SNAPSHOTS ABOUT EAST AFRICA’S EDUCATION SYSTEM
REVIEWS FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND COLLEGE STUDENTS
ABOUT THE SPIRIT OF FAIR PLAY

GABRIELLA HIDEG
ESZTERHÁZY KÁROLY UNIVERSITY

This paper focuses on the East African country, Kenya, and its education system, which is exotic from the Hungarian point of view.

The aim of my study was to present the historical development of education in Kenya, and the odds and limits appearing within it, based on the available literature. It becomes visible that access to education is not given equally to everyone, regardless of which level of education we examine. This becomes really interesting and unique if we ask primary school students and college students about fair play and its content in such an imbalanced and even unequal system.

As a test method, I used the analysis of literature and a questionnaire survey, which was based on a random sampling method. The questionnaire contains 17 questions including 15 closed and 2 open questions. Questions covers the content of fair play, interest in sport, and in addition to these, the responses about behaving in different competitive situations and judging actions as well. The data obtained were summarized with simple mathematical and statistical methods. As an expected result, we get closer to a foreign, unknown country in an educational/historical and pedagogical point of view. The results of the questionnaire survey, which measure the segments of the two different levels of the Kenyan education system, show the opinion of students about fair play.

1. Introduction

Kenya was once a British colony, nowadays it is a rapidly developing country with world-class hotels and shopping centres on one side of the road, while privation and poverty show its cruel face on the other side. It is a country where internal fighting and political riots are ongoing, corruption creates significant challenges, and where terrorist organizations (which even break into universities and young people are slaughtered because of their religious affiliation) are increasingly appearing.

Kenya’s education system can be approached from several sides: we can examine ethnic and territorial differences, financial expenditures, and the nature of Kenyan
free education, but all current achievements and consequences derive from the beginnings through educational policy development.

Our research questions were formulated as follows. What does education system mean? How is each level divided? Is education free? If it is free, what does that mean exactly? What are the chances and opportunities to progress in the education system?

In my study, I present the history of education in Kenya based on the available literature and compare it with reality, practice, and experience, and this helps to present the results of the questionnaire.

2. Historical antecedents

The development of Kenya’s education history can be divided into three major overlapping stages, as set out in the works of Sheffield (1973), Nkinyangi (1982), Eshiwani (1993), Ssekamwa and Lugamba (2001), and Teferra and Altbach (2004). These three stages are traditional, missionary, and governmental stages.

2.1. The traditional stage

Kenya’s society was initially built on nearly 40 tribes, so education was also realized within this tribal society. Herskovits (1962) states that each tribe had its own teaching method, according to the specific “specialization” of the given tribe, but they all followed the three main modes, which also meant some levels of education. These are the education by parents and the elderly, the education by craftsmen, also known as the apprenticeship system, and the education related to an old-age initiation rite. Today there are also tribes in Kenya that preserve traditions, for example, a boy becomes a man and a full member of the tribe when he hunts down a lion.

The effectiveness of the methods can now be questioned, but at that time young people gained very useful knowledge within the tribal society. Specific knowledge was acquired by children, they learned how to relate to their immediate and wider families, their ancestors, their contemporaries, and their gods.
Overall, it can be said that this traditional form of education was successful in tribal society, young people gained a lot of practical knowledge to help to maintain the tribe. As time progressed, settlers from the West brought a new social order. As a result, the knowledge that young people acquired from their ancestors was no longer competitive and was clearly not relevant in the changing world. (Sheffield, 1973)

2.2. The missionary stage

Within this period, not only Christian missionaries played a big role, but also Great Britain stepped forward as it exercised colonial power over Kenya. Accordingly, we can speak of a pre-colonial period when actually missionaries had a greater impact and we can speak of a colonial period that lasted until 1963.

In the 1800s, the first missionary organizations arrived in Kenya. Their primary purpose was to Christianize the natives. To this end, schools were established and soon also practical training became a part of the curriculum, such as carpentry, horticulture, and literacy. (Sheffield, 1973)

They wanted to reach the members of the tribe through children and their school education. The competition was great between various Christian organizations for Christianizing natives, and as time passed, tension between these organizations and natives grew. As Sheffield (1973) describes in his study, it was a fundamental problem that the world of beliefs of natives was in many respects opposed to the teachings and aspirations of Christian organizations. It is a consequence of the disagreement that generations had been left out of the missionary education system and the return to education within the tribe was no longer adequate for the challenges of the age.

A country-wide range of activities of the missionaries could be discussed, and as Anderson (1970) also states, there were 35 schools in Kenya in 1910, so it is unquestionable that the foundation of Kenya’s education system was laid down by missionary organizations.

Great Britain took power over Kenya in 1895. Among its first actions was to create schools for children of the so-called ‘white colonists’. Meanwhile, missionary organizations were also present in the education system. As a result, an unprecedented conflict emerged. The government focused primarily on the education of white children, though it also founded a state school for black children, where they learned to write, read, and acquire practical knowledge as it was within the tribal societies as well. The British did not want to provide high-quality education for local young people because they did not want highly qualified adults who could later have senior leadership positions. Local children, if they would have liked to get higher education, stayed at Christian schools or they were left out of education. (Sheffield, 1973)

If we talk about high-quality education, we should also mention territorial disadvantages. The areas where there were schools of ‘white colonists’ received the largest financial support and the best-educated teachers taught in these schools, so the children of colonists received high-quality education, which cannot be said about local children. (Alwy, 2004)
The education measures taken during the colonial years are still a problem for the Kenyan government. The British government introduced recruitment examinations and tuition fees to prevent Kenyan students from applying. To demonstrate the uselessness of education for African students, the Government established the Beecher Committee working in the 1940s and 1950s. To limit the number of Kenyan students, the committee assumed that half of the students who had started primary school would stop learning in the first four years. Then the four-fifths of the remaining students would drop out during the exams and the rest would go to higher classes. At that level, half of the students would drop out because of the tuition fees or exams. Colonial governments tried to completely rule out Africans from the system, which led directly to today’s problems. The costs of education have led to serious political debates. (Alwy, 2004)

The British set up a system that primarily focused on teaching the British ruling class and their families.

2.3. The governmental stage
It can be seen that some educational problems in Kenya are the results of colonization and measures taken before independence. Independence in Kenya meant that it had to build everything itself, with British pressure in the background. Thus, after becoming independent, one of the major tasks of Kenya was transforming a system that had resolutely excluded natives from education and all this had to be achieved by limited financial and human resources. After gaining independence, the Kenyatta government made several attempts to overcome the problems affecting the education system. (Alwy, 2004)

In 1964, a so-called Kenyan Educational Committee was set up to eliminate social differences and emphasize national unity. Missionary organizations, their educational system and methods were not involved in any of these activities and efforts, so their displacement started from the education system. (Ghai and Court, 1974)

In order to eliminate inequalities, disadvantaged settlements (for the reasons mentioned above) had to be helped catch up and the quality of education had to be increased. As the quality of education depends on the quality of teachers to a large extent, it was important to equally distribute appropriately qualified teachers in the country and possibly concentrate more heavily on regions where long-term educational disadvantages had previously been established. In practice, this was almost impracticable, as legislators did not comply with the principles of the endeavour point by point, and the best instructors was employed in areas where members of the government were interested. Alwy (2004) found that after the liberation, the Kikuyu tribe benefited from the distribution of government resources because Kenyatta president was a member of this ethnic group. Moreover, highly qualified instructors refused to move to a poorer village and teach there.

Kenya, along with most of Africa, turned to the World Bank for help. However, the Bank’s objectives have caused many problems in the country, but we are talking about the effects of them on the education system in this study.
In the 1960s, when Africa moved to nationalism, the World Bank announced its investment in human capital, which emphasized education as the driving force behind social, political, and economic change. This plan emphasized higher education and neglected primary and secondary education. (Banya and Elu, 2001; Samoff and Carroll, 2004; Sifuna, 2007)

In the 1970s, the popularity of higher education grew. As a result, the World Bank shifted the focus from higher education to primary education. The bank sent promising students to study abroad as they considered it a “luxury” to concentrate on the Kenyan education system. The Bank reshuffled money, donations, and measures to primary education, which meant the decay of the higher education system and facilities for decades. (Banya and Elu, 2001)

By the 1990s, the World Bank realized that neglecting university-level teacher education had had a negative effect on primary education as well. Therefore, the bank began to focus on higher education, prioritizing technology, new inventions, governmental interventions, and a primary education supported by a strong higher education. As a result of these measures promoted by the World Bank, the education budget comprised 5-7% of the GDP between the 1990-1991 and 2002-2003 financial years. In fact, even the World Bank was not ready to solve the problems of the education system of Kenya. The measures that were the most cost-effective only delayed the progress of the weak system. (Banya and Elu, 2001; Samoff and Carrol, 2004; Teferra and Altbach, 2004).

2.4. Primary education in Kenya, the development of free primary education

So far, I dealt with the review of the history of education in Kenya, but as I have formulated the research questions, I consider it interesting and important to examine each level accordingly. As my empirical research focused on primary school students and university students in this paper, I present these two levels, free education, and the educational development in Kenya in more detail.

Kenyan primary education, its costs, and access to free education were investigated in detail by Nkinyangi (1982), Sifuna (2007), Somerset (2007), Vos et al. (2004), Oketch (2010), Banya and Elu, Mooko, Tabulawa, Maruatona and Koosimile (2009), and Samoff and Carrol (2004) in their studies. In 1963, with the advent of independence, the government promised to abolish tuition fees but these remained until the 1970s, which led many parents not to send their children to school for almost a decade. In 1971, the government made education accessible to everyone by abolishing these fees. In 1973, the first four classes were free, and for the remaining three years a uniform 60-shilling annual fee was imposed. By 1978, the eight-grade primary school system became free of tuition fees. This, however, proved to be an empty promise of the government, as the abolished charges returned, just under another names. The schools made the A compulsory student contribution to construction and equipment funds, including books and uniforms, was introduced. New costs continued to have a negative impact on poor families, and the more students went to school, the more money these institutions needed to maintain and expand their facilities and equipment.
By the 1980s, the government withdrew the provisions on the abolition of tuition fees, thus, terminated free education. Only in 2003 was the primary school tuition abolished again, bringing the number of people starting school from 5.9 million in 2002 to 7.2 million in 2004.

Making primary education free was not a bad decision but the education system is still not ready today to receive students. Infrastructure and equipment are insufficient and inadequate, and teachers cannot teach students at the appropriate level because classes are overcrowded.

The reality is that 70-80 students study in a classroom, which means that in the relatively small classrooms 3-4 students sit at the school desks. School desks are worn-out, battered, and books look much more like “lettuce” than books. Instead of wearing a branded schoolbag, students bring their minimal school equipment in plastic bags; so those who already have a brand logo on their bags can be considered “wealthy”. The up-to-date composition of students is mixed. Students aged between 10 and 12 years are together with students between 16 and 18 years. The reason is not that these children do not learn and have to repeat a year, they are the ones who dropped out from the education system for years. Although education is free, families need to buy textbooks, writing instruments, clothes, and shoes.

Many Kenyan families have to consider a lot of things before sending their children to school. It is an important aspect whether schools provide students free meals or not, the better case if so, because children may take some food home, but at least one less meal has to be provided at home. Generally speaking, there are more generations in a family and a wage earner (usually one wage earner in one family) supports 8 to 10 people. Furthermore, parents need to consider when sending a child to school that one breadwinner will be missing from the family, one less person brings money home (though it sounds terrible, child labor exists in Kenya).

I want to note and emphasize that in my study I examine public schools. In private and ecclesiastical schools, the quality in every aspect is quite different. Despite the shocking reality, children are happy, and they do not have much desire, they only want to study.
2.5. Higher education or the tertiary system, transition to the tertiary system

Problems observed during the analysis of primary education are also true of secondary education, which continues to reach its end point in higher education. As the education system does not offer real, universal access to primary and secondary education, it does not help students get into higher education. If these students cannot go to high school, their progress is even more limited, thanks to the few university places and high costs. Only a small percentage of students can go to university-preparatory high schools, so only a small number of them can study at university. Between 2004 and 2009, only 24 percent of high school graduates achieved “good enough” results to be able to apply for admission to a university at all (Siringi & Ndurya, 2009).

It is important to note that higher education was free after the colonists left, and there was a need for well-trained professionals who could have the widest possible task coverage in society. According to Otieno (2004), this program lasted until 1974 when a student loan program was introduced to cover non-study costs. This was partly a failure because the government did not set up a proper repayment system so 81% of the borrowers could not repay it.

Since independence, the government has established six new state universities. All seven Kenyan state universities can quickly expand and grow, thanks to the government’s goals of enhancing equal opportunities, improving the economic situation, and educating the population.

According to the statistical data of 2011 (Wanyama, 2011), the number of places at university increased from 16,629 in 2009 to 20,000, which is a record. In 2011, the number of admitted students was 32,645, and although this is a drastic increase, tens of thousands of high school students cannot go to university. (Wanyama, 2011)

In order to meet growing demands, the government has turned colleges or polytechnics into university colleges, which in time may even train teachers. This program was launched in 2007, and 15 institutions operating as external faculties of the seven public universities take part of it. These schools usually receive those students who do not have the right grades or financial resources to study at public or private universities. They do not only train skilled workers but also provide higher education, such as nursing or teacher training.

Yakaboski and Nolan (2011) conclude that the acceptance of teacher training by universities is problematic in many respect, mainly because university education is four years, while teacher training is only three, which raises concerns about costs and admission criteria. Furthermore, it is a big problem that there are already 61,000 teachers less in the country than needed. (Yakaboski and Nolan 2011)

3. Test methods and sampling procedure

Literature exploration was greatly facilitated by the fact that I had the opportunity to gather literature at a college in Kenya, the Shanzu Teachers Training College. This is why books from the 1970s and articles written in the 2000s, which are quite recent in Kenyan terms, are now being processed. The analysis of the content of this
literature and the presentation of the results of the questionnaire are also helped by the personal experiences gained during the time spent there.

My study includes the questionnaire survey already mentioned, the sampling procedure of which was based on random selection. The method of gathering information was based on the questionnaire used by a previous study, conducted by Papp (1995) on a similar topic, and was adapted to my own research. The questionnaire contains 17 questions, 15 of which are closed-ended and two are open-ended questions. In this paper, I have presented and analyzed the answers of five respondents due to space limits. The issues cover the content of fair play, assessing responses to various competitive situations, evaluating actions, and examining the relationship between corruption and sport.

The data were aggregated using simple mathematical-statistical methods, while data processing was done using Microsoft Office Excel spreadsheets and the IBM SPSS statistical program.

The sampling process carried out in two phases. The first stage was performed in January 2014. I managed to have the questionnaire filled in by 50 students from nine Kenyan primary schools. Sample taking was made difficult by the fact that there was no direct contact with schools and school leaders were not personally present at filling. Given that it is a closed community and exposed to terror threats every day, I was not surprised to find that they were reluctant regarding the personal encounter to meet personally. The second phase was performed in January 2015. Based on my knowledge of the local conditions and the relationship network created by that time, I could continue my empirical research in a Kenyan elementary school. The conversation with teachers, the school principal, and personal experiences brought reality closer to me because though the things described in the literature are factual, these sources do not talk about the real circumstances in which children are taught and instructed by teachers.

The motivation was similar when I visited the college. In addition to collecting literature, I was interested in what young people were learning and who would be educators after completing school. 72 high school students participated in the study, in addition to the 133 primary schoolchildren.

4. Hypotheses
Knowing the development process and the challenges of the Kenyan educational system as well as morality and the norm system in this society, I formulated and tested three hypotheses.
H1: Due to inequalities in the education system and in the Kenyan community, students and schoolchildren have negative concepts related to the meaning of fair play.
H2: Within the framework of a game, they understand the importance of victory and they would also commit fouls to achieve this.
H3: Resulting from their social conditions, in their opinion, corruption appears to be within the sport as well.
5. Results

The first question group of my study tried to determine the theoretical level of sportsmanlike behavior in different competitive situations. My second question group examined the relationship between sport and corruption, and finally, I had a look at the students’ knowledge about the meaning of fair play.

With my first question, I investigated whether students would consciously commit a foul in order to achieve victory. (Figure 1.) The difference between the two age groups, primary school students and college students, is significant. 54.1% of surveyed schoolchildren would consciously cheat for victory, whereas 84.7% of students in tertiary education participating in the study would rather be defeated than cheat for victory.

With my second question, I examined team spirit and the actions within the team. (Figure 2.)

Students had three choices. 42.9% of the primary schoolchildren interviewed would hand over the ball to their teammate if they were in a better position than he or she, 43.1% of the college students chose the same answer. Similarly, a high proportion (47.2%) of students would consider this action in acute competition. Taking into account local memories and experiences, it is not surprising that 21.8% of the schoolchildren would let themselves. Perhaps they would act selfishly, and for their own interests, they would even jeopardize the potential victory of the team.

Though I did not cover it during the investigation, later it would be worthwhile examining how schoolchildren and students, who would think about committing a foul, would handle this situation in the future.
With my third question, I examined how young people would act against their opponents in the event of injury. I looked into whether they would consider the interests of their own and or those of the team, regard victory as more important or they would help their opponents in trouble.

93% of the students in higher education would act in a sportsmanlike manner or deliberately stop the game (11.1%), or they would stop or even pass the opportunity to the opponent and help the injured (81.9%).

The proportion of schoolchildren (64.7%) who would take the chance to obtain a benefit is high. I have to refer to the results of the previous question, according to which the same age group would place their own interests before team spirit and cohesion in case of a team game. Given the previously presented inequality in the Kenyan society, we cannot be surprised that the students would use their opponent’s injury primarily to obtain an advantage.

Looking beyond the results of the questionnaire, we face a dilemma. The interpretation of the answers given to our fourth question (Figure 4.) raises countless new questions. 84.7% of the surveyed college students and 73.7% of primary school children believe that there are bribery and corruption in sports. The question is whether to be happy that young people today are so sharp and clear about the problem concerning the fact that unsportsmanlike means are already appearing in the field of sport that was previously considered pure and inviolable or we should be frightened because young people see the trend, and the answers to previous questions
Figure 3. Measuring Sportsmanlike Behavior in a Competitive Environment. Source: Own elaboration

Figure 4. The Relationship between Corruption and Sport. Source: Own elaboration
indicate that a large proportion of primary school students do not find anything wrong in committing a foul, especially, if it seems to contribute to their own personal advancement.

If we talk about corruption, I would like to mention one of Kigotho’s (2001) papers in which he draws attention to one of the most controversial recent cases in the field of higher education. The case is a good example of the enormous competition and the difficult access to higher education, since in 2001, 90 students dropped out from Egerton University when it turned out that they had fake high school certificates (Kigotho, 2001).

When we look at the meaning of fair play, we are bounded by a conceptual definition. I take a previous study of mine as a basis; there I also dealt with the definitions of the term found in the literature.

The first fair play concept found is in the Declaration on Sport (1964) by ICSSPE (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education), which was “institutionalized” in sports life by the Fair Play Charter adopted in 1974. In the preface of the manifesto, Philip Noel-Baker, the then Nobel Peace Prize winner President of the ICSSPE, said: “The principle of fair play is the essence of all sports competitions, and it is also of fundamental importance in both professional and amateur sports. It requires not only the strict respect of the rules but also the joyful and spontaneous reception of their inner spirit. This concept includes respecting ourselves, and our opponents as well. Without the fair play principle, sporting events could become humiliating and degrading for the participants. If the perfidious practices that unfortunately continue to be present in international and world competitions today, would spread further, the sport as a teaching tool, a recreation, a group form of entertainment, and as a factor of agreement between nations would irrevocably lose its value.” (Baker, 1964: 5-6)

The Code of Sports Ethics (2001: 19-20) issued by the Council of Europe defines the concept of fair play as follows: “Fair play is defined as much more than playing with the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving.”

Hogan (1973) combines the concept of fair play with the moral and social values that are of particular importance in the world of sport. He believes that the behavior and the moral conduct of athletes are determined by the norms and sports rules taught in sports. Hofmann (1990) goes on to assume that empathy is closely associated with most moral principles, thus affecting moral judgment and conclusion, so empathic skills developed with the help of physical education can be decisive in defining fair play behavior.

According to Zsolt (1983), someone who acts sportsmanlike also presents the written and unwritten moral rules, norms; does not mislead anyone and does not use unfair means against others.

According to Keating (1995: 147), “fair play is a kind of moral code that guides behavior in sport.” So, under the concept of fair play, we mean a series of sociomorphic values that are passed on through sport.
According to the concept of Vallerand, Briere, Blanshard, and Provencher (1997), sportsmanship can be defined as the relative respect of rules, judges, social norms, and opponents, as well as the commitment to sport and the lack of negative attitudes regarding participation in sports. The term ‘fair play’ includes several social and moral values that can be applied to sports and physical education as well.

According to Butcher and Schneider (1998: 1), fair play is “the view that sports should use to teach positive social values.” It “is a part of the general moral or social values that are taught through sports and physical activity.”

Horváth and Prisztóka (2005) go back to the past, arguing that the concept of fair play is rooted in the human ideals of the ancient Greek society, which expressed and respected valor, courage, masculinity, honor, and virtue as a life principle. The violation of the rules of ancient Olympics led to serious sanctions. Nowadays, modern minds think that the accelerated world, the pursuit of higher performance, and the immeasurable desire for money overwhelm almost everything else, thus, fair play becomes idealistic with the values it represents as well.

Overall, it can be said that “the conceptual definition of fair play moves on a very wide scale, but there is a common point in the wordings. The notion comes from sport, but it is not just a concept that is closely related to morality, empathy, sportsmanship, respect for others, but it also represents a philosophy. Today, the concept and the spirit of fair play are present in all areas of life.” (Hideg, 2016)

Finally, I conclude the analysis with examining the results of my last question. What do young people think about the concept of fair play, what kind of meaning do they attribute to it? (Figure 5.)

Both college students and primary schoolchildren linked the same three indicators to the notion. During the filling out of the questionnaire, I asked students...
to link three attributes to the concept. Primary schoolchildren think of friendship (29.3%), justice (22.1%), and fairness (16.3%) when hearing the term. In the case of college students, the same three attributes appear in other ratios, with 20.8% of justice, 23.6% of honesty, and 19% friendship. 50-50% of the choices are positive and negative. Based on the results, we can say that the percentage of negative content is low, only fraud (1.5 and 0.5%) and corruption (3.2 and 0.5%) appear in the responses, which may even result from an error of interpretation, bearing the previous questions in mind.

6. Conclusion
The hypotheses of my research were tested in two age groups through a questionnaire study based on the development and the challenges of the Kenyan education system, and the moral values and the norm system of the society.

I assumed that in the Kenyan society, due to the inequalities in the educational system, students and schoolchildren have negative concepts about fair play. My hypothesis was not proved. Figure 5 shows that both primary school students and students in higher education attach a positive meaning to the concept of fair play, and though in a different ratio, the same three attributes are the most important for them. Is it a local, social, and/or socio-cultural characteristic?

My second assumption is that, within the framework of a game, they understand the importance of victory and, in order to achieve this, they would also commit a foul, which was partially confirmed.

To prove this hypothesis, I examined sportsmanlike behavior through three questions. The primary school age group is more likely to cheat and let themselves convince to do so compared to the college age group. According to the results, 54.1% of the schoolchildren would consciously commit a foul to win, 21.8% of them would not pass the ball to their own teammate even if they were in the right position, and 64.7% of them would benefit from the opponent’s injury. The result is somewhat contradictory to the fact that they are aware of the concept of sportsmanship on a theoretical level, but they cannot or will not act so in practice.

Possibly due to age difference, college students are not only theoretically aware of the meaning of fair play. My personal experiences support the results of the questionnaire survey, according to which primary school students are selfish to the utmost meaning of the word, coupled with incredible aggression.

My third and last hypothesis was also confirmed. Resulting from their social conditions, 73.7% of schoolchildren and 84.7% of students thought that corruption in sport existed.

Overall, it can be concluded from the results of the study of the two age groups that Kenyan young people, who grow up in the same social, economic, and socio-cultural environment, are aware of the meaning of fair play in the theoretical sense. However, there is a difference between the two age groups when applying sportsmanship in practice.
The development and implementation of a practical program where young people can learn how to practice good sportsmanship toward their team and in everyday life can be the subject of a further study. Consequently, the short- and long-term results of the program should be examined as well.

**Bibliography**


