THE NEED TO INTRODUCE PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN AT
THE BASIC LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

"This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award."

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DEDICATION

With gratitude and love I dedicate this piece of work to my family, I owe them the virtue of patience and hard work.
I wish to express my gratitude for the training and assistance provided by the professors at Kenyatta University that made this research possible. In particular, Dr. Wokabi Francis, Dr. NyanjeBatso and Dr. Oyigo all my university research supervisors who provided immeasurable support and inspiration and for their vital critical viewpoint and constructive comments.

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<td>ECDE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE</td>
<td>General Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPAR</td>
<td>Institute of Policy Analysis and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCPE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Primary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCSE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
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<td>Philosophy for Children</td>
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<td>ROK</td>
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ABSTRACT

Among the aims of education in Kenya is to provide opportunities for the fullest development of individual talent and personality. This will make learners grow up into self-disciplined, self-reliant and integrated citizens who will play effective and productive roles in national development. Within these objectives is the need for education to shape learners in the way they think and live in the world. The rate of expansion of human knowledge has been so rapid in the recent years that there is increasing danger of what is learnt becoming obsolete in a short while. This stresses the need for learners to be more critical and creative in order to make it in the 21st century. Various countries like the U.S. and the U.K. have recorded vital contributions of philosophy for children among learners. Students who have done philosophy from an early age elicit admirable values such as intellectual humility, respect for divergent views, courage and open-mindedness which are useful in democratic institutions. As the whole world tends towards democratization, these qualities would be essential in realization of those prospects. Primary education is the foundation upon which mastery of formal learning skills must be planted so as to provide smooth transition to higher levels of learning. Due to the rising concern that the youth are facing challenges in adapting to the ever-changing environment of society and work, the primary curriculum in Kenya has undergone various adjustments. However we still have an increase in illicit activities like; drug addiction, homosexuality and general disillusionment among the youth, which depicts poor decision making due to lack of constructive critical thinking skills. Research shows that philosophy for children enhances cognitive ability, development of reasoning skills, dialogue, emotional and social skills. The discipline mainly focuses on developing critical and creative thinking skills of learners. This study examined the aims of education and its challenges, the nature and spirit of philosophy and the possible benefits of introducing philosophy for children at the basic level of education. It was mainly founded on constructivist theory that views learning as an active process of knowledge construction by the learner encouraging life-long learning attitude. Various philosophical methods like the analytical, speculative, critical and dialectical methods were employed. The study found that philosophy is first introduced at the university level of education in Kenya; and so the system does not maximize on the magnitude of benefits that can be accrued from exploring philosophy intensively and consistently from an early age. Therefore there is need to introduce philosophy for children at the basic level of education so as to promote the development of vital thinking skills and improve on the quality of education.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, assumptions, significance, theoretical and conceptual framework, limitations and operational definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Several studies show that the education sector is faced with challenges in nurturing learners to be self-disciplined, self-reliant and integrated citizens who can play an effective and productive role in individual and national development. Commissioned reports on education like ROK (1964) and ROK (1976) focused on the need for education to foster national unity while the more recent ones like the ROK (1988), the ROK (2000) and ROK (2011) recommended improvement on the eminence and significance of education and the advancement of lifelong learning and alteration in response to changing situations. Specifically, a major weakness noted in the latter reports is inability of Kenya’s education system to equip learners with skills that can enable them to adapt appropriately to new information and the changing world. A survey by The Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (2008) found that Kenya is still suffering from issues of poverty, lack of employment, violence and increasing incidences of corruption among other development challenges, which come about as a result of poor judgments that may be caused by lack of criticality and creativity in analyzing situations.

According to Wachira (2009), the relevance and quality of school curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment in Kenya needs to be improved and standardized. Nasongo
(2011) posits that the recurrent problem facing the education sector is poor quality where institutions are accused of teaching what is not needed, making it difficult for learners to cope in the constantly changing modern world of innovation. According to Copi (2005), the rapid rate of expansion of human knowledge in the recent years has increased the danger of what is learnt as substantive knowledge in school becoming out of date in a short while. This suggests that any content given to learners faces the danger of being out-dated or insufficient due to changing times. With this situation therefore there is need for learners to be encouraged to be more critical and creative in order to effectively navigate the knowledge economy of the 21st century. This explains why recent policy initiatives like the IPAR (2008) have the quality and relevance of education among their key concerns.

Philosophy is a rational process that calls for the use of a questioning attitude in understanding different aspects of human experience in a bid to come up with a comprehensive and vision of reality. The nature of philosophy is ‘to do,’ where doing entails assuming a critical view on the beliefs one holds to determine whether they are accurate and most enlightened. According to Chaffee (2005), criticism in philosophy is used constructively for the purpose of better understanding of what is going on and is applicable to every area of human experience. With change seeming to be the only constant in our modern lives, there is need for learners to sharpen their abilities to be excellent critical thinkers to enable them make enlightened and informed decisions in all areas of life.

A critical thinking person tends to approach life in a reflective and informed way; which is also useful for other academic disciplines so as to discover how different disciplines
synthesizes issues and use experience to provide and apply concepts while constructing knowledge. Therefore criticality is also useful in understanding other disciplines and this is what sets philosophy apart from other academic disciplines because they all have their roots in philosophy (Chaffee 2005). Doing philosophy encompasses questioning the most fundamental human experiences. In fact, according to Chaffee, the critical thinking abilities and attitudes originated for the most part in philosophical inquiry.

ROK (2011) proposes that the learners should be equipped with the skills to enable them live and work as citizens with dignity to enhance the quality of their individual lives by making informed decision through an all-inclusive basic education plan. It also proposes cascading to lower levels, including Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE), the basic skills in research to inspire utilization of critical, autonomous and analytical approach thinking among learners as a step towards achieving the goals of education. The report points at the need to nurture critical thinking from an early age. This can be developed when students inquire together in collaborative groups of inquiry. Various countries such as the US and UK have recorded vital contributions of philosophy among young learners and citizens in general with current research suggesting that philosophy graduates are among the most employable (www.philosophyfoundation.org).

Empirical evidence from Clackmanshire Schools in the UK, (www.p4c.org 2006) reported improved cognitive abilities in pupils after sixteen months of philosophical enquiry which were sustained two years later even without further inquiry opportunities. Gains in various fields including improved communication, participation and social behavior were evident after six months of inquiry. Lipman (1991) posits that philosophizing from an early age assists children to cultivate the habit of rational thinking
which needs to be encouraged so as to provide smooth transition to higher levels of critical and creative thinking. This will provide a coherent and meaningful curriculum that students can easy relate to their day to day experiences solving the current concern on student-curriculum disconnect. He further posits that philosophy has to acquire a central place in the curriculum from an early age for pupils to maximize its benefits.

In Kenya, The International Baccalaureate Organization’s Primary Years Program which uses the philosophical inquiry method is the first attempt to formally introduce philosophizing at an early stage. It has been implemented at the Aga Khan Schools in Nairobi and Mombasa with positive outcomes (www.criticalthinking in Kenya). The program emphasizes on pupils engaging constructively in communities of inquiry for knowledge construction, so as to encourage pupils to be in a position to be good inquirers, evaluative thinkers, fluent communicators, risk takers as well as knowledgeable, righteous, thoughtful, open-minded, well-balanced and reflective individuals from an early age. The central idea in philosophy is to develop critical thinking skills in all learners and encourage positive self worth which is in line with the educational goals in Kenya. An experiment carried out by Wambari (1999) at Thika Road Baptist School reported that philosophy makes a difference in children’s thinking habits where they seemed to be less credulous and more questioning in pursuit of satisfying their curiosity. This was reported when he subjected standard five pupils to one lesson of philosophy a week. Philosophical inquiry can therefore be a significant contribution to education theory if introduced early.

The basic syllabus of education in Kenya has some aspects of philosophy through subjects like social ethics and more recently through teaching of life skills which is not
yet clearly defined. Formally introducing philosophy at the university level as is the case in Kenya today doesn’t maximize on the benefits that can be accrued from consistently and intensively exploring it from an early age.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Commissioned reports on education such as the ROK (2000) and the ROK (2011) reveal that that the education sector is not satisfactorily equipping learners with knowledge, skills, attitudes and positive values for self fulfillment, national development and reasonably adapting to a rapidly changing society. The need to develop such skills, attitudes and values that promote reflective, innovative and responsible thought and action seems to be consistent with the objective behind the spirit and nature of philosophy which encourages a constructive questioning attitude towards every area of experience so as to understand and make better decisions for life through constructive criticism. These skills can be best developed through consistent and extensive philosophical inquiry from an early age. Philosophy in Kenya first appears as a subject at post secondary level and therefore it may not be capable of realizing its full benefits. This study therefore suggests the introduction of philosophy at the elementary classes in Kenya to promote development of critical thinking skills to facilitate survival in modern times and improve on the quality and relevance of education.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to make a case for introduction of philosophy at the basic level of education in Kenya. It is a response to documented observation that the system of education in Kenya does not satisfactorily facilitate development of individual talent and
personality in children, to enable them to become self-disciplined, self-reliant and united citizens equipped with relevant knowledge, expertise and constructive values to adapt in a rapidly changing local and international environment.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of this study:

i) Examine the aims of basic education in Kenya

ii) Examine the challenges facing education in Kenya

iii) Examine the nature of philosophy and its benefits in light of the challenges of education

iv) To argue for introduction of philosophy at the basic level of education in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

i) What are the aims of basic education in the Kenya?

ii) What are the challenges facing education in Kenya?

iii) Can philosophy contribute towards addressing the challenges facing basic education in Kenya?

iv) Why should philosophy be introduced at the basic level of education in Kenya?
1.6 Significance of the Study

This study hopes to help focus attention on children who find it difficult to enjoy their natural philosophical state of childhood characterized by curiosity, questioning, adventure and creativity in a formal educational setting largely controlled by adults. It will also provide useful information which curriculum developers can use to design basic education curricula that intensively taps onto and develops the innate abilities and inclinations of children; to provide the foundation for subsequent learning. The study will inform the debate of education reform in Kenya by focusing attention on developing children’s autonomous learning and critical thinking skills to make them more adaptive to contemporary challenges and becoming effective employers and employees in institutions and encourage national development.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is basically conceptual given its philosophical nature. However, it will mostly rely on secondary data and provide empirical evidence. Relevant documented empirical studies will be used to support its claims. Unfortunately, most of such empirical studies have been carried out in Western countries and their applicability to African context can be contested.

Philosophy for young learners is a relatively new idea in Kenya although some institutions like the Aga Khan Schools and Thika Road Baptist School have experimented on philosophy with children which will be useful in informing this study.
1.8 Delimitations of the Study

Faced with the conceptual nature of the study the documented reports used were carefully chosen to ensure their validity.

Although philosophy for children is a relatively new concept in Kenya the study relied on evidence from institutions that experimented with philosophy for children at primary school level which was useful in informing this study.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

This study is based on the following assumptions:

i) Primary education is the foundation upon which the mastery of all learning must be developed. A sound foundation for learning should therefore be formed at the earliest opportunity which is at the basic level of formal education.

ii) Philosophy can be designed to employ child-friendly philosophical methods of inquiry.

iii) Philosophy helps in infusing critical and creative thinking into all subjects studied.

iv) Critical thinking facilitates better understanding, decision making, problem solving and responsible living.
1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study will be based on Constructivism. This theory whose main proponents include; Vygotsky L, Piaget J, Dewey J, Rorty and Bruner J.; View learning as a contextualized process where knowledge is constructed rather than just accumulated. (www.learningtheories.com). It assumes that all knowledge is constructed from active, reflective and deliberate engagement of learners within a social context. To constructivists learning is a very personal endeavor for an individual as well as a social process where concepts, principles and rule are applied in a practical real-world context.

Vygotsky (1978) who propounded social constructivist theory argues that culture and context are important in forming understanding. Social constructivist theory holds that learning best happens in an active social setting. According to the model, learning is a social construct mediated by language through social interaction and captures the reasoning of the mind of an individual in social action. According to this theory learning is a process of of learning the cultural practice of the community y practicing it.

Segal, Chipman and Glaser (1985) found that schools place prioritizes development of reading writing and mathematical skills due to their general applicability neglecting learning reasoning and problem-solving skills required in sophisticated aspects of life. In a swiftly changing world it is difficult to predict what the best applicable skills and knowledge students require; it seems, therefore, that they should be equipped with information that will be applicable throughout their lives. This can be developed through adoption of philosophy lessons for young learners to sharpen their thinking skills not only in the classroom, but in other social settings.. Learners should learn to listen to others as
well as respond effectively and develops ability to follow various lines of reasoning taking place in communities of inquiry.

Vygotsky (1978) argues that interactions in social settings precedes a Childs’ development ending with cognition. In one of his studies, he specifically examined the role of prior knowledge in science learning. His findings provided that children’s cognitive process is a unitary function of spontaneous and scientific concepts. According to Vygotsky, the upward growth of spontaneous reasoning prepares the child for systematic development while scientific concepts introduced by instruction develop downwards to organize and utilize the spontaneous concepts. Culture provides the primary resources needed to restructure prior knowledge. Moreover the restructuring process itself occurs externally in social discourse. Adults play a crucial role in developing children’s social, negotiation and sharing skills by bringing them out through cultural practices. Social constructivism views the circumstance in which learning occurs as vital to learning itself. Learning results from social processes where the child uses experience with language and thought in the presence of one or more participant involved in an interactive process.

Social constructivism is supported by (Lave, (1991) and; Wenger, (1998) who came up with the concept of ‘Communities of practice’- groups of people sharing a common love for something and strive to get better at it as they continue practicing. This is in line with the pedagogy of philosophy for children where many of its practitioners like Lipman (1991) emphasize the use of a group inquiring together into questions with the teacher as a expeditor who intervenes to encourage thinking at a deeper level while allowing
discussion to follow the emerging interest of the group. In so doing knowledge is constructed from mutual social interaction and is enriched.

Bruner, (1915) in his theory of discovery learning believed that it is best for learners to discern facts and relationships for themselves through inquiry-based instruction. In a typical enquiry group, a thought-provoking incentive like the use of an image, video can be presented to help learners come up with a response so as to vote for the one they wish to explore. This makes learners part of the knowledge construction making it more meaningful to them. Philosophy according to Lipman (1991) has adapted the use of dialogue to practice the concept of inquiry in a bid to sharpen the social and thinking skills drawn from various diverse perspectives making one think in an accountable way in a group of peers. Philosophy with its tools of logic and argument was seen as the best means to facilitate meaningful education process to enable sustainable learning and thinking creating a coherent educative process where students can relate their daily experiences to what they learn in class. This study will showcase the possibility of addressing the challenges of education in Kenya through introduction of philosophy for children at the basic level due to the similarity of their aims. It will also endeavor to examine the contribution of philosophy for children towards the realization of Kenya’s vision 2030, a central concern in education, specifically under the social pillar, whose aim is to build a just and solid society with social equity in a clean and secure environment (IPAR 2008).

The study will make use of varied reports and ideas from various philosophers and scholars on philosophizing and try to relate them to the situation in Kenya. It will then try to find a relationship and infer how these ideas can help improve the education system in
Kenya. Information collected from such reports will be used to make a case for introducing philosophy at basic level of formal education.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

Outcomes of Curriculum with and without Philosophy for Children

In this conceptual framework it is assumed that children are innately curious. Doing philosophy encourages this questioning attitude making learning more of a natural experience to learners. Through this, the critical thinking skills are developed making learners able to relate educational content to their experience and broaden perspectives on issues for better understanding. With philosophy we are likely to end up with self-driven, confident and adaptive individuals, which is the aim of education.
On the other hand, when philosophical questioning is discouraged, critical thinking skills are not properly developed and learning becomes strange; as learners cannot clearly relate to content and their questioning attitude is impeded. This affects understanding negatively and is likely to produce rigid, dependent and unsure individuals who are incapable of making reasonable decisions due to their limited perspective on issues and dependency syndrome.

1.12 Operational Definition of Terms:

i) Basic level of education in Kenya: refers to the upper primary level in the Kenyan system of education.

ii) Cognitive development; refers to the child’s development associated with memory, reasoning, problem-solving and thinking.

iii) Community of inquiry; is an educational group of people who collectively come together to engage in purposeful critical analysis and reflect on issues to construct individual meaning and then confirm mutual understanding.

iv) Constructivism: is a theory that deal with how different people come up with meaning of the world from individual constructs.

v) Critical thinking: entails judging the reasonableness or soundness (logical validity) and truthfulness (accuracy) of statements.

vi) Philosophy: is the study of the general and fundamental problems like those connected with existence, knowledge, values reason mind and language.
vii) Philosophy for children: is a thinking program that taps into children’s natural curiosity and assists them in their search for meaning, encourages intellectual courage and rigor and helps develop the qualities that make for good judgment.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will review literature on the aims of education in Kenya, the challenges facing education and the spirit and nature of philosophy. It will also highlight the possible benefits of introducing philosophy at the basic level of education.

2.1 The Aims and Challenges facing Education in Kenya

Dewey, a renowned scholar, posits that education and learning are collective and interactive processes and thus the school is a social institution through which reform can and should take place. He believed that learning was supposed to be an active process where learners would come to school `to do things` and live in a community which gave them real and guided realities of day to day challenges that would foster their capacity to contribute to society. He further argues that education must teach students how to live and lead to the realization of one`s full latent and develop the ability to use those skills to make the society of better; stressing the need for each learner to take part in their own learning.

Lipman (1974) advocated for introduction of philosophy for children into the education system after witnessing his student’s lack of reasoning abilities. He believed that children were able to think abstractly from an early age; hence, the need to develop reasoning skills by teaching philosophy.
The purpose of education and training in Kenya is to develop a person’s personality and enable them to fit into society as productive and civil individuals, (MOE, 2005). This is outlined in the specific objectives of education which endeavor to develop children’s potential interests and abilities to play effective and productive role in meeting the social and economic needs of the country, promote national unity through promoting positive attitude and mutual respect for people of varied cultures to live in harmony; which in turn will foster positive attitude towards the international community, MOE (2005). All these reports seem to highlight the need for education to nurture and develop skills and attitudes which will enable learners to cope in the society’s changing environments, make them self-reliant and well integrated citizens. They seem to suggest that the primary underlying objective of education is to cultivate the critical and creative skills of learners to enable them live well with themselves and others in society.

Various commissioned reports have highlighted the major challenges of education in Kenya the main one being on its quality and relevance. The ROK (1964) proposed the need for education to foster national unity and development, which was further echoed in detail by the ROK (1976). The ROK (1988) touched on the quality and relevance as well as the ROK (2011) a deliberate move into looking at education in terms of value and substance to the learner and society as opposed to cycles which was producing citizens who found it difficult to adapt in the practical situations of the labor market. Recent policy initiatives on education such as MOE (2005) are focusing on access, equity, superior and relevance in inside and outsideproficiencies within the education system. According to The Daily Nation (2012, February 2 ) The constitution calls for the need of educational aims to be aligned with the objectives of the constitution; which aims at
providing opportunities for life-long learning and achievement and introducing community outreach programs for all learners.

Despite the fact that there is need for education to foster criticality, creativity and the right attitude for better adjustment in society, the system of education in Kenya does not seem to consciously encourage the disciplines that foster development of thinking skills in learners. The syllabus is loaded with content which does not allow learners sufficient time to consciously interrogate and relate the curriculum to real life experiences. Life skills was introduced as one of the subjects in schools though there is no clear guidance in its content and handling. Philosophy, a discipline that deliberately nurtures and develops thinking is introduced at post-secondary level in Kenya. This may not accrue the benefits that can be realized from consistently engaging in philosophy from an early age which is better development of thinking skills and right attitudes. Therefore, there is need for curriculum developers to focus more attention to these disciplines by placing them at the basic level, in order for education to realize its main objective.

2.2 The Nature and benefits of philosophy for children

The objectives of education in Kenya are in line with the nature and spirit of philosophy, which aims at enabling individuals to criticize not only their own, but other people’s thoughts and notions. Philosophizing is the independent process where thoughts are processed in a logical and coherent manner. According to Richard (1995) philosophy is an art rather than a science. It is a discipline concerned with formulating issues approached from multiple viewpoints. It also invites the use of critical dialogue and reasoned discourse regarding conflicting points of view making critical thought main
tools of learning. Philosophy’s nature of inquiry helps in exploring each person’s unique interests and abilities to maximize self-development. This agrees with the constructivism paradigm that affirms that the learner is an information constructor. Constructivists seem to agree that the process of learning is the dynamic contextualization of constructing knowledge rather than just acquiring it. They further argue that knowledge is best developed based on personal experiences and hypothesized from the environment. Learners then have the chance to test these hypotheses in their interaction and negotiation in social settings. Where each develops a unique interpretation of situations and construction of knowledge.

In essence, according to Richard (1995), philosophical thinking can be considered as a framework for thought where one thinks within a network of thoughts, assumptions and principles defined from inferences and insights. The inquiry nature of philosophy is likely to encourage this personalized knowledge construction through its developed practice of dialogue as a method of probe, hence it also fosters positive attitudes by developing attributes such as intellectual tolerance, courage, integrity and humility, which enhance harmony and mutual respect for varied opinions, cultures and ideas; values which are central in constructivists theories and core in education. Prominent constructivists like Wenger (1991) and Lave (1998) propounded `Communities of is an educational group of people who collectively come together to engage in purposeful critical analysis and reflect on issues to construct individual meaning and then confirm mutual understanding. Enquiry in philosophy provides the suitable arena for this interaction for mutual gain as each individual’s views are valued. Consistent engagement in such discourse is likely to develop an individual’s mode of thinking which makes them better placed to reason out
on issues as they emerge. This is important for achievement of education goals such as self-development, social responsibility and life-long education. The systematic analysis of concepts or arguments in philosophy ensures that ideas are evaluated and claims are justified on the basis of reason which exposes one to a variety of dimensions of approaching different issues.

If well developed, these skills can enable learners to contribute effectively to social and economic needs of the country that will translate to national development. In essence, the central concerns of philosophy are similar to those in the aims of education in Kenya which entail: improvement of moral and ethical values such as peace, veracity, scrupulousness and equity; unity of purpose, social responsibility; quality and life-long learning. Philosophy has the potential of improving criticality and positively contributing towards improvement of the quality of education and application in day to day life, because it genuinely interrogates the human concerns handled in education.

2.3 Philosophy for children

Philosophy for children originally developed by Lipman, a philosophy professor at Montclaire State College in New Jersey, in the 1970s is a programme that studies children’s natural curiosity and then use it to help them in their quest to find meaning by encouraging intellectual courage and development of good judgement in their daily lives. While it is true that philosophy for children is a thinking programme, it does much more by building children’s astonishment and inquisitiveness on ideas that are important to them. The subject matter is the concepts that reinforce both our understanding of human life and all theoretical disciplines such as: friendship, truth, certainty, evidence, liberty,
reason, fairness, god, self, human nature, rules, responsibility etc through stories, pictures and charts formulated to trigger and encourage thinking (www.p4c.org).

In Kenya, students are not specifically taught how to think, how to learn, how to make decisions, analyze arguments and solve problems. Nevertheless it is expected of them to do these things (Wambari 1999). According to Mutahi (2009) education institutions have been charged with the role of ensuring that national policies spelt out for the sector are well translated and implemented through curriculum. Presently many countries, Kenya included, are stressing on democratization which calls for values that are developed through the common central concerns in philosophy. The most attractive promise of the 8-4-4 system at its conception was that, graduates at each exit point would achieve some degree of self-reliance; where self-reliance is transformation from a state of dependency to that of autonomy in thought, belief and action.

Through philosophizing where learners engage collaboratively in thinking processes for knowledge construction, values such as: intellectual tolerance, courage and humility that bring about responsibility, fairness and justice are developed. It may also contribute to holistic development of individuals and broaden general outlook of issues; understanding freedom so as not to misuse it, but to use it responsibly. The enquiry technique of philosophy is significant as comprises of people purposefully taking part in the critical analysis and reflect on issues to construct individual meaning and then confirm mutual understanding. This may encourage opening up of all learners through questions and discussions without fear and learning that different ideas may be of value enriching the learning experience. The chance to voice each person’s views will improve understanding
of people and reduce tension that can help reduce cases of vandalism, drug addiction and other stresses.(www.p4c.org)

An experiment in a local school by Wambari (1999) with primary school children revealed that the class one group that did philosophy spending one forty-minute lesson per week in third term, became more questioning and less credulous. Pupils from the same group in class five wanted to know why they should be punished, before they would willingly submit themselves to the ordeal. Seemingly they needed to understand cause-consequence relationships and the purpose for which punishments are administered. With such understanding children are more likely to avoid circumstances that make punishment necessary in a well ordered society than when without knowing why, punishments are administered to them routinely and mechanically.

2.4 Benefits of philosophy for children

Philosophy for children is often engaged because of its ‘effects’. It is thought as primary in improving performance in literary, speaking, listening and math tests. It is praised for its influence on the development of emotional and thinking awareness. Philosophy in itself is good for children as it brings out their imaginative and reasoning capacities enabling them to explore values and identify vital concepts in life like truth, justice and beauty. Lipman (1991) p4c benefits.[Web discussion board]. A philosophical community of inquiry provides a chance for all members of a society to search for meaning where children become reasonable as they adeptly open up to other people’s reasoning. Lipman, ((1991) philosophy foundation [Web log post].
When students inquire together in collaborative groups all views are valued and different opinions are considered which encourages fairness and justice; aspects which are pertinent for democracy. The good of the majority and not just in number but stressing content is considered. The needs of the minority are also put into consideration in such a system which can go a long way in improving the welfare of the less privileged, like the weak students who find it hard to air their views, the poor, physically challenged etc. whose voice is mostly ignored.

The constitution in Kenya stresses the need for life-long education and community outreach. When children are equipped with skills in reasoning they can easily adapt in dynamic situations as the diversity in ‘communities of practice’ enables them to deal with varied opinions, cultures etc. to prepare them for community outreach programmes. Working together regularly in teams also provides practice to work with others in the community. With education having a central role in development, improvement on its quality and relevance through the introduction of philosophy at the basic level of education will contribute towards the realization of Kenya’s vision 2030. Philosophy for children could promote forums for open dialogue where participants sift arguments and explore alternatives rather that exchange ideas in bits of information. Encouraging conversations where children and adults can talk and explore their difference is vital, this is not done enough. No wonder children are swayed by their peers to a far greater extent. The talks they have are memorable and important; hence, the lasting influence on behaviors Lipman, (1991)benefits ofp4c.[Web discussion board].
Teachers can make classroom talk outstanding too, through philosophy because a philosophical dimension for philosophical thinking can be found in any subject in curriculum.

Review of educational research carried out by a p4c.com co-director, Steve Williams (n.d.) p4c review of education research. [Web discussion board] showed positive outcomes in: Development in cognitive aptitude where the findings suggests that one hour each week allocated to inquiry-based teaching has significant influence on pupil’s reasoning abilities.. Self-esteem was also improved in the children involved in the philosophy program. Teachers also doubled their use of open-ended, follow-up questions in response to pupils’ comments. The study also provided confirmation of improvement in pupils’ communication skills, poise and attentiveness which depicts emotional and social development. Pupils learnt to manage their outlooks and impulsivity. Tested after two years in secondary, the pupils who demonstrated significant improvement in cognitive development at primary level sustained through secondary education. Therefore the cognitive gains from the regular involvement in collaborative class provides sustainable results despite not being taught in secondary classrooms.

The introduction of philosophy early can enrich the educational experience in Kenya by raising confident learners with developed critical thinking skills. Effecting collaborative classroom communities is not an easy task, but the potential gains described above from these classes makes it worthwhile for teachers to work towards achieving it. The nature of these educational advances, seem gradually significant as the goals of education are redefined in a fast changing world of information technology and global economy. Changing curricula now places a growing focus on thinking and relational skills, values
that can be enriched through philosophy which provides a suitable environment for
development of critical skills and valuable affective dispositions.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction

This research employed a combination of philosophical methods in order to reach the desired result. The study mainly relied on secondary data acquired from books on the nature, methods and purposes of philosophy, journals on philosophy for children, journals on challenges of education in Kenya, reports from commissions of inquiry into education all found in the library. Sessional papers and modules on education from the district education offices, together with UNESCO documents on the relevance of philosophy to education found on the internet were also used. The researcher critically analyzed, evaluated and logically interrogated concepts, relationships among aims, assumptions and issues that were pertinent to the task of the study, that is arguing that, introduction of philosophy for children at the basic level in the Kenyan system of education is not only consistent with the stated aims and objectives of education in Kenya but also useful in addressing persistent shortcomings related to the current education’s relevance and quality in the market. The analytical method of philosophy was used to clarify the meaning of philosophy and other concepts. It also helped to elucidate the aims of basic education in Kenya. The critical method was used to evaluate the relationship between the aims of education in Kenya with the nature and spirit of philosophy so as to determine the nexus. Through speculation the researcher sought to understand the major challenges of education and hypothesize possible alternatives from philosophy as remedies.
Finally the dialectical method of philosophy was used to argue for the introduction of philosophy at the basic level of education in Kenya while interrogating the possible objections to it so as to come up with valid recommendations. These methods were not used independently, but they were used interdependently with each other in the process of meeting the set objectives.

3.1 Speculative Method in Philosophy

The speculative method strives to provide answers to the why questions on basic issues in human life. In so doing it seeks to come up with models on nature of humans, the society and the world at large to help understand and interpret that variation of data on educational research as well as studies on behavioral sciences. In speculation the human mind is challenged to stretch in trying to understand what is apparently incomprehensive (Njoroge 1986) In this case the researcher sought to understand why the education system is falling short of achieving its noble goals and why similar democratic objectives seem to have been realized in countries that practice philosophy for children such as France, US and the UK. (www.P4C.co.uk). Speculation involves a lot of reflection to understand the situation wholly. The researcher hypothesized alternative solutions which may assist in appropriately interpreting what ails education in Kenya. While at it criticality was used for the purpose of evaluation. This informed on why the level of self-discipline, self-reliance and self-initiative is less than expected from education and also informed on the apparent reason for the positive qualities elicited by students and citizens that have undertaken philosophy from early stages.
3.2 Analytical method in philosophy.

The main proponents of this method include; B. Russel and L. Wittgenstein. They believed that philosophical problems are thought of being, at least in part, linguistic problems, and accordingly in so far as these issues can be re-solved; it is through elucidation of language Mattei, L. (2007, P.100). Philosophical analysis therefore involves breaking down complex issues to simplify them so as to understand meaning. It involves logical analysis of language and concepts within their contexts with the aim of achieving conceptual clarity in order to avoid ambiguity, confusion or complexities. The researcher endeavoured to clarify the meaning of philosophy and what philosophy for children entails in terms of content of philosophy for children, its pedagogy with special emphasis on enquiry which is the main method in philosophy for youngsters. The aims and objectives of philosophy for children in places where it is practiced and the outcomes were also examined. This helped to test the logicality of its application in the Kenyan context and whether introducing it in the basic level of education in Kenya can help improve on the eminence and applicability of education in Kenya. The concepts of quality and relevance of education were also be analyzed within the Kenyan context so as to avoid ambiguity and highlight clear meaning. Other concepts to be analyzed include; self-discipline, self-reliance and integrated citizens and the benefits of philosophy for children in basic level in other countries.

3.3 The critical method of philosophy

Critical thinking involves the application of criteria to make judgments Lipman, (1991). Criteria function as standards against which judgement is made on the quality of what is
under examination. Generally accepted standards for statements to be credible include; relevance or accurate facts, impartial, free from rational fallacies, logically consistent, depth, fairness, adequacy and completeness [(Ennis, (1985); Paul, (1990)]. Criticality in philosophy is primarily constructive, evaluative and liberating in nature. It recommends in a normative manner what ought to be done when faced with a crisis (Njoroge,( 1999))

The researcher critically examined the persistent challenges of education in commissioned reports in order to ascertain what brings the quality and importance of education to question in light of philosophy. Other countries that have succeeded with similar objectives by utilizing children’s philosophy were examined specifically the UK and France. Information gathered was be evaluated on the basis of the nature and spirit of philosophy to establish the possibility of improving education in Kenya by the introduction of philosophy for children at the basic level of education. It also helped to suggest the direction that education ought to take in addressing the specific challenges and the means it can use for students to attain self-actualization and contribute to development in Kenya which will also inform on improvement on the quality of education.

3.4 Dialectical method

This is a logical process that proceeds from thesis, to anti-thesis and to the synthesis. The basis of this method is genuine dialogue which is built through argumentation, integrating the best in the former arguments; then careful examination of arguments in support of opposition of the thesis so as to bring out the conclusion. In this study the thesis was: the introduction of philosophy at the elementary level of education; while the anti-thesis was the possible challenges to the introduction of philosophy at the basic level of education in
Kenya. The synthesis was our desired alternative from the studies to improve on quality and relevance of education in Kenya. That is to test from findings in other countries whether introducing philosophy at the lowest level of education can help address the challenges of education facing Kenya.
CHAPTER FOUR

EDUCATIONAL DIMENSIONS, AIMS AND CHALLENGES

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the concept of education and its aims. It also elucidates some of the challenges facing education in Kenya.

4.1 The Concept of Education

Education can be described as both a process and as a product. As a process (or procedure) education is a deliberate attempt to fashion experience by the direction and control of learning. This is formal education as carried out in schools. The process has three essential components, namely: physical, emotional (or psychological) and intellectual (or mental) development. As a product, education involves training and acquiring certain habits, formation and acquisition of skills, virtues and attitudes. Behaviour modification also falls under this conception of education. For Peters (1969) the essence of education is not simply to modify human behaviour. It is an enterprise that leads to self- realization which, in turn supersedes behaviour in defining the very nature and essence of human beings. Towards this end he proposes three conditions which are necessary but not sufficient for education:

a) Education must transmit something worthwhile to the people; b) transmit or involve some understanding or knowledge; and c) involve some acceptable procedure or method of transmission of something worthwhile and understanding (Olela, 1988)
These three conditions that qualify education are complemented by Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) where they describe education as a multi-dimensional enterprise comprising cognitive, normative, creative and dialogical dimensions. The Cognitive dimension provides a link between education and knowledge. Knowledge is defined as justified true belief. The relationship between these three conditions; belief, truth and justification, give us a deeper understanding of knowledge. It concerns itself with the questions of why, how and what we know as well as various forms of knowledge and methods of verification. Knowledge is indeed wide in scope.

The Normative dimension concerns itself with the thoughts of aims, objectives, purpose, morals and values in education. It defines education in terms of what `ought` to or `should` happen. It is a prescriptive account of education and as such is in the areas of ideals. The overall objectives of education in the country as formulated by The National Committee on Educational objectives and policies fall under the normative dimension. As such education is normatively speaking defined as moral education which goes beyond the idea of socialization (Njoroge and Benaars, 1986)

Creativity (the creative dimension of education) emphasizes work and the liberation methods of teaching such as experimentation, discovery, discussion and invention. Creativity is a basic educational concern since it is a human response that involves reflection and action. It involves adapting to new situations in new and appropriate ways. Here, apart from its transmission dimension education is also given a liberating dimension.
In the dialogical dimension (social relating dimension) education is described as individualization. It talks about communication between persons on equal basis as human beings. It is also described as a listening dimension that emphasizes subjectivity; where people are seen as subjects and not objects, actors and not reactors. The Dialogical dimension has more of a psychological preference for individualization in that it aims to develop the learner’s personality to enable him adjust to the situation in his or her own manner. Here individualized learning stressed to mean that the learner’s peculiar pace, interests, talents and shortcomings are well taken care of in the educational project of self realization. Education here is seen as an inter-subjective relationship which involves communication, encounter, participation and dialogue (Njoroge and Benaars, 1986). Defined as dialogue, it implies that people communicate with each other on equal terms.

Njoroge (1999) adds a fifth dimension, ‘the appropriation dimension’ to the four dimensions of education elucidated by Njoroge and Benaars. This dimension demands that the learner makes his/her own content, values and skills that he learns in school. Here education is seen not as an imposition from outside but as a value that a learner must internalize if he/she wants to reap the fruits of education. When the process of education has been sifted, distilled and unified, vital information and values offered and critiqued and engaged in this process dialogically, the latter stages comprise an art of appropriation. Information and values become part of the person of the knower in such a way that they are personally appropriated. The learner makes personal the knowledge of facts and values in such a manner that there is almost mysterious interaction between the knower and that which is known (Njoroge, 1999)
This forms the basis not only for the various methods employed in education but also for people’s energy in propagating an idea, belief or value. People propagate that which they dearly treasure or attach value to and that which is part of them. Njoroge quotes Frankena who identifies four variables that are necessary in any learning process. These are: a) the teacher b) the student c) dispositions in which both content and value are taught and learnt and the method engaged in the education process. This insightful analysis needs to be imbued with the spirit of appropriation if the process of education is to be of value.

Ducasse (1943) espoused eight dimensions of education that are complemented by the above mentioned dimensions. The first is Intellectual education meant to enhance the growth of mental prowess to build knowledge possessed by earlier generations. Development of intellectual powers means refinement of habits of and skills useful in the formulation, verification of logical orders and facts improving the capacity for coherent inference and grasps of practical requirements which are developed through exercise. Learning to think and to develop intellectual initiative may not enable one to function effectively if he/she does not orient themselves with some broad knowledge over a systematically diversified range and knowledge, detailed, precise and thorough about the matters directly connected with one’s situation.

Education in social adroitness is the ability to interact with other human beings in varying personal interactions. This is of value to any person as humans usually relate to one another and is in agreement with the dialogical dimension propounded by (Njoroge and Benaars 1986).
Physical education seeks to equip one with proper physical fitness to ensure physical health and efficiency. It is viewed as necessary because the human body is the vehicle of all experiences and the primary implement of all undertakings (Ducasse).

The fourth dimension Ducasse espouses is the Education of will, which seeks to develop restraint; man’s capacity to make the self do what they can do and desire to do. To educate this capacity one adopts the use of reward and punishment. Prevalence of perseverance, adherence to purpose, fortitude and willingness to take when needed are rewarded while penalties are used when one procrastinates, surrenders to pettiness and impulse.

Moral and spiritual education seeks to make a man righteous and nurture in him/her the spirit of nobleness paving way for goodness of heart. Morality entails one’s resolve in dealing with others to be that of justice where one conformstothe requirements that guides others to do the same; but does no more than they owe or less than owed. Spirituality seeks to make one to go further than the requirements of duty this makes them merciful, compassionate and kind enabling them to find satisfaction in promoting other people’s welfare (Ducasse).

Vocational education ensures mastery of subjects through rehearsals which provides information or theory to guide learners in a way that ensures success in gaining the required skills. Aesthetic dimension of education includes advancement of the capability to separate among different colors, shapes, tones, textures, odors, and flavors; differences and other relations otherwise unnoticed by the untrained eye. Once one masters such
discriminations, they are in a position to work in the decorative and free arts that builds scientific treaties in the education process of the intellect.

Learning to be appreciative of varieties and nuances of sentiments possessed by man in the form of moods, feelings and attitudes regarding various materials like poems, novels and other educative material is important. It nurtures one’s capacity to express own sensory and emotional occurrences in a creative manner (Ducasse).

In the liberal dimension, education seeks to liberate humans by conferring freedom from two kinds of inner bondage. One of the two forms of inner bondage is bondage to blind impulse. Human beings become free from this sort of confinement when he or she is able to integrate various proportions of desires, powers and varying interests into their habitual thinking. Once this is done, then these acts are genuinely represented in the decisions made by a whole being rather than irresponsible expressions brought forth accidentally by the inner being. Therefore, by learning to coordinate impulses, one becomes free from the blind slavery to them. Its only when thought gives a voice to these impulses and each are heard when the can be controlled by those of the rest. Therefore, liberal education should be concerned with teaching self-control where one learns to think before they act accordingly. (Ducasse)

Bondage to ignorance is the second form of inner bondage that the liberal dimension of education seeks to free man from. Freedom here means possession of a all-inclusive view of the variety of human discoveries, accomplishments and dimensions; and obliged insight into the typical values for which men live. The freedom perspective brings freedom of choice or choices. Its doors open in in varying proportions to the range of
values that enables one to awaken to the diverse viewpoints that helps one regard things from a different scope of information gained and the range of different possible means of acting previously unknown to him or her. Therefore, in this case, possessing perspective is the key mark in the mind of the liberally educate and only such an individual can direct him and others in a responsible way.

A critical analysis of the eight dimensions of education reveals that Ducasse based his dimensions of education on human nature, that is, a human being is both mind and body. The human being has intellectual, physical and also emotive. These dimensions can be summarized into two, namely cognitive and physical. The four dimensions propounded by Njoroge and Bennaars’ can be summarized to two main orders, namely immaterial (mind) and material (body).

Based on the aforementioned dimensions of education, there are two principal dimensions of education, cognitive and physical. According to the Oxford Advanced Dictionary: Cognition is a scientific term for ‘the process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought.’ It involves processing of information, applying knowledge and changing preferences. In relation to education, cognitive dimension deals with knowledge associated with: memory, reasoning, problem-solving and thinking. It has to do with the mind. The physical dimension of education entails that which a human being is able to learn because of connection to the environment through physical presence (body). These skills have their foundation in the physical nature of human beings. It can therefore be concluded that for education to be holistic, it has to address the two main dimensions, that is, the mind and the physical aspects because the two are interrelated and indispensable.
4.2 Aims of Education in Kenya

In view of the importance of education, The Kenya Gazette Supplement (2002) outlines some basic aims of education in Kenya as: guiding learners towards self-realization, helping them acquire reading, writing and interpretational skills, logical thought, critical judgment and respect for dignity of work. Apart from these, the school is also expected to equip learners with basic skills relevant to the job market as dictated by the economic and manpower needs of our nation; develop desirable social standards and attitudes; inculcate an awareness and understanding of one’s immediate environment and foster positive attitudes to our country and to the international community. All these goals get their expression in the qualities of self-expression, self-discipline, self-reliance and self-realization which as elements of moral value indicate good conduct, good character and motives. More importantly, they imply creativity, innovativeness, a sense of purpose in life, self-control, self reliance, a sense of self worth and the ability to fulfill one’s potentialities.

Creativity is about understanding situations, combining and sifting ideas about it in order to come up with probable solutions (Stein, 1967). This process encourages self-expression and self-realization. The modern day scenario throws various challenging situations which people have to grapple with and somehow survive. In career choices where there is a lot of competition for limited resources available, it is important for learners to learn to be creative in various circumstances and come up with new or creative ways to survive. The `jua-kali` sector is an example of creativity in job creation but more can be done to diversify and improve on this as opposed to merely replicating
what is already there. Through philosophizing the imagination of learners can be further
stretched and encouraged which will help breed new and better inventions.

Critical reflection is about judging ideas basing on reasoned criteria thus coming up with
reasonable perspectives on issues (Beyer, 1995). It requires self-discipline and self-
control to base decisions on criteria such as credibility, accuracy, reliability among others
and shows a sense of purpose in life. For instance, with the temptation to cheat in exams
critical reflection may enlighten a learner on the real aim of learning for self-
 improvement as opposed to acquisition of fake certificates that may be propagated
through impulse, and also show respect for dignity of work among other desirable social
standards. Constructive criticism that is propagated through philosophy encourages
learners to question their decisions and judgment hence they are likely to make more
reasonable decisions.

Critical and creative thinking generally complement the principle dimensions of
education which are the cognitive and physical dimensions. Creativity is mainly
associated with works of art like dance and crafts which focus mainly on the physical
dimension of education. Criticality mainly entails the process of thought in terms of how
logical an idea is, based on laid down criteria and is thus cognitive inclined. It can be
therefore deduced that these two thinking processes, that are well propagated through
philosophy promote the fundamental dimensions of education, which the goals of
education in Kenya seek to achieve.
4.3 Challenges of Education in Kenya

The education Sector Support Program (2005-2010) espouses some of the challenges of education in Kenya which entail; weak early child development and education program which are crucial in the acquisition of different skills and attitudes required to lay the foundation for learning throughout one’s lifetime. It is difficult to recover the lost ground if a child’s caregivers fail to stimulate educational interest. This important education sub-sector faces lack of coordination and financing issues coupled with poor learning environment where children are not allowed enough time to develop their thinking skills. It is common that learners are taught to take what the teachers say and regurgitate it as it is.

The room to assimilate and express the information in the learner’s unique way is mostly not given. This encourages cramming in learners and kills creativity that is built on self-expression through imagination. An example is recorded from Nyang’ite Primary school in Kuria district where a little girl on showing off a drawing of her home and birds is dismissed by her teacher and told that they were ‘scribbles’ and that she is ‘just a baby scribbling’ (Lindsey, 2010)

This statement by the teacher may infer that the learner is not taken seriously because he/she is just a baby who scribbles. The Advanced Oxford dictionary defines scribbles as ‘marks that have no meaning.’ The learner’s work being described as such may portend that whatever the learner originally comes up with may be viewed by the teacher as meaningless and only what the teacher gives makes sense. Repeated incidents like this may discourage learners from exploring their potential and settle for mere memorization.
of given facts. Looking around the girl’s classroom it was realized that the other children had taken a formulaic approach to drawing birds and trees which were identical (Lindsey, 2010). The message that may have been sent albeit not deliberately would be that the learners’ own presentations or expressions of things are not important and the formulaic way is what counts so learners resort to rote-learning only, hence stifling creativity among the learners that is usually stimulated through self-exploration. In such scenarios thinking is likely to be stifled as learners are not allowed to explore their own perspectives and thoughts on issues, much less express themselves; only the teacher’s way is deemed ‘correct’.

The road to true learning is thinking; yet it seems that children have no spare time to specifically engage in this necessary practice known for creation of knowledge, development of social skills and cognitive growth. There is over-emphasis on examinations in education which has limited schemes for making learning and training programs practical-oriented. This is further complicated by the large number of pupils that teachers have to handle. The above mentioned school has 605 pupils and 5 teachers. The ratio of teacher to pupils in this case is 1:101 which is overcrowded and so gives limited time for personal engagement of learners and on practical skills as it would require a lot of time for such a large group. The same can be attested of most public primary schools. With such a situation, and the pressure of competition among schools, and the gauge being exam results, learners get limited opportunities for self-engagement in the learning processes and specifically thinking which help make the learning experience relevant SSP (2005-2010).
Wambari (1999) posits that ‘the way the current system of education in Kenya works, students as a matter of practice are not specifically taught how to think, how to learn, how to make decisions, how to analyze arguments, or how to confront issues and solve problems. But it is nevertheless expected of them that they should know how to do these things, and many more of the sort in life.’ Some of the complaints noted by the Koech Commission (2000) were that learners were taught merely to pass exams and acquire certificates, they are half-baked intellectually, they cannot think independently, they are not self-guided or autonomous and are lost immediately they enter unfamiliar grounds as they lack imaginativeness and innovativeness.

He further posits that with such complaints it would seem that the 8-4-4 system is not fulfilling its promise of achieving self-reliance and `operacy` in learners, which is vital in the rapidly changing and complex world of today and tomorrow. The demands of the 21st century are such that, to be met, education must endeavour to enhance more understanding and better judgment, and to deemphasize mere transmission of information, facts and data in the classroom which, as happens to be the case, are readily accessible in today’s highly technology-conscious society.

Wambari (1999) further espouses that nobody has produced evidence that these complaints are without any justification whatsoever; and besides, it is unreasonable to expect that students will have skills that they have not been taught at all. In fact there is general consensus that we have not achieved excellence in education and in our habits of thought, in particular. The excellence sought can only come by way of teaching thinking to upgrade its quality. One way of doing this is uplifting the intellectual abilities of learners by teaching them not only what to think but, even more importantly, how to
think. It is in this connection that critical and creative thinking is central to effective education as its purpose is to enable learners to think well for themselves and determine responsibly what is true, what to believe and what to do.

Awiti (2013) also posits that the system of education in Kenya hinders learning by rendering unvaried repetition of topics from primary level upwards, with nothing to challenge, engage and direct imaginations of learners. He further says that Kenyan schools are still inextricably bound with the mission of colonial administration which was to educate native functionaries who would serve and obey colonial authorities without questioning. The environment created was not a place for forging curiosity, critical thinking and complex reasoning, creativity and innovation. Moreover he claims that the authoritarian knowledge transfer, teach-and-test method, is highly suited for transmitting dogma and training subservience.

These concerns show notable challenges in education especially as related to developing critical and creative thinking skills in learners. The importance of education in developing and nurturing thinking skills is widely propounded by all the many scholars of education. Therefore appropriate strategies need to be developed to improve this indispensable aspect of education by encouraging disciplines that have critical and creative advancement as their central component. This study suggests introduction of philosophy at the basic level as a measure to improve thinking skills because the discipline entails critical reflection and creativity.
4.4 Conclusion

Generally this chapter elaborated the concept of education in detail in order to understand what its main purpose is. It then narrowed down to the objectives of education in the Kenyan system of education and some of the challenges the sector faces in attaining these objectives.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY AND ITS BENEFITS

This chapter elaborates the nature of philosophy and two thinking processes in philosophy: critical thinking and creative thinking and their benefits. It also showcases how these thinking processes are used in a typical philosophy for children session. The possibility for young children to philosophize will be shown by examining creativity within the developmental stages. The aim is to show that teaching young children to philosophize can contribute positively towards addressing the challenges of basic education in Kenya as it nurtures their thinking skills.

5.1 The Nature of Philosophy

Protagoras of Abdera (480-410 BC) was among the first sophists to coin the word philosopher meaning `lover of wisdom.` A lover of wisdom distinguishes appearance from reality and must grasp the foundation of observation which falls in the area of knowledge. Knowledge is the indispensable material foundation of empirical philosophy. The Ancient Greeks held that to illuminate problems of conduct is ultimately the chief function of philosophy. They distinguished the theoretical from the practical uses of reason. The former was to understand the world and the latter to guide conduct. Attainment of excellence in each of these respects endowed man with practical and theoretical wisdom: traits that exemplified the highest excellence of man (Oniango, 1993).
Some scholars have defined philosophy as the search for a comprehensive view of nature, an attempt at a universal explanation of things. Others as the theory of subject matter taken as a whole or organized unity containing principles which bind together a variety of particular truths and facts and requiring a certain harmony of theory and practice, that is, philosophy is a kind of approach that can be applied to any branch of learning. The essence is in the search for a better understanding of the world and the nature of man and his place in the world (Oniango, 1993).

According to Gunga (2003) philosophizing involves independent thought process and requires skills in coherent reasoning. It is a rational thought about all issues that influence human life. Philosophy can also be defined as the study of general and fundamental problems like those connected with existence, knowledge, values reason, mind and language.

What stands out in all these definitions is the deliberate focus and special attention philosophy lays on the thought process concerning all issues in human life. To distinguish is to recognize the difference between things. From the aforementioned definitions of Philosophy, it can be deduced that it seeks to recognize reality which is the true personal situation and problem that exists, from what the situation appears to be. In so doing, it illuminates the problem, makes clear or easier to understand the situation thus giving a comprehensive view of it (includes everything or nearly everything about a situation). Better understanding of the world and issues affecting human beings gives practical or suitable instruments for any intended purpose. As Gunga (2003) puts it, philosophy’s major instrument for illuminating the central or basic problems is the application of rational thought in all concerns of human existence with a view to understand better and
adjust accordingly. Philosophy can therefore be seen as a human enterprise which critically and reflectively attempts to understand our universe in its entirety and ourselves as part of it.

Philosophy differs from other disciplines in the way it addresses problems through critical and systematic approach that relies on rational argument. Its nature is to inquire by systematic analysis of concepts or arguments so that ideas are evaluated and claims justified on the basis of reasons and evidence. The ideas are constructively critiqued with the aim of better understanding and having broader perspectives on issues and not necessarily finding the ‘correct answer’ (Chaffee 2005). This shows that the thinking process and specifically correct reasoning where claims are to be made on the basis of laid down standards which include: clarity of concepts where the language and thought are made as clear as possible, precision which is about what exactly is under scrutiny and accuracy which checks truth of claims, relevance and consistency to what is at hand; are the heart of philosophy. The implication is that philosophizing enhances the development of critical thinking skills.

The other important aspect of philosophy is the various dimensions on issues that are considered, which can be avenues where creativity could be encouraged. Creativity which is a process of developing ideas that are original and of value through stretching one’s imagination (Robinson, 2001) can be encouraged through philosophizing. This is because in philosophy learners are encouraged to come up with various alternative solutions to given problems which taps into their imagination with the view of improving their creativity.
Mellou (1996) suggested creative teachers and creative teaching as one of the key components for fostering creativity. Edwards and Springate (1995) and Craft (2000) explain this to mean that teachers and other early childhood workers can encourage creativity by behaviors such as:

i) asking open-ended questions,

ii) tolerating ambiguity,

iii) modeling creative thinking and behaviour,

iv) encouraging experimentation and persistence,

v) praising children who provide unexpected answers.

Philosophizing entails independent thought of each learner on fundamental issues which are usually open-ended so as to recognize the real situation. This search creates a favorable environment for learners to explore their personal convictions and perspectives on various ideas which is, itself, the process of creativity. Different perspectives on issues are likely to be expressed by learners from such an endeavour, and therefore ambiguity and unexpected responses are brought to the fore. The main objective of philosophy being to attain a comprehensive view of issues, different ideas are persistently tested or questioned giving evidence or reasons for various arguments so as to illuminate the situation. The aim is to understand better and have broader perspectives on issues. It may not necessarily find the ‘correct answer,’ but it reduces the pressure from learners who may fear giving the ‘wrong answer,’ because what matters here is giving one’s own perspective with good reason. Thus propounding Robinson’s democratic approach to
creativity: everyone is capable of creativity. Philosophy is therefore, likely to develop and encourage creative thinking and also come up with more informed all inclusive conclusions.

Apart from the reflective and creative aspect philosophy, also has an advanced social aspect developed through its methodology. The inquiry technique in philosophy was started in 400/300BC by one of the founders of philosophy; Socrates, who in his quest for truth used intellectual dialogue commonly known as the `the Socratic method` where he would question people systematically while asking for justification for their claims in search for truth. Philosophy has developed this practice of dialogue as a method of inquiry by introducing `Community of practice` (Wenger 1991).

An educational community of practice or inquiry is an educational group of people who collectively come together to engage in purposeful critical analysis and reflect on issues to construct individual meaning and then confirm mutual understanding. In these communities dialogue is encouraged with all participants having an open mind and freedom to present their opinions on given issues. Its structure represents the creative process that results in a deep and meaningful learning process developed through the presence of social and cognitive concepts

a) Social presence is the capability of those taking part to identify with the different aspects of the community, communicate with others purposely in a secure environment and come up strong relations with others (Garison, 2009).
b) Teaching presence is the process of coming up with different designs, facilitation and way forward in the processes of cognitive and social for the sole purpose of identifying meaningful and academic worth learning outcomes.

c) Cognitive presence is the degree to which pupils construct and then check meaning using sustained reflection and discourse (Garison et al. 2001).

Such an interaction is a way to broaden children’s learning through collaborative inquiry and exploration of ideas. This encourages learners to ensure that any idea they come up with has value and that others’ ideas are also of value. It also promotes learner’s confidence to ask questions and learn through discussion and develops intellectual courage where learners get courage to deal with ‘unpopular’ ideas reasonably; and intellectual humility where learners realize that they don’t always have to be right by genuinely listening to other perspectives on issues (ww.p4c.org). Through these communities all learners get opportunities to genuinely inquire helping to promote mutual respect as each person’s contribution is valued, and in doing so self-discipline and control is developed. These are some of the main social attributes the espoused in the aims of education in Kenya. Such an open forum is likely to open avenues of understanding learners better and so be able to nurture and assist them realize their unique potentialities as required in the aims of education.

From the above discussion it can be deduced that philosophy cannot be confined to a particular definition, however what comes out clearly is its process that has three main aspects, namely: critical thinking, creativity and dialogue. The three aspects are related to education in that they encourage and develop the basic attributes espoused in the aims of
education in Kenya which include: logical thought, critical judgment, self-expression, self-realization, self-control and self-worth among other attributes listed in the goals of education. It therefore seems that what philosophizing aims at achieving is commensurate with what the Kenyan system of education aims to achieve.

5.2 Critical thinking

Facione (1990) posits that an increasing accord was evident in the education sector lying where the traditional activists who took part in liberal education believed in, that is, in the process of inquest, erudition and thoughtfulness, rather in the accretion of fragmented skills and senescent information. This gained remarkable momentum for the movement advocating the infusion of critical thinking in curricula. It also raised vexing questions: What are those skills and dispositions which characterize critical thinking? And how can critical thinking be assessed? These questions are hard enough, but they take on social, fiscal and political dimensions when asked.

In its broadest sense, critical thinking is judging the quality of anything on the basis of reasonable criteria. Beyer (1995) defines critical thinking as making reasoned judgments with the main purpose of ascertaining the degree to which some phenomenon meets some criterion or the extent to which it is an authentic instance of a specifically defined phenomenon. `Reasoned` here is used to mean arrived at by logical thinking, while `judging` consists of determining the degree to which a thing meets a standard, a rule, or other criteria. Paul (1990) defines it as the extent to which a conclusion is plausible or warranted by the evidence. A consensus statement by the Delphi report, (1990) records that critical thinking is a purposeful, self-regulated judgment process that ends in the
interpretation, analysis and inference of well-explained conceptual, methodological and contextual considerations. Therefore, critical thinking is the tool that liberates and educates one by serving as a powerful resource in one’s personal and civic life. It is pervasive and facilitates self-rectifying behavior in humans. Therefore, a critical thinker learns to be habitually inquisitive and trustful of well-informed reason. It also builds a habit of being open and fair-mindedness erasing any habits of making mistakes due to personal biases and builds a prudence in making clear and sound-minded judgments by seeking relevant information to clear doubts ad inquire where needed. Educating good critical thinking combines developing critical thinking skills with nurturing those dispositions which consistently yield useful insights and which are the basis of a rational and democratic society (Delphi 1990).

The critical thinking skills espoused by the report include: Interpretation, a skill which entails sub-skills such as categorization, so as to apprehend or appropriately formulate categories, distinctions or frameworks for understanding, describing or characterizing information. It also involves decoding significance, as well as clarifying meaning, which mean to identify, deal with and then provide a detailed explanation of the content, and functions, intentions, motives, purposes, social significance, values views, rules, procedures, criteria or inferential relationships expressed in convention-based communication systems such as in language, social behaviors, drawings, numbers, graphs, tables, charts, signs and symbols and to paraphrase through stipulation, description, analogy or figurative expression the contextual, conventional or intended meanings of words, ideas, concepts, behaviors, drawings etc respectively (Delphi 1990).
Analysis is another core critical thinking skill which involves exploration of new ideas, identify the various duties of expressions play intended to take an active role in that come in the form of an argument, persuasion and reasoning that helps to compare or contrast ideas and identify issues or problems and determine their component parts. Analysis is also about perceiving arguments when statements, description, questions or detailed representations to define whether or not the set expresses, or is intended to express, a reason or reasons in support of or contesting some claim or opinion. Given the expression of a reason or reasons intended to support or contest some claim or opinion analyzing arguments identifies and differentiates the intended main conclusion, the premises or reasons advanced in support of the main conclusion, additional unexpressed elements of that reasoning, the overall structure of a presentation and the intended or not in the different items contained in the body of expressions under examination that are not meant to be part of the argument under presentation.

Evaluation is to determine their reliability of arguments and statements and other cases represented accounting for the different accounts presented according to a person’s perceptions, their personal experience, differing circumstances, opinions and values and judgment in a bid to assess the strength in logic of the inferred relationship whether intended or actual. It entails assessing claims and arguments which involve identifying the various issues revolving around credibility ascribed to the origin of the data or opinion, determine the relevance of issues or problems under a particular context in order to determine whether they are acceptable, its level of confidence in relation to the probability of them being true I the representation of one’s personal experiences, judgment and opinion.. In assessing arguments there is judgment of whether the assumed
acceptability of the premises of a given argument justify one’s accepting as true (deductively certain), or very probably true (inductively justified); to judge between reasonable and fallacious inferences; to anticipate or raise questions or objections and to assess whether these point to significant weakness in the argument being evaluated etc (Delphi 1990).

Inference is the process of identifying and then securing the various elements required to come to a reasonable conclusion on the form of a hypotheses. It considers the relevance of information and utilize it to deduce the outcome from the data, representation, judgements and beliefs etc. The main sub-skills include querying evidence, conjecturing alternatives and drawing conclusions by judging that information relevant to deciding the acceptability, plausibility or relative merits of a given alternative, question, issue, hypothesis or statement is required, and to determine plausible investigatory strategies for acquiring that information. Formulation of multiple alternatives for resolving a problem, to postulate a series of suppositions regarding a question, to project alternative hypothesis regarding an event, to develop a variety of different plans to achieve some goal is also sought. This is in a bid to come to varying conclusions by using the required mode of inferences that can assist in determining the stand, viewpoint and the opinion one should take on a specific issue (Delphi 1990).

Explanation is where provides statements on the findings from their reasoning; helping to verify the reasoning in an evidential, methodological critical and contextual consideration. Accurate statements, descriptions or representations of the results of one’s reasoning activities so as to analyze, evaluate, infer from, or monitor those results is given. It also entails giving evidential, conceptual, methodological and contextual
considerations which one used in forming one’s interpretations, analyses, evaluation or inferences so that one might accurately record, evaluate, describe or justify those processes to one’s self or to others and finally give reasons for accepting some claim and meet objections to the method, conceptualizations, evidence, criteria, or contextual appropriateness of inferential, analytical or evaluative judgments (Delphi 1990).

Self-regulation is about one self-consciously monitoring one’s cognitive activities, the elements used in those activities, and the results educed, particularly by applying skills in analysis and evaluation to one’s own inferential judgments with a view towards questioning, confirming, validating or correcting one’s own reasoning or one’s results. The sub-skills here include, self-examination, where one takes time to analyze and reflect on their reasoning and then focus on verifying the results found and how best to correctly apply them in the execution of cognitive skills involved to come up with an objective and thoughtful meta-cognitive self-assessment of one’s opinions and reasons for holding them; to judge the extent to which one’s thinking is influenced by deficiencies in one’s knowledge, or by stereotypes, prejudices, emotions or any other factors which constrain one’s objectivity or rationality and to reflect on one’s motivations, values, attitudes and interests with a view towards determining that one has endeavored to be unbiased, fair-minded, thorough, objective, reasonable and rational in coming to one’s analyses, interpretations, evaluations, inferences or expressions. Self-regulation is also about self-correction where self-evaluation reveals errors or deficiencies, to design reasonable procedures to remedy or correct, if possible, those mistakes and their causes (Delphi 1990).
The affective dispositions of critical thinking exhibited by good critical thinkers according to the consensus by the above mentioned report include a variety of approaches to life and living in general. A good critical thinker is habitually disposed to engage in, and encourage others to engage in inquisitiveness with regard to a wide range of issues, has concern to become and remain generally well informed, is alert to opportunities to use critical thinking, is confident about his/her ability to reason, is open-minded about divergent world views, honest about facing one’s own biases, prejudices, stereotypes, egocentric or socio-centric tendencies and is willing to reconsider and revise views where honest reflection suggests that change is warranted. Specific issues, questions or problems need to be approached with clarity in stating the question or concern, orderliness in working with complexity, diligence in seeking relevant information, reasonableness in selecting and applying criteria, persistence though difficulties are encountered and precision to the degree permitted by the subject and circumstance; in order for the aforementioned dispositions to be effective. The cultivation of these dispositions is particularly important to insure the use of critical thinking skills outside the narrow instructional setting. Persons who have developed these affective dispositions are much more likely to apply critical thinking skills appropriately in both their personal life and their civic life than are those who have mastered the skills but are not disposed to use them(Delphi 1990).

These critical skills can aptly be used by a person with disposition toward critical thinking or having a `critical spirit`. This does not mean that the person is always negative and hypercritical of everyone and everything but ones who always want to ask `Why?’ or `How?’ or `What happens if...?’ This is evident in how one approaches
problems, questions and issues that needs to elicit a probing inquisitiveness and keenness of mind (Delphi(1990).

Though critical thinking has numerous advantages it only makes up a part of what good thinking is about. The other kind of good thinking this study focuses on thinking in a creative and innovative way paving way for novel and insightful approaches and fresh perspectives and new ways of understanding things. These products include things like music, poetry, dance, dramatic literature, inventions and technical innovations. It can also include ways of framing issues in a way that expands the number of possible solutions and the ways of conceiving of relationships which tests presumptions and lead one to see the world in inventive and different ways.

5.3 The Creative process

The Creative process has been described in a variety of ways. Whiting (1958) described the process as consisting of: Saturation which is gathering of data, facts and sensations to serve for the development of the new ideas; Incubation which occurs without conscious effort and involves sifting materials about and making new combinations and Illumination which occurs when the solution or some concept of the end state comes to mind.

Wallas (1926) presented his systematic description in terms that are now well known: preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. During preparation the problem is investigated from all directions. Incubation involves no conscious thought but `work` still continues on non-conscious levels. In the Illumination stage `happy idea` occurs together with the psychological factors that immediately preceded and accompanied its
appearance. Verification is where the validity of the idea is tested and reduced to the exact form.

Stein (1967) described the creative process as consisting of three stages: Hypothesis formation - which starts after preparation and ends with the formation of a tentative idea or plan. Hypothesis testing involves determining whether or not the idea will stand up to careful scrutiny and testing. Communication involves presenting the final product so that others may react to and possibly accept it.

Although the terms and emphases may vary in the descriptions of the creative process, there is a great deal of agreement among them. The initial step is selection of a problem or project on which to work on and in all likelihood the original statement of the problem and/or the initial ideas about the solution undergo change. The process does not run off smoothly from start to finish.

Nevertheless it continuous or incubates on conscious levels and from this work or a test of this work there is a growing conscious awareness of a new possibility that illuminates and `lights up` a new direction, another approach, a different pathway to the solution which the individual did not see before or which he could not think of before. The various approaches agree that the resultant of the creative process is something novel. The novelty produced is useful, tenable and satisfying or adaptive (Stein 1967). The novel product that is called creative, changes the course of future actions and behaviour, alters our way of looking at things and it opens up new vistas that stimulate further creativity.
John Kao (1997) defined creativity as `the entire process by which ideas are generated, developed and transformed into value. It comprises what people commonly mean by innovation and entrepreneurship. 'A more recent description is by Sir Robinson (2001) who described creativity as `the process of developing ideas that are original and of value. Creative intelligence is dynamic, diverse and distinct.’

Definitions of creativity are varied; however most theorists agree that the creative process involves the following components: a) imagination, b) originality (being able to identify and come up with something new), c) productivity (capacity to create a range of variety of concepts by adopting a diverse thinking strategy), d) problem-solving (using lessons learnt and imagination to various circumstances), and e) the ability to come up with a worthy and valuable concept(Sharp 2004).

Where the definitions of creativity are numerous, the extent that these proportions try to come up with an innovative creative approach as part of generic human character or provide a definition to what makes a difference. A report chaired by Robinson (1999), adapted represents a stand on the issue of creativity. The view is most likely very useful in viewing one’s creativity in relation to the learning context: (5, para. 25). It states that everyone is able to achieve creativity in different activities so long as the conditions are perfect and they possess the required knowledge and skills. According to this report everybody is capable of creativity as opposed to the former that attributes creativity to be the reserve of only a few. This study adapted the democratic view to creativity in that all learners are capable of creativity to various levels which can be tapped into and deliberately encouraged to improve. In recent years, scholars have worked to incorporate inventiveness and imagination in the definition of creativeness.. as a result, this shows
that increasing acceptance that acting creatively is not about generating new and huge ideas as well as creating practical solutions to problems people go through on a daily basis and then using them to a day to day situation; hence it is associated with a wide range of everyday tasks and activities. Psychologists have focused on the creative instincts one is born with for many years. Maslow (1957) discussed the notion of ‘primary creativeness’ and asserted that ingenuity has its foundation in one’s subconscious and is the source of new discoveries. Support from many researchers including Steven Pinker and Stanley Greenspan (1997) points towards the possibility of one tapping on their personal potential to come up with inventions at early stages I life. Both believed that humans have pre-disposing factors of creativity. It is possible to identify potential for invention and creativity at a very early age.

Oech (1990) believes that thinking creatively should be identified as the process involving both the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ aspects of thinking and that it plays an important role if one knows when to apply either of them. ‘Hard’ and ‘soft’ thinking are concepts related with imagination and play a vital role in reflecting the neurological concepts related to the different parts of the brain. Research points towards the brain’s right side as the visual and processor of information in an intuitive manner that stimulates thoughts simultaneously by looking at the issue as a whole and then dealing with the finer detail defined as soft thinking. The left brain focuses on the verbal processing of information in sequence by analyzing by looking at fine pieces that are then interconnected to form a whole- (hard thinking). This explains why the right side of the brain is known to control intuition, imagination, emotional feelings and artistic creativity while the left side is focused on the planning and organization, logic, analytical thinking and deduction. The
right side of the brain is sometimes referred to as the ‘artist’ whereas the left side is regarded as the ‘judge’. Oech (1990) argues that every person has a ‘judge’ and an ‘artist’ within, and both are required in order to be creative. Even those who are very inventive and thrive on spontaneity and uncertainty also need to seek order and be analytical if they are to be successful. Therefore, it is widely believed that when both hemispheres of the brain work together, then one comes up with the most powerful creative thinking that utilizes both the generative and evaluative brain processes.

Leaving scientific evidence aside, children typically display many qualities associated with creativity. They are naturally inquisitive and through their play show a great capacity for imagination and fantasy. Vygotsky (1978) suggests that young children’s creativity is lower as compared to the adults due to the limited knowledge and experiences as well as low complexity of cognitive functioning. The creativity of young kids are more subjective as they create things for their own use while adults imagine for both themselves and their children. De Bono (1992) posits that the imagination and creativity children possess stems from their innocence. He explains that if one lacks a usual approach, solution and ideas involved, then one is forced to come up with new viewpoint. He however promotes the view that as children grow their abilities to create is inhibited by the views of people around them. As their development schema enhances around 8-10 years, their creativity is hampered as they take into account what others think of their concepts. As a result, the main challenges for educationalists is come up with ways to help the youngsters to develop and maintain resilience towards their ideas while at the same time allowing others to analyze, contribute and evaluate their creativity.
The ability to work collaboratively and develop in creative partnerships, are key skills for the 21st century.

De Bono (1992) believes that creativity is only fostered if people develop specific thinking techniques. He argues that although the brain is capable of great creativity and ingenuity, it is not designed first and foremost for this purpose and, as we grow older, it is more difficult to think laterally because thinking patterns become so well established and comfortable. He has therefore promoted the view that creative thinking is something that can be developed by anyone using practical techniques that develop thinking skills.

Most writers agree that much of the art of creativity and ingenuity revolves around the need to improve perception and going beyond the known and seeing what no one else does. Claxton and Lucas (1998) argue that human brains are wired to make pre-conditions that makes the new and strange situations familiar. However, this results in our brains focusing on what one expects rather than being open to new and strange scenarios. What we see is what we look for. This means that we often jump to conclusions and accept the first and obvious solution to a problem. One of the main ways in which we can train ourselves to be more creative, therefore, is to use techniques that help us see beyond the obvious.

The stimulus materials designed for philosophy for children that encourage brainstorming and creative thinking would provide a useful technique to help promote creativity since there is no obvious solutions to the problems but learners are guided to develop their thought process to come up with divergent solutions for problems. Learners are encouraged to think in a laterally manner placing focus on making association between
things that are not normally joined and then interpret and apply the lesson in new situations, look at things from different points of view and experiment with alternative approaches to solving problems. De Bono (1992).

5.4 Critical thinking and Creativity

Critical and creative thinking are central to human rational progress. Context of usage determines the critical or creative thinking skills to be applied and whether it is to be done interdependently or separately (The New Castle State University, 2013).

Critical thinking deliberately engages learners in: a) raising key issues and problems and them formulating them in a clear and precise manner; b) collecting and assessing relevant information, and utilizing abstract ideas to interpret it effectively; c) coming up with well-reasoned conclusive evidence and solutions that can be tested against all the relevant criterion and standards.; d) openly considering alternative systems of thought; and e) effectively communicating to others the analysis of and proposed solutions to complex challenges. Creative thinking deliberately and actively engages learners in: a) bringing together the new ideas into new configurations; b) developing new alternatives for existing properties and ideas and c) coming up with new deliberate ideas (NC State University 2013).

The process of critical thinking is generally prescriptive as it seeks to make judgment on issues by fully understanding the problem, and then as honestly and thoroughly as possible questioning it by subjecting it to the relevant knowledge on the subject. This evaluation ends up with a recommendation on the basis of the criticism. This process involves skills in creativity which mainly entails the use of imagination, but in a
reflective manner. It seeks to understand the whole and involves a lot of innovation and hypothesizing answers that may not be factual which lead to imagination. It usually ends up with alternative solutions or perspectives to issues that involves criticality.

Though the two processes of thought may be slightly different, but they are very much interdependent on each other unless a situation warrants strictly the particular field of each. Critical thinking can enhance creativity in that it validates the thought being reflected upon and so ensures a better degree of creativity; while creativity can also be important in criticality as it broadens the scope of judgment from which to make prescriptions that are more inclusive. Therefore to produce better judgment and alternatives the two thinking processes are mostly used interdependently and their advantages intertwined.

A critical thinking skill, like any skill, is the ability to engage in an activity, process or procedure. So being skilled in critical thinking involves knowing, perhaps implicitly or without the ability to articulate this knowledge, both a set of procedures and when to apply those procedures. Reflecting on and improving one’s critical thinking skills involves judging when one is or is not performing well, or as well as possible, and considering ways of improving one’s performance (Delphi, 1990). This reflection to improve critical thinking involves creative processes such as: imagination, ability to generate a variety of ideas through divergent thinking and application of that knowledge to produce an outcome of value and worth to improve one’s performance in critical thinking. Learning critical thinking therefore involves the ability to make such self-reflective judgments entailed in creativity.
The affective dispositions that are necessary for the development of critical thinking such as flexibility, inquisitiveness, self-confidence, open-mindedness, and willingness to reconsider and revise views are the foundation for creativity. When one is self-confident they can voice their imaginations without fear which opens the scope for critiquing it to enrich the idea bringing a better outcome. Flexibility and willingness to reconsider other views enables one to sift of an idea and come up with better creative ideas. In essence these two thinking processes are intertwined as they are based on similar dispositions and refined outcomes.

5.5 Benefits of critical and creative thinking

With the rapid increase of interest in creativity and the apparent relationship of the topic to national success, there have been many attempts in schools to improve creative thinking. Crutchfield (1965) substantially reported that with the present rate of technological advancement, it is impossible to predict what specific facts or even skills children need to acquire now for future use. Rather `what education today must seek to do is to bring about the optimal development of the whole individual. They must be equipped with the generalized intellectual and other skills which will enable him to cope effectively with whatever the state of the world is and as he will later encounter it. Central among these generalized skills is the capacity for creative thinking. Crutchfield believes that most children’s capacity for creative thought has hardly been tapped and that almost every child can benefit from `explicit training`. Parnes and Brunelle (1967) reviewed forty such attempts and concluded that students could be reliably taught to improve their sensitivity, fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration through critical thinking sessions.
In Critical thinking learners learn a variety of skills that can greatly improve their classroom performance. These include: understanding arguments and beliefs of others, critically evaluating these arguments and beliefs and the ability to develop and defend one’s own arguments and beliefs. Although critical thinking cannot make inherently difficult material easy to grasp, it does teach a variety of skills that, with practice can significantly improve one’s ability to understand the arguments and issues discussed in books. It also helps one to critically evaluate what he is learning in class and to develop one’s own arguments on various topics and issues.

According to Basham (2008) Surveys indicate that fewer than half of the present day’s college graduates can expect to be working in their major field of study within 5 years of graduation due to changing workplace realities. Increasingly, employers are looking not for employees with highly specialized career skills since such skills can usually best be learned on the job but for employees with good thinking and communication skills- quick learners who can solve problems, think creatively, gather and analyze information, draw appropriate conclusions from data and communicate their ideas clearly and effectively. These are the generalized skills that critical thinking aims to improve.

Basham further espouses that critical thinking is important in promoting democratic processes. In such a society the citizens have the ultimate say on who governs and for what purposes. It is vital therefore that their decisions should be as informed as possible. Many of the serious societal problems like: environmental destruction, religious and ethnic intolerance, nuclear proliferation, spiraling healthcare costs, failing schools etc have largely been caused by poor critical thinking. Solutions to problems require critical appreciation of the situation and coming up with creative approaches to solving it. This
insinuates a totally different and preferably, better level of thinking. Communities of inquiry in philosophy adapt a multi-faceted critical approach to problems or situations with the aim of improving thinking skills in learners hence it could provide a suitable environment for nurturing thinking to make learners better problem-solvers and adaptable to change.

Critical and creative thinking is also worth studying for its own sake due to personal enrichment it can bring to our lives. Most people believe what they are told that is why throughout history people accepted without question injustices like slavery, that women are inferior to men, that devils cause diseases etc. Critical thinking honestly and courageously pursued can help free us from the unexamined assumptions and biasness of upbringing and our society because it helps us lead self-directed, `examined` lives.

This will propel learners to map out their lives more realistically and with a full understanding of the self and their place in society. As a result the full potentials of learners can be realized. Generally speaking critical thinking can help avoid making foolish personal decisions (Basham, (2008).

Despite the numerous benefits of critical and creative thinking its advantages have not been maximized in Kenya. For one, the basic curriculum needs to give more provision to disciplines that deliberately focus on development of thinking skills in learners. Subjects like mathematics could encourage some logical thinking and the introduction of life skills which focuses mainly on reproductive health and ethical issues, was a positive step towards improving the curriculum. However with the ever-changing modern world there is need to specifically focus on developing the thinking skills of our learners so that they
can easily adapt wholly in a variety of situations they may be faced with. So curriculum
developers should consider giving more attention to disciplines that encourage
development of thinking skills.

Scarcity of opportunities of employment has led to cut edge competition in pursuit of
more academic certificates. This in turn has led to increased pressure on educational
institutions within which learners compete against each other even as their institutions
compete with similar educational institutions. This is best illustrated by the KCPE and
KCSE ranking of best schools and best candidates (Kadenyi and Kariuki, 2011). While
academic competition is good in Kenya, it runs the risk of emptying the true purpose of
education. At present academic competition in Kenya borders on schooling rather than
educating. Schooling without education involves substituting correct pedagogical
practices with indoctrination: drilling pupils with the sole purpose passing examinations
with flying colors instead of acquiring goals and objectives intended by the syllabus,
learning by rote memory where inert facts and class notes are soon forgotten after the
examination (Mattei, 1996). Education on the other hand, should ensure through the
pedagogical intention, that the learner becomes independent, self determined and self-
reliant within a given social context (Bennaars, 1998).

Another problem is that instructional methods used are teacher-centered at the expense of
learner’s participation. These are compounded where the content of curriculum is
irrelevant to Kenyan needs and as Nyerere cautions, education loses its true meaning and
purpose where learners graduate without requisite desirable knowledge, skills, attitudes,
values and competencies for their society (Kadenyi and Kariuki, 2011).
The aforementioned problems together with the large number of pupils teachers have to handle especially in public schools, for instance at Nyang’ite Primary where there are 605 pupils with 5 teachers (Lindsey, 2010), which makes it difficult to render personal attention to learners’ personal development, and give efficient time to indulge in activities that would develop critical and creative thinking. Worth of mention also is the limited resources in the sector in terms of finances, materials and facilitators of these useful skills. This has negatively affected the quality of education in Kenya.

Just as with the cognitive dimension of critical thinking, when conceiving of the education or assessment of critical thinkers, it is important to consider ways of developing materials, pedagogies and assessment tools that are effective and equitable in their focus on affective dispositions that are useful in society.

5.6 A Typical Philosophy for children session

Philosophy for children was originally developed by Mathew Lipman in the 1970s as a reaction Progressivists gave on the excesses of the ‘encyclopedian learning’ school and on the marginal position of the child in education at the end of the 19th century (Vansieleghem, 2006). It is a program that engages learners in philosophical inquiry in context of a caring and collaborative community and taps into children’s natural curiosity and assists them in their search for meaning. The subject matter of philosophy for children is those common, central and contestable concepts that underpin both our experience of human life and all academic disciplines e.g. freedom, responsibility, reason, evidence, reality, mind, rules action etc.
According to the Montclair State College where the Institute for Advancement of Philosophy (IAPC) was founded; a typical Philosophy for Children (P4C) session begins with learners reading aloud or acting out a narrative that depicts the fictional discovery by children and then provides them with the chance to explore issues before putting this into effect in relation to day to day life. They then have to pinpoint the various issues in the narrative that they find fascinating and would wish to discuss while participating in the creation of the lesson objectives. For the rest of the remaining sessions, the children form a community of philosophical inquiry which conclude in action projects or works of art with the underlying drive being the participants` self-correction of their previous beliefs, feelings or values.

According to Hand [philosophy foundation. [Web discussion board] an adequate approach that synthesizes core aspects of philosophy for children is the foundations method. Here, children encounter key ideas, arguments, and puzzles from philosophy then they are left to pursue their own questions but with direction and strong emphasis on exploratory discussion and dialogue. Such an environment is likely to encourage maximum and natural development of young minds and enrich personal learning experience. Kenya being a developing country may benefit from this from our own context. With guidance and strong emphasis on exploratory discussion and dialogue learners will learn and diversely contribute to current ideas on development which may accelerate realization of Kenya’s vision of being a global competitive economy.

The materials used in philosophy for children are generally modeled to encourage learners to think critically and creatively about day to day issues and logically come up with solutions or suggestions of dealing with them. The inquiry technique of philosophy
provides a suitable arena for developing affective dispositions necessary for the development of critical thinking skills because all the learners engage and listen to each other in the process of knowledge construction that calls for tolerance, fairness, inquisitiveness, persistence among other useful traits.

One example of such a philosophical scenario from Lipman (1975) discovery is illustrated below:

During a science class Harry’s mind reportedly wandered off and his teacher Mr. Bradley had been discussing the solar system and how all the planets revolve around the sun. that’s when Harry had stopped paying attention, but in his mind the image of the flaming sun with planets revolving around it was lodged in his mind.

Harry then realized that the teacher was looking at him and he tried to clear his mind to pay attention to the question the teacher was asking. However, he had no answer to the question and in his mind he was trying to imagine something with a long tail revolving around the sun. he toyed with the idea of saying a ‘a dog star’, but then he realized the remembered that the teacher had said planets go around the sun and that’s the answer he gave. However, the laughter around the class meant that he was wrong, and had he been paying attention he would have heard the teacher say Halley ’s Comet and that just like planets they revolve around the sun. On his way home, Harry felt bad for not answering a question and he went over what may have possibly gone wrong for him to lose focus during the lesson and was puzzled. What had happened and what had led him to go wrong? He mulled in his brain over the way he had tried to come up with the answer. ‘All planets revolve about the sun,’ Mr. Bradely had said, and the thing revolving around the
son had a tail, but was not a planet. Harry then realized that there are things that revolve around the sun, but are not planets. ‘All planets revolve about the sun, but not everything that revolves about the sun is a planet. That’s when he discovered that a sentence cannot be reversed. Putting the last words of a sentence first changes the meaning of the sentence making it false. For example, take the sentence ‘All oaks are trees.’ If you turn it around, it becomes ‘All trees are oaks.’ The discovery fascinated Harry and he shared his discovery with his classmate Lisa. He asked her to give him any sentence and he would proof that the reverse would be false. Impatient, he urge Lisa to come up with a sentence fast and she stood thinking thoughtfully while staring at him. Finally Lisa made up her mind. ‘No eagles are lions,’ she announced. When Harry reversed the sentence, he was stunned to find that the reverse was true. He couldn’t understand why his discovery didn’t apply to the ‘stupid’ sentence. That when he realized that his rule should apply to all situations and he felt bad for failing the second time that day, his only consolation being that Lisa wasn’t laughing at him. Disappointed he told Lisa he thought he had come up with something new and he said he had even tested it. Then Lisa looked at him with wide eyes and asked if he had tested it. When he said his sentences had worked, she told him that the sentence wasn’t his, but hers. She told him that his sentences begin with ‘all’ while hers begun with a ‘no’. He wondered if Lisa was right and he knew the only way to determine if the minor difference changed his rule. He then came up with ‘If it’s true that ‘No submarines are kangaroos,’ Harry began, ‘then what about ‘No kangaroos are submarines’?’ After testing a few more sentences, he realized that starting sentences with ‘no’ makes its reverse true while beginning them with ‘all’ makes its reverse false. He
couldn’t find the worlds to thank Lisa so he mumbled something under his breath and ran home.

Harry was so grateful to Lisa for her help that he hardly knew what to say. He wanted to thank her but instead he just mumbled something and ran the rest of the way home. He found his mother speaking with the neighbor so he stood and listened to their conversation. Listening to Mrs Olson and his mother talk about whether Mrs. Bates’s frequent visits to the liquor store meant she was an alcoholic, something clicked in Harry’s mind. ‘Mrs. Olson,’ he said, ‘just because, according to you, all people who can’t stop drinking are people who go to the liquor store, that doesn’t mean that all people who go to the liquor store are people who can’t stop drinking.’ His mother told him that it was none of his business to interrupt, but by her tone, he could tell she was pleased with what he had said. So he sat down to have his glass of milk feeling happier than he had felt in days.

After presenting such a story as a stimulus, learners are given time to comment about the events and themes in the story. This is basically a creative process. Questions the learners may consider in this process among others include:

i) Describe the different feelings Harry, Lisa and Mrs. Stottlemeier have in Chapter one.

ii) Do you think that Harry and Lisa are friends? How do you know?

iii) Explain Harry’s error in thinking what ‘… has a long tail, and revolves around the sun every 77 years’ is a planet.

iv) What do you think a rule is?
v) What is the rule which Harry has discovered?

vi) What does Lisa say that causes Harry to lose confidence in his rule? How do Harry and Lisa resolve the problem?

vii) What is ‘resentment’ mean?

viii) Why do you think Harry is resentful of Lisa’s observation?

ix) Do you sometimes find it hard to express your feelings to your friends even though you want to very much?

x) Harry is very excited by his discovery. Why do you think discovery causes excitement?

xi) Have you ever discovered something that made you excited?

These leading questions and comments from learners may enable learners to identify issues they are interested to discuss in the construction of the agenda which forms the critical stage of the process. The ideas to be focused on include:

Leading idea 1: The process of inquiry.

When reading this story children are beginning to explore a world of ideas by investigating in a systematic way and engage in forms of inquiry. In the story the children use a methodical and systematic way, which are series typical of many cases of discovery and invention. These depict the process of inquiry characterized by the following stages:

i) Feeling of difficulty or frustration.
Mr. Bradely asks, ‘What has a long tail and revolves about the sun once every 77 years?’

Harry quickly replies, ‘a planet’

The class bursts into laughter leaving Harry embarrassed.

ii) Doubt

In Harry’s mind, he knew that the sentence ‘all planets revolve around the sun’ was true. As a result, he thought that even the thing with a tail revolves around the sun, but found this was not true. How come?

iii) Formulation of the problem

Harry: ‘All planets revolve about the sun, but not everything that revolves about the sun is a planet.

Harry discovers that he has been assuming because all planets revolve around the sun, then everything that revolves around it is a planet assuming that the sentence is reversible

iv) Hypothesis

Harry: ‘A sentence can’t be reversed. If you put the last part of a sentence first, it will no longer be true!’

v) First efforts to test hypothesis

Harry experiments with some sample sentences:

‘All cucumbers are vegetables’ (true)

‘All vegetables are cucumbers’ (false)
vi) Discovery of evidence which contradicts hypothesis

Lisa offers the sentence ‘No eagles are lions ’(true), which, when reversed, becomes ‘No lions are eagles’ (also true)

vii) Revising the hypothesis to account for contradictory evidence

Lisa’s suggestion that sentences that begin with a ‘no’ are true when reversed onsets testing evident in the sample sentences:

‘No mosquitoes are lollipops’

Application of revised hypothesis

Harry intervenes in the discussion between his mother and Mrs. Olson, claiming that Mrs. Olson’s reasoning about Mrs. Bates is incorrect.

However, the stimulus for inquiry may lack of the community of inquiry is not practiced. The practice helps engage the minds of young people in the importance of formulating and testing hypothesis, clarifying terms and asking and providing good reasons, using examples and countering arguments as well as questioning other’s assumptions by drawing inferences. The inquiry is also a social process where students need to share their views on issues while listening to the opinions of other students, reading their body and facial expressions while looking for missing perspectives (IAPC). In this way cognitive and social skillfulness are acquired naturally and in context. It therefore follows that the outstanding aspect of philosophy is reflection which literally means ‘thinking again’ in order to understand meaning and justify concepts Oduor,(2010) .In doing so one
engages in the creative process of reconsidering belief or judgment which one may have previously accepted without question or without serious interrogation

Some of the questions to be considered for the above discussion could include:

i) What is Harry’s first idea about reversing sentences?

ii) What is the rule about reversing sentences that Harry and Lisa discover together?

iii) How does Harry get his first idea about reversing sentences?

iv) Can you remember the steps in Harry’s reasoning that led him to this discovery?

v) On the blackboard write as many steps as you remember in the correct sequence?

vi) Do you think any of these steps could have been eliminated?

In the story, Harry discovers a rule which affords learners an opportunity to discuss what they think is the difference between discovery and invention. Discovery is often related to something great discovered by an extra-ordinary adult, but in this story this discovery is by a child and is not of a thing but an idea. The discovery can get children excited to discuss whether Harry discovered or invented the idea. The fact that, it is a fellow child they can relate to, may make them feel that they too can find out new things about their world. This will need guidance from the teacher to make the learners fully conscious of the thrill of discovery and invention. Even the timid and those who feel very inhibited about investigating the world of things and ideas need to be reassured as to how wholesome and wonderful discovery and invention can be (Lipman, 1975).
5.7 Critical and Creative Thinking in Philosophical Inquiry

The central components of a P4C session entail critical and creative thinking processes with a social aspect to it. The first part of philosophical inquiry where learners read aloud and act out philosophical stories can be likened to the saturation or preparation stage in creative thinking where data, facts and sensations to serve for the development of new ideas is gathered. The interpretative skill in critical thinking would be used in this stage to comprehend and express the meaning or significance of data, events, procedures or criteria.

Collaborating in the construction of the agenda or lesson plan where learners identify issues they are interested in the philosophical story could be the incubation stage of the creative thinking process which involves sifting the materials about and making new combinations to come up with the new idea or project of interest. To sift arguments in order to come up with the agenda analysis which is the second stage in critical thinking would come in handy to help detect validity and soundness of arguments and organize issues towards specific purposes.

Deliberation on issues as a community of inquiry in which participants self-correct their previous beliefs, feelings or values, is the illumination and verification stage of the creative thinking process where the solution or some concept of the end state comes to mind. The evaluation and inference skills in critical thinking help prove the credibility of statements and to assess the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationships among statements. At this stage a set of options for addressing a problem can be developed.
Finally, just like critical and creative thinking are not singular activities, but rather a collection of thinking skills that advance intellectual focus, motivation and engagement with new ideas, philosophical inquiry in philosophy for children seeks to make learners reconstruct new ideas by listening to one another, challenging and building one another’s thinking and looking for missing perspectives (Halogen and Gary,2000). As a result they come up with new and/ or better ideas that are more informed, and most importantly, ideas that they can relate to personally in addition to developing their critical and creative thinking capacities. From this, it can be correctly inferred that doing philosophy entails engaging in a critical and creative thinking session with the aim of developing their critical and creative thinking skills of learners in addition to safeguarding the critical thinking dispositions enhanced through collaboration, which are referred to as intellectual traits of philosophy. These dispositions include respect for human dignity; having a high opinion for the worth and honor of a human being, intellectual humility; the readiness to accept that we may be wrong or misguided on certain issues and genuinely seeking to understand the truth, intellectual courage; the ability to face and fairly deal with unpopular ideas, beliefs or viewpoints among other useful traits.

The above synthesis shows that development and enhancing of critical and creative thinking within a socially positive interaction and environment are the central concerns of philosophical inquiry. These have been proved to bring out positive attributes similar to those espoused in the aims of education in Kenya. Philosophy for children would therefore be a useful avenue towards achievement of the aims of education in Kenya if maximized from the earliest opportunity possible.
5.8 Creativity within the Developmental Process

Contrary to popular belief that children cannot think critically or be trained to do so, a research carried out by Legon (1957) to understand the creativity within the developing child found the following characteristics in children:

Until 2 years – The child questions the names of things and tries to reproduce sounds and rhythms

From 2-4 years- The child learns through direct experience and repeats his experience in investigative play. He starts to develop a sense of autonomy.

From 4- 6 years- There is experimentation with a variety of roles in play

From 6- 8 years- The child turns to realism and rejects pretence.

From 8- 10 years- The child begins to use skills creatively, identify with heroes, can undertake long projects and ask critical questions.

From 10- 12 years – Children enjoy exploration. Aptitudes for art and music develop during this period. The child can derive principles and generalizations.

This knowledge about pupil’s developing characteristics shows that with appropriate teaching methods and content creative abilities can be fostered in children from an early age because they have the inherent capability to do so. At the age of 10 years most children are in class 4 or 5 in the Kenyan primary cycle of education. The ability to use skills creatively and ask critical questions at this stage can be used successfully to encourage children to engage in communities of inquiry with appropriate materials and guidance provided in p4c to emphasize creativity and criticality in learners.
In his study about variations in creative thinking, Torrance (1962) found that creativity increased steadily from the first through the third grades but decreased markedly between the third to the fourth grade. It then recovered from the fifth grade only to drop again between the sixth and seventh grade. Subsequently the creativity from this period grew and lasted almost until the end of high school. Sullivan (1963) gives a probable explanation for the slump in creativity as a time when most children experience subordination, accommodation, segregation into groups, ostracism, stereotyping, competition and compromise. This is between age eight to ten years, a stage in which children identify with heroes and particular groups with something in common and consider them their friends.

In the process of identifying with heroes, children tend to treat those with different opinions as less important than them; subordination. To fit in the group, accommodation; which entails adapting and adjustment for convenience occurs. The different ‘alliances’ lead to segregation into groups which is to isolate a group of people from another in this case based on the groups interests. Ostracism is the act of excluding someone from a group or refusing to meet or talk to the person. This happens when there is ‘conflict of interest’ among the children in a given group or a misunderstanding which leads to ostracizing a member from a group. Stereotyping is when many people have a fixed idea or image of a particular type of person or thing but which is often not true in reality for instance the idea that only boys can pass mathematics. Competition is the act of trying to win something by defeating others who are trying to do the same while compromise is to give up particular demands by each side in a dispute so that an agreement may be reached which satisfies both sides to some extent (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 1995).
At seventh grade there are pressures to conformity as this is the stage where puberty changes occur and they may yield feelings of inadequacy and insecurity and the anxiety experienced can result in further constriction of the thought process. To conform is to follow generally accepted rules or standards. Children may shy off from being creative to avoid attention by choosing to conform even when they have different opinions on an issue. Apart from the two `seasons` of the slumps, the creative variations in elementary school children grows steadily and therefore with appropriate material and guidance their thinking skills can be improved (Sullivan, 1963).

These psychological processes may inhibit development of critical and creative thinking if they are not managed appropriately. Creativity involves more than just thinking skills. Russ (1996) developed a model for developing creativity which apart from cognitive abilities entails personal traits such as self-confidence, and being able to tolerate ambiguity and emotional processes such as pleasure in challenge and ability to control anxiety. Subordination makes a learner feel less important which, if not addressed, leads to low self esteem and encourages learners to settle for convenient arrangements due to fear of expressing themselves. The fear of being ostracized may inhibit a learner from challenging opinions he/she has reasonable evidence for. Stereotyping has the same effect as learners may fear to question what is popularly known to be the case and eventually fail to develop the habit of questioning ideas for verification which is the field of critical thinking. All the aforementioned psychological processes that children undergo encourage conformity and if not addressed at the right time may seriously stifle critical and creative thinking in learners.
An experiment carried out by Torrance (1961) with a group of teachers who taught using the philosophical inquiry technique, showed the pre and post tests of pupils in these classes were superior to those for pupils in the control group who were taught by teachers using their usual procedures. The experiment group had higher scores for originality and elaboration in four of the six grades studied, superiority in fluency and flexibility was also recorded. Another study by Torrance (1964) indicated that an in-service training program for developing creativity for teachers is a step in the right direction because pupils showed greater growth in creative thinking.

Theories of child development view young children as highly creative, with a natural tendency to fantasy, experiment and explore their environment. However, this high level of creativity is not necessarily maintained throughout childhood and into adulthood. Meador (1992) presents evidence from the USA that creativity (as measured by divergent thinking tests) declines when children enter kindergarten, at around the age of five or six. Runco (1996) explains that longitudinal research on trends in creativity suggests both continuities and discontinuities throughout an individual’s lifespan. In other words a child identified as highly creative in early life may or may not consistently show creativity later on. He argues that this uneven development may result from the fact that certain traits and talents develop at different rates and are influenced by each individual’s environment and life chances.

According to Sharp (2004) when considering young children it is appropriate to adapt a broad, democratic definition of creativity. In this way every child can be considered to have creative potential and to be capable of creative expression. She posits that it is important to consider what might constitute ‘originality’ in the work of each child, as
each child’s creative abilities can be related to his/her personal stage of development. She also suggests emphasis to be put on the creative process rather than to judge the quality of their ‘products’. This is because young children may not have developed all the skills they need to achieve a successful creative outcome. A similar point is made by Malaguzzi (1993, p.77) who says: ‘Creativity becomes more visible when adults try to be more attentive to the cognitive processes of children than to the results they achieve in various fields of doing and understanding’.

According to Sharp (2004) most writers on creativity agree that it is possible to encourage or indeed inhibit the development of creativity in young children. In order to consider the way in which creativity can be fostered in educational settings, it may be helpful to identify some of the components of creativity in young children. Russ (1996) suggests the following three elements are involved: a) personality traits such as: self-confidence, being able to tolerate ambiguity, curiosity and motivation; b) emotional processes such as: emotional fantasy in play, pleasure in challenge, involvement in tasks and tolerance of anxiety; c) cognitive abilities such as: divergent thinking, ability to ‘transform’ thinking (for example by being able to reorder information or shift thinking ‘sets’), sensitivity to problems, breadth of knowledge and judgment.

The implication of this model is that in order for children to express creativity they need a combination of attributes. Although some children may already have the necessary components, others may need assistance, encouragement and skill development in order to engage in creative activity Sharp (2004). For instance a child may choose not to engage in creative thinking because he/she lacks self-confidence and does not believe that they have anything of value to offer. Or maybe he/she becomes anxious when given an
open-ended task with possible solutions. Through observation and conversation an adult can work out what is causing the child’s difficulties and encourage them to work through them.

Philosophy is not taught at pre-university levels in many countries, Kenya included, where In Kenya, it is introduced at the university level. In Kenyatta University for example, the University Senate requires that every student takes a philosophy course entitled: ‘Critical and Creative thinking’ preferably during their first year of university study which is similar to other universities in the country such as Mt. Kenya University and Moi University (Wambari, (2001). However due to increased awareness on the benefits of developing criticality and creativity, some schools like: The Aga Khan in Mombasa have adapted a ‘Primary Years Program’ under the International Baccalaureate Organization that engages pupils constructively in Communities of Inquiry for knowledge construction from an early age (Aga Khan Development Network, 2013)

The community of inquiry is an aspect of philosophy which entails participants with a common interest who collaboratively engage in purposeful critical discourse and reflection to construct personal meaning and confirm mutual understanding on various issues. The learners are exposed to data concerning a specific area of interest, they explore and sift arguments about it then they come up with a conclusion. The central idea is to encourage open dialogue where all participants ask questions, sift arguments and explore alternatives so as to understand better. When done over a long period of time it encourages pupils to be inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers as well as knowledgeable, principled, caring, open-minded, well-balanced and reflective individuals
who can play effective roles in national development (International Baccalaureate Organization, 1998).

5.9 Outcomes of Philosophy for Children in Britain and France

In Britain, findings, from research by (Sunderland and New Castle University 2005) in Northumberland Schools which experimented with philosophy for children recorded that at key stage 1, long term involvement with p4c had led to better performance in mathematics in national tests and so they deduced that there seemed to be a positive link between the use of p4c and performance in mathematics. There was also improvement in English performance and G.C.S.E. achievement was twenty four per cent more than predicted.

Clackmannshire Schools in Scotland recorded that a whole population of children gained an average six standard points on a measure of cognitive abilities after sixteen months of weekly inquiry. There was also noted increase on the learners’ level of participation in class discussion as much again following six months of weekly inquiry with pupils doubling their occurrence of supporting views with reasons. The teachers also doubled their use of open-ended questions. The same pupils did not have further inquiry opportunities when they left primary but the cognitive abilities were still sustained two years into secondary school. Generally the pupils and teachers perceived significant gains in communication, confidence, concentration, participation and social behaviour following six months of inquiry (Dundee University, 2006).

Philosophy for children is also widely appreciated in France. Through the collaboration of Philolab (an organization that encompasses and brings together all important different
inventions in France and all Francophone countries) and UNESCO, philosophy in France has been promoted in all its aspects. While for years in France philosophy was only taught during the last year of school before the Baccalaureate and at University; and its teaching was formal, conservative and centered on the cultural history of the subject. However, in 1995 something happened that liberated philosophy of its confinement within the walls of school. This was the discovery of philosophizing as a practice verses philosophy as knowledge of a given content. New practices of philosophy emerged through ‘Cafés philosophiques’ (philosophical cafes) due to the need for the benefits of philosophy that emerged. Among the new practices was philosophy for children which, is vivid and creative in France today. The methods are adaptable to any situation and go beyond the context of primary school children to reach groups ranging from teenagers with great difficulty, to intellectually impaired children, groups subjected to violence and groups in government institutions with positive outcome (www.p4c in france.org).

5.1.0 Ideas Linked to Philosophy for Children in Tanzania and Kenya

Nyerere (1979) identified four shortcomings in Tanzanians system of education. These limitations are also evident in Kenya’s present education system. They include: a) Elitist education, that is, an education designed to meet interests and needs of a very small proportion of citizens and fails to produce an egalitarian society, b) Divorced education which uproots participants from their society, or a curriculum that is alien to local needs, c) Book-knowledge and diploma-syndrome which instills the belief that all worthwhile knowledge is found in books and not in experience of life to which he advocates a balance, d) Failure to combine school learning with work where students fail to offer community service under the pretext of being occupied with academic work even during
vocation. To these challenges he suggests that primary schools must offer complete education, not mere preparation for secondary school. They should not narrow down to competitive examination but rather offer an education that is truly a preparation for the life which the majority of children will lead, and for secondary schools to prepare learners for ‘life and service’ in their societies.

These problems triggered Nyerere to talk and write on education for liberation and education for self-reliance. For him the primary purpose of education is the liberation of man where it should liberate both body and mind; by producing a human being who is aware of his potential while pointing out life-enhancing relationship with one’s neighbors and the environment. There are two imperatives essential for a liberated man namely: a) an awareness of one’s humanity, b) the power to use circumstances rather than to be used by them (Nyerere 1979).

On self-reliance Nyerere enumerated social goals of education including: the need for education to foster social goals of living together for the common good, inculcate a sense of commitment and help pupils accept the values of society, emphasize cooperative endeavour; not merely individual advancement, stress concepts of equality and responsibility to give service which goes with any special ability to counteract temptation to arrogance and despising non-academic abilities, prepare people for their responsibilities as free workers and citizens that are able to think for themselves and make judgment on all issues affecting them and finally education should encourage learners to develop an inquiring mind; an ability to learn from what others do and to reject or adapt it to his/her own needs; and a basic confidence in his/her own position as a free and equal member of society who values others and is valued by them for what they
are Nyerere (1968). From these two dimensions the importance of teaching for thinking autonomously and with others for the purpose of better decision-making and adapting to any circumstance are pinpointed. In essence he implied teaching critical and creative thinking that values cooperation from the basic level which can be aptly exemplified through an arena for philosophy for children.

Wambari (2001) also advocates for quality education which must be critical and creative so that learners can achieve flexibility, adaptability and open-mindedness in Kenya. He suggests teaching thinking as the means necessary to empower learners to achieve intellectual autonomy and thus operate effectively on their own. One school in Nairobi (Thika Road Christian School) underwent an experiment with philosophy for children program under his guidance between 1993 and 1996. The same group of children was involved from Std. III to Std. VII at the end of which it was quite evident that the children had undergone palpable transformation towards reasonableness. The teachers in the school were the first to note that the class had become questioning and particularly asking for reasons for claims (Wambari, 2001).

Awiti (2013) States that, children have an innate proclivity for learning through curiosity, creative playfulness and collaborative sociability; therefore we must provide centers of learning that would optimize curiosity, playfulness, innovation and creativity. Schools should allow playful exploration and emancipate learning from the tyranny of curriculum. Such an environment can be well captured in philosophizing which stresses autonomous thinking in collaborative groups. For him, teachers should be facilitators of self-directed learning as a child’s drive to play, collaborate and discover serves the core mission of
education not only in hunter-gatherer cave culture, but in today’s skyscraper globalized knowledge economy as well.

5.1.1 Conclusion

This chapter elaborated critical and creative thinking and their benefits to society. A typical p4c session was then showcased to highlight how philosophizing fosters development of critical and creative thinking through its systematic approach. Creativity within the developmental process was examined show that children are capable of engaging in philosophical discourse from an early age. The concepts which are the main elements in philosophical discourse were viewed to be important elements that could propel the achievement of the aims of education in Kenya. Philosophy in Kenya is mainly introduced at college level and therefore may not extensively explore the benefits that can be accrued from nurturing thinking skills consistently. Countries that have realized positive outcomes from doing philosophy from an early age were also showcased. Therefore to maximize on the benefits that can be accrued from this philosophy there is need to give it more attention and introduce it at the earliest time possible.
CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to make a case for the introduction of philosophy at the basic level of education in Kenya so as to contribute to the improvement of the quality of education by developing individual talent, self-reliance, positive values and integrated citizenship.

6.1 Summary of Findings

6.1.1 Status of Philosophy in Kenya

Philosophy is generally introduced at the college level in the Kenyan system of education. It is usually taken as a unit under various names; for instance, at Kenyatta University it is referred to as critical and creative thinking. It is also taken in other Universities such as Moi University and Mount Kenya University and many post secondary colleges.

6.1.2 Aims of Education in Kenya in relation to Philosophy

In order to meet the demands of the 21st century and compete favorably with the ever-rising and changing international standards, the quality of our education should be of the highest standards possible. With the ever-changing situations around the world in terms of science and technology, social-economic demands of the society and environmental changes, education needs to embrace content; methodologies and approaches that equip learners with skills that will enable them survive in a continually changing environment.
According to MOE (2005), on education policy and framework, some of the important pillars that should be integrated in education and training include: inculcating in learners the knowledge and skills that enhance life-long learning, social responsibility such as promoting gender equity, care for the vulnerable regions and groups, unity of purpose which entails teamwork and striving for the national common good and equal opportunities for all among other useful objectives.

Philosophy is a multi-faceted discipline whose main focus is the thought system. Richard (1995) posits that the philosophical mind habitually questions the foundation of its thoughts and comes to the realization that it is defied in basic concepts values and assumptions and the gives serious considerations to the alternative competing concepts that enables the mind to think from a different perspective than its own helping differentiate its thinking with reality. By habitually thinking globally, the philosophical mind gains foundational self-command and is comfortable when problems cross disciplines, domains and frameworks. The discipline of philosophy is the one that fosters the philosophical mind.

In everyday life, the philosophical mind is evident in those who value the thinking of their own minds on basic issues while giving serious consideration to the ideas and thoughts of others. In teaching, the philosophical mind is most evident in those who probe the concepts, aims, assumptions and values that underlie their teaching; who routinely raise fundamental issues through Socratic questions; who routinely encourage students to probe the foundation and source of their own ideas and those of others; and who routinely encourage students to develop their own philosophy or approach to life or learning based on their own disciplined, rational thought which is quite rare. Habitual probing of the
foundations and sources of fundamental issues in academic and everyday life is likely to promote independent, well-balanced thinking and adaptive individuals who can have a better understanding of issues and situations. Serious consideration of alternative ideas from all participants is likely to foster teamwork, humility, courage and generally, social responsibility. These objectives are similar to those enshrined in the objectives of education in Kenya.

6.1.3 Challenges of Education in Light of Benefits of Philosophy

To respond to the question on the challenges of education in Kenya, the study revealed that the education curriculum does not adequately prepare learners to adapt favorably to the current changing trends. Some of the content taught in schools ends up being outdated by the time the learner comes out of college or university. Accurately predicting what will be applicable in terms of content at a particular time or situation also proves to be quite challenging. The volatile situation requires that learners acquire skills to make them adaptable to different situations that they may encounter. Commissioned reports of education show that the quality and relevance of education in Kenya is not adequately preparing learners with skills to adapt to their changing world. Therefore learners find themselves in unprecedented circumstances that make it difficult for them to cope.

Suggestions to address these challenges of education were, the learners needed to be equipped with knowledge and skills that would make them adaptable to various situations encountered. Effective thinking skills were deemed useful in helping one adapt to changes. Philosophy (which is a thinking framework that engages learners in collaborative thinking processes for construction of knowledge; with specific focus on
how to think, learn, make decisions, analyze arguments and solve problems) offers a suitable arena for developing these essential skills. The subject matter that is examined in philosophy is the common, central and contestable concepts that underpin our experiences of human life and all academic disciplines. Hence, consistently engaging in critically examining those central human issues is likely to improve the thinking skills of learners and prepare them to adapt better to our changing world.

In countries such as the U.S.A, Britain and France, the discipline has formulated appropriate materials to engage students in philosophical discourse from an early age in order to nurture their thinking skills adequately. According to the findings of this study, early engagement maximizes the benefits that can be accrued from consistently engaging in philosophical discourse. Critical and creative thinking needs practice to develop and is crucial in unpredictable situations. Therefore learners who have nurtured and developed these skills are better placed to adapt to changing environments than those who have not deliberately nurtured this skill which is needed in our Kenyan situation. Communities of inquiry used in philosophy which engage groups with a common course are important in fostering important values in our day to day lives which include: humility, intellectual courage, teamwork and tolerance. These values are embedded in the objectives of education in Kenya hence showing a nexus between the objectives of education in Kenya and those of philosophy.

6.1.4 Critical and Creative Thinking

Critical and creative thinking are the main processes involved in philosophizing. In questioning the central concerns in human experience done in philosophy, critical
thinking is a major component and in the endeavor to creatively come up with solution in philosophy the creative capacity is broadened. Thus philosophy promotes critical and creative thinking ability in learners.

Having examined the benefits likely to be achieved from philosophizing, philosophy should be introduced early into the system of education so as to engage learners in developing their thinking process from an early age. Consistent engagement in philosophizing maximizes the benefits that can be accrued in promoting critical and creative thinking.

6.2 Conclusion

Quality and relevance of education was found to be a major challenge facing the education sector in Kenya. Majority of learners were said to find it difficult to adapt to changing environments and to cope in working environments.

The study showed that positive attitudes and constructive critical thinking skills are important attributes in helping learners adapt in changing environment. The attributes can be fostered through consistently engaging learners in activities that encourage them to think critically and come up with creative solutions to problems or analyze arguments.

Philosophy was seen to provide a suitable arena for learners to engage in useful discourse that promotes critical and creative thinking. This is enhanced through its systematic approach to problems to create solutions.

‘Communities of inquiry’ found in philosophy allows learners to collaboratively question and create knowledge in an all inclusive method which broadens perspectives on issues.
Attitudes such as humility, courage and respect are major pillars in such communities as each individual’s perspective is valued and scrutinized.

To promote constructive critical and creative thinking together with the positive attributes require consistent and diligent engagement by learners in the process. Philosophy being one of the main contributors towards this achievement would reap the full benefits if it is introduced early in the Kenyan system of education.

6.3 Recommendation

The study made the following recommendations:

i) The ministry of education should consider introducing philosophy at the basic level of education to engage learners in various thinking discourses in philosophy so as to promote thinking skills

ii) With the world becoming rapidly global the ministry should expose teachers to countries that are using philosophy for children so that they can experience what is done elsewhere

iii) Train teachers to engage in philosophical discourse with learners.

6.4 Suggested Areas for Further Research

Based on the research findings the researcher recommended that a study should be carried out to assess teachers and educators views on the status of philosophy in schools.
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