

Abstract

Primary school education in Kenya is structured to foster a set of principles and ethics that protect and promote democratic values in the learner. It has the responsibility of helping children develop an appreciation of core democratic values and develop a sense of commitment and attachment to those democratic values. However, studies have revealed that schools are not giving young people freedom of expression and appropriate participation in policymaking. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of primary school education in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County. The study was informed by three objectives that sought to; assess the effectiveness of the goals of primary school education in instilling democratic values among pupils; determine the effectiveness of primary school co-curricular activities in instilling democratic values among pupils and determine the effectiveness of the content of primary school curriculum in instilling democratic values among pupils in public primary schools. The analysis was based on the principles of John Rawls philosophy. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 6700 subjects, comprising of 5950 standard seven pupils and 750 teachers in public primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County. Simple random sampling was used to select schools and standard seven pupils while purposive sampling was used to select teachers. A sample size of 370 respondents which comprised of 325 pupils and 45 teachers participated in the study. A pilot study was carried in two primary schools in Igembe South Sub-County, which were not to participate in the study because these schools had similar characteristics with the sampled schools. Validity of the instruments was ensured through expert judgment by supervisors from Chuka University. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient using the test-retest method was used to estimate reliability of instruments. A correlation coefficient of 0.78 was generated for the pupils' questionnaires and 0.82 for the teachers' questionnaires. The data collected from the questionnaires was cleaned, coded and entered in the computer for analysis using SPSS version 21. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Analyzed data was presented using frequency tables and pie charts. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The findings of the study revealed that goals of primary school education, co-curricular activities and curriculum content help in instilling democratic values among pupils. The study recommends that teachers should be conscious of the importance of the goals of education in instilling democratic values. Teachers and primary school stakeholders should be sensitized on the importance of enabling learners to participate in co-curriculum activities to help in instilling democratic values. The methods of curriculum delivery should be aligned with activities that promote democratic values amongst the learners. The researcher concludes that the recommendations made would prove quite instrumental in informing the policy makers, teachers, pupils and other education stakeholders on the effectiveness of primary school education in instilling democratic values.