.2 percent Kenyan Europeans and Asians, and 7.5 percent noncitizens -- mostly Europeans and Asians. In the assisted schools, the Africans were 40.0 percent Kenyan Asians and Europeans were 32.0 percent, and noncitizens -- mostly Europeans and Asians. In the assisted schools, the Africans were 40.0 percent Kenyan Asians and Europeans were 32.0 percent, and noncitizens formed 28.0 percent of the enrollment. This category of schools has increased from nine in 1967 to fifteen schools in 1976. In one private school in 1974, 55.3 percent of the enrollment were children of noncitizens, 11.3 percent Kenyan, Asians and Europeans and 33.2 percent were Kenyans of African origin. On the whole, the proportion of Africans in these schools is on the increase.<sup>25</sup>

We have outlined the racial composition of these schools to emphasize the class nature of racial integration which started in the early sixties. The pattern of integration into former Asian and European schools follows closely the pattern which is observable in commercial and large-scale agriculture, namely that of integrating the emerging African capitalist class into the former colonial institutions and thereby maintaining the structure intact. The reforms initiated in the early fifties and carried through in the early sixties were exactly intended to do this. In essence, this transformed the racial class structure of the colonial society into a nonracial class-structured post-colonial society. The present structure of the primary schools in urban Kenya clearly reflect this pattern.

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25. These figures are based on research carried out in the Ministry of Education in Kenya in the period 1974-1976. Comparative figures for 1972 are as follows:

	Africans	NonAfricans	Kenyans	Noncitizens
A	99%		2%	—%
B	53		24	23
C	69		14	18
D	34		33	33
Private Schools	19		25	56

26. From 1972 and 1974 figures, we can observe the situation is changing rapidly. By 1976, about 90 percent of the pupils sitting for the Certificate of Primary Education from C category schools were of African origin (H.C.A. Sonerest, 1976).

The crucial fact to note about the class structure of the primary schools outlined above is that this corresponds to the distribution of the better qualified teachers, facilities available and the performance of these schools in CPE which determines access to secondary education. Below we shall discuss the fees pattern of the four schools categories, distribution of teachers and performance in CPE. The data used came from Nairobi schools in the period between 1971 and 1976.

The pattern of school fees in 1971 and the amount of subsidy given to each pupil in each category of school shows that pupils attending C schools get 3.6 times what pupils in A schools are allocated from public funds. The pupils attending category B schools get 1.5 times what pupils in A schools get.<sup>27</sup> This expenditure does not include money allocated for equipment, which in 1976 was shillings forty per pupil.

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27. F.T. Temple, Politics, Planning and Housing Policy in Nairobi, M.I.T. Ph.D Thesis, 1973 p.114. See Kinyanjui The Political Economy of Educational Inequality in Kenya Harvard University Doctoral Thesis 1976 pp302-303.

The implication of these differences may be attributed, to some extent, to differences in CPE performance that can be seen in Table 4.

In Kenya, teachers, parents, pupils and the public in general tend to evaluate the quality of primary education offered at each school by how well the pupils perform on the Certificate of Primary Education examination, and by how many pupils are given places in government-maintained secondary schools. This examination has a strong influence on the curriculum and the attitude of teachers and pupils at the primary school level. Parents, especially the well-to-do, are going to great pains to provide their children with a head-start in English at home, in pre-schools and at high-cost schools so that they can achieve better grades in CPE, which is essentially a test in English.<sup>29</sup> In 1976, the City Education Officer described what was happening in Nairobi schools in the following manner:

All the same, the former European schools still remain popular not because they are still European schools. All of them are multiracial with Kenya Africans dominating the scene. Their popularity stems from the fact they are able to send to good secondary schools, majority of the pupils who go through their Std. VII's. The home background of the children that patronise these schools have a lot to do with the standard of C.P.E. performance.

Very early in life, well educated and wealthier parents are able to provide a home environment which has a significant educational advantage. These parents purchase books and educational toys, speak English at home, read to child at home, send children to good private nursery schools thus providing an advantageous pre-school conditions which are difficult to match in the poor, uneducated and rural families.

Through their influence and high expectation, the parents in these categories of schools are able to provide both support and bring pressure to bear on teachers so that they do their best. Besides, the administration is likely to provide a well-selected team of teaching staff to march this expectation. After all, they provide ten times higher fees, so they expect better treatment, they argue!<sup>30</sup>

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29. A detailed discussion of the structure of pre-schools and their relation to primary schools in Nairobi is provided in Gakuru, "Pre-primary education and Access to Educational Opportunities in Nairobi," *op. cit.* An item analysis carried on CPE performance indicates the importance of English in the overall performance. See H.C.A. Smerest, "An Item Analysis of 1974 Certificate of Primary Education," Nairobi, mimeo, 1975.

30. J. Wanyoike (City Education Officer, Nairobi), "Education in Urban Areas," a paper presented at the Seminar for Member of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies at Kericho, February, 1976.



The data below give the 1974 average performance for the four categories of Nairobi schools in English and the total score obtained in CPE. From these data, it can be seen there is no significant difference between categories E and D schools. In D schools there is, however, high variation in scores and it is reflected by higher standard deviations in the two average scores.

However, by starting with the null-hypothesis that schools, A, B, C and D are equal, an analysis of variance leads to reject the hypothesis and to conclude these are different. Our analysis finds differences between the schools are significant at the level of 99 percent confidence. This applies to English as well as the total mean scores. Differences in total scores in CPE between A schools and B and C schools were respectively 8.2 and 19.2 points. In English Paper the differences were higher, being respectively 9.2 and 25.6 points. The importance of the scores is that they are used to select pupils to be given secondary schools is reflected in the allocation of secondary schools in government-maintained schools. The import of the differences in performance is discernible in Table. 5.

Differences in performance in other subjects, such as Mathematics and General Paper (the paper with questions of History, Geography and General Science) are also significant, although not as in the English Language Paper. These differences can be understood in the context of a number of factors. First, the class background of pupils -- the school fees paid in each category of pre-primary school being an important indicator of the class background of the parents.

Table 4. Performance in Certificate of Primary Education -- Nairobi Schools -- 1974

Category of Schools	Mean Score in English (%)	S.D.	Mean Total Score in CPE (%)	S.D.	N
A	50.93	6.24	45.10	4.96	5,783
B	60.05	4.22	53.50	3.18	1,020
C	76.53	3.90	64.33	3.28	523
D	64.21	6.71	57.18	5.75	990
All Schools	55.89	10.02	49.41	7.97	8,408

Source: City Education Department, Annual Report, 1974

English:  $F = 19.58$  -- significant at 0.01 level.

Mean Score:  $F = 12.9$  -- significant at 0.01 level.

Furthermore, recent research by O.W. Gakuru has shown that each category of primary school is connected informally to a network of pre-schools where recruitment for primary class one is done. Gakuru's research on the structure of pre-school education in Nairobi has shown that high-cost primary schools are informally connected to high-cost pre-schools where recruitment for class one intake is done, a pattern that is followed in the other categories of schools. Any attempt to break from low-cost pre-schools to high-cost primary schools is strongly resisted by informal mechanisms. Since high-cost primary schools are few,<sup>31</sup>

31. Since 1967, the number of high-cost primary schools in Nairobi have virtually remained the same, being 7 in 1976. The medium-cost schools have also not increased in the last ten years. To cope with an increasing number of children from the national bourgeoisie and the salariat class, there have been an increase in assisted schools (9 in 1967 and 14 in 1976) and private schools (5 in 1976). The major increase in Nairobi schools is, however, the low-cost schools.

and many parents would like to send their children to these schools, the informal mechanism of restricting entry are stronger here than elsewhere.

The second factor which seems to account for the performance is the educational background and professional qualification of teachers in the different categories of schools. The distribution of qualified teachers in Nairobi has shown the differences between the four categories of schools in urban Kenya. In addition, in urban centres -- and Nairobi in particular -- pupils attending C and B schools have a richer /<sup>curriculum</sup> coupled with close supervision by the staff of the municipalities. In Nairobi, some children who have trouble with English are given a remedial course. On the whole, the medium -and high-cost schools/ have better educational facilities than the low-cost schools. We have already shown that the amount of public subsidy given to children attending B and C categories of schools is much higher than that allocated for children in A schools.

But, on the whole, what is important in explaining the differences between school categories is the total impact of the family background of the children, pre-school education obtained, training in English<sup>32</sup> and type of teaching and exposure in the primary schools.

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32. The best performance in CPE English in the last two years 1978 and 1979 were obtained in Kisumu, Nakuru and Nairobi-. The performance of A and B Category of urban schools contributes significantly to the outstanding performances in English of these areas.

All of these add up to the differences that are obtained in CPE performances. Family background inevitably prepares the child for the type of pre-school education to be obtained and this, in turn, prepares the child for entry into a particular primary school. The primary school, in turn, prepares the child for entry into secondary schools, and the best way to do

so is by getting high grades in CPE. The C category of schools, as is **evident** from Table 4, does the best in this respect. We shall say more later when we discuss allocation of secondary school opportunities among different categories of schools in Nairobi.

The Distribution of Secondary School Opportunities for Nairobi Pupils

We have shown how the average performance in CPE differs from one category of schools to another in Nairobi schools. These differences are reflected in the way secondary schools opportunities are allocated to pupils who complete primary education. Table 5 shows the distribution of opportunities for entry into secondary schools in 1972 by type of school attended. Although more recent data were hard to come by, the 1972 pattern represents a continuing trend that favours pupils attending schools that are patronised by members of the dominant classes.<sup>33</sup> As the city Education Officer pointed out in 1976, the main reason behind the fierce competition for places in categories C, B and D schools is "because of the race to get into a good secondary school after CPE."<sup>34</sup> The recent emergence of high-cost self-help secondary schools in Nairobi is an attempt to increase high-quality opportunities for secondary education for pupils attending high-cost primary schools. Recently, the Minister for High Education noted the dilemmas posed to the **society** by these high-quality private schools when he pointed out that "We do not want to allow them to make

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33. The Weekly Review of January 11, 1980 summed up, present the differential access to secondary schools in Nairobi in the following way:

... a pupil in a low cost primary school in Nairobi has only a 35 percent chance of going to a Secondary school, while his friend at the medium-cost schools has 70 per cent chance of doing so, and the one at high cost School has a 100 per cent chance."

34. J. Wanyoike, "Education in Urban Areas," op. cit.

huge profit out of the future of our children. The other reason we have a quarrel with such schools is that they charge very high fees which make them exclusive for the children of the rich. With their high cost, they are promoting a class consciousness within our educational system, and this is something which is against the principles of the type of society we are trying to build for our children.<sup>35</sup>

Our argument is that these schools are a symptom of a wider problem in the society which this paper attempts to highlight.

Table 5. The Distribution of Secondary School Opportunities by Type of Primary School Attended in Nairobi, 1972

Category of Schools	Proportion of Total Enrolment	Number Sitting CPE in 1972	Proportion Admitted in Aided Schools 1973 %
A	75.5	4,595	21.8
B	11.2	963	43.2
C	4.1	317	89.2
D	9.1	978	56.0
All Schools	98.9 (61,000)	6,853	32.8

Source: Nairobi City Council, Education Department, Annual Report, 1972.

Table 5 shows that of 61,000 pupils who completed CPE in 1972, 32.8 percent were admitted in government-aided secondary schools. The data also show the proportion of pupils attending the four main categories of Nairobi schools were admitted into secondary school in 1973. In C schools, 89 percent of the pupils who sat for CPE in 1972 gained places in government-maintained secondary schools. Most of these pupils were admitted into high-cost, high-quality secondary schools which have better examination results at the end of four years of secondary education. These are the schools ... national catchment schools,

<sup>35</sup> Hon. Mr. John Kanotho, Minister for Higher Education, Weekly Review, January 11, 1980.

What happens to pupil in C schools should be compared with the proportion of pupils coming from other categories of schools. The D schools had 56 percent of their pupils admitted to secondary schools, while B and C schools had 43 percent and 22 percent, respectively. The differences among the four categories of schools are enormous, with C schools standing out clearly at the top and A schools at the bottom. Thus, the probability of a pupil attending C school to gain admission into a maintained secondary school is four times that of a pupil in an A school. A pupil in a B school has about two times better chance than a pupil attending a low-cost primary school in Nairobi.

Table 5 should be read together with Table 4, which gives the CPE performance in each category of schools in Nairobi. Indeed, what happens to pupil at the end of primary education is tied closely with financial allocation, distribution of teachers and the quality of education given in each category of schools. The interaction of these school variables with the socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils is critical in determining performance in CPE. So far, no analysis has been done to show how this works in Kenyan schools. Our hunch is that school variables are significant determinants of performance in CPE. But how significant remains to be answered.

From our data we have, however, managed to show that A schools are catering for the working class and urban poor, they have less-educated teachers, and their students perform relatively poorly in CPE, which leads to few of the pupils being admitted into secondary schools. In contrast, pupils attending C schools come from high-income families, attend well-staffed primary schools and perform well in CPE which leads a high proportion of them to be admitted into high-quality secondary schools.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, we have indicated that the structure of schools in urban Kenya, is closely related to income structure -- which is essentially a class structure. We have also shown how different categories of schools are allocated public funds, teachers, and how these schools perform in CPE. We have also shown how differences in performance are reflected in differential access to secondary education.

In a discussion of educational inequality like the one undertaken here, impression may be given that the most important aspects of inequality are those which affect the children within the school system. This is however contrary to the analytical approach advocated at the introduction of this paper which called for placing education in the total context of the society. In this way the role of education in allocating rewards and positions in occupational and class structure is understood and appreciated. Thus, the children who have no access to schooling in Nairobi and those who leave schooling early (drop outs and standard seven leavers), and who are not <sup>the</sup> subject of this paper, need to be understood and analysed in the wider context of society inequality and poverty. The value of this approach is that a deep insight into the interaction and dynamics of society inequality and educational inequality can be grasped.

As we have already pointed out, the school structure we have in urban centres in Kenya reflects to a large extent the class structure in Kenya. Although there is no research at the moment on the socio-economic background of student bodies in each category of schools, the formal and informal mechanisms of entry into each category of schools tend to limit the student body in each type of school to a particular class or segment of a class. The situation in Nairobi, from pre-schools all the way to secondary schools, represents an attempt by the dominant classes to reproduce themselves through the education system. This process of social reproduction is, however, not confined to the educational system, but exists throughout the entire social system. The structure of schools discussed here is but a part of a wider process of class formation and social reproduction.

### III RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND ISSUES

Our attention has been focussed on urban schools in Nairobi. In doing this we wanted to highlight some of the problems facing education in relation to class structure of the society and inequality in provision of education from pre-school education to the university level. By concentrating on urban education we are by no means minimising the differentiation taking place in rural schools, but rather saying that this kind of analysis should be extended to the countryside. Nevertheless, we should note that while rural schools are not as clearly differentiated as the urban schools, in most of the rich rural districts of Kenya, there are two or three private or assisted schools which provide education for children of the rich. This is in addition to the four high-cost primary schools in the countryside which are supported by public funds and were previously part of the colonial European education system. Hence, most of the rural schools fall into the category of which in urban areas are designated as A schools. We would however, like to point out that this categorisation is not based on the concrete analysis of rural schools. Our hypothesis is that an analysis of primary schools in the countryside would show marked differences in quality of schooling provided and above all in their performance in CPE. It is also likely that the socio-economic background of the children is the most significant factor affecting pupils' performance in rural school.

At this juncture we should however deal with the issues raised at the beginning of this paper, drawing our conclusions from the experience and insights gained from the development and structure of Nairobi schools:

a) Concrete reality of provision of education

Our analysis of the provision of education in Nairobi has attempted to locate education in the historical economic and political context of urban development in colonial and post-colonial Kenya. In this way, we have shown how societal inequality interacts and is reproduced through the education system. The inequality in the education system tends, in a rather complex manner to reflect the inequality that exists in the distribution of incomes, wealth and political power. The concrete reality referred here is constantly changing as a result of local and international forces that transform the geographical landscape. The competition for places in standard one in high-cost primary schools is not merely as a result of increased population, but is to a large extent resulting from pressure of social mobility and attempts to maintain



class privileges. To deny these forces of social differentiation and assume harmony of interests in this society is to blind ourselves to the concrete reality in which educational provision operates.

b) Social change and perception of inequality in education

In the colonial period the dominant ideology emphasised racial differences, which was reflected in the structure and organisation of schools in Nairobi. Inequality in the society and in the education system was between the main racial groups --- Africans, Asians and Europeans. Equality at this period was conceived as equality between the races. Inequality in education provision was therefore perceived as that existing between the three racial educational systems. The African nationalists struggled for equal treatment in education and elsewhere regardless of racial background.

While measures to integrate Africans into European and Asian schools pre-occupied educators in the early sixties, by 1970, the issue of racial equality in provision of education had assumed less importance and regional and class inequalities had started to come into forefront. A look at parliamentary debates in the period between 1968 and 1972 shows that regional inequality had become a major factor. This should however be seen in the context of the development of harambee schools in the countryside. This emphasis of focus was not however felt in urban areas, which were regarded as islands of better educational opportunities.

From a countrywide perspective, regional inequality still remains an important issue. But when education is analysed within one district or urban centre, the contours of class inequality start to be visible. Our analysis of schooling in Nairobi therefore points to an important aspect of inequality which in coming years is going to feature greatly in conflicts related to distribution of educational resources.

Hence definitions of what constitutes equality in provision of education have to take into consideration the changes taking place in the social structure. Furthermore, it must be recognised that the dominant social groups will attempt to disseminate their views of what constitutes equality of educational opportunity as the views of the total society. The subordinate groups on the other hand will attempt to bring into the forefront their views of what equality in provision should mean and represent. In these circumstances education system becomes one of the theatres of class struggle, and the dominant forces in this struggle shapes the social policy and as well as the ideas that form the basis of that policy. The challenge

of the subordinated groups however remains regardless<sup>of</sup> whether it is articulated or not.

c) Choice of data and units of analysis

Research is not a value-free process and the intrusion of values and prejudices of the researcher is more common than it is usually acknowledged. The choice of data and units of analysis in research are often mediated by personal preferences as well as social forces. Our choice to analyse educational inequality in Nairobi in the seventies in the way done in this paper stems from conviction that this is the most penetrating and meaningful way of understanding educational inequality. The choice of type of schools as units of analysis meant rejection others (e.g ethnic or regional) as not that important. This approach however may not be appropriate in the country side, where these factors may be predominant.

The limitations of data or units of analysis used in each case must be appreciated and where necessary acknowledged. But search for appropriate data, accurate measurements and variables which give adequate explanations of a social phenomenon remains an ongoing activity of an individual researcher or among the community of researchers.

d) Some Research Issues

The discussion in this paper has left a number of unresolved issues as regards to education inequality in Nairobi. First, there is urgent research need to establish the relationship between socio-economic background of pupils and performance at primary school level. Our knowledge of this relationship is not based<sup>on</sup>/systematic and concrete Kenya data, but rather from experience of other countries. Availability of this kind of data can go a long in enlightening another equally important research question, namely the effects<sup>of</sup>/school variables on achievement. Research and data from other developing countries on this issues is inconclusive. Recent research in Kenya on this issue raises more question than it has attempted to answer. The question as to what are the critical school variables influencing school achievement, is not only of academic importance, but also has enormous social policy implications. Research in this area in Kenya remains however rudimentary.

In this paper we have emphasised the importance of English language in primary school performance. Rather than regard the role of English as a medium of communicating school knowledge as settled, we would however like this to be treated as a research question. The role of English in our educational system is perhaps problematic than it seems from a casual observation. This is particularly if viewed from the wider perspective of 'cultural capital' which is a crucial factor in transmission of school knowledge, and has tremendous implications to social inequality.

In conclusion, we would like<sup>to</sup> argue that in addition to locating educational problems in the socio-economic context of the society, there remains an equally important task of putting research findings within a theoretical framework. A great deal of educational theoretical framework - thereby becoming limited to describing and explaining a particularised phenomenon without advancing social theory.

Theoretical reflection stemming from educational research in Kenya is very underdeveloped and it is time researchers in Kenya face up to this challenge, which can enrich educational research in the coming years.