

THE 21ST CENTURY LUO CULTURAL EDUCATION LONGVIEW

Dr. Eliud Garry Michura (PhD)

Abstract

Education and culture of a given society are very precious and key components of human sustainability on the planet Earth. "First Things First". Creation of the planet Earth began with Environment, culture and education. Culture is our way of life and is sustained by education. Education is a means of transmitting culture. Development and sustainability of a society is embedded in education in cultural setup. Culture is intertwined and not divorced from each other. In developed societies called the "west" the economic, technology, political and societal systems are inherent and driven by education in cultural setup. The respect for the environment and sustainability question is deeply rooted in cultural education. In the African setting education should have been developed around and within the diverse African cultures as exploits of the rich continent but in this case, the African diverse cultures were seen as stumbling block from achieving colonialists goals in the continent. The move to persistently base our school curricular on prototype foreign education curricular development with the content of western culture over the years has created development meltdowns in African communities. Kenyan education system over the years has never been HOLISTIC in content and has not reflected cultural values of every community but instead has contributed to competition, social classification, political conflicts, unemployment, and a beast of burden. If culture is what a group of people construct as a result of their shared experiences and the confluence of their values, beliefs, norms, rules and traditions then the study of educational organisations will be largely about the study of their culture. The Sigendini Luo traditional education was regarded as the best form of shared experience communicating effectively through song, stories, riddles, proverbs, art and dance. Sigendini and the traditional Luo society realised the invaluable part played by Sigendini cultural education set up, hence they organised an institution for promoting cultural values and beliefs and telling them to children and youth. Education is essential for social cultural control. Does the Luo community have "Sigendini effect" anymore? Our current generation has lost the best of Sigendini to modern prototype education which only meant to promote western culture. Does our culture still hold anymore place in the modern civilized and globalised planet Earth? Has Kenyan education system at any one time tended to promote sustainable development in Luo community in cultural perspective? Before and after independence Luo community compared to other communities in Kenya if not in Africa were the best civilized, best educated, best managers, best administrators and best nearly in everything. The current analysis of the state of the Luo community in terms of education and sustainable development presents a very glooming situation with a dying culture and lost glory. Has series of education curriculum in the past become a necessary evil to the Luo community or has the Luo culture become a necessary pediment towards development? Are our community leaders, parents, children, education systems, and all the stakeholders irrelevant? It is believed that, Luo community has all the resources and potentiality to develop into a first class community in Africa if not the world. Then why are we in this state of despair, a quagmire, helpless and shameful. Are we really poor as perceived? And if we are, how and why are we poor? Are these myths or real development issues facing the community? Are we undergoing extinction? What has become of our young generations? What will become of our heritage, our children, our culture, our Sigendini, our environment and our resources? Luo community has great potential to become First class community. Our leaders are brave and well round up in leadership and management. Think of the great leaders of Africa; the legends; Luanda Magere, Mzee Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya who shaped Luo community and Africa. In the current analysis who can outmatch Baba Professor of politics

Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga who is not only our charismatic leader but National, Regional and International figure when it comes to politics. If we all become one, speak like one, and unite and act as one, we all win and succeed. Let us all be awakened, go back to the drawing board, rethink, recycle, reuse our fundamental *LUO KITGI GI TIMBEGI* otherwise we perish. This is the theme of this Luo International Conference being held today. This paper therefore highlights and raises very pertinent issues to be discussed and examined by all Luo Stakeholders for the continuity and development of our community both within and abroad. Kenya is ours but our culture “*Luo Kitgi Gi Timbegi*” is our root our survival, our heritage.

Key words: Education, culture, development, sustainability and environment.