



Full Length Research Paper

A Critique of the Kenyan System of Education in View of the Freirian Concept of Education: A Philosophical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This research paper offers a critique of the Kenyan system of education. Our interest will be focused on a philosophical search for an education that will realize the objectives of this system of education. To facilitate this, we shall try to come up with a clear conception of education. To this effect, we have to adopt a holistic education, an education that integrates man and society. This point to the role of education as liberating both the mind and the body. It has to make the learner be aware of his potential as a human being and in a positive, life enhancing relationship with himself, others and his environment. Education should enable man use circumstances rather than be used by them. Education provided in our schools must serve the purposes of our country. It must encourage the development of a proud, independent and free individual who relies upon himself for his own development. Besides, it has to prepare the youth to play a dynamic and constructive role in the development of the society they live. Granted with these attributes, then education should foster the development in each individual of three things; an enquiring mind, an ability to learn from what others do, and reject or adopt it to his own needs and a basic confidence in his own position as a free and equal member of the society, who values others and is in turn valued by them. With reference to our current system of education, it can be deduced that it has fallen short of the above. It is restricted to schooling, overemphasizing the cognitive dimension of education. Its terminal objective is for examination purposes. Other attributes of the learner are not adequately catered for, and for this purpose, it has encountered controversies about its authenticity. In an attempt to offer an alternative education, this study has adopted the Freirian concept of education. Here, education is perceived to be the intersubjective process of becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it. This implies that education is a humanizing enterprise in which both the learner and the teacher are subjects on equal footing. We therefore reject the teacher-centred process of education, which reduces the learner to a mere object. We equally reject the student – centred approach which denies the intersubjective nature of education. Instead we embrace the dialogical approach in education, which will not only ensure an intersubjective encounter but also create critical consciousness between the two subjects.

Keywords: Critique, Kenyan System, Education, Freirian Concept, Education, Philosophical Perspective.

INTRODUCTION

According to Peters (1967), education is an activity which encapsulates criteria to which any one of a family of processes must conform. The criteria are such that the absence of one or more of them in an activity can make it not really an educational activity from what is not. For a

process to be considered as education, it must involve: A conscious effort to bring about a desirable change in the state of mind of the recipient. Peters and Hirst (1970) refer to this as the desirability condition. Education hence is initiation into worthwhile activities. The change brought

about in the learner must be intentional, deliberate and directed towards a purpose. Education involves a designed program geared towards producing the desired change. It is a growth that is designed and guided by an expert. The learner must have some knowledge and understanding. (The cognitive aspect) – the knowledge condition. The knowledge or skills must be transmitted in a morally acceptable manner. This involves the willing and voluntary participation of the learner; the learner should not be forced or deceived to learn. Also, the content should be presented in a way that fits the level of understanding or intelligence of the learner.

Akinpelu (1981) observes that the above criteria have been summarized by Frankena, when the latter asserts that education takes place when 'X' is fostering or seeking to foster in Y some disposition 'D' by method 'M'. Education therefore involves:

X – The society, the teacher, or whoever is educating, including oneself.

Y – The learner who may be a child, a youth oneself or an adult.

D – Disposition, beliefs, habits, knowledge, skills, attitudes and so on, considered desirable for the learner to have both for himself and society and

M – Methods that are satisfactory, that pay due regard to the interest, the willingness and the personal integrity of the learner, and that involve his active participation.

From the above account however, it does not guarantee that once these criteria have been observed and adhered to, the product will be an educated person. It is only a question of high probability or certainty that the process will produce an educated person. Another observation is that the process of education is gradual. Educating is not strictly a means of producing an end which is different from itself. It is expected that people who undergo effective and adequate education get affected and changed by it. Education should change an individual's attitude and his way of life. The change pervades all his activities and the evidence of being educated can only be seen in the way one behaves in social relations, not in the amount of abstract and sophisticated knowledge he possesses. Peters (1967) equates the process of education to 'reform'. Reform picks on no particular process. People can reform through dedication, devotion to God and so on. Likewise, people can be educated by reading books, exploring their environment, travel and conversation – by chalk and talk in a classroom. The learner is 'initiated' by the other into something which he has to master, know or remember. Education picks out processes by means of which people get started on the road to such achievements.

Being educated implies possession of not only knowledge, but also requires understanding principles of the 'reason why' of things – critical thinking. Education rules out one-sided development. It is a whole man process. Through education, an individual must use his

knowledge and skills in widely varied and changing situations. Children must be prepared to meet and deal with the unknown, with problems and situations unknown to them. We must therefore look to the constants in life, the persistent situations which man has faced, faces now, and will face over the years. This then calls for action based on thought, cultivation of the intellect far beyond gathering knowledge for its own sake. It emphasizes development of interest in learning, with methods of inquiring, with ways of relating facts, and with the ability to use ideas in practical settings. Education should not be conformity, but the educational program should aim at forward movement towards complete realization of the goals it has set for itself, and the improvement of society as well as individuals. From the previous discussion, we can infer that education entails learning, hence we can't speak of education without learning. In cognitive terms, learning, points to knowing and understanding. However, learning is not knowing. Cognitive learning is a process, a task, thus one says 'I am learning'. Knowing is the outcome of learning, a result, an achievement. Knowing is the outcome, referring to a result, to something one has achieved. Education thus involves knowledge and understanding, not just learning, this implies if in the course of education, a learner does not gain knowledge and understanding, then something fundamental is missing in the educational process and hence it is defective. It is expected that the learning process should lead to knowledge and understanding. Knowledge and education are directly linked. The aspect of understanding in contemporary education is absent. Education is regarded as the 'knowledge industry'. Formal education is seen from the economic perspective, as an industrial process through which human 'products' are manufactured to serve in the various sector of the national economy, the knowledge acquired in school is expected to equip these products with skills to enable them function in the economic production. Formal education is therefore geared towards the accumulation of scientific knowledge (facts) and technical knowledge (skills) to control the standards of production, the learners has to be subjected to rigorous testing selection by means of examination.

Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) observe that knowledge in this context is regarded as a set of facts and figures that must be acquired by the learner, who is considered as a deficit system which has to be filled with appropriate knowledge. The importance of this knowledge is determined by its economic use. If education entails knowledge and understanding, how is this depicted in the Kenyan system of education? To answer this question, we need to try and understand what knowledge is. Njoroge and Bennaars use Scheffler's (1965) analysis to come up with criteria for knowledge. They point out that the belief, truth and grounds conditions have to be met in order for anything to be regarded as knowledge. The belief condition refers to the psychological state of mind

that is, a conviction or certainty. Knowledge is first of all a matter of belief. Believing is hence the beginning of knowing. Knowing however goes beyond mere conviction. This therefore leads to the second condition of knowledge. The truth condition points to actual truth of which one asserts. Knowing points to the truth of the matter. For instance, when I say "the ground is wet" I claim to know the truth that is actually so. If it proves to be false, then it means I did not really know. To know something is then more than to believe. But how do we ascertain that our belief is true? This calls for the third condition. The grounds condition entails giving an account for knowing something. To have a true belief of something, one needs to justify his claim. Only if one has sufficient grounds to verify his claim can he state with certainty that he knows something to be the case. One therefore knows something if he believes it to be true and has adequate grounds for his belief. Scheffler (1965) hence defines knowledge as a 'justified true belief.' Relating the above analysis of knowledge to the Kenyan context of education, it is evident that the belief condition is well catered for as students tend to display a strong belief in the word of the teacher and the recommended course books. They embrace these two authorities to tell the truth. They end up acquiring authoritarian knowledge by conforming to the authority of the teacher and the course books without question. In this view the learning process has eventually been reduced to a mechanical exercise in mental skills training. This is what Paulo Freire regards, as the 'banking' concept of education whereby the teacher deposits knowledge in the heads of the pupils as one deposits money in a bank. Students are reduced to mere recipients or empty vessels to be filled with knowledge till it is demanded back to the time of examination. Students are hence rendered passive and docile throughout the learning process. The teacher is the master while the learner is his slave or servant. The teacher is visualized as having a stick in the hand, ready to punish whenever his authority is challenged.

In this respect, students acquire ideas and concepts without internalizing and understanding them fully, whatever they learn doesn't affect or change them personally. Education becomes exam-oriented hence the student discards whatever he learns immediately after the exams. This state of affairs is brought about by the use of morally unacceptable methods of learning such as conditioning, indoctrination and brainwashing. The learning process is a one-sided activity where there is no dialogue between the teacher and the learner. As Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) put it, education should be an intersubjective process which involves communication, encounter, participation and dialogue. Defined in existential terms, dialogue implies people communicating with each other on 'equal' terms. If education is viewed from this perspective, then through dialogue the teacher should assist the learner to become a better individual. Existentially, the learner should

become a conscious being, a 'self.' By virtue of being self, he becomes self-reliant and independent. It was from the notion of self-reliance that the government of Kenya decided to adopt the 8-4-4 system of education which was expected to offer a wide range of employment opportunities. This system's emphasis on technical and vocational education was to enable the student graduating at any level acquire some scientific and practical knowledge that can be utilized for self-employment or for further training. This system was launched in January 1985 following the recommendation of the Mackay report of 1981. Under this system, the pupil was to spend eight (8) years in primary school, four (4) years in the secondary school and a minimum of (4) years at the university level. The notion of self-reliance was conceived to be economic. That once a student attains economic independence by way of self-employment or securing a job, then such a person would be considered to be self-reliant. However this objective hasn't been realized owing to the escalating rates of unemployment. In addition, from the existential point of view, self-reliance means more than just emphasizing on technical subjects. The approach used in teaching vocational subjects means the use of morally unacceptable pedagogical procedures which disregard the dignity and autonomy of the learner. This will lead to the production of what Edalia (1990) describes as: People who are to think for themselves, who in spite of the skills they have, still wait to be directed on what to do. This crack is the 8-4-4 system of education, coupled with the heavy workload and improper pedagogical procedures has drawn sharp criticisms from scholars and educational practitioners, compelling the government to enter into a series of reviews on the 8-4-4 system of education. This forms the root of the problem of the proposed study.

Research Objective

To establish how the Freirian perspective of education can facilitate the achievement of the goals of the 8-4-4 system of education.

Synthesis of Literature

Over the years, education in Kenya has been perceived as being instrumental in the country's development in terms of manpower provisions. Education was to provide manpower for better planning towards economic improvement. Education was perceived as a means for adapting men to the changing societies and new techniques. Education was the means for fitting man in the social and economic roles in society. This notion of education is the anti-thesis of Freire's conception of education. Education for man should mean humanizing

the world by transforming it. Man humanizes the world through “praxis” – unity of thought and action. Through this thought, he seeks to understand the world and through his actions to transform and humanize it. Man’s humanity, Freire holds, derives from his creation in God’s image and imposes upon him his essential vocation and quest: to become a more human being. The challenge that confronts man is that of escaping from the prison of habit and precedent and the constraints of his bio-social situation in order to realize his humanity to its fullest extent. True education should serve this end through conscientization. This is a liberating process which addresses itself to both the individual and the social dimensions of man. If authentic education is characterized by the liberation of the human mind and spirit, the basis of traditional education is what Freire regards as “banking”, whereby a teacher “deposits” knowledge into the mind of the learner. In this scenario, both the teacher and the learner are captives of a concept of education imposed upon them by tradition and society. By perceiving education to be the mastery of a stock of knowledge rather than an orientation towards their role in the world, men condemn themselves to realizing less than their full humanity. They become mere objects rather than the authors of their own destinies.

Education must thus provide a way of passing from “primary consciousness” to the “critical consciousness” needed for his creative action upon reality. In the state of “primary consciousness” man is submerged by reality. He cannot perceive the world as it is, including his own freedom. He is ignorant of his potentialities and consequently unable to act or to transform reality to achieve his own end. “Critical consciousness” enables man to emerge as a free human being. It allows him to perceive the world as it is, relate to it, question it. It enables him to choose and commit himself to the choice he has made; to accept responsibility and together with his fellow men, to learn how to reach a higher degree of authentic freedom. For Freire, the task of education is therefore to bring about the most favourable conditions to enable man and society as a whole to reach this state of critical awareness. According to Freire, every man is capable of achieving critical awareness. This is because he is capable of looking “critically” at his world. He has to discover how “to hold history in his hand”. As he gradually perceives his personal and social situation more clearly and critically, discovering its contradictions, discovering its causes and foreseeing its consequences, he becomes capable of transforming these facts into concrete action. In applying himself to this transformation, the more does his critical awareness become. It is from this perspective that Freire prefers the term “cultural action” to “education”, which is also employed for “training”, or “domestication”. By cultural action he implies “progressing from emotional knowledge to a rational perception of reality”. Transformation of extential reality is brought about by means of reflection; which is admiration

of the object received. Reflection will lead dialectically to praxis, which is action for freedom provoked by reflection. This action in turn will evoke new reflection and so on. This process leads to “conscientization” which is the development of critical reflection of man into history and culture. ‘Culture’ is conceived as the transforming action of man on nature.

Freire defines man as a being in the process of transformation, therefore he is incomplete. Man belongs to different communities (socio-economic, religious, cultural and others) which are continually shaping him. It is in his relations with the world that man becomes aware of himself and progressing beyond emotional perception of facts and things, arrives at the act of knowledge through reflection. This perception of man distinguishes him from an animal. Whereas the latter adapts itself to nature, man attempts to humanize nature. This implies that man has a relationship with the world whereas an animal only has contact with it. Being a conscious being, man is not only “in the world”, but also “with the world”. Only man as an “open” being is capable of successfully accomplishing the complex operation of “transforming” the world by his action. Unlike an animal, which lives without time, submerged in life with no possibility of emerging from it, adjusted and adhering to reality, man can cut through this adherence and transcend his being in the world. Man can add to the life he has, the existence he makes for himself. Existence is therefore a way of life, peculiar to the being capable of: transforming, producing, deciding, creating and communicating. Man as a subject existing with the world, thinks about this and questions himself on his relationship with the world. The realm of his existence is therefore, one of work, history, culture and values in which he experiences dialectics, determinism and freedom. Only those beings that are conscious of their conditions are capable of liberating themselves. “Awareness of” and “action on” reality are therefore important components of the transformation and means by which men become related beings. The awakening of this consciousness in man is what the process of education should create in man.

Critical consciousness or conscientization, as a goal of education points to the process by which human beings participate critically in a transforming act. It provokes recognition of the world, not a “given” world, but as a world dynamically “in the making”. It thus involves a constant clarification of what remains hidden within us, while we move about in the world. Critical consciousness as a goal of education has four qualities: power awareness. This entails the act of man realizing that society and history can be made and remade by human action, and by organizations and groups, for what ends and how power is currently organized and used in society. Critical literacy is another quality. This points to the analytic habits of thinking, reading, writing, speaking or discussing, which go beneath surface impressions, traditional, myths, mere opinions and routine clichés,

understanding the social contexts and consequences of any subject matter, discovering the deep meaning of any events, text, technique, process, image, object, statement or situation, applying that meaning to your own context.

Dissociation: This refers to recognizing and challenging the myths, values, behaviour, and language learned in mass culture; critically examining the regressive values operating in society which are internalized into consciousness – such as racism, sexism, class bias, hero worship and so on.

Self organization or self education: This is taking the initiative to transform school and society away from authoritarian relations and the undemocratic, unequal distribution of power, taking part in and initiating social change projects; overcoming the induced anti-intellectualism of mass education. These being the qualities of critical consciousness, we can deduce that when consciousness appears, there is reflection and intentionality toward the world. We can not only know, but also know that we are knowing (Freire, 1993) this is facilitated by praxis – a dialectical unity of reflection and action – that enables man to emerge from the world objectify it and in so doing can understand and transform it with his labour. Conscientization can thus be perceived to be the process in which men, not as recipients but as knowing subjects, achieve deepening awareness both of socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.

There is nothing like “neutral education”. Education either functions as a tool to facilitate integration into the present system and bring about conformity to it, or becomes “the practice of freedom”, the means by which man critically and creatively with reality discovers how to participate in the transformation of their world (Freire, 1970b). Education can either be for “domestication” or “liberation”. Domesticating mode of education points to the manipulative dimension between the educators and the educatee, by which the latter are reduced to passive objects of which the latter are reduced to passive objects of action by the former. This dehumanizes the learner and alienates him from the learning activity. The passive learner is not invited to creatively participate in the process of their learning, instead they are “filled” by the educator’s words. The educator dominates the learning process by prescribing or imposing his own choice upon the learner. The learner becomes a conformist of the teacher’s ideas, and having internalized the image of the oppressor (teacher), the oppressed learner adopts the guidelines of the teachers, thus develops fear of freedom. This one-sided, “narrative” nature of the educational process is what Freire regards as the “banking” concept (Freire 1970a). In this teacher - student relationship, the teacher’s task is to “fill” the students with the contents of his narration. The student in turn, records, memorizes and repeats these contents without perceiving its meaning and without realizing the true significance. Narration turns the students into

“containers” to be filled by the teacher. The more completely he fills the “receptacles” the better a teacher he is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are. Education in this case becomes an act of depositing, in which students are the depositories while the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits, which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. In the final analysis, there is lack of creativity, transformation, and knowledge is misguided in the learner.

In the banking education, knowledge is bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable, upon those whom they consider to know nothing. This projection of an absolute ignorance onto others is characteristic of the ideology of oppression, which negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. According to Freire, the banking concept of education manifests itself in the following attitudes and practices.

- The teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- The teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- The teacher talks and the students listen meekly;
- The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- The teacher acts and the students have their illusion of acting though the action of the teacher;
- The teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
- The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
- The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the students are mere objects (Freire, 1970a).

The banking educator reduces the student to an adaptable and manipulable being. Students in turn, hardly develop critical consciousness, but instead adapt to the world as it is. He is a mere spectator, not a recreator. The teacher’s role is to “fill” the students by making deposits of information which he considers to constitute true knowledge. The teacher prescribes to a passive learner who adapts to what is being taught without question. The learner is thus considered as an object and eventually develops into what Freire terms as a “necrophilous” person, whom to him, memory rather than experience, having rather than being is what counts. In a nutshell, the banking education represents the domesticating education which alienates the learner by inhibiting his critical thinking and subsequent creativity by conforming to the teacher’s domination. Freire believes that there exists a dichotomy between education for

domestication and education for liberation in terms of methodology and educational components. The domesticating education (conformist action) is directed towards an isolated and “ignorant” individual who is expected to adapt to the established system of values. Knowledge in this case is a corpus of facts and information already organized, that is “ready-made packages”. The method employed is a mechanical transfer of knowledge that emphasizes repetition and memorization. The learners are perceived as “empty vessels to be filled” by the instructor, who is a sole subject possessing “knowledge”, who is the agent of transmission. The monologue method dominates. Education for liberation (cultural action) sees man in his environment, rich in experience. It aims to make man critical of the established system of values. Man has to make history instead of conforming to it. Knowledge is to be discovered and organized by both the learner and the teacher. Knowledge has to be acquired through observation, analysis and “interiorization”. Both subjects are regarded as active human beings discovering the object of their knowledge. The instructor is considered as a catalyzer in the search for “knowledge”. The learning units are conceived and prepared in accordance with the learners’ identified needs of man and his environment. The pedagogical approach employed is dialogue, which invites creation and recreation of knowledge.

Knowledge, according to Freire, emerges only through invention and reinvention, through restless impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world and with each other. This can only be realized through liberating education (critical education) which integrates the teacher and the learner into a mutual creation and re-creation of knowledge. Knowledge should not be produced at some distance from the classroom by researchers, scholars, textbook authors or curriculum committees, then just be brought in class for “consumption”. Freire (1993) observes that teaching and learning are human experiences with profound social consequences. Education is not a mechanical method of instruction. Learning is not a quantity of information to be memorized, or a package of information to be memorized, or a package of skills to be transferred to students. Instead, a “Freirian class” invites students to think critically about the subject matter doctrines, the learning process itself and their society; that a classroom should be a place where the individual and society are constructed. Both the students and teachers should empower themselves for social change, to advance democracy and equality as they advance their literacy and knowledge. This approach should see students learn to question answers rather than merely answering questions. Students should experience education as something they do, not something done for them. They are not empty vessels to be filled with facts or information from the predetermined syllabus. ‘Knowing’, according to Freire, means being an active subject who questions

and transforms. To learn is to recreate the way we see ourselves, on education and society. Freire (1973) argues that a literacy program should be an introduction to the democratization of culture. A program which in itself would be an act of creation, capable of releasing other creative acts on which students would develop the impatience and vivacity which characterize search and invention. The empowering education should therefore constitute a democratic and transformative relationship between the student and the teacher, the student and the teacher, the student and learning, and the student and society. This in itself makes the whole process of education to be political. Politics here encompasses the teacher- student relationship, the method of choosing the course content and the subject chosen for the syllabus. Politics also reside in the questions and statements from teachers about the themes being studied, the freedom students feel when questioning the curriculum, the physical conditions of the classroom, the imposition of standardized tests, the grading and tracking policies and so on. These are the key areas that determine the kind of educational practice put in place, whether it is domesticating or liberating. Critical education should develop the way students think about the world and act in it. Domesticating education orients students to accept inequality and their places in the status quo and to adhere to the authority. Liberating education should invite students to question the system they live in the knowledge being offered to them, to discuss the kind of future they want – the right to remake the school and society they find. Education is politics because it is through which individuals and society are constructed.

From the democratic perspective, Freire (1970a) observes that society is controlled by an “elite” which imposes its culture and values as the standard. In school, this is manifested in the imposition of required syllabus, mandated textbooks, tracking and standardized examinations. To this effect, Freire holds that: Any educational practice based on standardization, on what is laid down in advance, on routines in which everything is predetermined, is bureaucratizing and anti-democratic (Freire and Faundez, 1989). For Freire, curriculum is controlled from above as a means to impose the dominant culture on each new generation of students. This domination in school includes a traditional curriculum which interferes with the democratic and critical development of students. After the end of the course, students still can’t transform knowledge and society. In an education system devoted to the banking pedagogy, students internalize values and habits which sabotage their critical thought. They develop into alienated and anti-intellectual adults. The students thus rely on authority. The authority (teacher) take “real education” to be something done to the students, not something the student do. The authority hence dominates in the learning process by telling the students what to think and what to do. Domination is when a teacher says

“you must believe this because I say it”. This is the manipulating culture that makes myths about reality. In this context, it is when a teacher can try to convince the learner that “a table is a chair”, when the curriculum makes reality opaque, when the school and society present the system of monopoly (Shor and Freire, 1987). The authority dependence on students is matched by the authority dependence of the teacher who follows the outlined syllabus and resists democratic transformation. The teachers don’t share decision – making in the classroom and do not learn ‘with’ and ‘from’ students. But liberating class illuminates reality. It challenges the status quo, in that the students are able to unveil the actual manipulation and myths in society. In the event of unveiling, the students change their understanding of reality and their perception. This can only be achieved when a teacher directs the learner by making a plan, a program, a goal for the study. The directive educator then moves more and towards a moment in which an atmosphere of comradeship is established in class and does things with the learner.

Domesticating education, as discussed earlier employs an anti-dialogical or monologue approach. This entails vertical relationship between the student and the teachers, where the teacher “knows it all” thus issues communiqués to the passive recipient learner whose role is to consume without question. To alleviate this scenario, Freire advocates for the problem-posing approach, which puts the teacher and the student on equal footing in search of knowledge. It is from this approach that dialogue is facilitated between the educator and the educatee. The problem – posing approach offers a mutual search for knowledge for both the teacher and the learner, who develop “co-intentionality”. This mutual intention makes the study collectively owned, not a teacher’s sole affair. The student’s alienation from teachers is thus overcome. Co-intentionality begins when a teacher presents a problem for inquiry related to key aspect of student experience so that the student sees his thought and language in the study. Here the language, experience and the conditions of the learner are of paramount importance in the process of education. They determine the theme of study. The subject matter is not presented as theoretical facts to memorize, rather as problems posed in students’ experience and speech, for them to work on. The academic material is therefore integrated into student’s life and thought. Students don’t merely memorize information about Biology or Economics, but rather encounter problems from their lives and society through the academic disciplines. This is what Freire terms as “epistemological relationship to reality”

This implies being a critical examiner of your experience. Questioning and interpreting your life and education. All these are what constitute the problem-posing approach to education. The problem posing

education rejects communiqués and embodies communication. It is a learning situation that consists of acts of cognition, not transfer of information. The cognizable object (content) intermediates the cognitive actors- the teacher and the student. The teacher doesn’t regard the cognizable objects as his private property, but as objects of reflection by himself and the student. The teacher presents the study material to the students for their consideration, and reconsiders his earlier consideration as the student expresses their own.

The role of the educator is thus to create, together with the learners, the conditions under which knowledge is re-invented. Freire (1970b) observes that problem posing education unveils reality and strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality. That, the students and the teacher develop their power to critically perceive the way they exist in the world with which they find themselves. They come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation. It demythologizes reality and unveils facts that explain how man exists in the world, as opposed to the banking education which mythicizes reality and conceals certain facts which explain the way men exist in the world. Creativity and stimulation of true reflection and action upon reality is the cornerstone of the problem posing approach. Men are made authentic beings in the process of becoming – unfinished, uncompleted in and likewise unfinished reality. The unfinished character of men and the transformation character of reality necessitate that education be an on-going activity. To realize this, Freire (1970b) holds that man must perceive his state not as fated and unalterable, but merely as limiting and therefore challenging. Problem posing as a humanist and liberating praxis posits that men subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation. It therefore enables teachers and students to become subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism, and enabling men overcome their false perception of reality. The problem-posing education is manifested in dialogical approach of the teacher-student relationship. According to Freire, pedagogy is central in the teaching and learning process. Therefore advocates for a process which engages both the learner and educator in a communication, and this is the dialogical method. What is the dialogical method of teaching and learning? This can be perceived as a horizontal relationship between persons. A relationship of “empathy” between two “poles” engaged in a joint search. This method can be explained in terms of freedom against domination, as a cultural action inside or outside a classroom where the status quo is challenged, where the myths of the official curriculum and mass culture are illuminated. Dialogue is part of our historical process of becoming human, where educator and the educatee meet on equal footing to reflect on their reality as they make and remake it. Thus, (Freire,1987) this states,

"Dialogue is a challenge to the existing domination. The object to be known is not an exclusive possession of one subject doing the knowing p. 99."

The world is not a state and closed order, a given reality which man must accept and adjust rather it is a problem to be worked on and solved. Every human being, no matter how "ignorant" or submerged in the "culture of silence" he may be, is capable of looking critically at his world in a dialogical encounter with others. Provided with proper tools for such encounter he can perceive his personal and social reality and deal critically with it. Through this, man discovers himself and his potential as he overcomes the paternalistic teacher-student relationship. In the educational process, knowledge of the object to be known is not the sole possession of the teacher who gives it to the students. Instead, the object to be known mediates the teacher and the learner, who are engaged in dialogue. The object to be known is put on table between the two subjects of knowing. The educator however has some intellectual experience in picking the object for study before the student meets it in class and presents it for discussions. The prior contact of the teacher with the object to be known doesn't mean that the teacher has exhausted all the efforts and dimensions in the knowing the object. But through dialogue he also re-learns the object through studying with the student.

The object to be known links the two cognitive subjects, leading them to reject together on the subjects in question. Dialogue is thus the sealing together of the teacher and the student in the joint act of knowing and re-knowing the object of study. Then instead of transferring knowledge statistically as a fixed possession of the teacher, dialogue demands a dynamic approximation towards the object. The openness of the dialogical educator to his own re-learning gives dialogue a democratic character. It invites learners to exercise their own powers of reconstruction. Dialogue in teaching implies the absence of authoritarianism, where the educator issues communiqués to the educatee, instead of facilitating a genuine open exchange. Through dialogue the teacher – of – student and the student –of – the – teacher – cease to exist. A new term emerges: teacher- student with student- teachers. The teacher is no longer the one who merely teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the student, in turn while being taught also teaches. The two parties become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. No one teaches another, nor is anyone self taught. They teach each other, mediated by the world, by cognizable objects, which in the banking pedagogy is owned by the teacher. A Freirian pedagogy which tries to develop critical consciousness is a student – centred dialogue which "problematizes" themes from everyday life as well as topical issues from society and academic subject matter from specific disciplines. The criteria of dialogue entails participation. Students are asked to participate in making

their education by decoding thematic problems. The learning process is also interactive and co-operative. So students do a lot of discussing and writing instead of listening to the teacher talk. The course material is situated in the student thought and language beginning from their words and understandings of the material relating it to their condition. Being critical in nature, the class discussion encourages self- reflection and social reflection in terms of how we talk about issues, how we know what we know, how we can learn what we need to know, and how the learning process itself is working. The students reflect critically on their own language as well as subject matter, the quality of their learning process and the relation of knowledge to society.

The classroom discourse is democratic in nature since it is constructed mutually by students and teacher. Students have equal speaking right to negotiate curriculum. The students are entitled to co-develop and evaluate the curriculum.

The basic format of the class is dialogue about problems posed by the teacher and the learners, the teacher initiates this process and guides it into deeper phases. By fronting questions he invites students to assert the questions, he invites students to assert the ownership of their education, building dialogue with their words. They are doing education and making it instead of having education done for them or made for them. The Freirian dialogue also dissociates students from passivity in the classroom. It challenges their learned anti-intellectualism and authority- dependency (that is, Waiting to be told what to do and what things mean) it interferes with the student's silence, submission and sabotage associated with the traditional classroom. It also dissociates with the teachers from the classroom. It also dissociates teachers from the dull and domineering teacher-talk they're socialized into, transforming them into problem-posers and dialogue –leaders. The class becomes multicultural. That, it recognizes various ethnic, racial, regional, age-based and gender cultures in society. It takes critical attitude towards discrimination and inequality. It examines the cultures of dominant and non-dominant groups.

The pedagogy is based on classroom and community research by the teacher into speech, behavior and conditions of students as well as into their level of cognition and effective development. It expects students to be researchers, inquiring into problems posed about daily experience, society and academic material. The classroom itself is active and interactive, due to the problem-posing co-operative learning and participatory format. The critical dialogue seeks action outcomes from inquiry. That is, how people act on knowledge and form knowledge to gain power so as to change things. Finally the critical democratic classroom is affective. It seeks the broadest development of social inquiry and conceptual habits of the mind. A range of emotions such as humor and compassion are cultivated through dialogues.

Dialogue is thus a human phenomenon. It is an encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name and eventually transform it. It is an act of creation. For dialogue to exist, there ought to be good rapport between learner and the teacher. This is cultivated through love. Love is an act of courage, not fear, love is commitment to other men. It is a commitment to the course of liberation. The aspect of love in dialogue then leads to humility. This is the regard for each other. The teacher should have high regard for the learner by empathizing with him. Faith is another necessity for dialogue. The two subjects in dialogue should have faith in their power to make and re – make, to create and re – create, faith in their vocation to be fully human, (which is a birth right for all men). Founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship between the dialoguers, which leads to mutual trust. Hope is also a necessity in facilitating dialogue. Hope is rooted in man's incompleteness from which he gets motivated to search. Through hope, the dialoguers expect an outcome out of their efforts. The most pivotal aspect of dialogue is critical thinking. The thinking which perceives reality as a process, as transformation, rather than a static entity. This is the thinking which doesn't separate itself from action. Critical thinking perpetuates continuity in transforming the world (reality) and humanization. Only dialogue generates critical thinking: without dialogue there is no communication and without communication there is no true education (Freire, 1970a). The dialogue character of education as a practice of freedom does not begin when the teacher – student meets with the student – teachers in a pedagogical situation, but rather when the former first asks himself what he will dialogue with the latter about. For the monologue (anti – dialogical) educator, the question of content simply concerns the program which he will discourse to his students and he organizes his own program. For the dialogical problem – posing teacher – student, the program content of education is not a piece of information to be deposited to the student, but an organized, systemized and developed “re – presentation” to individuals of the things about which they want to know more.

Authentic education is not carried out by the teacher for the student or by the teacher about the student, but rather by the teacher with the student; mediated by the world, a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views and opinions about it. Many educational plans fail because their authors design them according to their own personal views of reality, not taking into account the man-in-a situation to whom the program is directed to. When organizing an educational program for instance, we should start with the present existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people. We must pose this present, existential, concrete situation to the students as a problem that challenges them and requires their response. They

should not be presented with programs which have nothing to do with their pre-occupations, doubts, hopes and fears. We should not speak to the students about our own view of the world, or impose that view on them, but rather dialogue with them about their view and ours. Their view of the world manifested in their action reflects their situation in the world. To communicate effectively, the educator must understand the structural conditions in which the thought and language of the people are dialectically framed. In a concrete classroom situation, Freire believes that a teacher should start by first learning the students. Present them with exercise that educate both the teacher and them at the same time, for instance; short time reading, writing, thinking and debating experiences. This approach will make the educator realize their real cognitive and effective levels. The teacher will thus invent a course of study in progress with the student. This is opposed to the pre-existent syllabus in the mind of the teacher. There should be no dichotomy between knowledge production and the knowing process. The teacher should cultivate action, critical reflection, curiosity, demanding inquiry, uneasiness, uncertainty in the learner so that the student develops skepticism and scrutiny, hence become curious, critical and creative.

Critical education has to integrate the student and the teacher into a mutual creation and recreation of knowledge. Knowledge should not be produced at some distance from the classroom. It should be created and recreated by teachers and students. The teacher should first research the spoken and written words of the students, so as to learn what they know, what they want and how they live. Their speeches and writings access to their consciousness. This research approach to teaching educates the teacher in designing a curriculum which is intrinsically motivating. It also bridges the professional gap between the student and the teacher, who investigates the students. This animates the students to study themselves, the course texts, their own language and reality. The teacher should establish freedom in communication to the pupils so as to establish a mutual atmosphere which encourages students to talk openly, not fearing ridicule or punishment. Through this, students speak out the themes of their lives, which pose as problems. Learning should be done together with the students, not knowing in advance what would result, by inventing knowledge in the class with students. Teaching should be done in small chunks, by the teacher moving together with the students as they both research on the topic to research on and later present their findings for discussion. Teachers should therefore not be confined to a prescribed syllabus or particular texts to cover certain mandated topics. A large syllabus sabotages the attempt by students to grasp the content. A sizeable curriculum content will ensure prolonged scrutiny of the materials drawn as problematic texts. The curriculum content should contain themes of the students' daily life issues so as to relate the subject content to reality.

Freire observes two options of initiating dialogue. The first is choosing problem themes from student culture and another one is studying academic subjects in a situated manner, that is, inserting academic disciplines in the students' social contexts. The latter option calls for the "problematization" of the study topic. Problematization refers to the asking of questions and calling into question. It is at one end and at the same time the beginning of an authentic act of knowing. The topic of study is perceived to be a problem and framed in such a way that the learners are assigned to go and research on. A key role should be played by the educator, who challenges both the learners and the reality which is to be studied. The context of problematization is in dialogue. It entails the examination and appropriation of mediating reality by conscious actors who stand a subject-to-subject relationship to one another. Taking physics as a discipline, the dialogical method could be applied in the following way: ask students at the beginning of the course to carry out research about a given topic for instance cosmology. This can be done through interviews about how different people understand the world; i.e their cosmological vision, what the sky mean to them, what the stars mean to them and what the world generally is. The teacher should also ask students to put down their own understanding so as to make comparison with what they obtain. When the students come back to class, they report on how people think about the universe – day and night, the moon, seasons and compare all these with their positions (perceptions) of the same. The students' situated research therefore moves them beyond the limits that restricted them before. They take up responsibilities outside the traditional curriculum. They become active researchers prior to listening to a lecture on reality. They make close contact with the common people. As the students research, the teacher is also doing the same, then when they meet in class, all their findings are put on table for discussion and analysis. Presentation of the findings is what will evoke dialogue in class. This will enable both parties to learn from each other's findings and they'll be able to justify their arguments. This is a textured situation of teaching which counters the passive and silencing methods of transferring knowledge. It enables students to share in the illumination of reality. This is a sample of a dialogical approach of a physics course. This pedagogy develops some independence (autonomy) among the students, hence humanizing education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This being a philosophical study, Critical method was used supplemented by the analytic method.

The Critical Method

According to Njoroge and Bennaars, the term critical is derived from a Greek word "Kriticos", which means "skilled in judging". To think critically means to judge whether or not some claim or premise is believed and convincing. Critical thinking liberates us from dogmatically accepting assertions or premises. Critical thinking entails making claims backed up by reasons and arguments. Arguments here imply a rational attempt to prove a point of offering reasons or evidence and drawing conclusions from it. In the proposed study, this method is thought to be useful in bringing to light the issues hampering the effective achievement of the goals of the Kenyan education., particularly as it pertains the pedagogical procedures and the curricular. A critical examination of this system will enable us clarify its shortcomings and hence prescribe alternative remedy. Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) associate this method to the Socratic Method, after an ancient Greek Philosopher –Socrates. These methods attempted to protect man from fanaticism and hypocrisy, dogmatism, slogans and ideologies. It therefore liberates man from narrow-mindedness. Criticism here takes a positive evaluation of judging an idea, in attempt not only to clarify but also to provide a normative perspective on which direction ought to be followed. This method will thus assist in providing an alternative course of action in a bid to alleviate the shortcomings of the problem under study.

The Analytic Method

According to White (1991), the word analysis comes from the Greek word meaning to "break up" analytical procedures aim to reveal the nature of something by breaking up the matter in question into its constituent parts. The first stage of philosophical thinking is analytical. A Philosopher tries to clarify an issue using certain mental tools to break up the general concepts under inquiry into smaller ideas which are easier to work with. In practice, this amounts to searching for specific definitions of the ideas or concepts involved in the philosophical concept under investigation. In this study, this method will be employed in examining various features of the Kenyan system of education and clarifying the concept of education.

RESULTS

The objective of the study was to: Establish how the Freirian perspective of education can facilitate the achievement of the goals of the 8-4-4 system of

education.

Freire conceives education as a humanizing enterprise. That is, through education, man should be able to understand his world and humanize it by transforming it. Education should not only be a mere stock of knowledge to be mastered, but an orientation towards man's role in the world. It should enable man realize his potentialities and exploit them to the fullest. With this, education will enable man to perceive the world as it is, relate to it and question it. The task of education therefore is to create the most favorable condition to enable man and society as a whole to reach the state of critical awareness. Education should therefore enable man to progress from emotional knowledge to rational perception of reality. After becoming critically aware of himself, man will be able to realize his potentialities and shortcomings, hence be in a position to overcome the latter. Freire sees man as being in the process of transformation hence he is incomplete. Being an open being in the world, he has the ability to transform the world through his action and reflection that is praxis. He has the ability to chart his own destiny by transforming, producing, deciding, creating and communicating on issues affecting him in his daily life. This can only be realized through the process of education.

A good educational programme should evoke critical consciousness in the learner. This is the main goal of education. According to Freire, critical consciousness provokes man's recognition of the world, not as a predetermined world, but a world which is dynamically undergoing the process of making. Critical consciousness entails critical literacy. By this, Freire refers to the analytic habits of educational components such as reading, writing and thinking, which go beyond mere surface impressions, traditional myths or routine opinions. Through education the learner should discover the hidden meaning of any events, texts, concepts and apply them to his own contexts. This will lead to the development of 'dissociation,' a quality developed in a learner, which enables him to recognize and challenge the long held myths or values in society which have been internalized into the society's consciousness. This perception is opposed to the indoctrinating and brain washing culture of education. Through dissociation; the learner will be able to develop 'self education'. This points to the transformation of the schools and society away from traditions authoritarian relations and undemocratic relationships between learner and the teacher. If this is what education should do to the learner, then how can this be realized? To answer this, Freire suggests an alternative educational process which puts the learner and the teacher on equal footing. He identifies two categories of education-'domesticating' and 'education for liberation. The former category points to the manipulative dimension between the teacher and the learner, where the learner is reduced to a passive listener of the teacher's communiqués, which he has to consume

without question. This one-sided educational process is what he terms as the 'banking' concept of education (Freire, 1970a). This narrative nature of educational process reduces the learner into a mere receptacle which cannot develop critical awareness. The learner will even end up consuming inauthentic concepts, provided they have come from the teacher, who is a symbol of trust and authority.

Due to this, Freire advocates for the latter category – "education for liberation". As opposed to the banking education, where the learners' critical thinking is inhibited, education for liberation perceives man in his environment, rich in experience. The learner is not perceived as 'empty' not knowing, instead he has an active role to play in the learning process together with the teacher. Man is made critically aware of the established system of values. Man has to recreate the world instead of conforming to it. In education, the learner has a right to challenge the teachers' authority and question answers instead of just consuming them. This can only be made possible if the learner fully participates in the learning process by carrying out his own research and study of the existing curriculum concepts. The teacher's role is that of a facilitator who guides and catalyzes the learning process, by assigning tasks the learner, instead of studying for him and 'filling' him with the knowledge. This approach facilitates unending inquiry into concepts under study, leading to invention and re-invention. Both the teacher and the learner are therefore integrated into mutual creators and re-creators of knowledge. This approach will make students experience education as something they do instead of being done for them by their teachers. What Freire discourages in this context is the imposition of readymade curriculum, standardized tests, grading and tracking policies and routines which compel them to adhere to. This interferes with the democratic and critical development of the students. Students cannot be able to use the knowledge they've acquired to transform society. The education program should therefore be in consonant with the learners' intellectual capacities, their interests and their daily experiences in society.

To enable the students achieve critical awareness, Freire advocates for the dialogical approach in the teaching and learning process. This approach, as explained in chapter two puts the learner and the teacher on equal footing in a joint search of knowledge. In terms of knowledge seeking, none of them 'knows all' instead they both engage in the process of studying. The study is hence collectively owned by both parties. According to Freire, pedagogy is central to the teaching and learning process, hence determines its eventual outcome. The dialogical process can be facilitated by the problem-posing approach in studying the curriculum concepts. In problem-posing, the subject matter is not presented to the learner as a package of facts to memorize but as problems posed within the learner's experience for him to

work on. The teacher first identifies the learner's interest and experience regarding the concept in question, then facilitates the learning process by coming up with problems. These problems can take the form of project work, assignments or study questions to be researched on. After the research exercise, each party brings his findings to class for discussions and any necessary make-ups. Freire emphasizes that the problem to be researched on ought to be within the student's scope of experience in society, presented through the respective academic disciplines. Through this approach, communication and dialogue will be aroused. The role of the educator here is thus to create together with the learner the condition under which knowledge is invented.

Through problem-posing, the student perceives his state, not as predetermined and unalterable, but sees himself in the process of becoming. He is hence unfinished, together with unfinished reality. He will therefore develop unending quest for knowledge. Dialogue challenges the student's passivity in class, authority dependency and submission which are characterized with the traditional classroom. The learning process hence becomes interactive and participatory in nature. Both the learner and the teacher are equal subjects engaged in inquiry for knowledge. According to Freire (1970a), it is only through dialogue that critical thinking is generated, facilitated by communication. In order to facilitate this, he proposes that the educational programme should start with the present existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the learners. These have to be posed to the students as problems that challenges them and requires their response. They should not be imposed with other ideas and views outside their experience and scope to consume. In a classroom situation, the teacher should first of all start by his students. He may present them with a short quiz to ascertain their prerequisite entry behaviors and their intellectual capacity. The quiz can be in form of reading, writing or a short mental work. The teacher will eventually identify their cognitive level and thus design a course of study that corresponds their intellectual ability. Knowledge should therefore be invented and re-invented in the classroom by the teacher and the students. Teaching should be done in small chunks by both the teacher and the learner researching each given topic and later present their findings for discussion. Teachers should therefore not be confined to a prescribed syllabus to be covered within a stipulated period of time. A large syllabus will make students not grasp the concepts adequately.

To initiate dialogue, Freire proposes that the teacher should select themes from the student's culture and experience or the student's social contexts. This therefore means that the curriculum content should be of relevance utility to the students' daily life. This will facilitate easier and enjoyable research by the students. They will also enjoy fully in the dialogue during the

learning process, since the curriculum content affects them directly. The dialogical communications will eventually cut down the barriers of the teacher autonomy and domineering role in the teaching and learning process. Any given system of education should be in consonant with the needs, aspiration and the experiences of people in a given society. The educational system in different kinds of societies in the world is different in organization and in content. This is because the societies providing the education are also different, and education has a purpose. The purpose of education in any given society is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society, and to prepare the youth for their future membership in the society, and active participation in its maintenance and development. Having adopted from the west and directly implanted in Kenya without any alteration, the 8-4-4 system was bound to fail since it was designed to serve the needs and aspirations of the western society, which are quite peculiar and different to the Kenyan society. This system is therefore inadequate and inappropriate for a developing nation like Kenya. The inadequacy of this system is depicted from some of its salient features, which encourage attitudes of inequality, intellectual arrogance and intense individualism among the educated. Having been adopted from the west, it is elitist in orientation, designed to meet the interests of those who go to school.

Every stage of schooling is a preparatory for the next and those who don't excel to higher level are considered as failures in life. Those who learn up to higher levels expect to secure high salaried employment in the urban set-ups and lead a better life than their fellows; hence perpetuating social stratification. This education has also divorced its participants from the society which it is supposed to prepare them for. The curriculum offered is not of immediate use to the society which the learner comes from. Once educated, one feels that he belongs to a class of the elite and it would therefore be degrading him if he is called upon to assist in communal work. He belongs to a class of the elite, which ought to live a luxurious life. The education has also made the youth to develop a notion that all knowledge comes from textbooks or from educated people that is, those who have undergone formal education. The knowledge and wisdom of other people is despised. In addition, one's academic qualifications are the ones which count, for him to secure any job opportunity. Other attributes of an individual are of subsidiary importance. Everything we do emphasizes book learning and underestimates the value of traditional knowledge and wisdom which is often acquired by some people as they experience life, without even going to school. Worse still, the curriculum is too theoretical; such that students don't make use of their skills they learn. However, this mess can be corrected with proper re-examining of our education system, so as to make it relevant to our daily lives. The purpose of our

education should be first to foster our social living and working together for our common good. It has to prepare the young ones to play a dynamic and creative role in the society's development. Our education must inculcate a sense of commitment to the community, and help the learners to accept the values appropriate to our kind of future, not of the west. Our education should emphasize co-operative endeavors, but not individual advancement. It must therefore stress equality and responsibility to give services which go with any special ability such as vocational skills or academic pursuits.

Education should also prepare the youth for the work they'll be called upon to do in their society. The students therefore have to think for themselves, make their own judgement on all issues affecting them. They have to be in a position to interpret the decision made through the democratic institutions of our society and to implement them in the light of the local circumstances peculiar to where they happen to live. To sum-up, the education provided must encourage the development in each citizen of three things; an enquiring mind; an ability to learn from what others do; and reject or adapt it to his own needs; and basic confidence in his own position as a free and equal member of the society, who values others and is valued by them for what he does and not for what he obtains (Hinzen and Hundsorfer, 1979). This view of education is what Freire terms as critical awareness, which education should develop in an individual. The learner should therefore be in a position to interpret the basic principles and concepts of the academic subjects they learn, internalize, them, then adopt them to solve their daily problems. The learner should be able to judge social issue affecting him by himself. The knowledge should enable the learner to be innovative, not waiting to be told what to do. At its launch, the main emphasis of 8-4-4 was to promote self-reliance among the youth. This can only be realized if we try to understand self-reliance from the existentialist perspective. According to Hinzen and Hundsorfer (1979) citing Nyerere (1967), the purpose of our education should be for liberation'. To liberate means to 'set free from something'. Education has to liberate both the body and mind. It has to make man more of a human being that to be aware of his potential as a human being and be in a positive life enhancing relationship with himself, his neighbor and his environment.

Education should therefore enable man to be self-reliant and eventually make the country self reliant. Self reliance in man points to Freire's critical awareness in that through education, man becomes aware of his manhood, and his potential to use his circumstances rather than to be used by them. He must overcome the feelings of inferiority or superiority and hence be able to co-operate with fellow men on the basis of equality for their common purposes. Once he has liberated his mind, man will turn to the 'evils' in society such as diseases and

poverty. He will employ all he mechanisms at his disposal to fight them. By so doing he'll be expounding his self-reliance struggle by fighting the evils that degrade and in humanize him. Education has to liberate us from mental slavery and colonialism by making us aware of ourselves as equal members of the human race, with the rights and duties of our humanity. We have to be liberated from the tendency of submitting to circumstances which reduce our humanity as if they were immutable. We also have to be liberated from technical ignorance so that we can make and use the tools and technology at our disposal to better our lives. It should turn out men who have the technical knowledge and ability to expand the economy for the benefit of man and society. It should make liberated men and women into skillful users of tools but not turning them into tools. We should hence become creators.

Since each man is a unique individual and at the same time being part of mankind, therefore each man's liberation will lead to a unique kind of contribution to the totality of humanity. Our education should not turn men into marketable commodities, in terms of their certificates, better salaries and housing. This will make educated men contribute little to their community's development, by making them feel superior. Having elaborated how our education should be, how then do we reconstruct it so that the above goals are met? First of all as noted earlier, the primary school curriculum offered is not sufficiently related to the tasks which have to be done in society. This can be restructured by first changing the content of our primary education and raising the primary school entry age so that the child is older when he leaves, and also be able to learn quickly while at school. At a slightly older age, it is easier for the pupils to grasp the subject content since this corresponds to the chronological age. Education in primary school should be complete in itself. It shouldn't be a mere preparation for secondary education. Instead of offering a curriculum that is geared towards competitive exams which will select a few to join secondary school, it must be a preparation for the life which the majority will live. The same should also apply to secondary school education. The exam-oriented curriculum only assesses the academic performance, ignoring the students power to reason, character and willingness to serve. The aim of schooling is to produce an all round personality who will be creative in society. This cannot be achieved through academic assessment alone.

In effect to this, the curriculum we design should only be based on the needs and aspiration of our society, but not meant to meet international standards. This is because every state has got its own unique problems, needs and aspirations. When designing our curriculum, we should not determine the type of things children are taught in school by the things a doctor, a lawyer or an engineer needs to know. Instead we should be guided by

the things which a boy or girls ought to acquire and the values he ought to cherish if he is to live well in the society and contribute to the improvement of the life. We should focus on the majority while designing the curriculum and syllabus. The objective of teaching must therefore be the provision of knowledge, skills and attitudes which will serve the student when he lives and works in a dynamic society. This approach will break the classroom monotony. Students will be able to learn a lot on their own without necessarily being taught in class. In farming, they may learn soil conservation measures, crop and animal production, the use of fertilizers, among other concepts. They will understand what they are doing and why, and will be able to analyze any failures and consider possibilities for greater improvement. With this approach, it is easier to employ Freire's problem-posing method, by assigning students project work which they will research on and present findings for discussions in class. This kind of curriculum will also make students relate work to comfort and like it. In urban schools where crop farming is not available, alternative projects can be established. This includes poultry, piggery or operating a school canteen. In addition, other duties done at school such as cleaning and laundry work should be done by the students themselves. This will save the school the burden of paying the laborers, besides shaping the learners into responsible citizens. The school learners must therefore be made part of the community by having responsibilities to the community and having the community involved in school activities.

Although Freire discourages the use of standardized tests for assessment, for the purpose of the Kenyan context, it should be combined with other forms of assessment such as the work done by the students for the school and community. This will not only evaluate the academic performance, but so other attributes such as cooperation, diligence and character. To enhance continuity in learning, the school vacation should be staggered depending on the projects being undertaken by the students, while one group proceeds for the holiday, another one remains, engaged purely on practical work. Vacations should also be accompanied by project work assigned to students in various disciplines so that they bring their findings the following term. This will assist in adequate syllabus coverage together with the learners, rather than breaking the learning process, only to resume when schools re-open. Practical work in post-primary institution may take the form of students participating in communal activities such as census, Adult Education and working on dispensaries for small wages; which may be paid to their respective institutions to cater for other learning equipment. Such duties should earn students credit which should account for their final grades at the end of their courses. Education should therefore not be considered apart from the society. It should integrate student in the social and economic system in which it operates. Children learn more from their life

experience than from their teachers and textbooks. By advocating for the integration of education with society, it does not mean that we abandon formal education. Instead a school system should be devised and operated with reference to the society in which its graduates will live. We have to use education as a catalyst for change in society. We shouldn't compare our education with other systems of education in the west, but instead try the much we can to ensure that it suits our conditions. We shouldn't imitate what other states do. Finally, we should move away from the mentality that academic ability marks out a child's success in life; that those who do not merit to higher levels of education are failures in life. This epitomizes the concept of education as the processing of human raw material into refined commodities. Besides examination results, other qualities such as character, co-operation and the desire to serve, should be considered when assessing a student's ability to advance to the next level of education.

DISCUSSION

In the literature review, an attempt was made to establish circumstances under which the 8-4-4 system of education was introduced in Kenya. It was the wish of the government to formulate a system of education which would cater for the aspirations of the youth and serve the interests of national development. This had not been realized since independence, as outlined in the Ominde Education Commission of 1964. This Commission recommended that education should provide skills and knowledge that would enable an individual participate fully in the country's economic development. Failure to attain these goals saw the subsequent formation of other commissions to investigate into the then education system. The most outstanding were the Gachathi Report of 1976 and the Mackay Report of 1981. It was from the recommendation of the Mackay Report that the 8-4-4 system was brought into being. Few years after its launch, it faced a number of problems that hampered its success. The major problems cited were irrelevancy of the curriculum matter to the learner's daily life, inadequate teaching facilities and equipment and the heavy workload bestowed on both the teachers and the learners. These problems were highlighted in the Kamunge Report of 1988 that recommended for the restructuring of this system. Despite the amendments that followed the Kamunge Report, these problems still persisted. Due to this, there was further need to review the curriculum in a bid to realize its objectives. This was followed by the Koech Commission of 1999, which recommended the reduction of the number of subjects offered in both primary and secondary schools. This was to be done through the integration of some subjects. However, this move did not alleviate the problems of heavy workload, since what was done here was mere

transferrals of topics from one class to the other and changing the names of subjects, otherwise the curriculum remained irrelevant and the workload remained bulky. Owing to this, the education was purely exam-oriented; this contradicted its initial objective for equipping the learner with vocational skills, because the practical subjects were phased out. At this juncture, we see this system of education bearing the characteristics of a domesticating education. Being exam-oriented, the ranking system used in the national examinations was based on the 'mean score', 'regardless of the methodology employed in teaching. The best school is ranked depending on the mean score obtained. This has created room for the use of morally unacceptable methods of teaching, where the learner is meant to memorize the material that will assist him pass the examination. Learners who undergo this education end up being unable to make use of the knowledge and skills they have acquired.

Liberating Education

This is the anti-thesis of domesticating education. It is popularly known as the learner –centered education. This education rules out the domineering role of the teacher in a classroom. It emphasizes on the role of the learner in the education process through active participation. Here, both the learner and the teacher meet on equal footing in the joint search for knowledge. Since education is a continuous process and reality is dynamical, it therefore calls for learning and re-learning, invention and re-invention of knowledge. The learner is liberated from a preconceived perception that he knows nothing and the teacher knows everything. He is made to develop self consciousness and realize that he has the potential to make choices in life, act on them and live, and realize his objectives in life. For education to be a humanizing affair, it calls for dialogue. This is a communicative encounter between two equal subjects-the learner and the teacher, mediated by love, faith and trust. In dialogue, neither the teacher's status nor the student's status overrides each other. Both parties become considerers of reality. This implies that the teacher does not 'know all' and the student is not 'blank' in the head. Both of them have the capacity to chart their way forward through their encounter.

Our discussion here does not imply that there is not a difference between a teacher and a student. A teacher has got some prior knowledge on what is to be learnt, he is therefore supposed to guide the learner and in the process he also learns and re-learns. The learner should not therefore just conform to the teacher's work, but even challenge his authority. This approach can be facilitated if the curriculum content is prepared in accordance with the

learners needs, aspiration and within his experiences. This arouses his learning urge and willingness to participate in the dialogue. The curriculum should be prepared basing on what Freire calls the 'epistemological relationship to reality'. That is, it should be consonant with the learner's experiences in reality and be integrated in the academic disciplines. How then can dialogue be initiated in a classroom situation? Freire argues that the subject matter should be presented in class as a problem to be worked out by both the teacher and the learner. This can be done in form of a project work or an assignment, whose findings are later presented in class for discussion, and then both parties reach a common consensus regarding the concept under study. The teacher's main role is to select the object of study before meeting the learner. His experience empowers him to guide the learner on how to study. This kind of approach guarantees a democratic learning process in which the learner is encouraged to learn by himself. Through this, he will develop critical consciousness and eventually enable him become self –reliant.

Self-Reliance in Education

It can be remembered that the paramount objective of 8-4-4 education was to promote self-reliance in the learners. From a philosophical point of view, self-reliance goes beyond equipping the learner with vocational skills to make him economically productive. Existentially this points to the critical awareness which a student attains concerning himself as a unique entity and the world as revealed through the encounter with education content. Concerning himself, he should realize that despite other impediments that may dictate his facticity, he still stands a chance to determine his future destiny, and becomes responsible for what he has chooses in life. Concerning the awareness of world reality, he needs to resist the notion that reality is predetermined, since this could discourage him from striving for excellence. He has to perceive reality dynamically. That is, the student should realize that it is his right as a human being to intervene and transform circumstances for the better, once he understands them. If a teacher wishes to create this perception in the learner, he needs to treat his students as free agents for them to recognize themselves as free. This can only be realized if our system of education doesn't over –emphasize on the examination as a sole yardstick for the student's success in education. The exams set should demand creativity and originality in the learner, as opposed to mere memorization of facts.

This means that even the universally accepted facts should not be perceived as being absolute, but a room be created for the learner to experience and rediscover that knowledge afresh. This can be realized through dialogue.

CONCLUSION

In the introductory section of this study, we attempted to carry out a survey of what education entails. By this, we were interested in what education as a process should do to a learner who undergoes through it and also finding out the criteria by which if met, we would term a given process to be education. After coming up with a clear understanding of such criteria then we would attempt to adopt a working definition of education. Through our survey, using perspectives of this process from various scholars, we came to an agreement that through education, the learner has to develop knowledge and understanding. It is expected therefore knowledge and education are directly linked. Education therefore entails a whole man's process. That is, through education, an individual must be able to use his knowledge and skills in widely varied and changing life situations. An educated person is therefore expected to meet and deal with the problems and situations unknown to him basing on the past and the present experiences he is undergoing. Inability to express the above therefore implies that one is not educated, although it isn't a guarantee that once you undergo the process of education, then you have to display these qualities. It remains just a matter of probability and certainty. All in all, it is expected that people who undergo effective and adequate education ought to get affected and changed by it. Education should change an individual's attitude and his whole way of life. The evidence of this change can be depicted in the way one carries out himself in social relations, not the shock of abstract and sophisticated content he possesses. We can therefore conclude that the function of education is to liberate man. It doesn't therefore imply that academic training is not important. Either technical or professional training is unimportant. What has been suggested is that education must not be thought of only, or primarily as a matter of schools, or as an instrument for academic and technical advancement. The dissemination of academic, professional and technical knowledge is only vital if it is made part of the education which liberates man and enables him to work as an equal, with his fellow men for the development of mankind.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is need to offer suggestions on how to shape education so that it can live up to its expectations. Just in passing, the most touching set-backs that hamper its efficiency are; bulky workload, emanating from integration of subjects and wide syllabi; abstract curriculum content; inadequate facilities and equipment for comprehensive syllabi coverage and non-conformity of the curriculum content with the societal demands.

To try and overcome hurdles in curriculum implementation, there is need to conduct a thorough

review of the pedagogy and the curriculum content, besides trimming it down into manageable disciplines. The teaching method should be constructed in terms of an intersubjective encounter between the learner and the teacher. It is the bulky workload and the exam-oriented approach in teaching that makes this system a failure. This inhibits the student's creativity and originality in looking at reality. It is from the subject –to-subject interaction and communication between the learner and the teacher that the student can emerge as a creator and re-creator of his own reality-socially, economically and culturally. Teachers are the ones who directly face the task of implementing the curriculum. For this matter, they are the technicians who can put in place proper mechanisms on how the curriculum should be approached. They are aware of the difficulties they encounter in the field, they know the learner's needs and the societal demands. They should therefore be incorporated in the curriculum designing. This will enable us come up with a relevant curricula which captures the aspiration and needs of the students in their society.

To ensure that the curriculum is practical in nature, there should be a link between the school and the local community, by setting up income generating projects as discussed in chapter four. Such projects will enable students come into contact with the practical concepts which they learn theoretically in class as they participate in the work. The little income generated from such enterprises can be utilized to purchase the learning equipment in the schools. The integration of the schools with the community will not only enhance the practical approach to learning, but also create room for the learners also evaluating them practically; above all, the dialogical method of teaching should be paramount if in any case self-reliance is to be achieved.

To make the curriculum more practical it should be integrated with the society and our economy. Schools must become communities. There should be a direct relationship between teachers, pupils and other members of the community. All schools must contribute to their own upkeep, by being economic communities as well as social and educational institutions. Schools should establish income generating projects such as workshops, farms, hence directly contributing to the total national income. These income generating projects will offer opportunities for the students to learn practically and thus alleviate the problem of shortage of learning resources.

By the time a student completes his course he is acquainted with the skills of participating in economic development.

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