

Preface

Children grow up in several and different environments; home, school, community and religious organizations provide experiences from which children acquire and develop skills, attitudes and attachments which characterize them as individuals and shape their choice and performance of adult roles.

This book is about practices and processes involved in socialization and education, particularly the agencies concerned with the ways in which schools, through their teachers, curricula and organization, deliberately and/or informally influence the young.

Among all agencies of socialization, schools are in a strong position to exert influence upon the young. This stems in part from their specialized functions and expertise concerning scholastic and technical instruction. Schools introduce forms of authority to students, social and working relationships and occupational roles. Some of this influence is specific and overt, operating through deliberate instruction to more or less determined objectives.

Although there is much emphasis on schools and their students, it would make little sense to discuss schools in isolation from other agencies of socialization. Consequently, we have discussed the influence of other socialising agencies such as home, peers, media and religious organizations, school processes, and practices on educational outcomes. By doing this, it is hoped that the influence of each socialization agent has been put in its proper perspective and that its limitations can be appreciated.

The first chapter discusses the development of sociology as a discipline and some of its various branches. Chapter 2 deals specifically with the origins and development of sociology of education and its concerns. Sociological theories and their application to education are contained in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 looks at socialization, particularly, the agents of socialization and the relationships between socialization and education. Chapter 5 discusses the role and purpose of indigenous education while Chapter

6 examines how moral education was imparted on the young during pre-colonial era. Chapter 7 examines the relationship between culture and education.

Culture is the main content of curriculum of any education system while education is seen as a major agent of development. However, as much as education is viewed as an instrument of social and economic development, it contributes in some ways to social inequality. Chapter 8 therefore discusses education and social stratification. Chapter 9 looks at the sociology of the classroom by examining its complex environment. Chapter 10 highlights the factors affecting the education of girls while chapter 11 discusses the teacher and teaching profession and the changing multiple roles of the teacher in response to societal changes. Finally, Chapter 12 is a case study of the attitudes of Kenyan undergraduate students and perceptions towards the teaching profession.

It is our hope that students of sociology of education will find this book resourceful in the course of their study.

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