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A Critical Appraisal of History Taught in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract

This study is an enquiry into the character of the history syllabus as a means of generating and developing historical awareness as defined by authoritative historical literature. The findings indicate that the syllabus is based on Euro-centric views of history and on sex blindness of traditional historiography. It is over-patriotic in approach and suffers bias of omission in relation to the world, Africa, women, and cultural histories. The content fails to give the child a clear perspective of these histories; and a balanced view of male and female roles in the discipline. The syllabus has failed to live up to the research findings and recommendations by renowned African scholars as presented in UNESCO, General History of Africa Series and other related findings and emphasis. It is concluded that the syllabus should be reviewed to reflect recent focus on African history and in education.

Keywords: History, Syllabus, Content, Reconstruction, African History, Historiography

Introduction

History as a discipline is concerned with the reconstruction of the past. Historical events are interpreted and reinterpreted on the basis of available historical data or evidence reconstructed by means of scientific procedures constituting historical inquiry. Krug (1966, p. 13) argues that “the purpose of history is the imaginative reconstruction of the past which is scrupulous and scientific in method but artistic in its conclusion”.

The subject scarcely existed before the 19th century. In England, a serious study of the subject began with Dr. Arnold of Rugby school in 1853 at primary school level. Twenty years later, (1872-74) it was introduced in secondary schools, and by 1881, history became a fully recognized optional subject with a properly prepared syllabus.

Many educators contend that history should be taught in schools because it contributes to the strengthening of loyalties and helps children to identify with the rich historical background (Jarolimek, 1967). It is further argued that knowledge or understanding of history can affect attitudes of loyalty and patriotism towards one's country (Lowenstein, 1967). History is justified in the curriculum because of its peculiar way of thinking, its application to modern problems and

acquisition of the methods of the historian (Burston, 1972). Other scholars argue that, the unique contribution of history in the curriculum is related with its "particular concern with the concept of continuity and change" (Batho, 1985, p. 5); "its concern with the reconstruction of the past" (Bank, 1977, p. 235); and its relation to time perspective, where there is no root, nothing to relate to, if there is no history (Carpenter, 1980). Yet others view it is a light that illuminates people's lives because "those who are blind to, or ignorant of their past are also blind of their future." (Statesman, Nov.9, 2011).

The importance of history in developing skills cannot be overemphasized. The skills cultivated include "the ability to assess evidence and conflicting interpretation; experience in assessing past examples of change; developing broad perspectives and flexibility; and enhancing research skills and basic writing and speaking skills"(Stearns, 1998).

The study of history in Kenya can be well -understood in the light of changes in African historiography since the 19th century. At this time, the western historians held the view that Africans had no history. Such views were evident in the writings of Hegel (1770-1881) which contained statements as "Africa is not a historical continent, it shows neither development nor education. As we see them today, so they have always been" (as cited in Fage, 1981, p. 30). This became part of historical orthodoxy of the time and it persisted until the late 19th century when Africa was subjected to colonial rule.

To the imperial historian, what constituted history were European activities in the world as aptly put by such a historian:

... the study of history has a purpose. We study it ... in order to discover how we have come to be where we are, and that the present world is so dominated by western European ideas, techniques and values, that for the last five centuries at least, in so far as the history of the world has significance it is only European history that counts (as cited in Fage, 1981, 31).

Within this mode of thinking, history in Africa began with the arrival of Europeans and was thus presented as an extension of European history, as a stirring story of European adventures in Africa (Zezeza, 1990). According to these scholars, the activities of European explorers, traders, missionaries and administrators constituted the sum total of African history (Ajagbo, 1990).

These views were transmitted through the western educational systems created in Africa and other parts of the world. In schools, no African history was taught as aptly put by Were (1967, p. 13) : "Throughout my school career, I noticed that practically all the history taught was foreign and consisted largely of the period of European occupation" .

With the rise of African nationalism in the 20th century, especially after the World War II, the African elite firmly rejected the western historical notions about the African past. They demanded the adoption of a new approach and the setting up of improved educational facilities to undertake a reappraisal of the African past. Using oral traditions, local written records,

archeology, historical linguistics, ethnography among others, the African historians demonstrated that Africans had a history before the coming of the Europeans. For instance, Ajaegbo (1990) argues that; "before the advent of written culture, African societies had developed a long tradition of history and culture "(p. 10).

The process of reinterpretation was accelerated after independence when newly created African states set out to decolonize African historiographical enterprise in the late 1950s and 1960s. To produce conscientious historians to carry out this, the educational system had to be overhauled so that the needs and aspirations of independent African states could be reflected in the curriculum. The Kenya Government saw the need to change the history curriculum and to establish a curriculum study unit whose main concern was to ensure that teaching materials and syllabus were in accordance with modern teaching methods and developments in the field (Government of Kenya, 1964). Consequently, efforts were directed into research in African history using oral traditions. By the last decade of the 20th century, the study of African history had reached a high level of development (Zaleza, 1990).

For the reconstruction of African history to have a lasting effect in education it must be reflected in the history syllabus's content and objectives. The syllabus determines what concepts, skills and values are imparted to the child (Kenya Institute of Education (KIE),1986). Its content must be in harmony not only with historical findings and education of the total society for the future multiple adult roles (Obura, 1994) but also with the current theories of teaching and learning. The content must be free from sexism and social stereotyping (Kelly, et al, 1986), ensuring that both boys and girls have positive perspective about their place in the society; past, present and future. It is only through the judicious selection of content (Wilson, 1983) and constant revision of the syllabus (Incorporated, 1975), to reflect the current education and historical research findings that the right historical concepts and images can be transmitted to the child.

Since independence, the Kenyan child has been exposed to two main history syllabi: the 7-4-2-3 based on the old educational system and the present one based on 8-4-4 system, The latter has been revised twice in 1992 and 2002. The history taught before 1986 at secondary school level was broad based covering world history in the first two levels of secondary education (Forms one and two) ; and history of East Africa and Kenya and any two African regions except North Africa in Forms three and four. In Forms five and six; history of Tropical Africa was compulsory while students had to choose one area among the following; National Movement and the New States; Theory and Government and Constitutional Development and Practice; and lastly Economic and Social History of East Africa from 1800 and World Affairs.

This curriculum had these shortcomings:

- African history was taught as a regional and sub – regional history instead of continental history.
- When regional history was studied, the areas were based on colonial divisions not on historical and current geo-political entities. For instance, the history of East Africa was taken to mean British East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania while,

Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and Djibouti were excluded.

- The history of North Africa was not studied because it was seen as Muslim –Arab and therefore more linked to Europe and Asia through the Mediterranean sea than to the rest of Africa.
- History of Africa started from ca.1000 A.D.to the present day. No mention was made of the period before ca.1000.
- European activities in Africa were central in African history. In the history taught in Forms one and two, out of six topics covered, five were based on African interactions with Europeans. In Form Four out of seven topics, only two are on Africa before colonial rule.

Thus African history revolved around colonialism. The period which stretched from the beginnings of human society to the 19th century was ignored. Such an approach made students lose the long-term historical perspective and hold wrong notions about African history.

The aim of this article is to give a critical analysis of the revised 8-4-4 History and Government syllabus of 1992 and 2002 highlighting the strengths and weaknesses.

The purpose of the study was to find out whether the history syllabus at secondary school level contains relevant historical knowledge in the light of historical reconstruction which has been going on since the 1960s. This knowledge is essential in liberating the Kenyan youth who would develop pride of their African past and culture because history constitutes the solid foundation of a nation's cultural institutions. This awareness is imperative for integration in society, in which the African child regardless of gender is required to participate in decision making and national development. One's contribution as an adult should be dependent on what historical consciousness the individual is exposed to in schools as reflected in the syllabus.

The main research questions were: What are the areas of emphasis in History and Government syllabus in Kenya? Are these areas of emphasis in line with findings in African history and gender in education?

Objectives

The study focused on these objectives:

- 1) To identify, analyze and evaluate the content of history syllabus in relation to national goals of education, the domains of learning; organization, appropriateness and focus of the syllabus; and lastly the purpose (function) of history.
- 2) To determine the relevancy and appropriateness of history taught at secondary school level in relation to research findings in African history.
- 3) To evaluate the historical knowledge the Kenya secondary youth is exposed to.

Methodology

To achieve the above objectives, the methodology adopted was a survey. The 1992 and 2002 History and Government syllabi were analyzed to find the areas of emphasis (Note that the history syllabus is also known as History and Government syllabus). The teachers of History and Government (81 in number) and students (600) were involved in filling a questionnaire to find

out their views about the syllabus. The analysis took the form of evaluative discussions and descriptive statistics.

Results

The relationship between History and Government content and national goals of education

The analysis of 1992 syllabus content against goals of education shows that there exists a relationship between the content of history syllabus and national goals of education.

Table 1

Topics and sub-topics in History and Government syllabus (1992), which could contribute to the achievement of national objectives of education

Objectives	Topics			Content; Sub-topics		
	f	N	%	f	N	%
1. National unity	9	22	40.9	17	87	19.5
2. Prepare and equip with						
a. knowledge	6	22	27.2	10	87	11.5
b. skills and expertise	0	22	0	0	87	0
3. National development	4	22	18.2	12	87	13.8
4. Development of talents and personality	5	22	22.8	13	87	14.8
5. a. Promote social justice and morality	4	22	18.2	5	87	5.7
b. promote social obligation and responsibility	4	22	18.2	9	87	10.2
6. Positive attitudes and consciousness towards other nations	5	22	22.8	12	87	13.8

As shown in table 1 above, about 41% of the topics in the syllabus are related to enhancing patriotism, and national unity, while 19.5% of the sub-topics focus on specific aspects of national unity. It is evident that there is over emphasize on patriotism. Four terms out of the total twelve which constitute one third of the teaching time is used to teach content on Government of Kenya. However, the realization of this objective depends on the use of value related methods of teaching. It is unfortunate that many History teachers in Kenya schools apply teacher – centered methodology especially lecturing.

Another goal which could be achieved by teaching of the subject includes preparing and equipping the learner with knowledge (27.2% of topics and 11.5% of sub-topics. Exposure to historical knowledge is essential for societal survival and effective national life. Through this the youth learn the diversity of the Kenyan nation and the interdependence of individuals and communities for survival. They also realize that Kenya cannot succeed in isolation; interaction with other nations is a must. To this end, there are 22.8% topics and 13.8 % sub-topics dealing with aspects of international consciousness.

History is supposed to promote social justice, morality, social obligation and responsibility while providing for the full development of talents and personality. About 18% topics and 5.7 of sub-topic teach that every society has morals based on religious and cultural beliefs and on governmental laws. Compliance is rewarded while rebellion is punished. Therefore, desisting from immorality enhances morality and justice. Learners are taught their responsibilities to individuals and to the nation. A topic like Provincial Administration enlightens the learner on the need to support the work of administrators while Bill of Rights is concerned with their rights and the rights of others.

The skills emphasized in history teaching are cognitive in nature and include development of critical skills, social relating skills and the skill of analyzing, synthesizing and interpretation of historical data. There is no content on these but they can be enhanced through child-centered pedagogy.

Although the national objectives stress more on the affective domain, there is no specific objective focusing on learning in this area. An analysis of specific objectives in relation to domains of learning shows that, the syllabus objectives focus more on cognitive learning at the expense of the affective and psychomotor skills. Even with the cognitive, the emphasis is more on lower levels of learning; knowledge and comprehension (53.5%) than on middle levels; application, analysis and synthesis, which constitute only 27.8%.

The analysis of the revised History and Government syllabus launched in May 2002 is shown below:

Table 2
Analysis of 2002 History and Government Syllabus in Relation to National Objectives of Education

Objectives	Topics		
	F	N	%
Nationalism, Patriotism and National Unity.	10	32	31.3
National development (social, economic, technological and industrial).	10	32	31.3
Individual development and self-fulfillment.	7	32	21.9
Sound moral and religious values.	0	32	0
Social equality and responsibility.	5	32	15.6
Respect for rich and varied cultures.	1	32	3.1
International consciousness.	9	32	28.8
Good health and environment protection.	0	32	0

Key f - frequency N-topics

Table 2 above shows that the syllabus (2002) has 31.3% of the topics on nationalism and patriotism compared to 40.9% in the previous syllabus. The topics on Government, which used to take 1/3 of the time in the whole year, have been incorporated in to topics under contemporary history. The areas, which have continued to be ignored, are on culture, health, and environment, moral and religious development. Although in the introduction of this new syllabus, it is stated that "...a number of themes which address individual's honesty, health and integrity have been selected to enable the learners cope with the challenges of the day...", this does not come out in the topics selected for the study. It is left to the textbook writers to interpret the syllabus and incorporate the issues under the sub-topic: "Social development and challenges." This constitutes a mere 0.8% of all the sub-topics, and interpretation is likely to differ from one textbook writer to another.

The Organization of the Syllabus

The 1992 syllabus is organized a long spiral and thematic approaches. The content revolves around three main themes: social, economic and political. They recur in almost all the topics of the syllabus and at all levels of the secondary school (Forms I, II, III, IV). This makes the subject matter repetitive and boring for both the teacher and the learner. For instance, 'Transport and Communication' is discussed at three levels; in Form I, II then III. This spiral approach, which is repetitive, makes the 1992 syllabus unnecessarily, wide and uncoordinated. The content does not provide a balanced perspective of history nor does it avoid repetition and overlap (Wilson, 1984).

The 2002 syllabus still follows the thematic and spiral approaches with the social, economic and political themes recurring at all grades of secondary education though focusing on different aspects of the themes.

The 1992 syllabus has used historical events occurring in different centuries as a basis of topics to be taught. The topics are categorized in years ranging in centuries. However, there are certain aspects of history, which have been either unfairly categorized or not put under any epoch. Topics like 'Early Man' and 'Early Agriculture,' 'Industrialization and Urbanization' have not been put under any period; neither is the topic on the 'Development of Transport and Communication' up to the mid- 18th century. The topic 'Kenya and the World up to the 19th century' stretches over a century yet the starting point has not been specified. These flaws are still evident in the new syllabus.

Although centuries and themes have been used as the pivot upon which history revolves, the content lack coherence and consistency. For instance, the 1992 syllabus content in Form I Term I, is loosely related because after 'Introduction', the next topic is ' Early Man', which is followed with 'Development of Early Agriculture', 'Industrialization' and 'Urbanization'. This is followed by 'Communication and Transport' then 'Emergence of Kenyan Societies' after which there is the 'Government of Kenya'. The link between the topics is minimal. It needs a teacher with a foresight to draw the link and show the relation while teaching; a few of them have this quality.

The same inconsistency continues with Form II content. It is only in Form III that the topics have some flow. The focus is on colonialism in Africa, then Kenya and how eventually Kenya attained independence. However, the government section is still out of place. The Form IV content faces the earlier problem of inconsistency because there is no link between the following topics: 'Africa

in the 20th century', 'Political Systems and Governments', 'International Relations' and 'Government of Kenya'.

The new syllabus has not overcome the above limitations. The order of topics and inconsistency has been maintained though with minimal changes. For instances, Form I topics are: 'Introduction,' 'Early Man ', 'Development of Agriculture' , 'The people of Kenya up to the 19th century', 'Organization of Kenyan Societies in the 19th century', 'Contacts between East Africa and the outside World', 'Citizenship and National Integration'. There are few of these topics which are directly related like the ones on Kenya. This lack of consistency retards learning.

Due to the above inconsistencies, it is not easy for the learner to develop a systematic understanding of the subject. In fact, 70.3% of the learners using the 1992 syllabus cited poorly arranged content as one of the key problems they experienced in learning history. Content was further described as being difficult, confusing, wide, irrelevant, boring and out-dated. For instance the topics mentioned by students as most difficult to learn in the 1992 syllabus were as follows : Religion (83%) Development of transport and communication (63.9 %), Political systems and Government (61.9) % , Emergence of Kenyan societies (58.3%), Africa in the 20th century (48.8 %), Development of agriculture and urbanization (47.7 %) and Economic and social development in Kenya (42.9 %). The topics identified as boring to students included but not limited to the following: Religion (66.7%), Development in Kenya since independence (66%), Introduction to the course (59.1%), Government of Kenya (41.3 %), Agrarian and Industrial change (34.8%).

The teachers on their part gave the following as difficulty topics to teach : Early man (94.6%), Agrarian, industrial change to mid -18th century (54.1%) , Religion (48.6%), Political systems and governments (43.2%), International relations (37.8%), Development of early agriculture , industry, and urbanization (35.6%).The reasons they gave on the topics difficulties related to abstractness , terminologies used , the breadth and depth, irrelevance , inconsistency and lack of clarity among others. A wide syllabus was given by 47.8% of the teachers as a major problem facing the subject.

The Relevancy of History Content to the Learners Experience and Mental Age

Studies show that history content has to be made “intelligible in terms of the pupils’ experiences, understanding and age” (Thompson, 1972, p. 33). What is taught should be within the range of the experience and reality that children have (Brown, 1967). The 8.4.4 history syllabus is meant for the age group 14-17 years. The Term I content is supposed to be appropriate for the children who are 14 years old. The topic after introduction to the course; “Early Man” requires a lot of abstract thinking because these early people lived in the distant past. The teacher has nothing concrete on which s/he can base her/his teaching and this slows down learners thinking. Similarly, next topics, 'Development of Early Agriculture' and 'Industrialization and Urbanization' are also abstract. These topics have been maintained in the new syllabus, although Industrialization has been moved to Form II.

At the age of 15 years, the learners can respond well to abstract explanations of historical data. Topics taught at this level (Form II) are appropriate and relevant to the age of the majority of learners. In Form III, at the age of 16 the learners are at the age of forming concepts. Therefore, the concepts of colonialism, resistance, nationalism and democracy taught could be well conceptualized. In Form IV at the age of 17, the individual is at high level of thinking and can deal with abstracts, concepts and arguments. Thompson (1972) argues that the children's conceptual understanding of history is broader at the 4th year of secondary schools and possibly later. Therefore, the content covered on contemporary history in Kenya, Africa and the World is appropriate for this level.

The Flexibility of the Syllabus

A good syllabus should meet any particular teaching problem of the individual school (Incorporated, 1975). This calls for flexibility. The Kenya history syllabus is not adaptable to different learning environments. Its content is fixed; there is no room for additions until a new syllabus comes in force or the old is revised. This is contrary to the norm. A history syllabus should be subject to revision, and reasonable change in the light of the results of historical research and changing emphasis of time (Incorporated, 1975). The initial 8-4-4 syllabus was revised after seven (7) years in 1992. The present syllabus (2002) was revised after ten (10) years. However, these revisions have not been meaningful. The revised syllabi of 1992 and 2002 are identical with the original one of 1985 because they still use spiral and thematic approaches. The emphasis has been on world and national histories and less on Africa. The syllabus is still characterized by inconsistency, broadness and omissions. This inflexibility does not only affect the inhibition of teacher creativity but also narrows the content to what is in the syllabus.

The Syllabus and Dimensions of History

There are three dimensions of a history syllabus: the vertical, the horizontal aspects, and the horizontal area (Wilson, 1983). According to the 1992 syllabus the horizontal area has the following percentages per topics and sub-topics: National topics (27.3%) and sub-topics (35.6%); continental topics (18.2%) and sub-topics (16.1%); and world topics (36.4%) and sub-topics (20.5%). These percentages show that there is no balance in the horizontal focus. Although world and continental histories have been fairly treated, it is important to note that both have suffered equally because the topics and sub-topics on the world and continental history do not cover key events affecting the continent or the world as a whole. Emphasis is on a small area of either Africa or the world giving an incomplete view of whatever is being studied. Complete topics on Africa are 9% of all the topics and 9.2% of sub-topics. This has resulted in inadequate exposure to African history and African personalities in history. The limitation was evident when learners were asked to identify African personalities they would like to emulate in history. The results were as follows: Jomo Kenyatta (10.7%), Nelson Mandela (7.6%), Mekatilili (6.8%), Menelik (3.2%) and Kwame Nkrumah (3%). The rest of the personalities identified scored 3.0%. This portrays a picture of a generation ignorant of its heroes and heroines.

This normality has not been corrected in the new syllabus. Topics on Kenya cover 46.6%, Africa 15.6%, World 28.8%, East Africa 3.1%, and general topics 6.3%.

Horizontal aspects refer to the social, cultural, economic and political aspects of history. The percentages for the four aspects in 1992 syllabus are as follows: Social 13.6% of the topics and 12.6% of the sub-topics, political 27.3% of the topics and 24.1% of the sub-topics, economic 31.8% of the topics and 34.4% of the sub-topics, cultural had no topics and 1.4 % of the sub-topics. The above analysis shows that political aspects have been well covered; while economic and social is over- represented and under-represented respectively. Although history is supposed to foster people's cultural heritage, this aspect has been completely ignored.

The picture portrayed by 2002 syllabus topics is as follows: social (6.3%), political (43.8%), economic (21.9%), cultural (0%), technological/industrial (3.1%), socio-eco-political (18.8%), socio-economic (3.1%) and general (3.1%).

Vertical dimension refers to ancient, medieval and modern history. Ancient is the period of dating from a remote past to about A.D. 476, Medieval refers to Middle Ages dating from A.D. 700-1500, while modern is the period since Renaissance from 1500 to the present. The percentages, for these dimensions in the syllabus are as follows: Ancient 22.8% of topics and 1.8% sub-topics; Medieval 9% of topics and 9.2% sub-topics; Modern 45.5% of topics and 54% of sub-topics. This picture has not altered much in the 2002 syllabus. There is a lot of emphasis on modern history at the expense of medieval and ancient. These two areas are equally important and should not be sidelined even if they are based European periodisation.

Fulfillment of the Functions of History

A good History syllabus should be able to meet the functions of the subject in education. One important function is that it should help the learner develop a sense of human solidarity, which goes with democracy. It must also bring up important contributions which have been made in the history of the world by both male and female regardless of their race and ethnicity. For instance, all ancient civilization, kingdoms and empires of the world, and outstanding discoveries by American, Africans, Asians and Europeans must be identified and a selected number studied. This is an area poorly treated by both the 1992 and the 2002 syllabus. The focus has been mainly on industrial revolution and scientific inventions at the time.

According to Burston (1957) the purpose of history is to provide standards of reference by which to criticize our own age and to inculcate moral values such as: tolerance and sympathy. It is also supposed to introduce habits, attitudes of mind, and historical knowledge that are indispensable for a cultured person. The 1992 syllabus does not provide standards of reference such as: morals, democracy, civilizations etc. by which to criticize our own age. Ancient Greece which is the cradle of democracy, art, literature, architecture and political systems is not taught. Revolutions which changed the world like the French Revolution based on equality and brotherhood, Communism Revolution in Russia, the Americans War of Independence based on equality of human beings are all left out of the syllabus.

Development of democratic principles is essential in a country's citizenry. There are about 9% topics in 1992 syllabus, which might lead to the development of democratic principals in the learners. These include: a study of national political parties in Kenya and political systems and

governments of Britain, France, U.S.A. and former USSR. However, the syllabus fails to focus on how democracy is practiced in these countries and how it should be enhanced.

Although, there is a whole topic on religion, the emphasis is on historical development of religions of the world not on the emotional development of the learner. The learner is simply exposed to the major religions which exist but is not given standards by which to measure the best religion. Values like sympathy, tolerance, responsibility can best be inculcated by the spiritual dimension of religion; no amount of historical facts can impart this. When the learners were asked to give reasons why history is useful, only 3.3% identified acquisition of good morals and values as some of its benefits. Related to morals are habits, attitudes of mind and historical knowledge which are indispensable for a cultured person. These include way of speech, dressing, eating habits and manners. These aspects are ignored in the syllabus.

The 2002 syllabus has not been improved in the above areas. There are however changes with the incorporation of new topics such as democracy, human rights and conflict resolution. The topic on 'Religion' was removed instead of being revised to emphasis on the moral values it could transmit.

The Syllabus Content is Relation to Research Findings in African History and Gender

Most of the researchers in African history have been published in *General History of Africa* in eight volumes (series) by UNESCO. The aim of launching these series was basically to use the findings of African scholars on African history as a basis of producing school history textbooks. These findings were to influence the content of the syllabus and the textbooks. A look at the syllabus shows that the designers have failed to incorporate UNESCO ideas into the syllabus. For instance, while the above series advocate for interdisciplinary approach in teaching history with a variety of sources from different disciplines, both the 1992 syllabus and 2002 have failed to advance this approach in the teaching of the subject.

UNESCO recommends organization of African history according to common characteristics through the centuries and throughout the African continent e.g. Ancient Civilization of Africa from the 7th - 11th, Africa from the 12th - 17th century, Africa under foreign domination 1880-1935 etc. This categorization according to periods has been avoided by both 1992 and 2002 syllabi.

African history is supposed to cover about 3 million-years according to the above series. Analysis of the topics on Africa in 1992 syllabus shows that some topics do not depict any period e.g. 'Iron age in Africa', 'Use of early metal in Egypt, Benin and Central Africa', 'Urbanization in Africa' and 'The spread of Islam in Africa'. There are only two centuries specified for coverage, namely the 19th and the 20th century. Even the topics on Kenya are covered under the above two centuries.

With regard to 2002 syllabus, the above omissions are still evident e.g. no period is depicted under 'Early Man', 'People of Kenya up to the 19th century', 'Urbanization', 'Early Agriculture' etc. There are only two centuries identified in the syllabus: the 19th and the 20th centuries.

History is not taught from the African point of view, with Africa as the basis, followed by regional histories. Instead, the focus is on Kenya and the world. Whenever Africa is tackled in 1992 syllabus the emphasis is on African countries like South Africa, Egypt, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo- DRC and Ghana. Kenyan's neighbors like Uganda, Sudan and Somali do not feature at all. Africa is never taken as a historical entity nor is relationships between the various

parts of the continent brought out. The continent lacks a unifying force, a paradigm. It is therefore, fragmented into nations and its totally is lost. This is evident in both syllabii.

The syllabi do not consider the history of Africa as the history of peoples' of African continent as a whole in spite of colonial boundaries dividing them. Instead, they look at people in relation to their national boundaries, so that the Maasai of Kenya are separated from those of Tanzania, so are the Luo of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

African contribution to the history of humankind is not integrated into the history of the world nor is Africa's historical connections with other continents analyzed in terms of mutual exchanges and multilateral influences. The role of Africans as creators of original cultures, which flowered and survived over the centuries in unique patterns, is overlooked. African cultures are not even mentioned. African art, which is seen as an expression of cultural substance of African religion and ideologies has not been mentioned by the syllabus. Some of the important African arts found in the different parts of Africa include: Nok art, plastic art, ceramics, curving, clay figurines, rock-painting etc. One wonders how the African youth will find their place in the world when they are ignorant of their own roots.

Although, there is a topic on 'Early Man', the focus is not on Africa as the main setting both for human's emergence as the sovereign species and for the development of a political society. Instead, the focus is on ' Early Man' in general. Whereas UNESCO emphasis is on origins, production and uses of 'Early metals in Africa, the 1992 syllabus focused on specific areas e.g. Egypt, Benin, Mesopotamia and Central Africa.

Industrial Revolution in Europe is discussed with no relation to Africa yet, since the 10th and 11th centuries, the Maghrib and Western Andalusia have been important centers for the diffusions of science and philosophy to Europe. They played a large part in preparing Europe for scientific and cultural renaissance. In fact, the capital accumulation in Europe and the rise of the Industrial Revolution would have been inconceivable without the price paid by Asia, the Americans and above all Africa.

The 1992 and 2002 syllabi are characterized by gender stereotyping. There is male- dominated approach to historiographic content. Although UNESCO emphasizes that matrilineal family line was an important feature of African society, this aspect has been ignored. None of the women leaders who feature in UNESCO are given prominence. Such women include: Queens Shanakdakhate, Amanirenas and Amanishakhete who ruled Meroe at different times; Queen Tin Hinan of Morocco; Queens Ranavalona I, II, III and Rasoherina of Madagascar; Queen Cleopatra of Egypt and Empress Zawditu, who ruled Ethiopia from 717-720 etc.

Even in Kenya, where research has portrayed women's role in the political and social spheres, the 1992 syllabus has overlooked this contribution. However, the latest syllabus has attempted to correct the error by including in the syllabus one sub-topic on the role of women in the struggle for independence in Kenya'.

Conclusion

From the forgoing findings and discussions, it is apparent that the secondary school history curriculum in Kenya serious flaws. The weaknesses are on over-emphasis on patriotism and cognitive learning at the expense of other attitudinal and moral aspects. It is confined to social, economic and political elements of history, at the expense of cultural aspects. It fails to bring out the relationship between humans and the physical and biological environment in time perspective. There is an existence of a sexist hidden curriculum which is discriminatory against women. Similarly the transformational role of science and technology over time is limited to scientific inventions during Industrial Revolution and development in modern means of communication without emphasizing on Information Communication and Technology (ICT) and revolutionary role in knowledge transmission.

The content has failed to focus neither on the entire African continent nor on regional histories, instead the concentration on isolated topics of World, Africa and Kenyan histories. Its area of emphasis is discordant with UNESCO's findings based on African history. It is therefore recommended that the syllabus designers should come up with a revised History syllabus based on one approach and on methods, approaches and findings of UNESCO's *General History of Africa Series*. It should also apply the recommended periods a long which African and world history could be organized. The curriculum should be reorganized to highlight women's prominence as agents of change in history, not only in politics but in all aspects of life. The objectives ought to emphasis on the cognitive, affective and social relating areas of learning.

The content should start with what is familiar, to abstract and cater for both horizontal and vertical dimensions of history. At the same time, it should make the inter-relations of local, national, continental and world histories easier. It is further recommended that constant revisions of the above UNESCO series be carried out because of continuous unearthing of historical data so that they remain up to date and relevant.

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