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## **Afrocentric Teaching Methodology and Societal Norms among Secondary School Learners in Meru County, Kenya**

**Dr. Joseph Muriungi Kirugua**

Tharaka University College, P. Box 193 MARIMANTI, Kenya.

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### **Abstract**

*The society expects the schooling process to transmit desirable societal norms among learners. Thus cases of undesirable behaviors among the learners have compelled society members to question the effectiveness of teaching methodology used in school system to socialize learners. This study sought to examine the application of Afrocentric teaching methodology to enhance societal norms among secondary school learners in Meru County, Kenya. The study used exploratory descriptive research approach and correlation design. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics used for data analysis was Linear Regression Analysis. The study established that integrating Afrocentric teaching methodology had a fair positive correlation with societal norms which implied that integration of Afrocentric teaching methodology into the contemporary Kenyan school system significantly influences societal norms among secondary school learners at 5% level of significance. The findings of this study will provide vital knowledge regarding societal norms besides providing a basis for further research. The researcher recommended that there is need to integrate Afrocentric teaching methodology into the contemporary school system for maximum enhancement of societal norms.*

**Key Words:** Afrocentric integration, Teaching methodology, Societal norms.

### **Introduction**

Some teaching strategies are more effective in achieving teaching objectives than others. According to a research study by Schaub (2016) on strategies of promoting values in education and a similar study by Hansan (2016) on teaching dispositional strategies, when teachers act as role models, it is more likely for a school system to achieve the objective of inculcating intended values than when teachers live a life different from what they insist on the students. Schaub and Hansan further argue that desired norms are also more effectively instilled in learners when there is collaboration between teachers and parents in discussing the desired norms and values with the

learners. This makes the learners to see the importance of what is stressed in school. Dhiraj (2006) agrees with Schaub (2016) and Hansan (2016) on the need for teachers to be positive role models in order to instill desirable norms and values in learners. Dhiraj (2006) further argues that desired societal norms and values can be more effectively achieved through teaching of religious studies which should include stories on societal norms to keep children glued. These studies however do not show whether teachers indeed act as role models or not and how that impacts on social norms among learners which this study sought to establish.

Research studies by Emdin (2016) on new approaches to teaching and learning show that nurturing students respect for teachers through respecting them and showing them the value of respect during teaching learning process can promote respect for seniors in the society. Schaub (2016) concurs with Emdin and adds that creating the climate for societal norms to flourish in school is an effective way of promoting societal norms in school. This is an effective way of developing students' ownership of the cherished norms and values in school. A research study by Machado (2016) on strategies of promoting values in education, agreed with Emdin (2016) and Schaub(2016) by establishing that desirable behaviors and attitudes in classroom are not achieved by chance. Teachers have to deliberately plan for and provide discussion forums within school system to discuss the value of desirable societal norms. According to Machado (2016) for teachers to plan deliberate transmission of desired norms and values there must be embracing of teaching strategies that encourage practice and transfer and not just for the sake of memorizing and reproducing in exams. Research studies by Machado (2016) on strategies of promoting values in education however raise questions on whether the schools in Kenya use such methodology and how effective it is in inculcating desirable norms and values among learners. This study thus sought to investigate integration of Afrocentric education perspective in school system to enhance societal norms.

Research studies by Hansan (2016) on teaching dispositional strategies reveal that teachers' understanding of student realities and then using that information as a starting point for instruction effectively can promote good behaviors among learners. This knowledge if well utilized can promote experiential learning process, storytelling, reflection, interpretation and guided imagery. According to a study by Kim (2000) on classroom practices that enhance students' sense of community, values and norms are best transferred when students are engaged in the classroom and they can be effectively taught using interesting and creative learning strategies such as differentiation strategies, learning stations, teaching desired virtues through videos, through reflective journals and use of problem solution charts.

For teachers to effectively guide learners in acquiring desired behaviors they must measure students' behavior in classroom and determine why, where and when students use behaviors contrary to societal expectations. According to Hansan (2016) teaching methods that create conducive environment where learners freely interact with one another and stressing the value of

interpersonal relationships in the classroom where teachers provide warmth and supportiveness, encourage cooperation and student engagement.

A research study by Mosha (2002) on traditional education system of the Chagga people of Tanzania, African indigenous education is synonymous with character formation of the learners where moral values play a vital role. According to Mosha (2002) all societal moral values are intended to promote the interest of the community. All societal norms and values were embedded in the community' traditions, customs, rituals, believes and practices of indigenous communities. A research study done by Osabwa (2016) on an analysis of the pedagogical approaches to character formation in Kenyan schools, older members of the society, in the form of resource persons, were directly used in guiding young people. According to Mosha (2002) various styles and stimulus variations were used such as riddles, tongue twisters, proverbs, myths, narratives and folklores, all of which were geared towards desirable societal norms and values.

According to a research finding by Owuor (2007) on integrating African indigenous knowledge in Kenya's formal education system, African indigenous education used teaching methodology that emphasized on practical application of knowledge. According to Weimer (2009) teaching methodology that aims at promoting desired values through education, can be used in a school system. This is because norms and values can be taught directly or indirectly. Directly, norms and values can be organized, planed and taught as independent subject areas such as history or biology. Indirectly, norms and values can be enshrined in a school culture and integrated into various themes in various subjects. Weimer (2009) further advocates for active participation of learners which promotes both conformity and critical thinking as compared to a passive participation where the teacher dominates every stage in teaching - learning experiences.

According to Mariana (2019) themes could also be displayed all over a school environment for certain durations like for a day, for one week or one month. The theme of the week could be incorporated in all lessons throughout the week. According to Weimer (2009) such an approach in school system would lead to improvement in acquisition of intended values in the learners' subconscious mind. Students could also come up with various quotations and pin them on the noticeboard for the period that the corresponding theme runs (Katilmis, 2017). Students are thereby expected to internalize them which helps the learners to form value-based thought in the sub-conscious mind. Another approach could be silent sitting, where the teacher and the learners go through simple relaxation exercises following given instructions with for example eyes closed for some time or listening to a story that teaches moral values and then followed by questions to ensure that learners internalize what is intended for them.

According to Osabwa (2016) teaching strategies that would promote character formation are necessary since students' character is very important in guiding young people and enabling them to live up to the set standards of behavior in the society for the benefit of the individual and the

society. In the traditional African set up, the duty of molding people's character was a responsibility of the entire community and not just for parents. According to Veugelers and Vedder (2003), the focus of many schools in Europe in 1980s changed from conformity and adapting to society to self-fulfillment, social commitment and democracy. During that period there was decline in coherent norms and value system as emancipation became stronger in order to develop one's own value orientation.

The shifting of central focus of schools in Europe affected schools in African as well. Cultural spectrums too have broadened due to globalization (Costanzo, 2005). Osabwa (2016) further established that teaching of character in learners is not taken seriously in school system in Kenya. Osabwa (2016) established that character education was just taken as a formality and only few teachers used teaching strategies that enhances learners' character in schools. Where values were taught, it was highly academic and therefore appealed to the cognitive development at the expense of normative domain. Osabwa (2016) therefore recognized that deliberate efforts have to be made in Kenya to achieve the desired character in the learners and recommended for an integral approach of teaching which would enhance inculcation of desired norms and values.

### **Statement of the Problem**

School system in Kenya is expected to fully socialize and develop desirable social behaviors among the learners. However, occurrences of behaviors that are not in conformity with acceptable social norms continue to be reported in various schools. This inconformity raises concern on the effectiveness of current teaching methodology used by school system to develop acceptable societal norms among learners. This study sought to examine application of Afrocentric teaching methodology into the Kenyan school system to enhance inculcation of societal norms among secondary school learners.

### **Objective**

The objective of the study was to establish the influence of Afrocentric teaching methodology on societal norms among secondary school learners.

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis was tested:

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant influence of Afrocentric teaching methodology on societal norms among secondary school learners in Meru County, Kenya.*

## Methodology

The study utilized exploratory descriptive research design and correlation design. The target population was 86,700 subjects and a sample size of 384 was involved. The validity of the instrument was ascertained. Reliability of the instrument was ascertained through pilot study and a correlation coefficient of 0.774 was established.

## Results and Discussions

Information was sought on Afrocentric teaching methodology and then computed. The frequency results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequencies on Afrocentric Teaching Methodology

Afrocentric Teaching Methodology	SD	D	U	A	SA
Teaching by having learners participate in what they learn promotes self-responsibility.	0	2 (0.5%)	15 (4%)	153 (40.6%)	207 (54.9%)
Use of peer teaching promotes harmonious co-existence.	6 (1.6%)	9 (2.4%)	32 (8.5%)	182 (48.3%)	148 (39.3%)
Having specific approved experts charged with teaching promotes acquisition of good morals.	4 (1.1%)	14 (3.7%)	31 (8.2%)	169 (44.8%)	159 (42.2%)
Teaching by mentoring the learners throughout the developmental stages enhance respect for authority.	0	7 (1.9%)	26 (6.9%)	179 (47.5%)	165 (43.8%)
Involvement of societal members in teaching children promotes good manners among the young people.	6 (1.6%)	19 (5%)	33 (8.8%)	172 (45.6%)	147 (39%)
Active participation of learners in learning experiences encourage hard work.	0	3 (0.8%)	10 (2.7%)	115 (30.5%)	249 (66%)
Average Frequency/Percentage	2.67 (0.7%)	9 (2.4%)	24.5 (6.5%)	161.67 (42.9%)	179.17 (48%)

*SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly agree*

The research findings in Table 1 show that 66% of the respondents strongly agreed that active participation of learners in learning experiences encourage hard work, 30.5% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 2.7% no opinion and 0.8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The findings of this study are echoed by Boateng (1983) and Osabwa (2016) who established that indigenous African ways of socializing young members in the society which had

relative success in instilling desired values, embraced practical application of knowledge. Learners were actively involved in various learning experiences where intended norms and values were inculcated in a lively way. In a similar study, Schaub (2016) supports the findings of the current study by asserting that teaching strategies should promote practice and transfer and not encourage memorization and reproducing contents in examinations.

The information presented in Table 1 shows that 48.3% of the responses agreed with the statement that use of peer teaching promotes harmonious co-existence, 39.3% of the respondents strongly agreed whereas 2.4% disagreed and 1.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. These results are in harmony with Mosha (2002) who established that peer teaching is significantly effective in instilling desirable behaviors among learners. The research results shown in Table 1 also show that 47.5% of the respondents agreed with statement that teaching by mentoring the learners throughout their developmental stages enhance respect for authority, 43.8% strongly agreed whereas 1.9% disagreed with the statement. These findings are in agreement with Hansan (2016) on teaching dispositional strategies who pointed out that when teachers act as positive role models in mentoring the learners, schools can achieve their goal of inculcating desirable behaviors and values more that when teachers live differently from what they direct their learners to be.

The results presented in Table 1 imply that the highest percentage of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the given statements on Afrocentric teaching methodology (66% strongly agreed with active participation of learners in learning experiences encourages hard work whereas 0.8% disagreed, 54.9% strongly agreed with teaching by having learners participate in what they learn promotes self-responsibility whereas 0.5% disagreed, 48.3% agreed with use of peer teaching promotes harmonious co-existence among learners whereas 1.6% strongly disagreed with the statement). These results agree with the results of a study by Emeakaroha (2002) on African world and ideology who argued that traditional African curricula were activity based and that learners therefore caught norms, values and attitudes in a practical set up through various learning experiences.

The information sought through respondents' agreement with statements on Afrocentric teaching methodology was further computed to get means and standard deviations of the responses. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Afrocentric Teaching methodology

Afrocentric Teaching Methodology	N	Mean	SD	CV
Teaching by having learners participate in what they learn promotes self-responsibility.	377	4.50	0.602	13.381
Use of peer teaching promotes harmonious co-existence.	377	4.21	0.820	19.475

Having specific experienced experts charged with teaching promotes acquisition of good morals.	377	4.23	0.834	19.698
Teaching by mentoring the learners throughout the developmental stages enhances respect for authority.	377	4.33	0.687	15.865
Involvement of society members in teaching children promotes good manners among the young people.	377	4.15	0.895	21.542
Active participation of learners in learning experiences encourages hard work.	377	4.62	0.581	12.585
Overall Mean Score		4.34	0.737	17.091

The research findings in Table 2 indicate that active participation of learners in learning experiences encouraging hard work had the highest mean score of 4.62 (Mean = 4.62, SD = 0.581, CV = 12.585) while involvement of society members in teaching children promotes good manners among the young people had the lowest mean score of 4.15 (Mean = 4.15, SD = 0.895, CV = 21.542). This implies that most respondents strongly agreed that active participation of learners in learning experiences encourages hard work. These results agree with Idang (2007) on cultural relativism and the language of morals who said that for proper desirable moral behaviors to manifest among young people, the young people have to be actively involved in a learning discourse that exposes them to such morals which makes it easy for them to internalize what they learn. The language of instruction should also appeal to the learners' mindset to be inclined towards what is desired as they actively practice it in their everyday life. Similarly the results show that all variables in the study had close mean scores ranging from 4.15 to 4.65.

Therefore from the results presented in Table 2, all measures had high agreements with an overall mean score of 4.34 (Mean = 4.34, SD = 0.737, CV = 17.091). This high mean score of respondents' agreement with the statements on Afrocentric teaching methodology implies that it is an approach which from respondents' point of view can enhance societal norms. These results agree with findings of a research study by Gregory and Ripinsky (2008) on adolescent trust in the schools which established that teachers should mentor their learners and provide a support system for them to appreciate what is inculcated in them. The findings of this study also agree with the results of a study by Onyango *et al* (2016) which assert that teachers can facilitate positive behavior in learners by being available for them, to guide them and give them the support necessary while also encouraging them to avoid going contrary to the set rules and standards of behavior.

### **Correlational of Teaching Methodology and Societal norms**

The objective of the current study was to evaluate the influence of Afrocentric teaching methodology on societal norms among secondary school learners in Meru County, Kenya. A correlation analysis was conducted in order to assess the relationships among the research

variables. The results of correlation of teaching methodology and societal norms are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Teaching Methodology and societal norms

		Societal Norms	Integrated Methodology	Afrocentric
Societal Norms	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	377		
Integrated Teaching Methodology	Pearson Correlation	0.512**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		
	N	377	377	

\*\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The results presented in Table 3 show varied degree of relationship between societal norms and integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology. The research findings indicate that integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology had a fair positive correlation with societal norms ( $r = 0.512$ ; sig. 2-tailed =  $0.000 < 0.01$ ). This fair correlation implies that Afrocentric teaching methodology has a fairly positive influence on societal norms among secondary school learners. The findings of this study agree with Gray (2009) on character education in schools who argue that integration of a variety of methods in teaching helps in stimulus variation as well and facilitates learners' acquisition and appreciation of the intended norms and values which define the learners' character traits.

### Regression of Teaching Methodology and Societal Norms

The second objective of the current study was to evaluate the influence of Afrocentric teaching methodology on societal norms among secondary school learners. To assess the relationship between teaching methodology and societal norms, the following hypothesis was tested:

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant influence of Afrocentric teaching methodology on societal norms among secondary school learners in Meru County, Kenya.*

A linear regression analysis was done in order to test the hypothesis at 95% confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The contemporary teaching methodology and integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology were regressed against societal norms to establish the goodness of fit, the overall significance of the Model as well as the individual significance of the Model. The results are presented in Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6.

Information was sought to regress contemporary teaching methodology and integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology against societal norms. This was to establish the percentage of variation of the societal norms that is explained by independent variable. The results are presented in Table 4

Table 4: The Goodness of Fit of the Model

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	ARS	SEE
Integrated Afrocentric Teaching Methodology	.512	0.262	0.260	0.50970

The results presented in Table 4 show that integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology had influence on societal norms with a coefficient of variation as 0.262. This implies that 26.2% of variation in societal norms is explained by the integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology. Based on these results, the study therefore revealed that integrating Afrocentric teaching methodology into the contemporary teaching methodology contributes significantly towards societal norms.

To assess the robustness and overall significance of the Model, the researcher did an analysis of variance. The results are presented in Table 5

Table 5: The Overall Significance of the Model

Model	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	
Integrated Afrocentric Teaching Methodology	Regression	34.524	1	34.524	132.892	0.000
	Residual	97.422	375	0.260		
	Total	131.946	376			

The research findings in Table 5 show that integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology statistically influences societal norms with F statistics = 132.892 and a p-value 0.000 < 0.05. This implies that the regression model is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The study sought to establish significance of individual variables in the Model. The results are presented in Table 6

Table 6: Individual Significance of the Model

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	SE	Beta		
Integrated	(Constant)	1.775	0.184		9.660	0.000

Afrocentric Teaching Methodology	Teaching Methodology	0.583	0.051	0.512	11.528	0.000
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*Dependent Variable: Societal Norms*

The results in Table 6 revealed that there exists a statistically significant relationship between integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology and societal norms at 5% level of significance ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). The regression coefficient was 0.583. This implies that for one unit change in integrated teaching methodology, societal norms increase by a factor of 0.583. The predictive model for societal norms with respect to integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology can be stated as follows:

$Y = 1.775 + 0.583X_2$ ; Where  $Y =$  Societal norms;  $X_2 =$  Integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology ; 1.775 is the constant, 0.583 is the regression coefficient showing the expected increase in value of societal norms corresponding to a unit increase in integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology.

Conclusively the study revealed that integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology influences societal norms at 5% level of significance. The null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of Afrocentric teaching methodology on societal norms among secondary school learners is not supported in the current study at 5% significance.

This study established that integrating Afrocentric teaching methodology into the contemporary school system contributes to enhancement of societal norms. This study is supported by the ideas that were put forward by Emdin (2016) on new approaches to teaching and learning which suggest that nurturing students' respect during teaching learning process can promote respect for seniors in the society. Similarly the study is in line with a study by Schaub (2016) on strategies for promoting values in education which found out that creating a conducive climate for societal norms to flourish in school, is an effective way of promoting desirable societal norms in a school system. Schaub (2016) similarly established that societal norms are more enhanced in the classroom when there is collaboration between teachers, parents and students in discussing the desired norms and values in the society.

In a study on strategies of promoting values in education, Dhiraj (2016) supports the current study by establishing that desired societal norms are significantly enhanced through teaching of religious studies as it promotes respect for dignity and sanctity of human life. The findings of the current study are further echoed by Machado (2016) who established that societal norms are enhanced when teachers use teaching strategies that provide discussion forums within school system to discuss the value of desirable societal norms. The findings of this study however disagree with the results of a similar study by Narvaez and Lapsey (2016) on teaching of moral

education which found that students' social behavior is more influenced by their community's way of life than just by teaching strategies used by teachers in the classroom.

## Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed that Afrocentric teaching methodology contributes significantly to improvement of societal norms at 5% level of significance. This is explained by integration of Afrocentric teaching methodology which had a higher coefficient of determination. The study indicates that a high percentage of variation in societal norms in the Model was as a result of integrating Afrocentric teaching methodology into the current Kenyan school system. A unit change in integrated Afrocentric teaching methodology similarly resulted to the higher increase in societal norms. From the results of this study, the researcher therefore concludes that integrating Afrocentric teaching methodology into the current Kenyan teaching methodology would significantly improve societal norms among secondary school learners.

## Recommendations

The researcher made the following conclusions:

- (i) There is need to integrate Afrocentric teaching methodology into the contemporary school system for maximum enhancement of societal norms.
- (ii) There is need to sensitize teachers, learners and all key school stakeholders on the importance of integration of Afrocentric teaching methodology into Kenyan school system.

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