

Prevocational subjects in primary schools in the 8-4-4 education system in Kenya

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Abstract

It is argued that education policy in Africa in the last several decades has favoured curriculum change towards practical or vocational subjects. In Kenya this policy started to emerge in the mid-sixties leading to the launching of the 8-4-4 education system in 1985 with the objective of increasing the scope of vocational subjects in the school system at all levels. The article investigates the state of prevocational subjects in the primary school curriculum with a particular focus on the teaching facilities and materials, and whether the subjects provide useful vocational skills as stated in the objectives of the new education system. It is concluded that the teaching of prevocational subjects is hampered by a lack of basic resources, and their teaching has not shifted pupils' inclinations away from academic studies in favour of vocational skills training and practically oriented occupations.