PROMOTING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FOR EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE

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Abstract

Purpose: To achieve the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), strong political leadership, willingness to change and effective outcome-based governance will be required. Governments must align national policies with the SDGs’ scope and complexity. Effective governance is critical to achieving the 17 goals. Good governance will help by creating an environment conducive to collective action, holding actors accountable, and dealing with emerging complex trade-offs between goals. The Kenya Vision 2030’s political pillar is “a democratic political system that is issue-based, people-centred, result-oriented, and accountable to the public.” This highlights the importance of citizen participation in governance. This study delved into what can be done to promote citizen participation to enhance effective and accountable governance in Kenya.

Design/methodology/approach applied: Herein, a literature review approach, drawing from published peer-reviewed journal articles and grey literature (working papers, reports from credible databases of research institutions, and official government documents) was employed to elucidate discussions and conclusions.

Main findings: Tightening the democracy-education nexus, which aims at awareness creation and capacity building, is critical to promoting citizen participation and improving effective and accountable governance. Education promotes political interests and fosters civic skills thereby increasing the likelihood of political participation. An effective civic education teaches citizens about their rights and responsibilities as citizens, as well as the functioning of the government. Civic education in a democracy is self-government education. Democratic self-government entails citizens actively participating in their governance rather than passively accepting the dictums or demands of others. Education, on the other hand, should be linked to inclusivity and diversity.

Practical implications: There is a need to develop an informed and empowered citizenry capable of successfully engaging in governance affairs to influence governance outcomes in the best interests of the community and posterity. Capacity building, similarly, should be an ongoing process incorporated into the community participatory framework or institutions at various administrative levels. Furthermore, training must be sensitive to, and target or capture, the community’s various social categories’ concerns and needs.

Originality/value: While acknowledging the importance of addressing the status quo and need for citizen participation in governance, this study also delves into mechanisms that can be used to promote citizen participation in an intergenerational and intersectional manner while keeping in mind Kenya’s national development blueprint, Vision 2030, as well as the United Nations' Agenda 2030 to "Leave No One, No Place Behind."

Keywords: Citizen Participation; Democracy; Education; Governance; Kenya
1. INTRODUCTION
The SDGs are a global call to action to reposition the world toward a more sustainable course. They demonstrate a bold commitment and reflect a perspective that sees the environment, economy, and society as interconnected systems. The goals are aspirational and interrelated since they are universal and country-driven. To achieve one aim, it is necessary to address challenges that are more frequently associated with others. They are critical to "Leaving No One, No Place Behind," which encompasses comprehensiveness, inclusion, and equity, making governance quality critical. The path to SDGs necessitates dynamic channels of efficient governance that form effective links. It is critical to take action on critical governance concerns such as rule-based governance, quality administration and management, transparency, accountability, anti-corruption tools, and so on. Integration, engagement, and reflexivity are required at different levels of governance. The SDGs' transformative nature involves the effective use of public resources, the promotion of inclusive and accountable processes, and the assurance of data robustness for good governance (1).

Strong political leadership, willingness to change and good, outcomes-based governance will be required to achieve the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Governments must align national policies with the scope and complexity of the SDGs. The achievement of the 17 goals is dependent on effective governance which will aid in this effort by fostering a climate conducive to collective action, holding actors accountable, and dealing with emerging complex trade-offs between goals. The political pillar of Kenya Vision 2030 is "a democratic political system that is issue-based, people-centred, result-oriented, and accountable to the public." This emphasises the significance of citizen participation in governance. While acknowledging the importance of addressing the status and need for citizen participation in governance, this study probed into what can be done to promote citizen participation to enhance effective and accountable governance in Kenya in an intergenerational and intersectional manner while keeping in mind Kenya's national development blueprint, Vision 2030, as well as the United Nations' Agenda 2030 to "Leave No One, No Place Behind."

2. Design/methodology/approach applied
The study employed a literature review approach, drawing from published peer-reviewed journal articles and grey literature (working papers, reports from credible databases of research institutions, and official government documents such as Kenya Vision 2030 development blueprint and the Constitution of Kenya). The literature search was primarily conducted in English, with Google search operators (Google advanced search operators or Google search commands) used to supplement regular text searches and aid in the narrowing of search results, particularly for content research. In the search, various combinations of the words "Citizen Participation," "Democracy," "Education," "Civic Education," "Governance," and "Kenya" were used.

3. Results and Discussion
The 20th century saw an exponential rise in social scientists that held the view that maintaining democracy required some level of literacy(2,3). The gain from a child's education, according to Friedman & Friedman (1962), accrues not just to the child or his parents but also to other members of the society... through creating a stable and democratic society. Education is intended to promote democracy by influencing individuals' competence and cognitive orientations, as well as by providing experiences that instil democratic values.

3.1 Is there a direct or indirect relationship between education and democracy?
Three main arguments that link education with democracy are underlined in prior research advances: The connection between education and tolerance, the connection between education and participation, and a third perspective that sees increased education as conducive to social equality(5). According to the first point of view, which strongly highlights the link between education and tolerance; tolerant people should be more likely to support democratic principles such as the acceptance of the rights of the opposition and marginalised groups. Lipset (1959), for example, believed that education helps people understand the significance of tolerance norms. Elsewhere Bobo & Licari (1989), education alters people's cognitive styles, making them more likely to recognise the importance of extending civil liberties to those they disagree with. Further, Bobo & Licari (1989) added that education alters people's cognitive styles, making them more likely to recognise the importance of extending civil liberties to those they disagree with. Similarly, Golebiowska (1995) argued that higher education fosters individual value priorities that promote greater political diversity. Several studies have found that education is a significant predictor of political(6–8).

According to the second point of view, which showcases the link between education and participation, education fosters civic skills and political interests, which increases the likelihood of political participation(9). Early studies on voter turnout by Ameson (1925)and Harrison (1927)discovered that more educated people were more likely to vote. An increase in education capacity, according to Glaeser et al. (2007), should favour pro-democracy groups rather than authoritarian ones because education is important in motivating support for groups that are primarily driven by peer persuasion rather than direct rewards. Several works focusing on the United States (9,13) and the comparative politics literature have found a positive relationship between education and political participation(12,14). Weinberg and Findlers, on the other hand, demonstrated that teachers of numerous specialisations who are engaged in the general mission of civic education through a variety of school approaches are already bringing their own conceptions of citizenship—what is referred to as educational political agendas—to bear in the classroom and their teaching for democracy in the United Kingdom. These agendas, where neither formal nor informal training has been received, are incompatible with the pedagogical and ideological vision of a 'justice-oriented' active citizenship, in which politics is 'lived' as much as 'learned' and grounded in political literacy. A formalised training scheme within non-specialist initial teacher training...
(ITT) could not be more important in this context to guard against the anti-democratic scenario in which future citizens' education becomes a lightning rod for party political interests and ensure that citizens receive a holistic political education that prepares them to be much more than an obedient, employable workforce in the decades to come(15).

Based on the third perspective, which sees increased education as beneficial to social equality, measures of educational attainment are closely related to income inequality. Several studies have found this link: Park (1996) and De Gregorio and Lee (2002) discovered that average years of education have a strong negative impact on income inequality; Boix and Stokes (2003) discovered that increases in economic equality (as measured by farm ownership and literacy rates) increase both the likelihood of a democratic transition and the stability of democratic regimes. According to Alemán and Kim, increased education promotes democratisation and the effect of education on democracy is income-dependent (5).

However, there are significant challenges to all three interpretations. For example, scholars have argued that democracies can be sustained by an informed elite even if the population has low levels of tolerance, that increases in political participation may not favour democratic stability, and that redistributive conflicts related to income inequality do not explain the emergence of many modern democracies(19). Acemoglu et al. (2005) examined data from 104 countries between 1965 and 2000 and discovered that increases in education have no effect on democratic levels. The authors concluded that omitted factors influencing both education and democracy drive the cross-sectional relationship between education and democracy. Since this study, new research has challenged Acemoglu et al. (2005)'s findings using a sample of fewer countries dating back further in time(21), as well as alternative estimators and controls (22).

These studies, however, do not take into account that null or weak findings may be due in part to education having different effects in developing versus developed countries. According to Yoldaş, the primary goal of civic education is to prepare students to become mature and capable citizens. Civic education and political commitment, in the end, are crucial to the working of democratic societies. Civic education is essential to a modern democracy's political culture. At this point, the 'school' institution is in charge of teaching children and young people about politics and empowering them to become critical and conscious citizens with their own opinions about political participation. Given an interest in political participation, however, the mass media is an important link between participation and politics because young people learn about politics through the media. Political discussions and discussions with family, friends, or at school can have a positive impact on knowledge and political engagement(23). Alemán and Kim found that elevating the level of education among the population has a positive effect on the extent of democracy and that the impact is stronger in less developed countries, suggesting that the findings have implications for policies aimed at promoting democracy through education(5).

Banks et al. aimed to assist schools in democratic multicultural nation-states in reflecting the diversity within their societies, promoting the unity required for the survival of a democratic polity, and assisting students in becoming effective global citizens. They also aimed to assist educators in assisting students in developing reflective cultural, national, and global identities, as well as taking action to make their communities—both local and global—more just. They did, however, acknowledge that the components of citizenship education they described are necessary but insufficient for a comprehensive school-based citizenship education programme. Local issues and values must be added to the principles and concepts(24). Kovacs proposed that progressive scholars who want to realise a democratic public education could identify, access, and use resources (human, time, and money) to bring together diverse groups of people to facilitate pro-democratic school movements across a variety of race, class, and cultural divides so that social studies teachers can teach towards democracy(25). According to Glaeser et al., education increases societal support for democracy because democracy relies on people who have a high level of participation to sustain itself. They also demonstrated that better-educated nations are more likely to both preserve and protect democracy from coups(12).

Finally, Campbell stressed that little is known about the implications of adult learning for civic and social engagement. Data collated from surveys to assess civic and social engagement outcomes always include a measure of formal educational attainment, but such surveys rarely inquire about adult learning. However, there are compelling reasons to believe that adult education has an impact on civic and social engagement; most, if not all, of the factors, thought to link secondary and postsecondary education to higher levels of civic and social engagement also apply to adult learning. Among the scant research on the adult learning-CSE (civic and social engagement) relationship, a few rigorous findings suggest that adult education has a significant impact on civic and social engagement. However, much more needs to be learned about these relationships(26).

### 3.2 Is There A Two-Way Relation Between Democracy And Education? Does Democracy Promote Education?

There are several articles on the topic of the relationship between education and democracy, focusing on whether education intensified the likelihood of democratisation(12). Even though the practice of studying one continent is the most popular, there is little data on the impact democracy has on educational levels. An examination of斯塔維蓋的(2005)’s investigation into how multiparty elections impact educational investment in Africa serves as an illustration of this(28). During the 1990s,斯塔維蓋 investigated the relationship between multiparty elections and government spending on education in Africa. During the study period, many countries took steps toward democracy, and the introduction of multiparty elections was positively correlated with higher levels of government spending on education and redistribution. He also demonstrated that the increased educational spending was primarily directed at primary schools, while university funding remained unchanged(27).

Another common approach is the discussion surrounding the influence of democracy on human development, with education as a dependent variable(28). Vollmer and Ziegler (2009) investigated the impact of democracy on non-income dimensions of human development. Human development was measured using literacy rates and life expectancy. They investigated the relevance of democracy on literacy rates and life expectancy while controlling other variables that could
influence the overall outcome. The authors discovered that democracy had a favourable effect on literacy rates. Tsai (2006) also evaluated the effect of democracy on human development in developing countries. He divided human development into two categories: physical well-being and educational opportunities. Primary school enrolment rate, fifth-grade completion rate, and secondary school enrolment rate were used to compute the educational opportunities indicator. Tsai then observed the rate of change in human development, as measured by the level of human development between 1995 and 1998 compared to 1975 and 1984. Finally, he regulated government spending on education as a percentage of GDP. The findings revealed that education levels in democracies were significantly and clearly higher than in autocracies. The correlation between secondary school enrolment rate and income level was positive and significant, whereas government spending on education was small and weakly significant. Tsai discovered that autocracies improved faster in enrolment rates for primary and secondary school than democratic and semi-authoritarian countries, though he acknowledged that most autocracies began with lower enrolment rates, making high improvement rates easier to achieve. Democracies and semi-authoritarian countries spent more money on education, but the higher amounts spent did not result in higher educational achievement, indicating a greater emphasis on universities.

Authors of the aforementioned articles on the impact of democracies on education all agree that democratic countries have higher levels of education, whether measured by literacy rate, government spending on education, or school attendance rate. This holds for analyses that include or exclude high-income countries and cover only one continent or the entire world. However, the impact of democracy on education and the reasons for it are debated. Vollmer and Ziegler, as well as Stasavage, emphasised a positive relationship between democracy and education. Tsai, on the other hand, discovered that autocracies improved their enrolment rates faster than democratic and semi-authoritarian countries. Both Stasavage and Tsai came to the conclusion that democratic governments spend more money on education than autocracies. However, the composition of higher-level educational spending is unclear; Stasavage discovered that it was primarily directed to primary schools, whereas Tsai discovered that the money was allocated to universities. Vollmer and Ziegler discovered that the impact of democracy on human development is unaffected by variables such as income, inequality, and ethnic fractionalization. The literacy rate was their dependent variable for education. Because it measures the education level of the entire adult population, this parameter may be viewed as a weakness because it requires longer periods to be affected than enrolment rates. In this regard, Edenbrandt investigated the global impact of democracy on education. When measured by secondary school enrolment rate, empirical testing supported the relationship between democracy and education. It also supported the theory that a country's low-income levels reduce the effect democracy has on education because there is less to redistribute. However, income inequality and social fragmentation have no discernible effect on the impact of democracy on education(28). Despite the existence of several papers that present empirical results demonstrating how education promotes democracy, Edenbrandt's theoretical argumentation and empirical results do not contradict these arguments. According to Oelkers, the future theoretical challenge consists of assuming multi-linear relationships between education and democracy, linked together in different lengths, paradoxical and just as much open as concealed, all of which cannot be easily defined(31). Edenbrandt instead proposes that causality exists in both directions. If democracy promotes education and education promotes democracy, the two parameters reinforce each other(28).

3.3 Citizen/public participation, civic education and governance

The process of engaging in governance through which people participate together for deliberation and collective action within an array of interests, institutions, and networks, developing civic identity, and involving people in governance processes is known as public participation(32). It is impossible to underestimate the value of public participation. Its relevance in anchoring democracy stems from the fact that it ensures inclusivity and transparency in the governance process, with citizens and government agencies equitably delegating power(33). It ensures that the government responds to citizens' needs and strengthens the legitimacy of the government's decisions and institutions. Furthermore, public participation increases patriotism and trust in public institutions on an individual level. As a result, social inclusiveness and social capital increase, and public participation become a process rather than a single event.

Public participation is a political principle that has been recognised as a right - the right to public participation(34). According to Article 10(2) of the Kenyan Constitution, the national values and principles of good governance include: (a) patriotism, national unity, sharing and devolution of power, rule of law, democracy, and people participation; (b) human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination, and protection of the marginalised; good governance, integrity, transparency, and accountability; and (d) sustainable development(35). Public participation is viewed as a form of empowerment and is regarded as an essential component of democratic governance. It is part of a management style known as 'people first' or 'people-centred,' which avoids centralised, hierarchical decision-making. Participation is essential because practical experience on the ground demonstrates that it creates the necessary sense of ownership. In general, people are resistant to new ideas that are thrust upon them. Participation has greatly contributed to the sustainability of development initiatives, strengthened local capacity, given poor and marginalised people a voice, and linked development to people's needs(36).

The primary goals of public participation are to inform, engage, consult, collaborate, and empower citizens through various means such as elections or civil society activities in which public input is sought at all stages of policy development. However, the culture of public bureaucracy is not supportive of public engagement, instead relying on standard information exchange channels such as public hearings, which are frequently one-way and not oriented toward problem-solving(37,38). As a result, meaningful public participation is required to transform that culture and ensure that citizens are partners, not just clients, in the governance process. Meaningful public participation, as opposed to ordinary public participation, requires citizens to have access to information relevant to policy-making, the ability to hold their
leaders accountable and influence the decision-making process, with enhanced transparency and accountability, and the assurance that pressing concerns will be addressed by responsive leaders. As a result, when meaningful public participation occurs, citizens are completely satisfied, indicating that the process was successful and met its constitutional goal of influencing policy-making(39).

Citizens' need for power is important because participation without power can lead to frustration and desolation (34). The Kenyan Constitution contains viable proposals aimed at achieving participatory governance, one of which is the devolution of government. According to Article 174 of the Constitution, the objects of devolution of government are as follows: (a) to promote the democratic and accountable exercise of power; (b) to foster national unity by recognising diversity; (c) to give powers of self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them; (d) to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development; (e) to protect and promote the interests and rights of minorities and marginalised communities; (f) to promote social and economic development and the provision of proximate, easily accessible services throughout Kenya; (g) to ensure equitable sharing of national and local resources throughout Kenya; (h) to facilitate the decentralisation of State organs, their functions and services, from the capital of Kenya; and (i) to enhance checks and balances and the separation of powers(35).

However, it is crucial to note that devolution alone won't improve "automatic citizen participation." How then can it undergo continuous evolution? Civic education is one method of increasing the public's ability to effectively participate in governance. Citizens must be provided with accurate information to enable them to participate effectively in public affairs and national development. According to Article 33 (i) 'a' of the Constitution, everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes the ability to seek, receive, or impart information or ideas. Citizens will have greater knowledge, understanding, and ownership of the constitution as a result of civic education(40).

For citizens to understand their responsibilities, it will be pertinent to provide them with adequate civic education and awareness. According to scholars, there is a lack the capacity among many actors in developing countries, which explains why governments in these nations are reluctant to allow the poor, who typically have little access to education and low literacy rates and therefore inadequate understanding of the policymaking process, to participate in these processes(41). Civic education is thus paramount and urgent. Article 35 of Kenya's Constitution recognises public information as a public good that must be accessible and provided transparently to improve accountability. Civic education should be improved to ensure that citizens participate to the greatest extent possible. Furthermore, for effective public participation to occur, feedback mechanisms should be strengthened and clear guidelines established(42).

Civic education includes voter education, political literacy, rights education, education in democracy, peace education, and development education(43). Voter education is concerned with the electoral process. It aims to educate citizens about the importance of voting, how to vote, and when and why to vote. It is unconcerned about who to vote for. Political literacy aims to understand how politics is practised in the country. It aims to help citizens understand and operate the political system, as well as appreciate and influence their political development. Rights education emphasizes the central role of individual and collective rights in the life of individuals and communities. It aims to help citizens understand, appreciate, recognise, and defend the rights of individuals, minorities, special interest groups, and nations. The study of democracy as a desired way of life for a country is at the heart of education in democracy. It emphasises the importance of citizens understanding the practise and tenets of democracy to improve the quality of their governance. Peace education aims to instil in all men and women a culture of tolerance and respect for one another, as well as a total abhorrence of the use of war and other forms of force to settle disputes. Development education focuses on development issues. It contends that citizens must be empowered through the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that enable them to interact positively with their environment to reap the greatest benefits and improve their well-being the most.

In a nutshell, in a bid to ensure effective and accountable governance, civic education’s goal is to have an informed citizenry who actively and responsibly participate in the processes of good governance and the attainment of sustainable development. Generally, it seeks to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values for informed participation in the affairs of society.

4. Conclusion
In a bid to promote citizen participation for effective and accountable governance to "Leave No One, No Place Behind", it is of essence to fortify the democracy-education nexus, which aims at awareness creation and capacity building. The importance of linking the kind of democratic individuals and communities we want in society and the educational experience we cultivate for our children cannot be overstated. The question now is how much global trends in educational policy and practice recognise and understand the need for this to help create a more democratic future for all(44). On their own, schools face an impossible number of frequently competing priorities: those derived from their democratic missions and those imposed by the state. Furthermore, schools are not the sole or even primary source of equalising opportunities. Out-of-school factors account for a much larger proportion of the disparities in wealth, health, and life opportunities. The democratic imaginary and the production of democracy as a political system necessitate far more than a focus on schools; however, as many have argued, this great project must be deliberately practised within schools(45). A curriculum for democracy is not one that simply attempts to replicate existing democratic institutions and practices. It is a curriculum that recognises that 'democracy' must be continuously transformed by transcending the limitations and inadequacies of its current meaning. Only by preparing students to participate in this process of transformation will the 'curriculum in democracy' become a 'curriculum for democracy' - a curriculum that empowers all
future citizens to participate in the 'long revolution' that has been, and will continue to be, achieved in the progressive
development of both democracy and the curriculum(46).
As the concept of public participation evolved, the values and principles of public participation gradually emerged(47).
There are generally agreed-upon norms for effective public participation that seeks to ensure effective participation that
influences decisions rather than token or ineffective participation. Among the core values for public participation are the
right to participate, responsiveness, accountability, acknowledgement of interests, inclusivity, affirmative action,
consultation, transparency, flexibility, accessibility, accountability, trust, commitments, and respect, as well as integration.
In this regard, civic education assists citizens to: (a) identify the problems that impede good governance and
sustainable development; (b) analyse the nature and causes of bad governance problems and propose solutions; (c)
discourage and gradually discard practices that impede good governance and sustainable development; (d) promote equal
participation in societal processes for all, regardless of gender, ethnic, racial, or religious considerations; (e) list
activities that lead to informed decisions and choices; (f) identify fundamental and individual rights; (g) propose
methods for demanding, promoting, and protecting fundamental and individual rights; (h) discuss global economic trends
and their effects on the local economic situation; (i) discuss the causes of poverty and propose methods for alleviating
poverty; (j) identify and use the services of institutions that promote self
and discuss the importance of cultural diversity and suggest ways to promote cultural interaction; (l) identify and discuss
moral values and issues that strengthen commitment to truth, human rights, and justice.

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