

公正性と包摂性に関する教師と生徒の認識 ——ケニア農村部4校の公立・私立小学校の事例——

Perception of Teachers and Pupils on Equity and Inclusion: A Case Study of Four Public and Private Schools in Rural Kenya

西村 幹子 NISHIMURA, Mikiko

● 国際基督教大学
International Christian University

Keywords 初等教育, ケニア, 公正性, 包摂性, 公立私立
Primary education, Kenya, Equity, Inclusion, Public-Private

ABSTRACT

公正性と包摂性は、2015年に設定された持続可能な開発目標の中で最も優先度の高い議題の一つとされているが、主要な国際的および国内的な政策文書において、その意味や実践についての明確な記載は乏しい。本稿は、小学校の教師と生徒の認識を分析し、実際の学校における公正性と包摂性の実践に係る実態を理解することを目的とした。具体的には、ケニア農村部における公立と私立の4校の小学校を事例とし、72名の教師と155名の6年生児童に質問紙調査を行った。結果として、教師は生徒の異なる集団間のダイナミックスを把握しておらず、集団活動における配慮は学業成績に偏っていることが明らかになった。生徒は、異なる集団間においてより複雑な感情を抱いており、その感情は、成績の如何ではなく、社会経済的な地位や障害の有無に関連していた。また、教師の公正性と包摂性に対する認識、いじめの発生状況、その対象、およびその解決方法において、公立校と私立校の間に違いが見られた。学校現場において、公正性と包摂性が実質的、実践的な意味を持つには、より明確な定義と現実的で戦略的な選択肢が吟味されなくてはならない。

Despite the fact that equity and inclusion became one of the top priority agendas in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, major international and domestic policy documents in Kenya remain with less clarity of its meaning and actual practice in reality. Against this background, this article attempts to analyze perception of teachers and pupils to understand actual practice on equity and inclusion in rural public and private schools in Kenya. A case study of four schools was adopted using surveys with 72 teachers and 155 Grade 6 pupils. The results show that teachers in both public and private schools are less aware of and often overlook the dynamics within different groups of pupils in their group work than how pupils experience it. While teachers focus on academic abilities in group assignments, pupils have more nuanced feelings for working with different groups of pupils. Their concerns are primarily related to the socio-economic and disability lines rather than academic ability. Public and private schools have differences in teachers' perception on equity and inclusion, the incidence of bullying, the types of victims of bullying,

and the way of handling bullying. There is a need for clearer definition with realistic and strategic options of equity and inclusion in each context to enable these values to be practiced in school settings.

1. Contextualizing equity and inclusion

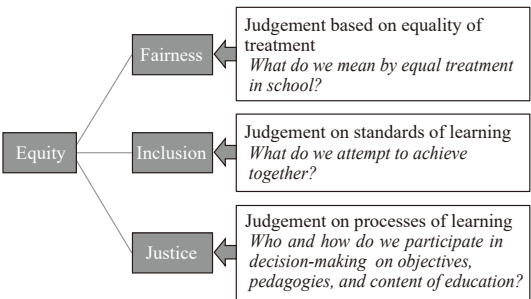
1.1 Equity and inclusion in education

Equity and inclusion became one of the top priority agendas in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. While equity and inclusion have a variety of definitions and approaches to it, many policy documents barely articulate their definitions (Nishimura & Sasaoka, 2017).

Equity stipulated in the international policy documents has three dimensions, namely, fairness, inclusion, and justice. OECD defines fairness as treatment of all pupils without favor regardless of gender, ethnicity, and other socio-economic backgrounds while inclusion is defined as ensuring all pupils achieve a basic standard of learning (Schleicher, 2014). Whereas OECD and the World Bank emphasize the academic achievement of pupils in the standardized tests as a measurement of equity and inclusion, UNICEF focuses on broader capabilities and rights of every child in considering equity in education (FTI-UNGEI, 2010; Schleicher, 2014; Wodon, 2016). Another polar is UNESCO, who stresses the dimension of justice in equity whereby they claim the importance of involvement of a diverse population in setting educational objectives and all the process of ensuring learning opportunities (UNESCO, 2015). Among the three dimensions of equity, the dimension of justice proposes a democratic and progressive participation in decision-making in education while the dimension of fairness and inclusion tend to be based on the technocratically set standards to measure its status.

As Figure 1 shows, equity has various judgements in its perceived reality. On the dimension of fairness, one should ask what we mean by treating all equally. The dimension of inclusion requires

Figure 1
Dimensions of Equity and Judgements in Education



Source: Created by Author.

clarity as in what kind of learning we are intending to achieve together. The dimension of justice is more concerned about the learning process and participation in its decision-making on objectives, pedagogy, and content of learning. Such judgements can vary depending on society and even on individuals and this is the very reason why we need to examine how people perceive and judge equity and inclusion in reality. It is in this divergent policy sphere that equity and inclusion remain top agenda with less clarity of its meaning in practice and hence it is deemed critical to examine how each country context deals with equity and inclusion.

1.2 Equity and inclusion in the Kenyan context

The Ministry of Education (MoE) of Kenya has published a series of policy documents stipulating the importance of equity and inclusion at the basic education level since 2015 (MoE, 2015; 2018a; 2018b; 2021). In the Kenyan context, disadvantaged population has been identified in the Arid and semi-Arid Land (ASAL) with high incidences of poverty rate and a low level of participation in education. The MoE also has two specific policy documents addressed to gender and disability and considers them as important

categories for equity and inclusion (MoE, 2015; 2018b). The curriculum implemented since 2018 abolished the academically focused and nationally standardized primary leaving examination of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and in turn emphasized a diverse ability of pupils including non-academic and practical subjects to ensure equal learning opportunities for all children based on their talent and potential course of life (MoE, 2018a).

Nevertheless, no definition is given in the policy documents in terms of three dimensions of equity and inclusion as discussed in the previous section and it is unclear as in how to ensure equity and inclusion in daily school life of children in Kenya. In addition, there has never been any study that examines if teachers and pupils perceive the school environment as conducive to equity and inclusion.

Against this background, this article attempts to analyze perceptions of teachers and pupils, as the most important stakeholders of education in practice, to understand actual practice on equity and inclusion in schools. By doing so, it aims to understand their experience in daily school environment, to depict common and discrepant features in their shared experience, and to draw some implications for theory and practice.

Specific research questions were as follows:

1. How do teachers and pupils perceive different groups to work together in school?
2. What are common and different features of their perception on equity and inclusion between teachers and pupils and between public and private schools in the rural context?

2. Methodology

2.1 Case study site

The case study was conducted in one of the ASAL areas in Kenya in July, 2023. Four schools, namely, two public and two private schools, were

chosen based on a typical rural context where they share diverse backgrounds of pupils, albeit vast majority belong to the Maasai ethnic group. These schools are located in the same neighborhoods. The author has worked in this area for over 10 years in collaboration with a local researcher.

Pupils in public schools mostly come from the neighborhood with distances ranging from a 10-minute walk to a 2-hour walk. Most public-school pupils selected the school either because it was in their neighborhood or because their siblings were already attending it.

Most private-school pupils chose the school because they believed it was superior to others. Thus, school choice is possible in this rural context and pupils tend to choose a private school for better quality when it is affordable as it has been documented at the national scale (Nishimura & Yamano, 2013).

The enrollment is relatively large in all schools, namely, 868 in School A (public), 599 in School B (public), 369 in School C (private), and 800 in School D (private). KCPE results are considerably higher in private schools compared to public schools with a difference of nearly 90 to 170 points out of 500¹.

2.2 Data

The data was gathered through a survey conducted in English, involving all 72 teachers (29 from public schools and 33 from private schools) and 155 Grade 6 pupils (87 from public schools and 68 from private schools) across two public and two private schools in rural areas of Loitokitok sub-County, within Kenya's ASAL region. One Grade 6 class was randomly selected in each school, ranging from the sample size of 33 to 47 pupils. The survey was conducted in support of the Loitokitok sub-County Education Office and a local researcher familiar with the area working as a non-governmental organization (NGO) staff

While teachers completed their surveys independently, we explained and read each question aloud for the pupils as they filled in their responses. When necessary, a research collaborator explained a question in Maasai or Swahili language for clarification.

3.1 Perception and practice of teachers

A word cloud in the shape of a heart, set against a dark grey background. The words are in various shades of white and light grey, with sizes corresponding to their frequency. The most prominent words are 'equality', 'gender', 'everyone', 'treat', 'regardless', 'equally', 'gender', 'equity', 'pupil', 'equal', 'fair', 'equity', 'group', 'fairness', 'resources', 'learners', 'ethnic', 'justice', 'pupils', 'children', 'groups', 'resources', 'impartial', 'sharing', 'equality', 'refers', 'among', 'different', 'opportunity', 'people', 'fairly', 'religion', 'ability', 'ethnicity', 'cultural', 'national', 'international', 'social', 'economic', 'political', 'environmental', 'gender', 'age', 'disability', 'sexual orientation', 'marital status', 'religion', 'ethnicity', 'nationality', 'race', 'ethnic origin', 'social class', 'place of birth', 'place of residence', 'place of work', 'place of study', 'place of worship', 'place of recreation', 'place of interest', 'place of origin', 'place of birth', 'place of residence', 'place of work', 'place of study', 'place of worship', 'place of recreation', 'place of interest', 'place of origin'.

Figure 3
Perception of Private-School Teachers on Equity



32 | Educational Studies 67
International Christian University

Table 1*Number of Teachers who Responded that They Consider an Indicated Factor in Group Work*

School	Factor	Gender (%)	Ethnicity (%)	Disability (%)	Academic ability (%)
A- Public		6 (35.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	15 (88.2)
B- Public		4 (33.3)	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	7 (58.3)
C- Private		4 (23.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	16 (94.1)
D- Private		11 (42.3)	1 (3.8)	6 (23.1)	23 (84.7)
Total		25 (34.7)	2 (2.8)	7 (9.7)	61 (84.7)

Note. The cases of disability in Private School D are mostly learning disability. Private schools do not have teachers specializing in special needs education and thus only accept children with a slight learning disability.

Source: Created by Author.

Regarding bullying, the tendency is quite different between public and private schools as shown in Table 2. Public-school teachers witness more bullying than the private-school teachers². Public-school teachers witness more bullying targeting ethnic minorities compared to private-school teachers, while private-school teachers witness more bullying related to poverty and

disability than their public-school counterparts. Furthermore, more private-school teachers responded that they report the case of bullying to headteachers than do public-school counterparts (Data not shown).

Majority of teachers in both public and private schools also perceive that different groups do not make pupils uncomfortable in working together,

Table 2*Number of Teachers who Witness Bullying and Victims of Bullying*

	Witness bullying*		Witnessed victim of bullying					
	Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Ethnic minority (%)*	Disabled (%)†	Strong character (%)	Poor (%)*
Public	1 (3.4)	14 (48.3)	8 (27.6)	7 (24.1)	6 (20.7)	4 (13.8)	2 (6.9)	1 (3.4)
Private	0 (0.0)	9 (20.9)	10 (23.3)	9 (20.9)	3 (7.0)	12 (27.9)	7 (16.3)	9 (20.9)
All	1 (1.4)	23 (31.9)	18 (25.0)	16 (22.2)	9 (12.5)	16 (22.2)	9 (12.5)	10 (13.9)

Note. *indicates that the difference between public and private schools is statistically significant at 5% level and †indicate statistically significant difference at 10% level.

Source: Created by Author.

Table 3*Number of Teachers who Acknowledge Pupils' Discomfort in Working with Different Groups*

School	Same gender (%)	Different gender (%)	Same ethnicity (%)	Different ethnicity (%)	Same neighborhood (%)	Different neighborhood (%)	Disability (%)
A- Public	1 (5.9)	2 (11.8)	1 (5.9)	2 (11.8)	6 (35.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (17.6)
B- Public	1 (8.3)	2 (16.7)	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	5 (41.7)	3 (25.0)	1 (8.3)
C- Private	4 (23.5)	3 (17.6)	2 (11.8)	0 (0.0)	8 (47.1)	1 (5.9)	2 (11.8)
D- Private	5 (19.2)	5 (19.2)	4 (15.4)	2 (7.7)	8 (30.8)	1 (3.8)	5 (19.2)
Total	11 (15.3)	12 (16.7)	8 (11.1)	5 (6.9)	27 (37.5)	5 (6.9)	11 (15.3)

Source: Created by Author.

implying that they can be treated equally with paying no attention to group dynamics. Table 3 indicates that the sole significant perceived factor contributing to pupils' discomfort, as identified by teachers, is being from the same neighborhood.

3.2 Perception and practice of pupils

Among the 155 sampled pupils from both public and private schools, 95% reported that they greatly enjoy school. Half of the pupils prefer in-class learning, while the other half favor extracurricular activities. 76.2% of pupils believe that making everyone feel comfortable at school is possible, still a majority yet little less than the proportion of teachers who believed so. 82.6% of pupils responded that they help struggling learners to understand a lesson.

As for treatment by group, although majority of pupils perceive that treatment of different gender and ethnicity is always equal at school, public-

school pupils perceive less so than private-school counterparts (see Table 4). Pupils' perception is supported by a stark difference in teachers' report on their equal treatment by gender and ethnicity in public and private schools.

With regard to bullying, it was found that public-school pupils witness more bullying than the private-school pupils as shown in Table 5. Public-school pupils witness bullying for ethnic minority and pupils with disability more than private-school pupils while private-school pupils witness more bullying for pupils with poverty than do public school counterparts. This result is not consistent with that of teachers. When asked about how to handle bullying, 42.6% of private-school pupils reported that they would stop bullying, while only 24.1% of public-school pupils responded the same. Majority of public-school pupils (70.1%) reported that they would tell teachers about bullying, while 50% of private-school pupils responded so.

Table 4
Number of Pupils who Perceive that School's Treatment for Gender and Ethnicity is Always Equal as Compared to Teachers' Perception

	Gender (%)		Ethnicity (%)	
	Pupils	Teachers*	Pupils*	Teachers†
Public schools	67 (77.0)	20 (69.0)	61 (70.1)	21 (72.4)
Private schools	61 (89.7)	42 (97.7)	64 (94.1)	40 (93.0)
All	128 (82.6)	62 (86.1)	125 (80.6)	61 (84.7)

Note. *indicates that the difference between public and private schools is statistically significant at 5% level and †indicate statistically significant difference at 10% level.
Source: Created by Author.

Table 5
Number of Pupils who Witness Bullying and Victims of Bullying

	Witness bullying*				Witnessed victim of bullying			
	Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Ethnic minority (%)†	Disabled (%)*	Strong character (%)	Poor (%)
Public	30 (35.3)	25 (29.4)	8 (9.2)	10 (11.5)	24 (27.6)	25 (28.7)	7 (8.0)	2 (2.3)
Private	5 (7.5)	19 (28.4)	6 (8.8)	5 (7.4)	10 (14.7)	2 (2.9)	6 (8.8)	3 (4.4)
All	35 (23.0)	44 (28.9)	14 (9.0)	15 (9.7)	34 (21.9)	27 (17.4)	13 (8.4)	5 (3.2)

Note. *indicates a statistically significant difference between public and private schools at 5% level, while †indicates the same at 10% level.
Source: Created by Author.

There is a statistically significant difference between public- and private-school pupils' perception on what makes pupils comfortable in doing group work together. While both public- and private-school pupils are concerned about gender, public-school pupils are more in favor of working with different gender as opposed to the same gender preferred by private-school pupils. Additionally, private-school pupils prefer working with pupils of the same ethnicity, while public-school pupils prefer working with pupils of different ethnicities. Public-school pupils also prefer working with pupils with disabilities compared to their private-school counterparts.

When asked about whom they feel most uncomfortable working with in a group, there is no statistically significant difference in the responses between private- and public-school pupils. Pupils generally feel uncomfortable working with peers from different backgrounds in terms of gender, ethnicity, neighborhood, and disability. However, public-school pupils specifically report feeling most uncomfortable working with peers of the same ethnicity.

It is also noteworthy that pupils and teachers have differing perceptions of what causes discomfort in group settings. While teachers believe that only the same neighborhood causes

pupils discomfort, pupils themselves consider neighborhood to be a minor concern.

4. Discussion and Tentative Conclusion

Equity and inclusion are frequently included in school agendas, but their emphasis and the methods to achieve them vary across the four schools and between teachers and pupils. It has been observed that teachers often overlook the dynamics within different groups and are less aware of the group dynamics among pupils. Their primary focus in group assignments is on academic performance, which aligns with the previous curriculum's strong emphasis on academics and the definitions of inclusion provided by the OECD and the World Bank. Despite the new curriculum's broader emphasis on pupils' abilities and a stronger focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, teachers do not appear to actively mix pupils from diverse backgrounds to foster intentional learning from one another and practice equity and inclusion on purpose. Teachers' perception on how pupils' feel about working with different groups differ significantly from pupils' own reports in both public and private schools. Pupils have more nuanced feelings for working with different groups of pupils with their concerns primarily focused on

Table 6
Number of Pupils who Reported Comfort and Discomfort in Working with Different Groups

School	Same gender (%)	Different gender (%)	Same ethnicity (%)	Different ethnicity (%)	Same neighborhood (%)	Different neighborhood (%)	Disability (%)
Most comfortable in doing a group work together							
Public	22 (27.5)	30 (37.5)	1 (1.3)	6 (7.5)	3 (3.8)	1 (1.3)	17 (21.3)
Private	33 (51.6)	15 (23.4)	11 (17.2)	1 (1.6)	2 (3.1)	1 (1.6)	1 (1.6)
Total	55 (38.2)	45 (31.3)	12 (8.3)	7 (4.9)	5 (3.5)	2 (1.4)	18 (12.5)
Most uncomfortable in doing a group work together							
Public	19 (22.4)	20 (23.5)	11 (12.9)	6 (7.1)	3 (3.5)	5 (5.9)	21 (24.7)
Private	9 (15.0)	16 (26.7)	5 (8.3)	8 (13.3)	2 (3.3)	6 (10.0)	14 (23.3)
Total	28 (19.3)	36 (24.8)	16 (11.0)	14 (9.7)	5 (3.4)	11 (7.6)	35 (24.1)

Source: Created by Author.

socio-economic and disability lines rather than academic ability.

The study also found that equity and inclusion are perceived and practiced differently by type of school in rural Kenya. Teachers and pupils in public schools report witnessing more instances of bullying. The victims of this bullying include both girls and boys, ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, pupils with strong personalities, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Private schools rarely witness the case of bullying, but their victims are concentrated on pupils with disability and a poor background according to teachers. Given that the majority of teachers and pupils feel that pupils of all gender and ethnicity are equally treated in private schools, their sense of equity and inclusion may overlook other types of marginalization. As private schools have less diversity in socio-economic backgrounds, with a narrow disability status among pupils with less severe learning disabilities, there may be a limited experience of equity and inclusion issues. Furthermore, teachers tend to focus on private coaching as additional treatment for pupils, rather than taking a collaborative learning method to mainstream pedagogy with equity consciousness.

It is also important to note that the approaches to handling bullying differ significantly between public and private schools. Private-school pupils tend to address bullying on their own, whereas public-school pupils are more likely to report to teachers rather than resolving them independently. In contrast, private-school teachers report to headteacher about bullying more than public-school teachers do. The different style of problem-solving and school management and its consequence may require more investigation to clarify management strategies and decision-making processes for respecting different groups and making school conducive environment for all pupils. Bullying is a concern of violence and

potential capability of each child as promoted by UNICEF and how to prevent and solve the issue may need attention to participation of a wider school community to address especially when it involves a group dynamic of socio-economic and disability backgrounds as indicated by UNESCO.

Equity and inclusion are widely respected values in all schools on surface. However, it is hard to witness intentional practice of learning geared towards equity and inclusion in practice. The gap between teachers' and pupils' perceptions indicates that attention to equity and inclusion of pupils with different backgrounds is not sufficient to make a school environment comfortable for all pupils. It is the individual judgements we make everyday in schools that define equity and inclusion in practice.

As the SDGs promote equity and inclusion and the policy documents in many countries echo such values in education, there is a need for clearer definition with realistic and strategic options of equity and inclusion in each context to enable them to be practiced in school setting. Otherwise, equity and inclusion will remain an elusive quest for ideal, far from reality.

Acknowledgement

This research was supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Grant-in Aid for Scientific Research (A), 2022-2026 (22H00079, Keiichi Ogawa).

Notes

- 1 The Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam for Grade 8 was conducted annually in all schools in Kenya to show the academic performance of schools in the former curriculum. The recent average scores were 215-250 in School A, 200-256 in School B, 350-375 in School C, and 330-340 in School D respectively.
- 2 A survey question had three options, not at all, sometimes but not always, and always.

References

- Fast Track Initiative (FTI) and United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). 2010. Equity and Inclusion in Education: A Guide to Support Education Sector Plan Preparation, Revision, and Appraisal. Washington, DC: EFA FTI Secretariat.
- Ministry of Education (MoE), Republic of Kenya. (2015). Education and training sector gender policy. Nairobi: MoE.
- (2018a). Competency based education and training policy framework. Nairobi: MoE.
- (2018b). Our promise to learners and trainees with disabilities: Education and training policy and implementation guidelines for learners and trainees with disabilities. Nairobi: MoE.
- (2021). Policy on information and communication technology in education and training. Nairobi: MoE.
- Nishimura, M. & Yamano, T. (2013). Emerging Private Education in Africa: Determinants of School Choice in Rural Kenya. *World Development*, 43, 266-275.
- Nishimura, M. & Sasaoka, Y. (2017). Global governance and development on equality and equity. *Journal of International Development Studies*, 25(1-2), 35-46. In Japanese.
- Schleicher, A. (2014). Equity, Excellence and Inclusiveness in Education: Policy Lessons from around the World. Paris: OECD.
- UNESCO (2015). Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good? Paris: UNESCO.
- Wodon, Q. (2016). What matters most for equity and Inclusion in Education Systems: A Framework Paper. SABER Working Paper Series. No.10. Washington, DC: World Bank.