

**EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A SKILLED HUMAN RESOURCE IN
KENYA: ARGUMENT FOR A SOUND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

OSABWA WYCLIFFE

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for consideration for any certification. This research thesis has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, they are specifically accredited and references cited using APA system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature :..... **Date :**

OSABWA WYCLIFFE

E83/38051/2017

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISORS

This thesis has been submitted for appraisal with our approval as University Supervisor(s)

Signature..... **Date.....**

Dr. Francis Likoye Malenya

Department of Educational Foundations

Kenyatta University

Signature..... **Date.....**

Dr. Fr. Francis Murira Ndichu

Department of Educational Foundations

Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all individuals that are mindful of educational reforms. I further dedicate it to my late father, Jackson Osabwa Ayieko, who willed that I pursue education to the highest level that I could.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- BECF - Basic Education Curriculum Framework
- CA - Conceptual Analysis
- CBC - Competence Based Curriculum
- KICD - Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
- KIE - Kenya Institute of Education
- MDGs - Millennium Development Goals
- MOEST - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- NACOSTI – National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
- OBE - Outcome-Based Education
- RoK - Republic of Kenya
- SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
- TVET - Technical and Vocational Education and Training
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNICEF - United Nations Children’s Fund

ABSTRACT

This research recognized that every nation has a social vision that is articulated in statements designated as national goals, with education being considered largely instrumental in their achievement. It was therefore an issue of concern when the nation of Kenya engaged in activities it considered educational, yet, persistently failed to satisfactorily meet the goals that such activities were geared towards. Instructively, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2012 on ‘Reforming Education and Training in Kenya’, acknowledged a rift between the education offered and the expected learning outcomes. Consequently, it recommended reforms in the 8-4-4 education system since the latter was unresponsive to the needs of the country. This position informed the study’s focus on the suitability of Kenya’s education systems towards meeting the goal of developing a skilled human resource. The objectives of the study were: to establish the Kenyan conception of education; to examine the educational philosophy that underpinned education in Kenya; to evaluate the potential of Kenya’s education with regard to meeting the goal of skilled human resource development; and to propose viable criteria for an education that would develop a skilled human resource. The study was guided by the Essentialist theory of education, and operationalized by William Spady’s Outcome-Based Education Model (OBE). Essentialism emphasizes the teaching of essential and enduring knowledge and skills in preparation for advanced education, the world of work, and effective socio-political life. Since such education aims at particular outcomes, the OBE model came in hand to provide principles that could guide all education that is goal-oriented – for practice and evaluation. The study mainly employed Conceptual Analysis (also known as Philosophical Analysis), together with Phenomenological Analysis and the Prescriptive approach as its methods of inquiry. Conceptual Analysis was used to get a clear understanding of and enable insights into prevalent educational concepts and practices, while Phenomenological Analysis enabled insights into the practitioners’ understanding of the concept of education. The Prescriptive method aided in proposing criteria for effective educating. Through a historical research design, the study established that education in Kenya was understood subjectively, the reason being that the philosophy underpinning it is not shared. Further, education practitioners were not keen on the educational philosophies they employed, despite the latter having a bearing on the manner of educating and consequent learning outcomes. Moreover, the potentiality expressed in various educational systems and policies was not actualized owing to unmatched government funding, hence, partial implementation of curricula. Upon evaluation of the systems, the research concluded that the prevailing milieu, characterized by subjective epistemologies and inadequate resource allocation, ostensibly under the 8-4-4 system, were antithetical to the optimum development of a skilled human resource. Consequently, the research prescribed five criteria that would guide an education capable of developing a skilled human resource: the rationale criterion; the essentialist criterion; the instrumental criterion; the social criterion; and the authenticity criterion. Further, it recommended clear articulation and publicity of Kenya’s philosophy of education; alignment of educational policies and the government’s fiscal plans; integration of focused, authentic educational practices; and redefinition of basic education to include certain compulsory, essential knowledge and skills that allow for lifelong learning and adaptability. Done, this would not only guarantee proper development of a skilled human resource, but one that will also reinvent itself in the face of change.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter set out general grounds for the study. It consisted of the background to the study; statement of the problem; the purpose of the study; the objectives of the study; the research questions; the significance of the study; the limitation and delimitation of the study; the assumptions of the study; the theoretical framework; the conceptual framework; and operational definition of terms, in that order.

1.1 Background to the Study

Society is usually viewed as a system comprising several subsystems that organically function to sustain each other. Education, herein considered as a deliberate formal programme of learning activities that aim to impart certain knowledge, skills and dispositions for application in given environments, is one such subsystem and is perceived as vital for the operation of society (Ballantine and Hammack, 2012). This vitality arises out of the conviction that education, most times, serves as a major vehicle that enables society to arrive at its shared aspirations. According to Harbinson (1973), a country that wishes to register any progress in whatever field must begin by developing skills and knowledge of its people (read 'educating') and utilizing them effectively in its national economy.

Whereas the importance of education cannot be overemphasized, its conception by various parties determines to a great extent the theories and practices such parties will

espouse. From such theories and practices, the educational experiences, specifically teaching and learning activities are derived. Such activities will by some means or the other exhibit that which is expected to be learned by individuals (Hirst, 1970), and be dictated by the outcomes the society expects to achieve (Czujko, 2013). Consequently, this study held that whenever such goals are met, following the prescribed educational practices, education is deemed to have played its part. Else, it would remain questionable in spite of other factors that equally facilitate the said education – for instance political and social institutions. To this end, the understanding of the concept of education was paramount since it would shed light on the attendant educational activities that one should look out for, without which it would be reasonable to indict the education system.

For Peters (1966), education has an inherent goodness, worthwhileness that is independent of what is taught. This implies that education may mean many things; things that share a common parameter of goodness. Accordingly, this ‘goodness’ is what gives the said education its normative character, so that, whether qualified or otherwise, the mere mention of education imputes goodness. Hence, whenever the term ‘education’ is mentioned, it, as a norm, evokes a notion of goodness, worthwhileness or a valuable thing. It is for this reason that we have various referents to education – basic education, health education, legal education, religious education, science education, medieval education, indigenous education, etc., each referring to a certain worthwhileness that the kind of education aims to cultivate. It is in this light that the study considered education for skills development, hence, sought to examine how the country conceived education, and what such conception heralded for development of a skilled human resource.

Generally, education has often been regarded as instrumental in the achievement of various societal goals. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for example, came up with a set of goals in the year 2000 known as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These were meant to guide member countries in setting their own goals so that humanity would achieve global progress on various fronts. In 2015, the MDGs were reviewed so that a new set of goals – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – would be used as a global development benchmark until 2030. Of relevance to this study was goal number four which states that governments are to provide inclusive, equitable, and quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all (UNDP, 2015). Needless to say, fulfillment of such goals is a function of a robust education system that enables individuals to acquire requisite knowledge and skills. As such, a deficit in the latter would necessitate an inquiry into the nature of education being provided.

Globally, various civilizations have had their conceptions of education and its purpose. Equally, several nations have articulated their philosophies of education which in themselves explain their conception of education both in theory and practice, and the role that such education is expected to play towards the advancement of their respective aspirations. Accordingly, ‘a philosophy of education’, in the current study, referred to a statement indicating a given philosophical standpoint that a people espouse in their education system.

England, in 2005, carried out reforms to their 14-19 curriculum by emphasizing vocational training, terming it as a more viable alternative to academic qualifications (schoolwork.co.uk, 2007). For them, Diplomas were more practical and involved

personalized learning required in the world of work. Therefore children leaving secondary schools (at age 14) were encouraged to join further education courses since the latter were viewed as enablers of skills that found application in most sectors (studying-in-uk.org, 2020). Here, one notices that the country conceived education largely in terms of how it prepared an individual for the world of work. Indeed, education in England is compulsory up to age 16 (secondary level) where certain subjects – English, Mathematics (core subjects) and Computing, Physical Education and Citizenship (foundation subjects), and one among the following: Arts, Humanities, Design and Technology, and Modern Foreign Languages. All these are geared towards preparing individuals for job training, hence the development of a skilled human resource that would facilitate national development.

As it were, most of the problems in education, and any other enterprise for that matter, arise partly out of the misunderstanding of the central concepts employed (Barrow & Woods, 2006). The current study upheld the view that clarification of a concept makes way for determining its processes and outcomes (as in the case of education), and in turn, lays the basis for assessment of its success. Such assessment was necessary because it placed a dispute, if any, precisely where it belonged, thereby setting the stage for improvement. For instance, education has various processes such as teaching, learning, and assessment (Brunner, 1960) which partly contribute to its meaning. This implies that a deficiency in the outcomes of educational processes should carefully be traced to any of these processes, if not all.

The United States of America, for instance, identified education as critical to her progress (Hao, 2017). Further, the education was committed to producing highly competent

individuals through ability training and accumulation of experience. In her famous report entitled 'A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform' (US, 1983) the country recognized the essence of education as a tool for developing individuals' powers of the mind – regardless of their race, class, or economic status. Further, a report from the US National Research Council (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012) identified education as instrumental for life and work. Such an education, the report contended, must be capable of developing transferable knowledge and skills required for use in the 21st Century. Hitherto, there was no doubt that America was among the highly developed countries in terms of human capital. Her recognition of the role of education in development of competencies among individuals was not dubitable.

Elsewhere, East Asian states such as Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea (christened 'Asian Tigers') were reported to have once been fragile states (Gopinathan & Lee, 2011). However, they made deliberate efforts to disentangle themselves from their unfortunate circumstances. For instance, Singapore is reported to have aligned its education and training to labour markets, with trade and industry policy being linked to that of education and training. (Ashton *et al*, 1999). This was its model of developing a skilled human resource. Singapore hinges on the philosophy that every child has different strengths, and, as such, learns differently – implying differentiated learning pathways for individual fulfillment (Gopinathan & Lee, 2011). For them, education is an activity that develops individual capabilities, hence, growing a human resource, an investment that makes up for their lack of natural resources. This explains why Singapore had to link both the trade and industry policy to those of education and training. Still in the East, consider China which places a high premium on education. For China, all children are

guaranteed 9 years of education – 6 in primary and 3 in lower secondary following the 1986 Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China (OpenLearn, 2019). Generally, the curriculum oscillates around technical innovation, daily experiences, and social development, hence, develops her human resource. China’s education espouses the UNESCO’s four pillars of education (Delors, 2001) wherein individuals are called to learn to know, learn to do, learn to live together, and learn to be. Education therefore enables one to fit in their society by being what they are expected to be.

Japan, on the other hand, is known for its highly academic system of education which is anchored on sciences, mathematics, and engineering (Chawala, 2021). Further, it emphasizes values egalitarianism, social equality, and harmonious coexistence, all anchored in the Fundamental Law of Education established in 1947. Under it, all citizens have access to education that values individual dignity, cultivates humane and creative citizens steeped in truth and justice. Whereas the system is faulted for its rigidity and exam-centredness, and its highly selective manner of admitting learners to tertiary colleges, it has largely contributed to the development of the country’s skilled human resource following its many differentiated pathways that appeal to every learners’ interests and capabilities. Hence, their notion of an education for a skilled human resource is one that caters for individual potentialities in relation to their cultural, technological and scientific advancement and innovations.

In Africa, the study sampled Nigeria, Rwanda, and Tanzania. To begin with, Nigeria’s education system, like Kenya’s, was founded on the British system, since the country was formerly a British colony. It was also sampled because it shared its educational problems with Kenya, namely, low achievement in her educational aims despite formulation of a

philosophy of education way back in 1977 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Its philosophy is described as more utopian than utilitarian (Adiele, 2006), implying that it promises more than it delivers. Nigeria's 1977 National Policy on Education derived a 6-3-3-4 education structure (6 years primary, 3 years junior secondary, 3 years senior secondary, and 4 years tertiary education) which persists to date. Subjects taught at the primary level include mathematics, English, social studies, agriculture, home economics, French, civic education, and ICT. At secondary school, the education cycle lasts for six years, with two three-year cycles: junior secondary and senior secondary. The former has two streams; pre-vocational and academic, and the core curriculum includes English, mathematics, French, integrated science, social studies, and technology. Pre-vocational electives include agriculture, business studies, crafts, and computer studies. Non-prevocational electives include creative arts, religious and moral education, and Arabic.

Nigeria's policy of education describes the country's philosophy of education as one based on three principles: development of individuals into sound and effective citizens; integration of individuals into the community; and equal access to educational opportunities across all levels. The first principle is in tandem with the topic of the current study, wherein individuals are nurtured so that they possess the expertise to take on various responsibilities in nation-building.

The study sampled Rwanda as well, since it fell in the same regional block with Kenya (the East African Community), and, further, owing to its fast-growing economy that had reportedly banked on education to spring back after the apocalyptic years that saw it almost tumble economically (Trines, 2019). Science, technology, and ICT skills are given priority, with emphasis on vocational and technological training which aim at developing

human resource and turning the country into a knowledge-based economy. The education system has a 6-3-3 structure (6 years elementary education, 3 years lower secondary, and 3 years senior). Subjects taught at the primary level are Kinyarwanda (from grade 1 to 3), English, mathematics, science and technology, physical education, social and religious studies, and creative arts. The secondary level teaches various disciplines and equally houses vocational training which is extended in post-secondary polytechnics. For Rwanda, TVETs were seen as key in replenishing the human resource that was decimated during the 1994 genocide. Education is taken as an instrument for human resource development, hence, the country served as an appropriate point of reference for this study.

The study further sampled Tanzania, a neighbouring country, based on the fact that it had a defined philosophy of education – notably Education for Self-Reliance – championed by His Excellency Mwalimu Julius Nyerere (Nyerere, 1967), the first president of the United Republic of Tanzania. According to him, Tanzanian education was to be one that could rid the country of poverty, economic dependence, ignorance, and exploitation, among others. It was to be characterized by its relevance to society; its ability to produce individuals with a heart for community service; its orientation to the job market; and its ability to instill problem-solving skills in the citizenry (Sanga, 2016). Whereas Nyerere recognized the role of education in the creation of a self-reliant nation, much of the challenges that assailed the country at the time were far from over. Samoff (1979), for instance, writes that Tanzania, upon independence, regarded education as the major route to power and wealth. Regardless, the differential access to the said education – in terms of regions, age groups, social strata, religions, and ethnic clusters (Sammof, 1979) –

negated the main purpose of education. Instead of alleviating poverty, it ended up creating classes, pitting petty bourgeoisies over the poor. This study speculatively viewed Tanzania as having been concerned with ideality more than practical solutions. Factually, there was no compelling evidence to the effect that Tanzania formulated a robust, inclusive education system that could provide educational experiences capable of actualizing self-reliant individuals. To date, the country's education is still unable to fully meet the country's educational goals (Human Rights Watch, 2017; Sanga, 2016).

In Kenya, education broadly has been conceived according to specific periods: the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial. Under the pre-colonial period, there were African education systems such as African Indigenous Education (AIE) where education was defined in terms of its functions. Ndichu (2013), avers that African Indigenous Education was understood as the transmission of cultural heritage, morals, social and religious values, and the impartation of desirable skills and dispositions. It had a functionalist outlook and adopted a practical approach. This was the case across the continent; education being viewed strictly in utilitarian terms (Sifuna, 1976; Sifuna and Otiende, 1994; Ocitti, 1993; Ssekamwa, 1997).

The colonial period saw western education being introduced alongside Christianity. Here, literacy skills were introduced, among other formalistic disciplines. Children attended schools to acquire new skills and knowledge. According to Wellings (1980), colonial education adopted an econometric approach wherein the kind of education offered to Africans was aimed at benefitting the whites more than the natives. The colonial government therefore sought to use as little resources as possible to develop a human resource that was limited to meeting its most immediate manpower demands. In short,

education became synonymous with schooling and was largely aligned to the aspirations of the prevailing colonial government (Sheffield, 1970).

Upon independence, Kenya set its national agenda that would be in tandem with its local needs. It reckoned that colonial education reflected western capitalistic tendencies that could not advance the African spirit of socialism (Sifuna, 1990). Against this backdrop, the new government formulated a blueprint that would provide guidelines for rapid economic development and social mobility for all citizens. This would be captured in Sessional Paper no. 10 of 1965 entitled 'African Socialism and its Application to Planning' (RoK, 1965).

Top on the agenda of the said Paper was the Africanization of the economy and public service. "Africanization" referred to the empowerment of Africans so that they gained capabilities of taking up technical and professional roles. According to the seminal paper, this would be achieved through the provision of education, training, and experience so that natives would be equipped with knowledge and skills in administration, entrepreneurship, and farm management. To this end, foreign expatriates would be engaged to teach and train teachers, doctors, architects, planners, engineers, administrators, managers, surveyors, and such like. To attain a more skilled workforce, the paper advanced that general education would be augmented by in-service training and apprenticeship in both industry and commerce. Further, different trades would be taught. Noteworthy, education was being considered more of an economic than social service, an investment, with its purpose being that of developing human resources.

How this could be done is beyond the scope of this study. Even so, one thing is clear: that the foregoing purpose of education, as identified by the then newly-formed government, implied that education was viewed as a process of nurturing human resource instrumental for economic development. As it were, the role or purpose assigned to any education determines how the education will be formulated. But most importantly, the articulation of such a role is difficult if one has no idea of the government's economic plans and models. Knowing such plans and models is critical since, if the plans are misconceived, poor, or ineffective, for example, the resultant education goals will most likely be ineffective. At this point, the government's economic models were not well articulated. The state, at best, hinged on its projected national aspirations and ideality, and linked education to development of human capital, hence, national development. One could – and rightfully so – speculate that the government was specifically interested in the exploitation of the human capital which, according to it, would automatically result in economic development. This brings in the aspect of the human capital theory which holds that investment in human capital leads to greater economic outputs, hence an educated population translates to productivity (Almendarez, 2010; Cohen & Soto, 2007). But one may ask why the craze with human capital when Kenyans had fought colonialists so that they could repossess physical capital such as land. On this, Fagerlind & Saha (2007) hold, and reasonably so, that physical capital alone is useless in its passive state unless the human agency is employed to exploit it. But again, capital, as it were, presupposes an owner, a profiteer that must employ it usefully towards certain benefits. Is it possible that the post-colonial education system socialized individuals into passive capital that only waited upon the owner (government) to employ it? How does one explain the

unemployment, underemployment, and the supposed shortage of certain skills and capabilities that would follow?

Pursuant to the foregoing, a new post-independent education system was vouched by a commission headed by Prof. Simeon Ominde. It recommended the formulation and implementation of education policies, and changes that would reflect the nation's newfound unity, sovereignty, and identity. Before then, colonial education had been driven along racial lines (Rok, 1964). Once more, the report was seminal since it identified six broad goals of education in Kenya; the first of their kind under the new government. The second goal, namely national development, happens to be the subject of this study. This goal would later be amplified to designate the promotion of social, economic, technological, and industrial needs for national development. Under economic needs, education was to produce citizens with skills, knowledge, expertise, and personal qualities that were required to support the growth of the economy. Education, therefore, was majorly conceived as a means to developing a skilled workforce instrumental in national development, with emphasis on economic growth which depended on the said skilled human resource.

As it were, a follow-up exercise would be made in 1966 in what was dubbed the Kericho Conference (Sheffield, 1967). This arose out of public outcry over the low quality of education that presided over the resultant unskilled labour. Dr. Arthur Porter, the then Principal of the University College of Nairobi, was picked to convene a conference themed 'education, employment and rural development'. The number of primary school leavers seeking unavailable job opportunities in urban centres had skyrocketed, and there was a need to look into the education system. Several recommendations were made,

including restructuring of the education system to embed ingredients that would spur development both in urban and rural areas, and establishment of adult education (Wellings, 1980). Consequently, a Board of Adult education was established in 1967, and village polytechnics were introduced to offer vocational education required to realize production and market-oriented skills. This was an acknowledgement that schooling alone (basic education?) was not sufficient in growing a skilled workforce. But more specifically, it brought out the position that the then prevalent education was highly academic, the probable reason why its graduates could not apply it in their rural environments. Accordingly, education had been conceived as a process of developing capabilities for white collar jobs which majorly existed in urban areas.

Years later, effects of the expansion of education – specifically secondary schools – would be felt. There was a massive output of school leavers that resulted in further unemployment. The role of education in empowering citizens for economic development was brought to question. The Gachathi Report of 1976 (RoK, 1976), for instance, exposed the loopholes and challenges that education faced in its bid to empower citizens. From the report, entitled ‘The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies’, it is observed that the 7-4-2-3 system of education that sprung from the 1964 Education Commission was too academic, and had little orientation to employable skills. Further, the system encouraged elitism, intellectual arrogance, and individualistic attitudes, all of which were antithetical to the African spirit of socialism (Sifuna, 1990). Implicitly, education was supposed to foster job-related skills and collaborative attitudes among individuals. However, this was not the case and so various agencies called for the intensification of technical as well as vocational aspects of the curriculum. The Gachathi

Report recommended, among others, expansion of primary school from 7 years to 9, with the additional 2 years dedicated to industrial, agricultural and commercial training. Education was to target areas that would generate employment.

At this point, one would be interested in finding out what had become of the resolutions of the 1966 Kericho Conference. Did the village polytechnics pick up? If not, why? Was technical and vocational education valued in the same manner as their academic counterpart? Could it be probable that the education so provided had served its purpose of developing the desired workforce, at least for that particular historical period, only that the positions so targeted had been filled? Had the developed skills become obsolete? In such a case, what form of unemployment was being referred to? What options would one have explored for remedial purposes?

Following the recommendations of both the 1966 Kericho Conference and the 1976 Gachathi Report, there arose a need to reform the then 7-4-2-3 system of education. In 1981, a commission chaired by Dr. Collin Mackay, a Canadian Scholar, was constituted to review the system. He led the 'Presidential Working Party on the Establishment of the Second University in Kenya' (RoK, 1981) to carry out the task. A key recommendation was the establishment of the 8-4-4 system on the basis that the previous one was deficient in terms of practical education. Consequently, there was a need to formulate a system that would furnish school leavers at all levels with employable skills – either as self-employed or by securing employment in the informal sector (Wanjohi, 2011). Education was supposed to guarantee self-reliance. Once more, education was viewed in terms of its function – specifically that of the development of skills for gainful employment. At this point, one would construe education – at least as presented by the government - as

curricular activities carried out by schools with an intention of developing employable skills.

Many other commissions and task forces followed; each addressing specific aspects of the 8-4-4 system of education for purposes of improvement. Various concerns would be raised, including curriculum overload, poor teacher preparedness, and lack of necessary learning equipment (KIE, 2009). Finally, in 2012, a report from a task force led by Prof. Douglas Odhiambo recommended an overhaul of the 8-4-4 system. The document titled ‘The Report of the Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Kenya Vision 2030 and Constitution of Kenya 2010’ (RoK, 2012) prompted the government to come up with a Sessional Paper N0. 2 of 2015 (RoK 2015) on ‘Reforming Education and Training in Kenya’. Relevant to this study is the observation in the Odhiambo report to the effect that education triggers human and national development. Further, that a competency-based curriculum is imperative if the country has to realize economic development that obtains from a workforce that possesses relevant skills and competencies.

The above implies that to a greater extent, the 8-4-4 system was deficient in terms of ensuring that each individual subjected to it acquired some skills and competencies that would enable them to participate in gainful employment. Consequently, a new curriculum – the Competency-based Curriculum – was rolled out and operationalized by Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on a Policy Framework for Reforming Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Kenya (RoK, 2019). The sessional paper indicted the old 8-

4-4 system for its inadequacy in the development of competencies. Were the problems systemic? Would the new system succeed? Were there other factors outside education that influenced the acquisition of skills? What could be done to improve the efficiency of education as an instrument for the development of a skilled workforce? Was it possible that the liberalization of education and further entrenchment of the same as a human right may just have meant that any education goes, regardless of quality? What guarantee is there that CBC would not go down the same route as the previous systems?

The persistence of the problems identified in the foregoing, despite formulation of various policies and interventions, much more, formulation of different systems of education that were considered more functional, focused, and responsive, raised the question as to whether the country had a clear educational philosophy that gave direction to its educational theory and practice, in this case for development of a skilled human resource, holding other factors such as resource allocation constant.

This inquiry, therefore, sought to investigate how the education in Kenya looks like: its conception by various players, its supposed purpose, and its practice. This presupposed existence of a philosophy of education that would reflect the kind of education expected, much less, its nature in relation to the role it was expected to play. The study would therefore become heavily conceptual, hence, inclined towards philosophical analysis of the country's conception of education. The study held that unless this was well-founded, the country would not achieve its goals of education regardless of any reforms instituted. Instructively, the constant factor in the said education reforms involved lack of adequate skills and competencies necessary for individual productivity and consequent national development, an apparent indictment on the quality of the education so offered (RoK,

2012; 2015). The circumstantial actuality of the country's state of human capital, viewed against the ideality that was promised upon independence, makes a case for this study to inquire why the government's education policies and consequent practice never resulted in the specified expected learning outcome.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The research sought to investigate why Kenya, through its education system, did not satisfactorily develop a skilled human resource that would result in gainful employment and, consequently, contribute to the nation's economic development. It has been noted that various reforms had been done over the years; specifically from the 7-4-2-3 education system to the 8-4-4 one, and lately from the 8-4-4 system to the competency-based 2-6-6-3 one. All along, a common denominator among the reasons for reforms was the systems' unresponsiveness to the realization of skilled, competent, and employable citizens who could drive the economy forward. Unless the weak link – the disconnect between policy and practice – is investigated and remedial strategies sought, this study held that such reforms, including the recent CBC one that is equally inclined towards development of skills and competencies, would be tantamount to labouring in a circle. Consequently, the nation would perennially miss its goal of economic development which manifests in the empowerment of all individuals, at least in requisite skills and competencies.

1.2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the suitability of Kenyan basic education as far as the development of skilled human resource was concerned, hence, offer a viable approach where necessary. A reflection on the nature of the education, specifically its educational philosophy, was critical since it would establish whether such education had a clear philosophical underpinning that would offer direction for its practice.

1.2.2 Objectives to the Study

This study aimed at achieving four main objectives as stated below:

- a) To establish the understanding of the concept of education as articulated by the government of Kenya.
- b) To examine the educational philosophy that underpinned the education in Kenya.
- c) To evaluate the potential of Kenya's education practice in achieving the national goal of developing a skilled and competent human resource.
- d) To propose viable criteria for an education instrumental in developing a skilled human resource.

1.2.3 Research Questions

The study sought to answer four main questions:

- a) What is the Kenyan government's understanding of the concept of education?
- b) What educational philosophy does Kenya espouse?
- c) To what extent does the education practice in Kenya presuppose its intended role?

- d) How should an implementation matrix of an education that is instrumental in developing a skilled human resource look like?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study may be of help to the country in different ways. Firstly, the study may guide education policymakers and other stakeholders in their quest for educational reforms. Reform is a normal practice. However, it is only reasonable that such be anchored on a thorough understanding of what ails the system. A good system ought to articulate both a definite philosophy of education and a relevant educational philosophy, all of which must be shared by stakeholders; and equally have an instrumental curriculum, coupled with adequate resources – both human and material. Education policymakers therefore ought to be certain where the problem lies, so that reforms may bear fruits. Secondly, it may inform the country on the importance of a clear articulation of the concept ‘education’ so that education policies, systems, and designs reflect a deliberate consciousness and understanding of the concept, a position that will set the stage for the articulation of a national philosophy of education. Thirdly, the report may prompt practitioners into reflecting on the activities they carry out under education to ensure that they truly lead to the realization of the national goals that education is tasked with. Lastly, the study contributes to the body of knowledge concerning the theory and practice of education, more so concerning the place of philosophy of education in Kenya’s education system.

1.4 Limitation

The study was somehow limited by inadequate literature specific to the topic under consideration. There existed very few studies specific to how education in Kenya suited its role of developing a skilled human resource. Nevertheless, the study referred to inquiries done in other countries as long as they reflected situations common with Kenya. Another limitation was the initial reluctance by the interviewed teachers to respond to the questions posed to them. Most suspected that they were under investigation, a position the researcher assuaged by assuring them that the study was confidential and purely for academic purposes. The last limitation was the Coronavirus pandemic, which meant that only form four students were to be in school. But this was not a big deal since the researcher had initially targeted senior secondary school students whom he believed were capable of responding to the questions asked. Further, the Coronavirus prevention and control measures set by the country's Ministry of Health restricted free interaction so that the researcher could not have ample time to conduct probing oral interviews with the students. However, the researcher countered this by administering printed questionnaires. To the advantage of the researcher, informants provided the information that the researcher believed was adequate, more so given that the field investigation was meant to supplement data that was largely to be obtained from secondary data.

1.5 Delimitation

Education is wide, both in conceptual and structural terms. This study limited itself to not only formal education, but the basic one. Further, education is designated as a means to realization of numerous societal goals. The study, however, limited itself to the goal of

developing a skilled human resource, and, further, confined itself to the educational philosophy that guided such an education. Instructively, achievement of educational goals depends on many factors including resource allocation and quality assurance checks. Whereas the latter are not dispensable, the study held that they are difficult to fathom in the absence of clear criteria as to what constitutes an effective education. This being the case, the study narrowed down on the educational philosophy since the latter provided a clear direction as to how such an education would be conceptualized, hence, practised.

Concerning collection of data, the study limited itself majorly to secondary data on seminal government documents which had necessitated changes in education systems over the years – for these touched on the purpose of education that presupposes conceptualization of the latter. The little interview conducted was merely supplementary to the main method of philosophical analysis and, consequently, prescription, and aimed at enabling the researcher gain a first-hand rough idea of the teachers’ and students’ notion of education. It therefore limited its location to one representative county – Busia – and generalized to the whole country, given that teachers are deemed to have uniform minimum qualifications, and that learners are subjected to a uniform curriculum throughout the country’s public education. A choice of any county would therefore highly likely provide reliable supplementary information that was required for analysis.

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

This study was based on two assumptions:

- a) Education has a role in the development of a skilled human resource.

- b) The educational practices carried out in Kenya are a true reflection of the country's conception of education, and, in prospect, its educational philosophy.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

In its bid to examine the nature of education in Kenya, as pertains to its suitability in developing a skilled human resource, the study was guided by the Essentialism theory of education, and operationalized by the Outcome-Based Education model (OBE).

The theory of Essentialism was pioneered by William Chandler Bagley and Herman Holme, who emphasized the need for teaching essential and enduring knowledge, the latter resulting from years of experience (Tan, 2006). The Essentialist movement emerged in the United States in 1938 following a caucus christened 'The Essentialist's Committee for the Advancement of Education' (Acquah *et al*, 2017). The group aimed at reforming the American education system to make it rational-based. The essentialists were interested in the moral responsibility of citizens and the formation of permanent principles of behaviour. Accordingly, schools would endeavour to transmit cultural and historical heritage that included appropriate skills, values, and attitudes which would enable students to function in their world. Students were to be guided by a well-educated, cultured, and caring teacher, and specific programmes formulated to develop rigor of thought, persistence, accuracy, and excellent workmanship. Here, the teacher was the centre of authority and served as a model both intellectually and morally. Further, humans, according to Plato's theory of human nature, are social in nature (Stanford Encyclopedia, 2015), hence, become what their social environment provides. A

competent society, say in the manner of its educating, is held to be in a position to produce competent members (read a skilled human resource)

Essentialism holds on to a number of principles (Ondego, 2014). First, students are to learn from established fundamentals of education that depict a universal characteristic. Second, learners must be exposed to subjects such as grammar, literature, philosophy, science, and other great works that instill wisdom and sense, thus training the intellect. Thirdly, a given core knowledge must be transmitted to all students in a systematic and disciplined way, before they are exposed to other less essential material that appeals to their interests. Fourth, the child is a learner and thus has to be shaped and developed. Finally, education is a preparation for life and not an imitation (Ondego, 2014).

Under essentialism, the curriculum is subject-centred, and as such, students' interests are sacrificed in favour of what society considers essential. Consequently, differentiated and specialized subjects are programmed so that students can master facts and concepts that enable them to understand their physical world, and prepare for advanced education, socio-political participation, and the world of work (Guttek, 2008). Essentialists further believe in standardized tests which they use in the assessment of learner competence. Further, the teacher is viewed as a mental disciplinarian and moral leader who provides instruction through lecture, practice and feedback. Implicit, the theory holds that education must be underpinned by certain essentials which allow for the preparation of students towards achieving specified learning outcomes – appropriate skills, values, and attitudes.

Like any other theory, Essentialism displays certain weaknesses. Generally, it is teacher-centred and yet shifts responsibility to the learner. Further, its methodology inclines towards a heavy dependence on the lecture method and memorization. This contributes to stifling the learner's potential in terms of creativity and imagination. In the current age, educational theories have adopted a student-centric model of learning where the learner is allowed to actively participate in the construction of knowledge as well as the choice of learning areas that suit their interests (Labaree, 2005). Traditional and authoritative methods are no longer tenable.

Whereas these limitations sound bleak, this study viewed the theory as appropriate owing to various inherent strengths. First, the theory recognizes that every education must spell out core knowledge that all individuals in a given society should acquire, and, most importantly, that such knowledge is not fixed but subject to changes as the need arises (Kauchak and Eggen, 2011; Cohen, 1999). Second, the theory vouches for the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge required at the workplace. Interpreted, such knowledge and skills cannot be of yesterday. They must be the current ones (in tandem with the current workplace) implying that essentialism moves with time – contrary to other claims that the theory is antiquated. Concerning place of the learner, this study argued that whereas the teacher is given prominence, such can be defensible owing to the fact that he/she remains a key player in the equation. For instance, the acquisition of the right moral principles – one of the tenets of essentialism – is best overseen by the teacher, and this is important owing to the fact that an educated person is not only knowledgeable and skilled but also sound morally (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986). Further, it is the teacher who best knows what the system has prescribed for the learner, despite the latter's right to express their

preferences, and that this teacher is the one who provides the final word after all is said and done within the learning environment. Whereas this study did not set out to compare educational philosophies, a little reference to some would do. For instance, it is not clear how the learner takes centre stage as professed by theories considered progressive, when the same learner is subjected to a fixed curriculum that is taught within a fixed schedule of time, and further subjected to a uniform examination. Therefore to regard essentialism as unprogressive may not be easily defensible given that its strengths outweigh the weaknesses. Most systems of education, especially their purposes and curricula, reflect the essentialist spirit. This study held that for an education capable of developing a skilled human resource ought to have particular essential elements that would guide its practice.

According to the foregoing shortcomings, this study observed a strong correlation between the essentialist philosophy of education and the educational experiences in Kenya, hence its choice of the theory to lay bare the problem at hand. For instance, the recent introduction of digital literacy programmes in Kenyan schools (RoK, 2015) is in tandem with the emergent branch of the essentialist school of thought known as neo-essentialism (Casinillo and Kiara, n.d.) which arose to counter the criticism that essentialists believed in conservatism. Neo-essentialism advocated the creation of computer science as a new discipline that could help America cope with new realities. As intimated earlier, the study employed the OBE model to help in evaluating the suitability of Kenya's education practice. This decision was based on the fact that the letter of education in Kenya presupposed an outcome-based education, much more, its content and methodology leaned that leaned towards the essentialist thought. For instance, the

BECF (RoK, 2016) spelt out clear outcomes of basic education under CBC, together with the attendant areas of learning, implying that the latter were determined by the expected learning outcomes.

Ideally, OBE finds a foundation in progressivism educational thought (Hellberg, 2014). The fact that Kenya vouches for progressivist educational theory in principle, but displays the essentialist thought in content and practice, implies that different educational philosophies can be used concurrently – with each providing particular aspects deemed relevant. But for its case, Kenya was largely inclined towards the essentialist thought, only that the practice – which should have logically been aligned to the OBE spirit – was in supposition.

Instructively, the OBE Model is credited to William G. Spady (Spady, 1994). Spady defines an OBE thus:

Outcome-Based Education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing curriculum, instruction and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens. (p. 1.)

Ideally, OBE entails the setting of clear outcomes that become the focus of all educational activities. This is followed by the establishment of the conditions and opportunities necessary for the achievement of the essential outcomes identified. In other words, education cannot be expected to produce particular outcomes if the conditions and opportunities made available are not capable of producing such. This study, therefore, employed Essentialism both for its educational implication (education for the current world of work), as well as its ontological inclination, wherein it stresses on the essence of

a phenomenon, for instance, the necessary components for a given system. The study sought to establish the essence of an education that will lead to achievement of aspired national goals. The OBE model, on the other hand, was adopted to explain how education should be conceived whenever it is designated as an instrument of achieving a particular goal; an achievement that is measured in terms of the learning outcomes.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

This study endeavoured to examine the nature of education in Kenya, with specific reference to how its educational practice was designed to meet the national goal of developing a skilled human resource. The study derived a conceptual framework that described the interaction between particular educational practices and resultant outcomes. Ideally, the framework holds that when the curriculum is implemented according to Spady's model of OBE, both teachers and learners would be required to focus on the desired outcomes. This focus, in turn, would inform them of the need to establish the correct means of attaining the specified outcomes. But before this, the right education system and milieu must be established by policymakers through a focused and shared philosophy of education, which derives the right curriculum and educational philosophy. That done, adequate resources must be allocated. The resultant cooperation leads to the acquisition of relevant skills that render one employable.

The following schematic flow chart presents the independent variable (Kenya's theory and practice of education), which is evidently flawed hence resulting in negative educational outcomes. For instance, both the policy factors (e.g. an unclear philosophy of education, reactive educational reforms, inadequate resource allocation, piecemeal

implementation of intervention strategies, and poor needs assessment) and school-based ones (subjective understanding of education goals/outcomes, subjective epistemologies, inadequate resources) are not well thought out, hence resulting in undesirable outcomes (lack of essential knowledge and skills/half-baked graduates, limited options for career training, and inhibited life-long learning). Thereafter comes the intervening strategies that could enhance the development of a skilled human resource: a definite, shared national philosophy of education, objective focus on the defined curriculum outcomes, an essentialist-based curriculum, and co-ordination among levels of education – primary, secondary and tertiary, adequate resource allocation – both human and infrastructure, and classroom-industry linkage. All these would lead to a clear philosophy of education, a fit-for-purpose curriculum, common/shared expected education outcomes, compulsory essential disciplines, uniform and adequate resource allocation, and uniform and objective educational practices. Granted, these would result in the acquisition of essential skills and competencies, trainability among school graduates, adaptiveness, and proclivity for life-long learning – of which are desirable, expected education outcomes.

1.8.1 A Conceptual Framework of an Outcome-based Education

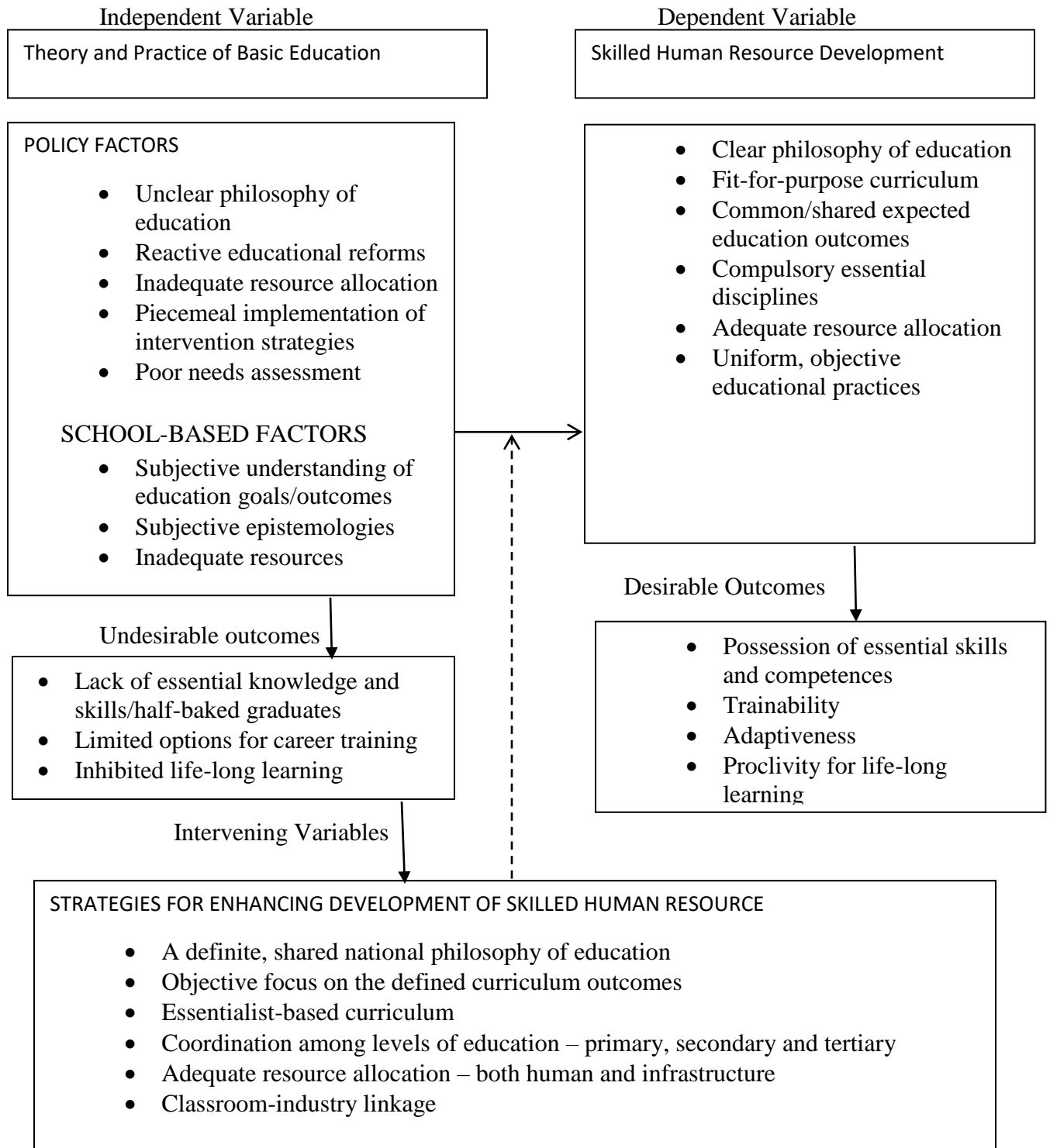


Figure 1: A schematic diagram illustrating the outlook of an Outcomes-based curriculum

(Source: Researcher's own conceptualization)

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Academic education	Education that centres on cognitive knowledge and skills in preparation for professions such as medicine, teaching, law, etc.
Basic education	Education offered from pre-primary school up to secondary level.
Development	An activity as well as an end; the former referring to ‘nurturing’, the latter to ‘perfection’ of the activity.
Education	A formal programme of learning activities that aims to impart certain knowledge, skills and dispositions, in readiness for application in specific environments.
Educational Philosophy particular	A school of philosophy which provides rationale for educational practices.
Implementation matrix	Criteria that should guide a process, in this case, an education for development of a skilled human resource.
Industrial education	Education meant to provide technical skills employable in certain trades, especially in mechanized operations.
National goals	A country’s vision, often expressed in general statements that capture what individual citizens should strive to achieve so that together they develop their country.

National goals of education	A set of statements that articulate what a nation aspires to achieve through its education.
Philosophy of education	A statement that captures a society's general apprehension of education; its nature and purpose.
Practice	The totality of actions which are procedural and performed not just once but repeatedly such that they form a discernible pattern.
Skilled human resource	Individuals who possess knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for application in job-related environments.
Vocational education	Education that prepares one for certain crafts and artisan trades, ostensibly after failing to proceed to higher levels of learning.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature that fell in line with its four objectives, in an attempt to illustrate the necessity of a robust educational philosophy that may effectively guide the practice of education towards the achievement of identified goals. It basically highlights components that a goal-oriented education ought to reflect, including the consistency between theory and practice. A subsection is dedicated to summarizing the major gaps detected in the reviewed literature.

2.1 The Conception of Education in Kenya as per Government Policy

In a bid to establish the suitability of Kenya's education towards the goal of developing a skilled human resource, this study endeavoured to first understand how Kenya understands the concept of education. This was critical for two reasons. First, understanding what the country means by 'education' would help the study in isolating and focusing the object of investigation. Second, the conception of education so established would be definitive of its practice. Instructively, the study rode on an assumption that a country's education is not limited to policy, but practice as well.

This study was cognizant of the fact that no one conception of education could suffice. Accordingly, it did not seek to provide a universal definition or conception of education for the single reason that each society had its own conception dependent on their unique circumstances. The concept of education by various entities dates back to ancient

philosophers. For instance, Aristotle held that it is only through the process of education that human beings can use reason to arrive at happiness, where the latter was a product of virtue and political harmony (Crisp, 2000). This position is corroborated by Backhurst (2011) who views education as a process that awakens reason in human beings. For Backhurst, every human being is born with the power of reason, and so, education is that which serves to actualize this power. Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 2010/1781) writes:

For how is it possible that the faculty of cognition should be awakened into exercise otherwise than by means of objects which affect our senses, and partly of themselves produce representations, partly rouse our powers of understanding into activity, to compare, to connect, or to separate these, and so to convert the raw materials of our sensuous impressions into a knowledge of objects, which is called experience? In respect of time, therefore, no knowledge of ours is antecedent to experience, but begins with it. (p. 27)

Kant is emphasizing that the power of knowing, congenitally programmed in every individual, and kindled by sensory experiences. These experiences get into our minds so that we are able to visualize the objects that they represent even when these objects are out of sight. When the objects appear again, Kant implies, we are able to compare them with the image stored in our minds and therefore recognize them. Kant's 'experiences' presented herein can be interpreted as educational activities which, for him, can only be impressionistic if the learner is fully involved in authentic tasks. It underscores the human nature as far as learning is concerned, hence, helps direct teaching and learning experiences.

Elsewhere, Aristotle terms education as the child's growth into itself (Backhurst, 2011). This implies that the child has particular inborn potentialities which are assisted by

education, not to change the form of the child (read transform), but to make them a complete being conscious of reason that is within her and therefore capable of using it. So what is education? Is it a body of knowledge that ought to be transferred to the learner? Is it a sort of a catalytic activity that is just meant to set a person thinking? What is its form? The fact that different education philosophers held different views over the same concept – education – explains why the practice of any education must be clear on the conception it espouses.

In their book, weighing in on the same concept, Robin Barrow and Ronald Woods (2006) write:

...the first and one of the important tasks for those who wish to understand and contribute to sound educational policy and practice is to analyze the concept of education; to give an account of the idea; to determine what precisely counts as being well-educated. (p. 11)

This account needs no further clarification. They further add:

But do we have a common understanding of what this thing called 'education' is? ... Is studying the history of Greece 'education' in the same sense that learning how to cook is 'education'? If we have different understandings of what education involves, are these various views all equally clear, and, if they are, are they all equally important or valuable?... If we do not know what counts as being educated, how can we make judgments as to whether we are being more or less successful in our various attempts to educate people? If we are not clear what constitutes education, how can we assess whether a new course in health, a new programme on road safety, or a new college for aspiring comedians should be regarded as education? (ibid, p. 10-11).

This study shared in the foregoing observation, and therefore sought to find out the Kenyan conception of education, for the latter would presuppose how she conducts her education practice *vis a vis* outcomes.

In Kenya, there existed not so many studies specific to the country's conception of education. But given the country was first a part of the larger African territory, before gaining identity as a country, this study chose to briefly delineate African philosophies that guided education then, since from them, one would gain some understanding concerning the concept of education at the time, and consequently track any transformation thereof.

As it were, each civilization considers particular concepts based on their existential realities. Accordingly, a people's fundamental concepts are inextricably tied to their fundamental ways of existence and interaction among themselves and their environment (Wiredu, 2005). This study therefore considered how Africans regarded education, however informal, by exploring their philosophies of education. But before then, it first abstracted the concept of philosophy as among Africans, as captured by various philosophers on the continent:

‘...that form of methodological inquiry which relies on rational justification and interpretive argumentation with the intent to bring about a critical transformation of African thought and practice.’ (Whagid & Smeyer, 2004: 131)

This thought is shared by Hountondji (2002) and Parker (2003). This study, nevertheless, was cognizant of the controversial debates that surrounded the possibility of African philosophy (Oruka, 1990, 1991; Horsthemke, 2017; Serequeberhan, 1991). Regardless, it held that African philosophy of education was contingent on African philosophy, and could be inferred as a form of inquiry that rationally justifies and argumentatively interprets African thought and practice of education. It involves how Africans considered

education – its justification/purpose and practice – in relation to their history, geography, culture, and social and political contexts. Whereas the philosophies of education may not have been articulated in modern terms typical of western philosophy, at least in method and content, the early Africans' critical thought and practice about education could still be captured in a way that would make them, if they were present today, recognize it as true reflection of their thought (Temples, 1969).

Kwasi Wiredu, a renowned African philosopher, viewed education as a means to equipping one with knowledge and skills for being (what one ought to become, e.g. morally sound) and living (what one must do – societal duties) (Wiredu *et al*, 2004). He held that such a conception was inspired by indigenous knowledge systems, a belief in consensus, and priority of community over individuality. Horsthemke identifies the philosophical principles of African education: preparationalism, communalism, functionalism, perennialism, and wholisticism (Ocitti, 1973). Education therefore prepared the African child for their role based on gender, and they learned through imitation, play, work, initiation ceremonies, and oral literature (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). Further, there was communal ownership of property and children, hence children were taught and disciplined communally. Generally, education was holistic (learners acquired multiple skills), uncritical (knowledge was unquestionably received), and aimed at conserving cultural heritage. Moreover, it hinged on the philosophy of *utilitarianism* since it was wholly considered as instrumental towards particular ends. In as much as it was informal and pre-literate, it nonetheless served the societal interests of the time.

Fast forward, Africa encountered a new order under colonial administrations, leading to new and formalistic systems of education. Here, children would be taken to special

learning centres – schools – and taught new knowledge, skills, and values. Literacy was introduced, and some of the indigenous philosophic principles of education such as communalism and wholisticism whittled down. Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru (2013) recounts that the absence of schools and writing among Africans contributed not only to the denigration of the Africans' intellect by missionaries and colonial settlers, but also the dismissal of African indigenous education as inferior. As such, the latter had to be replaced by the formal western education (Mungazi, 1982). This study was not keen on the apparent superiority wars that existed in the said context, but focused on the way Africans conceived their education before the transition to western formal systems.

Whereas western education eventually picked up, all did not sit well with Africans. This would be seen by the reaction of some African leaders after their countries gained internal self-rule upon the departure of colonial governments. In Tanzania, for instance, Nyerere (1967) advocated the philosophy of *self-reliance* and education for liberation (free thought that results in innovation) and lifelong learning (continuous improvement of one's education), basing the two on a socialist ideology of *Ujamaa* that saw citizens exist and act communally (Nyerere, 1968). Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah championed for *Consciencism* (Nkrumah, 1978), an ideology that sought to end colonial relationship on the African continent, while Senegal's Leopold Senghor rooted for African values and aesthetics under his ideology of *negritude* (Duckworth, 2010), wherein African traditions, cultures and history were glorified in a bid to water down the oppressive notion of white supremacy. Whereas these were national political leaders, their ideologies greatly influenced their countries' respective education systems, with a convergent philosophy of mental liberation and African humanism (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru, *ibid*).

Implicit from the foregoing, the colonialists had attempted to change the way Africans got educated, hence, their world view of education. The net effect, therefore, would likely be a change in the African's thinking about education, hence, its philosophy. Granted, a rebellion of sorts was inevitable, and could best be expressed through educational reforms. But again, such a revolution would only be tenable if the countries first gave a serious ideological thought concerning their education systems. But the prevailing conditions which saw Africans submit to colonial rule could not afford them latitude to seriously think about education. The same could be said of Kenya which, after the departure of the colonialists, was under pressure to quickly develop a human resource to replace the departed one. In such circumstances, preference would obviously not be accorded to formulation of a robust philosophy of education. Could this explain the manner in which western education would eventually be handled by post-colonial governments, leading to dissonance and the apparent failure in meeting various educational aims and objectives? Could such dissonance have been occasioned by divergent views of the concept of education between Africans and the colonial governments, more so on the purpose, content and methodology?

This study, following the foregoing context, reviewed various studies that focused on the concept of education and the philosophical underpinnings of such education in post-independent Kenya. One is a qualitative study by Munyoki (2012) which, through literature reviews and interviews to education stakeholders, sought to explore the subject of integrating both philosophy of education and the goals of education in the education practice among Kenyan high schools. The inquiry was motivated by the reality that

Kenya was most committed to international goals of education at the expense of local ones, and much less, with its philosophy of education. Consequently, the practice of education in Kenyan high schools was muddled by the ensuing confusion.

Munyoki found out that whereas Kenya's goals of education were known, the statement of philosophy of education was foreign to the students. Though the study defined education as the process by which society transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, values and attitudes from one generation to another through a teaching and learning process, such a definition was not in synchrony with the picture that the researcher had painted. If the government subscribed first to international goals such as Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as he had stated, it is not difficult to detect the little premium that it would accord to local goals and philosophy of education.

Ideally, a definition of education is usually derived from the philosophy of education that a country adopts (Barrow and Woods, 2006). The current study got interested in Munyoki's sentiments concerning lack of awareness of the philosophy of education adopted by Kenya, and, consequently, set out to establish the truth, buoyed by the puzzle as to how a country could achieve its national goals of education – such as that of developing a skilled human resource – without a shared philosophy of education. Instructively, the latter goal has been elusive since Kenya gained its independence from colonial administration (RoK 1981; 2012), hence the need to interrogate the role and purpose of education in its achievement. It was therefore necessary to establish whether there was consistency among the goal of education identified, the kind of education envisaged by the presupposed goals, and the actual educational practices employed.

Korir (2016) conducted a study which aimed at explicating a philosophical approach which would guide the country's educational reforms. Using the analytical framework, he established that local education reforms were not governed by any known theory, hence, their perennial futility. Korir's study was relevant to the current one, given that the two found confluence on unrealized goals of education. Whereas he focused on the reason behind unproductive serial reforms in Kenya's education systems, this study was particular to the country's failure to fully achieve the goal of skilled human resource development through education. Of importance to this study was Korir's definition of education as a life-long activity that aimed at imparting knowledge and skills required for a meaningful living.

The current study found it imperative to critically reflect on the actual Kenyan conception of education, ostensibly through inquiring into policy, hence being in a position to appraise the education practice that emanated from such policy. In doing so, the study would establish whether the practice was consistent with the role that such education had been bequeathed in principle, specifically with respect to the goal of developing a skilled human resource. Whitehead (1929:1), for instance, defines education as 'the acquisition of the art of utilization of knowledge.' Granted, such utilization is a manifestation of resourcefulness. As such, this study sought to establish how best the acquisition of the said art would be actualized so that skilled human resource could obtain.

Ambaa (2015) equally investigated the concept of education in Kenya. She intended to establish its fidelity to the education practice in the 8-4-4 system of education, since the

latter had apparently not resulted to self-reliance as the Kenyan government had intended. Her analysis of the 8-4-4 system of education summarized the meaning of education as a *process that involved communication, encounter, participation and interaction*. She views it as an existential approach through interaction where a teacher enabled a learner to be better than before. She equates interaction to dialogue although does not explain what she means by ‘communication’, ‘encounter’ and ‘participation’. It would have been imperative for her to shed light on the said terms, given that one of her objectives was to analyse the concept of education in Kenya. Granted, such analysis would shed light on what education entailed, much more its presupposed practice. It is such practice that would have been evaluated in relation to its suitability in developing self-reliant individuals. Whereas her definition mirrored that of Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) who posit that education is the inter-subjective process of learning to be self-reliant in society, her synthetic definition is obfuscating, lending credence to this study’s position that education is not an obvious concept. Evidently, she falls short of providing clarification on what it is that is communicated; the phenomenon that is encountered; the expected participants; and the activities involved in the interactive process.

At the national level, various government agencies have had their take as concerns the nature of education. In the discourses of those reviewed, however, none of them came up with a clear pronouncement of what they understood education to mean. In the Education Sector Report (RoK, 2016), for instance, the term ‘education’ is merely referred to contextually. The report is awash with phrases such as ‘globally competitive education’, ‘quality education’, ‘meaningful and adequate education’, among others. At its best, the report refers to education in terms of its purpose: to promote political, social and

economic development. From this description, the study deduces the meaning of education as a process that prepares individuals to contribute towards national development. Here, another conundrum ensues since it is not clear as to what amounts to 'national development'. Granted, one may infer that the process instills in individuals the capacity to contribute to 'national development'; a different way of referring to skilled human resource development (IKuli and Ojimba, 2018). The trouble with such an implied conception of education lies in the difficulty likely to be encountered when it comes to formulation and measurement of goals that relate to 'national development'. Such goals need be specific so that they can be seen in light of a given education process.

Another recent document on education is the Kenya Basic Education Curriculum Framework (KICD, 2016). It is of great significance since it captures a new system of education that is replacing the 8-4-4 one, and equally makes a claim that the latter system had some shortcomings. The document states that the 8-4-4 system of education was designed to realize self-reliant individuals – those with knowledge and skills for the world of work and career progression. However, this did not happen, and as such, the new system comes in with a promise of inculcating the much needed learner competencies. According to MOEST, these competencies represent the application of appropriate knowledge and skills for national development. Again, their understanding of the concept of education is not clear. Implicit, education is viewed as the acquisition of competencies to 'world class standards' with a vision of ensuring that every Kenyan becomes an 'engaged, empowered and ethical citizen'. Such description begs questions as to what exactly the conceived education looks like. Further, this study reckons the difficulty that is likely to be encountered in the course of formulating educational

activities that can bring about the kind of citizen envisaged. Clarification of the concept of education makes way for laying a clear procedure that can be interrogated whenever an educational goal becomes elusive.

Evidently, many definitions and allusions have attended the concept of education, and exploring all of them is not only impossible but unhelpful. From the conceptions so far reviewed, this study observed that not much had gone into thinking about education. Instructively, it is not enough to designate education as the vehicle for delivering society to its aspired destination. The society ought to have a shared understanding of the purpose of this education, hence, its philosophy, so that together they support the government in formulating educational activities that are consistent with expected outcomes. Onono (1976), in his study that sought to examine the philosophical assumptions that underpinned Kenya's formal system of education, stresses the need for a clear conception of education, holding that education must not be conceived in consumption terms in the fashion of a commodity bought or given for free. For him, this only serves to encourage passivity on the side of students so that they sit back and wait to receive knowledge through lectures. Contrastively, education, when conceived as an activity, will call for learning that results from meaningful activities.

Generally, the study established a gap wherein the Kenyan conception of education was unclear, so that it was not easy to envisage the educational activities that would be put in place to facilitate development of the required skilled human resource. Indeed, there would obtain a disconnect between the government's educational policies and classroom practice, since the latter would not be clear if the former was in supposition. Consequently, the study ventured into establishing the actual conception – as

presupposed in classroom practice – so as to set the stage for scrutiny of its effectiveness towards achievement of the expected learning outcomes. In essence, such practice would be reflective of some underlying educational philosophy, however nuanced.

2.2 Kenya's Educational Philosophy

As intimated in the theoretical framework, every human practice is preceded by some understanding of the rationale behind it. Of note is the cause and effect of such practice. For the purpose of the topic at hand, 'cause' here refers to that which can bring about education while 'effect' refers to the end result that the education so caused will achieve.

Tan (2006), for instance, argues that an individual's educational philosophy guides them in determining the aims of their education, function of schools, role of teachers and students, purpose of teaching and learning, and the nature of engagement between teachers and their students. In short, it provides a blueprint from which particular educational practices are derived by way of deduction. This is not to say that all educational practices are informed by a known, explicit educational philosophy. No. There are bound to be exceptional cases, and in such circumstances, the prevalent practice can be studied so that the grounded theory is abstracted. This view is shared by Carson (2011) who avers that philosophers of whatever nature (for instance education) employ induction method in abstracting knowledge. By induction, therefore, one can observe particular instances such as educational policies and activities, and, from them, derive underlying concepts, principles and axioms. The current study sought to establish the educational philosophy informing the practice of education in Kenya, hence evaluate its efficacy with regard to the national goal of developing skilled human resource.

Magulod (2017), using the descriptive survey method, investigated the educational philosophies adhered to by Filipino pre-service teachers. He observed that they espoused mixed philosophies such as Progressivism, Existentialism, Reconstructionism and some bits of Perennialism. He concluded that the teachers' epistemologies reflected both student-centered and teacher-centred teaching beliefs, though with a bias to the former. Most importantly, he contended that a teacher's beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour during the teaching and learning process was highly influenced by the philosophies they espoused. The same view was shared by Sorccorsi (2013), Uyangor *et al* (2016) and Tupas and Pendon (2016). For them, an educational philosophy provided a logical, rational and valid basis for selection of sound educational practices. Of a similar view is Bilbao (2015) who contends that an educational philosophy is a strong belief which translates into action thereby guiding a teacher on what to teach, how to teach and the purpose for such. Did the letter and spirit of the education in Kenya, from policy, subscribe to any known educational philosophy? If so, how did it influence teachers' choices as concerns their educational practices, much more, their personal philosophies of education? If not, could the teachers be relied upon to facilitate achievement of the set national goals of education? It should be noted that teachers need not necessarily have similar personal approaches to educational activities; however, their choices ought to be informed by a shared national philosophy of education and an educational philosophy that is presupposed by the education policies and curriculum frameworks. Else, each will do their own things, hence, render the national goals of education nugatory.

In a study similar to Magulod's, Jabaar (2018) employed the descriptive survey research design to investigate the teaching styles and educational philosophies espoused by teachers in Kano metropolis, Nigeria. He intended to establish whether there existed a correlation between the two variables. He found out that whereas there was no difference in the teaching styles as pertains the qualifications of teachers, there was a moderate positive relationship between their educational philosophies and teaching approaches. From the foregoing exposition, the current study thought it worthwhile to establish the educational philosophies espoused by Kenyan teachers, for such knowledge would help to determine whether their educational activities were consciously selected, and therefore instrumental in achieving expected learning outcomes.

Sanga (2016), through his study which investigated Nyerere's principle of education for self-reliance in Tanzania, buttresses Magulod's position. Whereas he (Sanga) found the principle largely unfulfilled, he recommended that education was nonetheless supposed to be relevant, solution-based and work-oriented. This study therefore ventured to establish what a work-oriented education should look like, since Kenya had identified education as instrumental to development of skilled human resource.

Ndichu (2013), through the Conceptual Analysis method, conducted a philosophical study that sought to establish the components that governed Kenya's national philosophy, and, from them, abstract a philosophy that would inform the practice of education in Kenya, as well as help the country meet its national goals and aspirations through education. In the final analysis, he established that the components for a national philosophy (for instance egalitarianism, mutual social responsibility, democracy, respect for the rule of law, and availability of opportunity for self-actualization, among others),

which would equally guide the country's philosophy of education, were available but unstructured. He proposed *Education for the Promotion of Good Life* as the most appropriate philosophy for Kenya.

For Ndichu, the society's conception of the 'good life' is what should inform the country's philosophy of education. This position is shared by Ikuli and Ojimba (2018), who, addressing Nigeria's state of national development, averred that a nation's progress was dependent on its national philosophy. For them, philosophy and education were critical factors in the development of a nation. With a similar view is Nyerere (1967) who observed that society could only design an educational system fit to serve their national goals if they were clear about the type of society they aspired to build. Whereas Ndichu ended by proposing what he believed was the appropriate philosophy for Kenya, which, accordingly, could guide the country's philosophy of education, the current study sought to pick from where he left and attempt to propose a suitable educational philosophy that would guide Kenya in its educational activities, ostensibly with regard to development of a skilled human resource.

A study by Korir (2016) – intimated earlier on – emphasized the importance of having a clear theoretical perspective which, for him, makes it possible for one to detect a flawed educational system. Such flaws, he argued, may be embedded in the aims, meaning, content, methodology and the evaluation process. In his study that sought to critique the approaches adopted in carrying out educational reform in Kenya, Korir established that the reforms were not guided by an explicit educational theory. For him, making public

the theory (which derives from the educational philosophy in use) is important since it gives room for scrutiny of the latter.

The current study concurred with Korir, and added that failure to make public the adopted philosophy could open doors varied positions. Such an instance, the study noted, was observed in an inquiry by Ambaa (2015) where she analysed the 8-4-4 system of education in relation to aims of education for self-reliance. She concluded that the 8-4-4 system was based on the philosophy of existentialism, a position that the current study disagreed with. Instructively, existentialism is a philosophy whose ideas originate from Jean-Paul Sartre, Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Buber among others. The major principle of existentialism is that there exist no universal and absolute ideas, and that reality is constructed by individuals (Ornstein and Levine, 2003). Consequently, there is no fixed curriculum, and that content and pedagogy are determined by student needs and preferences. Clearly, this is not the case as concerns education in Kenya; the country has a fixed curriculum, and students are expected to subject themselves to it under guidance from teachers.

The current study therefore detected a gap as far as the country's educational philosophy was concerned, and consequently advanced that the Kenyan government needed to make explicit its educational philosophy – both in policy and practice – so that its educational practices (which ordinarily derive from the educational philosophy) could be evaluated with objectivity. In the absence of such an educational philosophy, one would not be in a position to locate the genesis of a problem such as undesired learning outcomes. It is in

light of this position that the study sought to establish the country's educational philosophy, for without one, the education process would lack foundation hence lose direction.

As concerns theory, the Kenyan Basic Education Curriculum Framework (KICD, 2016) articulates six educational theories that are said to underpin the newly introduced competency-based curriculum. These are: Instructional Design Theory, Visible Learning Theory, Social Constructivism, Social-cultural Development Theory, Multiple Intelligence Theory, Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory, Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development and Bruner's Cognitive Development Theory. Shu (1985), in her book *Landmarks in Cameroon Education*, advances that there is bound to be a 'conflict of systems' when many theories or systems are lumped together for a particular aim. To her, the resultant hybridism is bound to mislead practitioners when it comes to implementation. Shu was addressing the many conflicting theories and philosophies that were introduced in Cameroon by various colonial masters, where each colonial regime (Germany, Britain and France) adopted philosophies that served its selfish interests (Loveline, 2019). The current study equally finds the foregoing situation somewhat confusing. It would have been reasonable if MOEST eclectically picked on particular principles of interest from every theory, for example, and clearly articulated them so that the formulation of educational activities is easily linked to such principles. Employment of multiple theories makes it even more difficult to subject the educational process to scrutiny, as much as it opens avenues for many differential and idiosyncratic practices. Put differently, teachers ought to have knowledge of such theories, not for wholesale

application, but because they need a variety, for choice, in consonant with the educational outcomes they aim to achieve. This study sought to establish possibility of having a definite educational philosophy, since would provide guidance to appropriate educational theories necessary for attainment of goals of education.

Generally, this study's approach of looking at educational policies and the presupposed philosophies was informed by the fact that such presented an ideal type of Kenya's education system, that is, how it could have worked if everyone worked in a rational-purposeful way. But given the reality on the ground – where there existed a rift between this ideal type of education and the situation in schools, the labour market and the general life of citizens – as held by various reports including the government's own, the study adopted other approaches for instance the focused interviews, as well as exploring documentaries that featured the actual situation in schools. The latter, as earlier indicated, were only supplementary, and meant to serve as confirmation of what the reports held. The current research therefore worked backwards by studying Kenya's educational policies and practices, and, by induction, attempting to trace the educational philosophy behind them. This helped in establishing whether such a philosophy was founded, and, whether it was capable of enabling the country to meet its goal of developing a skilled human resource, among other national goals of education.

2.3 Kenya's Education Practice vis-à-vis Development of a Skilled Human Resource

The objective upon which this section is based was poised to take a pragmatic angle; that of viewing education in terms of its practical utility. Accordingly, it sought to interrogate the nature of the education offered in Kenya, ostensibly its practice, in relation to its potential to actualize competencies that define a skilled human resource.

Educational practices of any society are largely a reflection of that society's shared goals, and its socio-economic structures (Morela, 2007). This follows the understanding that society initially identifies its needs, and, consequently, seeks the means to their fulfillment. Further, it is advanced that human beings are the active agents who make sense out of capital and natural resources that would otherwise remain passive (Harbison, 1973). This study argued that the human agents could only do so after being exposed to some educational experiences which would develop their capacities to undertake such roles. Such educational experiences, the study held, could only be effective if the government clearly articulated its economic plans and models, enabling their seamless linkage to the prevailing goals of education. As it were, misconceived, poor or ineffective plans and models would only result in equally poor and ineffective goals of education. But given that the government's economic models were not clearly linked to its goals of education, this study acknowledged the difficulty that attended the exercise of abstracting the definite role of education in Kenya as far as development of a skilled human resource went. Therefore the implicit role – however tentative – would be abstracted from the laid down policies and existent practice.

In a study conducted by the American National Research Council about Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012), it was noted that Americans recognized investment in public education as key to national prosperity among a host of other benefits. Further, both formal and informal learning activities prepared children for adult roles. The study set out to clarify and organize concepts and terms drawn from a huge research base in educational, developmental, social, cognitive, organizational, and developmental psychology and economics; with an aim of getting clear on what was meant by ‘Deeper learning’ and ‘Skills’, terms that were increasingly featuring in national goals of different countries across the globe.

The researchers concluded that the term ‘Skills’ as contained in the phrase ‘21st Century Skills’ was too general, often referring to the capabilities that could be applied to a wide range of tasks in various contexts. To remedy this, the study recommended the use of the term ‘competencies’ which would be more comprehensive and inclusive so that it captured both the expertise and knowledge within a specific domain of content and performance. In other words, a skilled person would perform some role mechanically, unconscious of the underlying knowledge. On the contrary, a competent person did something skillfully and with full knowledge of the how and why. This study, nonetheless, used the terms interchangeably. However, the concept of deeper learning, the American study demonstrated, was not only a function of education but also a dictate of the goals a country wished to achieve.

The study alluded to in the preceding paragraph is in synch with some elements of the current inquiry. The Kenyan government, through MOEST, is reforming its education system, specifically moving from what it terms as ‘content based curriculum’ to

‘competency based curriculum’ (KICD, 2016). This follows the realization that one of the country’s national goals of education – development of a skilled human resource – had not been achieved to desirable levels. Unlike the American study that focused on the 21st Century skills (mostly intrapersonal and interpersonal ones – as cognitive ones had been acquired to an appreciable level) the present one sought to examine the suitability of Kenya’s education to its supposed role of developing human capital that would help it meet its national goals.

Instructively, various studies have faulted the Kenya’s education systems as far as development of appropriate skills, attitudes and competencies are concerned. Monyenye (2005), and Mwaka *et al* (2013) in an analytic inquiry, separately attempted to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the philosophy behind the use of education as a means to fostering national unity. They established that schools found it hard to teach things that were contradicting the reality in the society. For instance, Monyenye observed that schools could not inculcate nationhood and national unity because the society that was to set an example was highly polarized. Mwaka *et al* had interrogated the national goals of education in Kenya, with specific focus on unraveling issues which hinder successful achievement of national unity. They established that the goal of national unity had not been achieved to satisfactory levels. Key among the reasons for this underachievement was a lack of understanding of the concept of education by Kenyans, a situation that led to educational malpractices. Following the two studies, one observes that the achievement of expected learning outcomes is dependent on multiple agents, wherein there must be a clear articulation of their relationship, with each performing their responsibilities. In essence, education in itself is a passive concept, so that its role

becomes manifest only after the said agents choose to act. The government, for instance, must come out clearly and perform its role beyond formulating policies and waiting for outcomes. There ought to be a distinction between development of human capital, and exploitation of the same, so that the government does not appear to be only keen on exploiting human resources that it cares little about its creation.

For any education to realize meaningful outcomes, all stakeholders must be in agreement on what they want from their learning institutions (Korir, 2016). According to him, failure to agree on the exact expected outcomes will lead to perennial failure which ultimately calls for frequent reforms. Malan (2000) observes that a system of education characterized by uncertainties in the desired learning outcomes often leads to learners attaining pseudo-knowledge, pseudo-skills, and pseudo-values. All these imply that an education system may be well formulated but be poorly implemented as a result of subjective interests. In the end, the emergent sets of outcomes, away from those originally targeted, would militate against uniform and consistent educational practices, with each entity pursuing those means that they believe are instrumental to the achievement of their subjective goals.

Cunningham (2006), notably, reports an exclusive one week phenomenological study about how and what students learn in Kenya. She explored the context, curriculum and language in Kenya's education practice by volunteering to stay and teach at New Hope Children's Centre, an orphanage that houses young girls. Her purpose was to expose postcolonial undercurrents that still besieged the education in Kenya, hampering success of set goals. In her submission, she averred that Kenya's educational practices were

awash with colonial echoes, and that they were founded on imaginary pictures of prosperity as epitomized by western lifestyles.

For Cunningham, Kenyans shared the view that Africa was inferior and therefore strove to emulate the successful West. As they did so through adoption of the western mode of education and economy, they lost sight of that which defined their identity, and, by extension, their immediate needs. From Cunningham's exposition, this study raised some questions: Was there a possibility that Kenya's educational practices were geared towards attaining goals that were outside its borders? Were such goals been attained, if at all they were known? How could Kenya determine the role of its education with certainty, given that such an education was not relevant to its immediate needs in the first place? Did this position explain why Kenya failed to satisfactorily achieve the goal of developing a desired skilled workforce? This study sought to establish the extent to which the practice of education in Kenya could lead to the achievement of the goal in question.

Aristotle, in his *Physics II*, refers to what makes something what it is (its nature) as 'causes' (Copleston, 2003). He explains that these 'causes' are four in number: the material cause, the formal cause, the sufficient cause and the final cause. Cause, for him, is that which can be said to be responsible for a phenomenon. The nature of a thing is therefore seen in terms of what makes it be what it is: its constituents; the structure of the constituents; the process that goes into its 'beingness'; and the end, *telos*, or final cause. As concerns a phenomenon such as education, the 'causes' can be viewed in terms of the curriculum, the policy frameworks, the educational activities, and, the expected outcomes, respectively.

Aristotle held that a deficit or modification of any of the four causes would lead to distortion of the phenomenon at hand, assuming that the causes were providing a consistent and coherent explanation of the phenomenon (Sampa, 2014). Further, the final cause is the main reason for the existence of the phenomenon since it is the one that gives the rest of the causes sense and direction. This study equates Aristotle's final cause with the outcomes of education, and equally shares in his submission that this final cause, the goal, determines the process of education. The study therefore examined philosophy behind the education process in Kenya, so as to establish whether the presupposed potentiality could lead to the desired outcomes. This followed the assumption that education was instrumental in achieving development of a skilled human resource, and as such, failure in the latter therefore necessitated an investigation into the possible weak link – whether it was the theoretical foundation of the education or the nature of its practice.

2.4 Education for a Skilled Human Resource

Following previous attempts to abstract the Kenyan concept of education, it became clear that education could not be conceptualized without reference to its purposes. Such purposes were a reflection of the aspirations of a given society, hence, it may be interesting to establish whether any goals could be met without educational experiences.

The study drew attention to the 1976 report of the National Commission on Education Objectives and Policies (RoK, 1976), specifically on one of its terms of reference (TOR) that focused on examining the relationship between the training function of formal education system and other systems of training, both public and private. The TOR

implied that there existed designated systems of training (away from schools), such as middle level colleges, and that the formal education system (schools, for instance) contributed to some aspects of the training. In short, the formal education system (no specified level) laid the foundation for training, so that other players could build on it. Granted, the foundational aspects that had been incorporated in the system required identification and strengthening. But four decades later, such foundational aspects that rendered education relevant with regards to development of a skilled human resource were still in supposition. Just what role did formal education play in this regard? Could it suffice in the absence of training? What is the role of our institutions of training? How much blame should schools bear as far as deficiency in skills and competencies is concerned? How true is the commonplace claim that education has become useless? Considering that education is being taken as means to certain outcomes, just what should such an outcomes-based education look like?

Following a sustained thread in the educational reforms that had attended this country (Korir, 2016), the current study deduced that the recommended education systems were reflective of an outcomes-based education model – whether by design or default. The ultimate question therefore was whether the actual implementation of the systems reflected the principles that underpinned an OBE. According to Sainy (2018), an OBE curriculum ought to be aligned with preset learning outcomes, methodology, pedagogical interventions and evaluation parameters. Further, it must promote student-centric learning.

Generally, under OBE, clear outcomes around which a country's education system revolves on need to be identified and made a national concern. This done, an enabling

environment that inspires students to achieve the predetermined learning outcomes should be established. Subsequently, performance-based authentic assessment, reflective of criterion-referenced evaluation, comes in to measure achievement. Has this been the case with Kenya? To what extent have education blueprints been accompanied by requisite action? This study came in to answer these questions, and, consequently, proposed a way forward.

2.5 Chapter Summary and Study Gaps

This research adopted a thematic structure in its review of related literature, based on the four objectives of the study: Kenya's conception of education; Kenya's educational philosophy; an evaluation of the education in Kenya as regards its potential to develop skilled human resource; and the suggestion of criteria for an education that is capable of developing a skilled human resource.

Instructively, various authors have been reviewed, ostensibly those who dealt with the theory and practice of education in Kenya. These included Munyoki, Korir, Ndichu, Monyenye, Mwaka, Njoroge and Bennaars, Ambaa, and Cunningham. Common among them was the conviction that Kenya's education needed a firm and definite philosophy from which all educational theories and practices would flow.

In the course of the review, three major gaps were identified and, therefore, formed the basis for this research. First, the conception of education in Kenya was not coming out clearly in the researches explored, a situation that jeopardized objective formulation of educational experiences and uniform implementation of the same towards achievement of expected goals of education.

Second, the educational philosophy underpinning Kenya's educational practices was not explicit, making it difficult for scrutiny and detection of any flaws in the education system. The study therefore sought to unearth the presupposed educational philosophy, ostensibly from policy and prevalent practice, and appraise it in terms of consistency, relevance and productivity.

Thirdly, none of the reviewed studies attempted to establish the relationship between education's goal of developing a skilled workforce and the means employed to achieve the latter. This study came in to establish the consistency or otherwise between Kenya's educational theory and practice, and the expected learning outcomes. This was aimed at preparing to propose a remedy presupposed in the fourth objective, a prescription that would have criteria necessary for an effective education: a shared understanding of the concept of education; a definite, shared philosophy of education; and workable educational experiences.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Whereas this was majorly a philosophical research, chiefly employing Philosophical Analysis, it triangulated other methods as the need arose, developing the whole work as an emergent piece. Whereas secondary data could have provided what the study required for analysis and reflection, given the philosophical nature of the study, the use of interviews was brought in with a phenomenological angle, to supplement data concerning the conception of education in Kenya. Ultimately, the prescriptive method came in since the research aimed at proposing a viable approach for implementation of an education instrumental in the development of a skilled human resource. This chapter featured the methods, rationale for their use and their application to the study.

3.1 Rationale for Philosophical Method

A researcher's choice of one method over the other depends on the type of questions asked and the desired outcomes. Philosophical questions are best answered through philosophical methods. Accordingly, the questions asked in this study could best be answered, initially, by conceptual and phenomenological analyses where meanings and implications of concepts, texts and experiences would be logically inferred and appraised against some standard.

Ruitenberg (2010) writes:

Philosophy is an academic discipline specialized in analyzing and understanding the wider processes of the constructing of theories, questioning their hidden background premises, and revealing and examining the values affecting academic – as well as other – human practices. (p. 10)

As such, philosophy focuses on a wider context of a phenomenon so that it is not unnecessarily restricted like other narrow researches which are evaluated on the basis of their measurable exactness and effectiveness – making the researcher lose the bigger picture of the phenomenon under study. In this sense, philosophical inquiry is presented as a comprehensive approach which does not take any issue, however small, for granted. A deep understanding of concepts is the beginning of such an endeavour. Eventually, the researcher is able to gain access to new understanding and thereby form their own perspective and insight on the issue at hand.

There have been criticisms that philosophy cannot provide true answers to real issues because it is highly theoretical. Writing about Theory and Practice, Carson (2005) holds that the dichotomy attributed to the two terms – theory and practice – is false. For him, a theory cannot exist apart from practice since a good theory must refer to practice. He contends that philosophers, just like scientists, are capable of observing concrete phenomena and abstracting from them principles that guide such experiences. Carson notes that whereas principles (read theory) guide experience and practice, such principles were *first* derived from experience and practice. This study holds that thinking over experience and practice is a function of philosophy, for such logical thinking eventually yields new knowledge.

This study endeavoured to analyze concepts, individual statements, policies and documented practices with an aim of abstracting meanings and principles underlying such realities by use of second order questions. This enabled insights into the relationship between the policies proposed, their purported philosophical bases, and their real world outcomes. Consequently, evaluation would become possible.

3.2 Conceptual Analysis

Conceptual Analysis (CA) is a philosophical method that dates back into time. It can be traced back to the Greeks who have an account of the term ‘analysis’. Etymologically, ‘analysis’ is a derivative of the Greek term ‘analysis’. Here, ‘ana’ is a prefix denoting ‘up’, while ‘lisis’ refers to ‘loosing’, ‘release’ or ‘separation’. Read together, the term referred to ‘loosening up’ or ‘dissolution’ (Beaney, 2010). Greeks used the term in geometry and philosophy in a manner that was suggestive of solving or dissolving a problem. This implies that analysis was never done in vain (Peters, 1966).

3.2.1 Historical Survey of Conceptual Analysis

Instructively, analysis was applied perfectly – after an action was complete and its effects evident – so that the cause behind such an action could be unraveled. In this sense, it implied a search for a solution backwards (*anapalyn lysin*), a practice referred to as regression. Another instance would involve defining a concept by breaking it into parts to lay bare inconsistencies. This was known as decomposition. Whereas Plato understood analysis as the search for definitions, Aristotle conceived it in the regression sense. The results from such an analysis would be weaved together as consequents (*epomena*) so as to form a synthesis. The synthesis would serve as a report or explanation of the issue under probe (Beaney, 2018).

In Medieval and Renaissance times, clearer forms of analysis were formulated. Distinctly, they factored in an element of interpretation. Later, the modern period would see analysis being treated as a method of discovery. One would go about it by working from that which was ordinarily known and trying to establish the reasons behind its existence; a kind of reconstruction, so to speak. Synthesis then came to be regarded as a method of proof; a detailed and orderly explanation of whatever had been discovered. Generally, analysis became a method of discovery of the truth behind any puzzle, while synthesis was a process of explaining the truth to other people, once discovered. Presently, the analysis in question may be compared to data collection in a research; synthesis may be equated to a discussion and interpretation of findings from the research.

In the contemporary period, analysis developed into analytic philosophy. Bertrand Russell and Gotlib Frege viewed analysis beyond regression and decomposition (Stroll, 2000; Kenny, 2000; Russel, 1903). For them, analysis was to be preceded by interpretation of the concept or situation under probe. This would make it possible to relate the issue at hand to some theory or conceptual framework for ease of understanding. Further, it would allow for the translation of grammatical forms of statements to logical ones so as to facilitate a notation of quantification. For instance, a worded mathematical problem would be expressed in algebraic form for ease of resolution. Today, the said process may be compared to transforming narrative responses in a research into statistics for ease of computation and analysis. Whereas analysis was initially employed in a manner that looked unproductive, further development has enabled it to be used to address particular problems in society.

In the early 20th Century, there arose a group of thinkers christened the Vienna Circle, an interdisciplinary movement that aimed at transforming philosophy. These philosophers (philosophically inclined scientists and scientifically trained philosophers) would frequently meet in Vienna, Austria, to discuss various issues under philosophy (Stroll, 2000). Of note was a more active, inner circle led by Moritz Schlick, a physics professor. The group, which included Rudolf Carnap, Herbert Feigl, Philipp Frank, Hans Hahn, Kurt Gödel, Viktor Kraft, Otto Neurath, Karl Menger and Freidrich Waismann would come to be known as the Schlick Circle (Staddler, 1998). The major business of this caucus was dissemination of the then newly created philosophy of logical positivism (Glock, 1997), wherein they aimed at making philosophy scientific by means of modern logic based on scientific and everyday experience (Staddler, *ibid*). Other discussion groups would equally form under the leadership of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Karl Popper, Heinrich Gomperz and Richard von Mises.

The Vienna Circle held discussions on logic and the philosophy of mind, among other scientific and philosophical topics. Under analytic philosophy, the caucus focused on philosophy of language, philosophical methodology and metaphilosophy. Combined, their views on these three areas culminated into logical positivism – the verification of theory of meaning (Ayer, 1952). According to them, the goal of philosophical analysis was to clarify the language of science, for instance elucidating the relationship between observation and theory, or scientific concepts in their various abstractions (Beaney, 2018). Anything that could not be linked to empirical justification was dismissed by the Vienna Circle, an illustration of their anti-metaphysical standpoint. The Circle

disintegrated in 1936 following racial and political prosecution of its members, which climaxed in the murder of Moritz Schlick.

Analysis, as intimated to earlier, involves breaking a concept into particularities so as to see the relationship between the particularities, and also relate the concept to others of its kind. Peters and Hirst (1970) write that analysis of concepts is best suited for issues of content in education. They held that most problems in education arise from misunderstanding of concepts and poor communication. Therefore the analysis helps in laying bare the principles that underlie such a concept, much more, delineates other concepts connected to it.

Irving (2015) is of the view that educational problems are directly related to policies and practices. For him, the latter arise from a people's understanding of the concept of education. Any misunderstanding therefore foments a problem. A case in point was where Kenyans disagreed over the difference between an 'examination' and an 'assessment' as employed in the new competency based curriculum (Onyango, 2019). Whereas both test whether learning has occurred, the former is more interested in placement while the latter is for feedback that strengthens the teaching and learning process.

Conceptual analysis has previously been used in various studies in the African context, in a regression-synthesis fashion. Here, researchers worked back in an interpretive manner to abstract the ontological commitments of education in Africa. Of note are Wamocha (1997), and Bennaars (1986; 1998). Wamocha, in his study entitled *An philosophical examination of views on education for Africa* (1997), critically examined the views of

four scholars concerning education for Africa. He – through interpretive analysis that characterizes modern analytics – extracted the underlying philosophical assumptions of Julius K. Nyerere, G.A. Bennaars, E. W. Blyden and J. P. Ocitti, and synthesized them into an ideal view of education for Africa. Accordingly, he established that the views, though relatively variable, conceived education for Africa largely in economic terms. For Wamocha, this was unfortunate since education proper was supposed to focus on the well-being and good of the human person (Ndichu, 2013). This position responds to a previous speculation that the government may have been keener on exploitation of human capital rather than the development of the same.

Bennaars, in his book *Philosophy and Education in Africa* co-authored with R. J. Njoroge (1988), stresses the need for a comprehensive analysis of education for Africa, where such analysis should go beyond mere focus on practice. He observes that educational ideas are not easy to trace and describe, reason why most authors on African education tended to restrict themselves on education practice ‘Since educational practices tend to be more visible, more concrete...’ (Noroqe & Bennars, 1998: 63).

Benaar’s venture was an attempt to abstract Africa’s educational thought. In his other book, *Schools in need of education: Towards an African pedagogy*, Bennaars (1998), through analytical essays, concludes that African schools have lost sight of their original function of educating the young for a better future, and embarked on mechanical activities which typifies the schooling process as a selection device. Consequently, many students are pushed out of school as failures, thereby missing out on education – the main

aim of attending school. Bennaars's analysis makes it possible to detect the deceit that is disguised as education. For Bennaars and Njoroge, modern philosophers conduct analysis by putting things together with an aim of synthesis (1986). Such consolidation enables philosophers to see phenomena in totality, interrelated and as a system.

Generally, concept analysis involves the process of unfolding, exploring and understanding concepts, with the intention of providing meaning, developing, delineating, comparing, classifying, correcting, refining and validating concepts as well as developing measuring instruments (Botes, 2002).

3.2.2 Application of Conceptual Analysis in this Study

This study employed CA to help answer the first two questions of the research; an inquiry into the conception of education, and its underlying philosophy. The study analysed the educational policies prevalent, and from them, reconstructed the emergent conception of education as demonstrated by various actors. It was more of discovery where the researcher worked from the known ideality (the educational policies) to the unknown (the conception of education and the educational philosophy so espoused), in a bid to establish whether such was consistent with theories related to achievement of goals. The study, through CA, therefore sought to establish the totality of the concept of education in Kenya, with regard to the educational philosophy that underpinned it, so that it is clarified and delineated. This would aid in evaluation of any other practice going in the name of education, for the former would serve as a standard tool for comparison and appraisal, hence providing the country with a definite direction in matters education theory, and, by presupposition, practice.

3.2.3 Document Analysis

Overall, this analysis was carried out on select documents. Whereas document analysis is not a philosophical method, this study employed it as a service method for purposes of providing data that would be analysed. Analysis cannot be done in a vacuum; on the contrary, particular materials have to be paraded so that they are reflected upon. The method was therefore adopted for the purpose of identifying materials for analysis. In the case of this study, the concepts under investigation, for instance the conception of education, philosophy of education and educational philosophies, were captured – explicitly or implicitly – in certain documents that were compiled for analysis.

Document analysis is a method employed to extract and organize documents relevant to a particular investigation (Malenya, 2014). Such existent documents are selected so that particular information therein is extracted and subjected to an inquiry. Whereas the method is predominantly employed in the province of Social Sciences, as Malenya notes, it is equally available for any other researcher. For instance, Malenya employed it to review MOEST documents on student violence in a study that sought to understand the underlying causes of the said phenomenon.

Whereas the said documents were in text form, there also existed information captured in audio-visuals. This study was alive to the existence of video files uploaded on digital platforms such as YouTube, which carried information that related to the topic at hand. Whereas social media as a source of information remains relatively unreliable, this study, nevertheless, cautiously employed YouTube videos that the researcher believed, from prior knowledge, were representative of the reality in Kenya. Creswell (2013) equally

acknowledges that such data sources are not popular but remain admissible in accordance with changing times. This study treated the video files as secondary data in the same fashion as textual documents.

Document analysis is adopted for various reasons. First, the documents provide ready information that has been obtained following rigorous research. At times it is not necessary to start from scratch when inquiring about something that has been done before, more so when much change has not taken place. For instance, this study sought to establish the Kenyan conception of education and the way it is practised. Instructively, many related inquiries have gone into this yet the findings have never been corroborated to synthesize the implications of the latter. The current study therefore extracted relevant information from the reports, synthesized and reflected on them. Second, most of the documents from the government are authoritative, credible and available for verification, hence the researcher leveraged this.

In as much as document analysis is credited, it has its shortcomings. First, some of the information may be outdated. This required that the researcher be cautious so as to detect such and seek alternatives. But again, the study had adopted a historical research design, implying that the documents were past records which needed reflection based on the historical times they captured. Second, some of the information may not be entirely true, especially when extracted from sources such as newspapers. This hurdle was overcome by counterchecking the factuality of the information. Finally, some individuals view the method as overly descriptive; only focusing on the readily available information. The current study remedied this by triangulating sources of data. Interviews and audio-visuals were brought on board to augment analysed documents.

This study gathered and extracted information from the following documents:

I. Textual documents

The study purposefully sampled education reports from commissions and taskforces, specifically Sessional Paper No. 10 on African Socialism and its Application to Kenya (RoK, 1965); Kenya Education Commission (Ominde Report) of 1964; The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Gachathi Report, 1976); The Mackay Report of 1981; Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research; Kenya Vision 2030 (RoK, 2008); The Report of the Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010' (RoK, 2012); The New Basic Education Curriculum Framework; and, Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on a Policy Framework for Reforming Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Kenya. The extracted information was analysed for insights on the conception of education in Kenya.

II. Audio-visuals

YouTube videos from various organizations and media houses, featuring the state of education in Kenya, specifically the concept of education, the practice of education, as well as the infrastructure. The researcher obtained them through scoping, wherein he typed the relevant phrases in the YouTube search engine, for instance 'Kenyan schools readiness', 'CBC readiness in Kenya', etc. The videos documented were those that captured the following: levels of teaching and learning preparedness; roles/goals/expected outcomes of education in Kenya;

curricula reforms; and statements from education policy makers. The study considered video files that featured a specific aspect of education, rendered in English and lasting not more than ten minutes. Their specificity and duration allowed easy analysis (time factor), while the language afforded wide access for verification. The researcher transcribed the messages in the videos, synthesized them for reflection, and acknowledged their links in the reference section as provided for by the prevailing 7th edition American Psychological Association guidelines (<https://apastyle.apa.org/>).

The analysis sought to establish Kenya's understanding of education as well as the underlying philosophies as implied in the documents, texts and videos, specifically in terms of their means-ends relationship. Such would be examined against relevant established educational theories and models to determine their consistency and by extension their probability to meet the aspired goal. The study held that a sound education must be grounded in a sound educational philosophy and theory, which presuppose particular educational beliefs, policies and practices. Ideally, education practice should emanate from clear theory. If the latter is unclear, there is high likelihood that education practice will be bungled. Therefore, a society that wished to achieve its aims would be expected to display consistency along this line, where practice will demand fidelity to theory.

Whereas CA was effective in providing insights into the theory and practice of education in Kenya over the years, by way of clarifying the conception of education (epistemological principle), relating it to other concepts (logical principle) and appropriating its contextual usage (linguistic principle), this study endeavoured to

corroborate such data with lived experiences which would demonstrate how the concept was being operationalized by education practitioners (pragmatic principle). According to Gift (1997), the four principles – epistemological, logical, linguistic and pragmatic – lay the standard for evaluation of quality CA. Whereas the analysed documents provided lots of insights concerning the conception of education, there was need to triangulate the study by going to the field, interviewing the actual players in the education field (sample teachers and students), and reflecting on the information gathered from them. This pragmatic angle enhanced the reliability of the study. To this effect, Phenomenological analysis was employed so that the researcher got first-hand information through interviews and observation.

3.3 Phenomenological Analysis

Phenomenology is a research approach initiated by Edmund Husserl (1858 – 1938), and focuses on consciousness and essences of a phenomenon (Finlay, 2008). Generally, it is concerned with what participants in a study have in common as they experience a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The main interest is on lived experiences, the ‘life-world’ or *Lebenswelt* as Husserl would say. For Finlay, this life-world is characterized by an individual’s consciousness being directed at something in or about the world. The consciousness allows them to apprehend a given phenomenon or idea that exists in their world. For instance, this study focused on the individuals’ consciousness of education; how they conceived its theory and philosophy. Therefore the conceiver (subject) and that that is conceived (object) were viewed as having an organic relationship known as *intentionality* in phenomenological terms. When one is conscious of something, this something must have a meaning to them. Creswell (2013) advances that phenomenology

describes a common meaning of a phenomenon or thing as held by individuals, hence the researcher aims at describing as accurately as possible the phenomenon, barring any pre-conceived knowledge, but remaining true to the facts (Groenwald, 2004).

Various researchers have employed phenomenology to inquire into education issues. Malenya (2014), for instance, did a phenomenological study on the phenomenon of student violence in Kenyan secondary schools. Through the method, he sought to establish the fundamental cause of the phenomenon hence recommend a remedy. He relied on data from MOEST concerning student violence, media reports and in-person interviews with school administrators, students, and teachers from 8 provinces in Kenya. The interviews were to provide the researcher with individual experiences of the participants. Ultimately, he concluded that students engaged in unrest as a way of expressing the unbearable experiences which constituted dehumanization. To remedy the situation, he recommended the process of liberation of both the students (the oppressed), and teachers plus other education stakeholders (the oppressor) through a process of humanization.

Another phenomenological study was done by Groenewald (2003) where he sought to inquire into the true nature of cooperative learning (an aspect of teaching and learning practice), by investigating the contribution that cooperative learning could make in the growing of talent among South African people. Groenewald held that phenomenology was the method that would suit his explorative research design by dint of its tendency to restrict personal biases for both the researcher and research participants. Through purposive sampling and snowballing, he interviewed academics and enterprise representatives concerning their feelings, beliefs, experiences and convictions on the

topic. Participants were asked to set aside their encounter with cooperative learning programme and share their reflection concerning its value. Ultimately, the study established that experiential learning did not add value because of its deficiencies and constraints associated with its management.

Overall, phenomenology thrives on the basis of the common themes that derive from the interviews conducted (Groenewald, *ibid*). Regardless, it is equally important to consider individual variations (Hycner, 1999), since these could point out to special cases that could be lost in the majority experiences.

3.3.1 Historical Survey of Phenomenological Analysis

Phenomenology is said to have a long history (Malenya, 2014). However, it was brought to the fore by Edmund Husserl's works. Other renowned phenomenologists included Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) and Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961). Husserl articulated phenomenology in reference to a method that deals with essences. He designed transcendental phenomenology whose object is the conscious experience of individuals on any given phenomenon. Heidegger emphasized hermeneutic phenomenology which dealt with the underlying nature of subjective experiences. For Sartre and Merleau-Ponty (Sadala and de Adorno, 2001) concrete lived experiences by humans were more important, thus their existential phenomenology. They believed that there was no inner man apart from the covertly experienced one (Finlay, 2008). Phenomenological research would be led by Giorgio and the Duquesne Circle in the 1970's, in their quest to develop a descriptive empirical phenomenology that followed Husserl's idea of essences of phenomena as experienced through consciousness.

When conducting a phenomenological study, the researcher delves into the world of participants and attempts to understand how they experience their world (Moustakas, 1994). According to Creswell (ibid), this can be done either through interview (the most popular way) or appealing to other data sources such as observation and documents. The researcher proceeds by bracketing their prior knowledge and assumptions concerning the phenomenon under study so that the former do not influence their thinking concerning the data they gather. This bracketing, or *epoche* as Husserl calls it, allows the researcher to put aside what they know as the reality of a phenomenon, and proceed to focus on how their participants experience the phenomenon (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). The aim of the exercise is to reduce individual experience with a phenomenon to a certain common description which captures its main gist or essence.

3.3.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of Phenomenological Analysis

Phenomenology finds strength in the fact that the researcher draws information from individuals who have first-hand experience. This implies that the method is guarded against hearsay. Further, the researcher allows the information to emerge by itself so that he or she does not impose his or her own views or epistemological beliefs. More importantly, the informant may provide more than what the investigator targeted, a situation that may enrich the study. For instance, the extra information may beg for more questions which could end up enlightening the researcher more, or prompting him or her to modify the line of questioning so that the required information is obtained.

Phenomenology, nevertheless, is not without challenges. A problem arises when it comes to helping participants express their ‘world-life’ in an articulate way so that one

understands them. As a matter of fact, an individual may experience a certain phenomenon but not be in a position to express it coherently. Regardless, the researcher can go around this by posing questions skillfully and as clearly as possible so as to get meaningful information. This is in regard to the subjective nature of most of human experiences, such that two or more people may go through a similar experience but interpret it differently. In this study, therefore, the researcher had to pose questions skillfully, and in an iterative manner, with a focus on the topic and frequency of responses. Those responses that were common among the interviewees were taken as *de facto* truth, thereby minimizing the subjectivity of individual experiences.

3.3.3 Application of Phenomenological Analysis to this Study

Whereas phenomenology has various variants, this study restricted itself to descriptive empirical phenomenology. According to Finlay (2008), this variant proceeds by comparing descriptions offered by participants on a certain experience and identifying essential or general structures that underlie the phenomenon. For instance, this study sought to establish the common understanding of education as conceived by various informants, and proceeded to carry out an experiential analysis on such understanding in terms of its implication to practice (means-ends relationship). Instructively, the interviews sought to establish the selected teachers' knowledge on their educational philosophies, specifically to gauge whether their practice of education was informed and directed by some educational theory for it to achieve its goals. Students were equally probed, with an intention of establishing their opinions and feelings concerning their learning experiences and the latter's relationship with their prospective careers. These interviews were not the typical phenomenology that delves deep into the world of

participants, but, rather, only served to collect the teachers' and students' views on what education meant for them. The method enabled experiential analysis – explicating the actual lived experiences from the select individuals by identifying common themes as well as variations.

The researcher therefore engaged the informants in dialogue on particular concepts as captured in interview schedules, recorded them, transcribed the data and picked essential similarities to enable synthesis of the philosophy of the groups on the topic at hand. Whereas the researcher was cautious not to impose his epistemological views and assumptions on the interviewees, he remained alert to any inconsistencies which, accordingly, necessitated further questioning for clarification. Such probing, according to Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru (2013), helps the interviewees to 'give birth' to the views and philosophies they hold. The study observed great convergence on the responses, and therefore treated the few variations as insignificant.

Interviews

The study employed focused interviews, which are based on a guide that lists questions or topics that need to be examined (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The study employed the latter since it is recommended when one is seeking a complete and detailed understanding of a given topic. Open questions, typical of focused interviews, are advantageous since a lot of information is gathered. On the negative side, they may consume a lot of time if there are many questions. Further, analysis of data may be problematic if the researcher is not keen on the specific information that they want. This study did not pose many questions since the researcher was very specific on the information required, and, further,

that the interview was not the main source of data, only being considered for supplementary purposes. The researcher wanted to seek confirmation as to whether the teachers and students had a definite conception of the education that they were directly involved in. But before conducting the actual interviews, the researcher carried out a pilot study on some first year students as well as some faculty members (those with a background in education) at his station of work, with preliminary findings indicating a position that education was conceived subjectively. The exercise, apart from confirming the clarity and validity of questions, affirmed the need for going to the field to collect the information sought after.

Application of Interviews

During literature review, some researches alluded that Kenya's philosophy of education was unknown to both teachers and students. This research, consequently, thought it wise to corroborate this information so as to enrich its analysis. Therefore, focused interviews were conducted and targeted teachers and students in ten randomly selected secondary schools across Busia County. Under a phenomenological study, 2 to 10 participants are regarded as sufficient for saturation of responses, given the long interviews recommended (Boyd, 2001; Creswell, 1998). In this study, teachers and students were purposively sampled because they were directly engaged in the teaching and learning activities, as much as their knowledge of the country's philosophy of education had been brought to question. Further, the random selection of both the county (Busia County) and schools was premised on the assumption that no teacher was superior to the other, ostensibly in terms of minimum qualifications (the reason why the Teachers Service Commission deploys teachers indiscriminately), hence any trained teacher could properly respond to

the basic education issues captured by the interviews. Similarly, questions posed to students were basic hence could be answered relatively well in spite of the kind of school they attended.

Instructively, learning outcomes are a product of the activities in the formal school setup. Further, this study had an assumption that the teaching and learning experiences were informed by the participants' understanding of the concept of education and its desired outcomes. The study had planned to interview both teachers and students orally, with students being interviewed in groups. This was so since interviewing individual students – especially on a concept such as education – would heighten their anxiety, making them less cooperative. Creswell (2013) holds that focus group interviews are suitable when the researcher believes that the group advantage will make them provide more information. For students, the interview targeted forms two, three and four students. This was so owing to the researcher's assumption that form one students were relatively fresh in secondary school, and as such, they may not have had adequate knowledge and experience to answer some of the questions posed – for instance whether their various learning areas prepared them well for their prospective careers.

However, all the targeted classes were not interviewed since the Coronavirus pandemic led the government to keep all other classes home except Form Four students, owing to the requirement of social distancing. Nevertheless, the research was not disadvantaged since it had targeted upper classes of secondary school. Further, group oral interviews for students were not possible for the same reason of social distancing. The question items were therefore printed and distributed to individual learners whereupon they wrote their responses individually, with Covid-19 prevention protocols such as wearing of masks and

sanitization being observed. Teachers were however interviewed as planned, through informal chats, though the social distancing requirement made some of them reluctant to converse with strangers. A total of 20 teachers and 120 students were interviewed. Surprisingly, the saturation of responses from informants came earlier than expected, a situation that rendered any further probing unnecessary. Responses for both cases were slightly varied, confirming the credibility of the information gathered.

Upon gathering data, the researcher used his logical insight, power of creative synthesis and epistemological assumption to make sense out of the collected information. This was after the oral responses from teachers were transcribed from field notes; notes that were made through memoing, a process that involves recording what a researcher hears, sees, experiences, and even thinks in the course of data collection and reflection on the same (Miles & Huberman, 1984). For instance, a teacher's body language such as facial expression upon being asked a question, told the researcher something about what they thought about the topic. This was important since it pointed towards their sincerity or the credibility of their responses, an aspect that contributes to reliability. Further, the tone of their voices and aspects such as pauses and gestures portrayed their feelings and convictions concerning the research question. The researcher based on these to determine whether to go for another participant or treat some responses as reliable, and therefore retain them. For instance, there was one who, from the word go, dismissed the interview as witch-hunt. His responses would then sound perfunctorily cagey, a situation that made the researcher replace him with another participant. This implies that the researcher, under phenomenology, ought to be extremely sensitive and keen through use of the five senses (Angrosino, 2007), so that he or she detects deceptive behaviour. Being keen on

details also helps the researcher gain extra information, thereby answering those questions that may not have been borne in mind at the beginning of the study. Indeed, it can lead the researcher into modifying the questioning so that more meaningful data is collected when it comes to interviewing.

The researcher, seized of the data, proceeded in five steps as recommended by Goenewald (2004). First, he set aside his personal convictions and beliefs concerning the topic so that they did not influence the explication process. This is known as bracketing (Moustakas, 1994). Second, he delineated units of meaning, by isolating participants' statements which addressed the phenomenon under study (Kenya's educational philosophy). For instance, the interview question items for teachers focused on their understanding of Kenya's philosophy of education, and consequent educational philosophies which they espoused, while those for students focused on their understanding of education, and their thoughts concerning its relevance to their prospective careers – at least from what and how they were taught. Third, these abstracted units of meaning were clustered into various themes (a process known as 'bucketing'), ostensibly in line with the four objectives of the study: Kenya's conception of education; Kenya's educational philosophy; Kenya's education practice *vis à vis* development of a skilled human resource; and education for development of a skilled human resource. Fourth, the interviews were summarized under the said objectives to provide a holistic context. The common feelings, beliefs, and convictions of each participant were generally captured under the themes, and presented for reflection and

synthesis. This reflection and synthesis marked the fifth and final step as presented in the subsequent chapters.

3.4 The Prescriptive Approach

The Prescriptive approach is a philosophical method employed when researchers engage in an inquiry that aims at assessing the worthwhileness of certain processes, and, consequently, passing judgment as concerns their suitability in relation to certain ends. Ndichu (2013) and Monanda (2021) attribute the method to Aldestein (1971), who employed it to examine the meanings of concepts like good and bad, assessment of conduct, and appraisal of art. The method predicates the notion of standards or criteria necessary for attainment of certain ends. Monanda employed the method to prescribe how moral goals of education should be implemented in Kenya, while Ndichu used it to abstract ingredients for a national philosophy.

This research employed the prescriptive method to derive criteria necessary for an education that would facilitate the development of a skilled human resource in Kenya. The same method was employed in recommending the steps that should be taken in furtherance of the same goal.

3.5 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

The researcher was cleared by the Kenyatta University School of Post-Graduate Studies, and further got a letter from the Department of Educational Foundations which allowed him to seek a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Permission from the Busia County Director of education was also sought and granted. Further, he sought consent from the Principals of the schools

where teachers and students were sampled. Interviewees were assured of confidentiality, and coded names of schools used.

3.6 Chapter Summary of Methods and their Overall Application

As stated before, the study triangulated various methods: the Conceptual and Phenomenological Analyses as well as the Prescriptive method. Document analysis, though not a philosophical method, was employed to service the first method whereupon provided secondary data in form of documents which were analyzed. Subsequently, interviews were employed in a diminutive version of phenomenology to reach out to select informants with an intention of gathering their lived experiences. The latter was then subjected to experiential analysis so that the result could be corroborated with the one from the conceptual meaning (the one that emerged from conceptual analysis of documents).

To begin with, the first two objectives – the Kenyan conception of education and educational philosophy – were investigated by both methods – Conceptual Analysis and Phenomenological analysis. A Conceptual analysis of various texts such as education policy documents, education reports from commissions and task forces, and video files documenting education practice/implementation was conducted following extraction and coding of the necessary information. Similarly, a Phenomenological/experiential analysis was done on the information collected during interviews, as well as observation and subsequent coding. This was followed by a logical synthesis that summarized the emergent Kenyan conception of education, which, to the assumption of this study,

informed practice. Generally, it was an emergent, interpretive research based on a constructionist epistemology where meaning was constructed and generated from various sources that constructed different meanings over the same phenomenon.

Next was the third objective which sought to establish the potential of Kenya's education as regards meeting the goal of developing a skilled human resource. Once a common understanding of the concept of education had been established, the researcher proceeded by reflecting on such conception and the reported educational experiences so as to establish consistency or otherwise. This formed part of evaluation, since any inconsistency would point to a likelihood uncertain potential. A consistent conception of education was tested against established educational models, in this case the OBE Model. It is instructive that the topic of the study focused on suitability of the education offered in Kenya *vis à vis* development of a skilled human resource; this implied an evaluation.

Finally, the fourth objective – establishment of a suitable education for a skilled human resource – prescribed an appropriate way forward, following philosophical reflection on the observations made with respect to the first three objectives. The researcher did a creative synthesis suggestive of an instrumental education in the Kenyan context, and, by extension, clarified the role of such education. Consequently, he prescriptively derived criteria which he believed, if followed, would guide in formulation of an education that could be instrumental in developing a skilled human resource.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCEPTION OF EDUCATION IN THE KENYAN CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sought to establish the Kenyan conception of education both in theory and practice. It therefore discussed the conception of education and the educational philosophy that underpinned the Kenyan system of education. This was in line with the first two objectives of the study. The concept of education was analysed ostensibly from government policy documents and reports on education, with supplementary analysis being done on education practitioners' perspectives. The latter informed the sampling of students and teachers. The study narrowed down to basic education in general, and secondary school education in particular, aiming to establish its suitability in developing skilled human resources. Secondary school education was targeted because the students at this level were relatively mature and schooled, hence, could link their education to particular careers or utility. Further, the objectives of secondary school education revolved around development of skilled human resource: acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for self and national development; identification and nurturing of talent; and establishment of a foundation for technological and industrial development. There was a need, therefore, to establish consistency or otherwise in the conceptions held by the said parties. This would help establish the philosophy of education held, hence, lay ground for evaluation – whether such philosophy presupposed an education suitable for achieving the national goals of education, particularly that of developing skilled human resources. Ideally, the type of society a country wishes to build dictates its

national philosophy of education (Ikuli & Ojimba, 2018), since education has a role to play. In turn, the philosophy, which captures the purpose of education, predicates certain expected learning outcomes. It is from these outcomes that a country identifies a suitable educational philosophy – one that guides teaching and learning, holding other requirements constant. A country’s philosophy of education therefore charts the purpose of such an education, its content and the means that will be adopted in imparting it – hence success. In essence, it is imperative that the attendant education policies articulate the kind of education envisaged, the recipients of such education, the purpose and the net beneficiaries.

4.2 Conceptions of Education in Kenya since Independence

Several policy documents and reports on education in Kenya since independence were analysed in an attempt to extract their underlying philosophical principles. Consistency of ideas, practicality of the presupposed actions, and provision for clear agency was critical. Therefore, the following seminal documents were purposively selected and subjected to conceptual analysis: The Kenya Education Commission Report, 1964; The Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya; The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Gachathi Report of 1976); The Mackay Report of 1981; Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research; Kenya Vision 2030; The Report of the Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010; The Basic Education Curriculum Framework; and Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on a Policy

Framework for Reforming Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Kenya. The historical approach was adopted since it afforded the researcher an insight into the basis for educational policies hitherto, and the likely reasons for the failed actuality of such post-independent promises.

4.2.1 The Kenya Education Commission Report, 1964

The first ever policy document on education after independence was the Kenya Education Commission Report (RoK, 1964). The commission was appointed in 1964 by the newly independent government and tasked with the duty of surveying existing educational resources and advising on formulation and implementation of national policies for education.

Throughout the document, education is mentioned with respect to its objectives. It is termed as a function of the nation of Kenya (RoK, 1964, p. 24), and had a duty to foster nationhood and national unity; develop right attitudes and relations; and serve the needs of the Kenyan people. But most importantly, the document was emphatic that:

Education must be regarded, and used, as an instrument for the conscious change of attitudes and relationships, preparing children for those changes of outlook required by modern methods of productive organisation. (RoK, 1964, pg. 29)

Overall, it was meant to prepare individuals for their social obligations and responsibility, and ensure that they became productive and adaptable to change. In summary, education was expected to facilitate achievement of six objectives: foster nationhood and promote national unity; serve Kenyans and their needs indiscriminately; respect religious

convictions of all people; respect cultural traditions of all peoples of Kenya; reduce unnecessary competition in education and value everyone's role; and transform people's attitudes and relationships so that children acquire outlooks required for modern productive organisation as well as respect for humanity. It was viewed as a tool, an instrument, or a function that could help realize such aspirations.

Looking through the goals, it comes through that this education aimed at producing an all-round citizen, pious, productive and sociable, hence useful to themselves and the country. Ideally, the country's development – ostensibly the progressive attainment of its national goals – would largely depend on how the education process would be conducted. Skilled human resource development was therefore the most critical element, and education was to provide the means. Of note, the purpose of education was foregrounded more than its actual practice.

Further scrutiny of the Ominde Commission report reveals an interesting conception of education, where three kinds of education are contemplated: European education, Asian Education and African education. Whereas the three are said to have characterized the colonial system, it cannot be lost on anyone that they ascribed a certain meaning to education. Implicitly, each race had an education unique to itself (Mse, 2015). Here, it can be inferred that education in that context was the experiences that could enable individuals to fit in particular roles: the Europeans to become administrators; the Asians to become specialists in various trades; and the Africans to be proficient in technical and vocational tasks. Whereas education ordinarily sounds a neutral concept that envelops the general good, a new twist had been introduced which presumed some hierarchy. Mazrui

and Mazrui (1998), for instance, report that European missionaries had previously promoted vernacular languages not because they valued them but because the latter facilitated easy evangelization. Similarly, the colonial administration believed that Africans would decline to take up menial jobs meant for them once they acquired European education, hence, education became a tool of placement. It passed as those experiences that enabled one to perform the roles assigned to them in the society.

In a World Bank Report on Implementing Educational Policies in Kenya, Eshiwani (1990) writes that missionaries used education as a strategy for evangelical success, and later, a vehicle for socio-economic development and change when Kenya attained independence. Whereas the colonial regime had used it as a tool to entrench racism, the successive government appealed to the same tool for social justice. Further, whereas missionaries are said to have considered education as a strategy for evangelization, thereby equating it to literacy, the post-independent Kenyan government viewed it as an instrument that could be used to correct past errors and empower citizens for economic and social development.

Instructively, the government could coordinate school activities and learning content in a manner it deemed fit for facilitating achievement of specified national agenda – eventually equating education to schooling. In fact, the last statement in the document had stated that the main outcome of education – across all levels – was adaptability to change. This reiterates the foregoing quotation, and illustrates the broad role which education had been assigned. Implicitly, education was conceived as *a schooling process that would socialize individuals into a new mindset inclined towards social justice, economic development and national heritage*. Here, three major philosophical principles

underpinned the envisioned education. First was utilitarianism, wherein education is viewed in terms of its practical use. The country was in dire need of human resource following the departure of the colonial administration, hence, education would greatly help to produce them. Second was the normative principle, wherein values – moral, cultural and religious – would be inculcated among individuals. However, not much was said about the matter of agency. Third was the expressive principle that would call for inculcation of social values such as nationhood, national cohesion and patriotism. The principle of social mutual responsibility (minding one another for collective progress) was implied, which would be expressly provided for in another document, Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 (RoK, 1965).

4.2.2 The Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya

This Paper (RoK, 1965) built on the foregoing Ominde Report (RoK, 1964) both in aspiration and limitation. In it, education was viewed in terms of schooling, as evidenced by its suggestion to increased enrollment. As a matter of fact, Eshiwani (1990) reports that the first Development Plan for Kenya, spanning 1964 - 1970, lay emphasis on economic development and Kenyanization and expansion of education. This ‘expansion of education’ would be manifest in expansion of schools, laying credence to the conclusion that education – at least at the time – was not only tantamount to schooling, but tied to an economic function. Evidently, this was a utilitarian conception of education. It was reported that Africans viewed western education as an avenue to the

new lifestyle characterized by financial rewards and social prestige (Wellings, 1980). The problem with this kind of conception of education is that it was not contemplative of the kind of educational activities required, much less, the educational philosophy, since schooling alone – regardless of what was to be learned – was enough to guarantee one a place in the economy.

In fact, the Sessional Paper corroborated the foregoing claim, by considering the education so described, and meant to develop skilled labour, as a ‘general’ one:

The shortage of skilled manpower cannot be cured by *general education* alone (emphasis by researcher). Trades must also be taught and firms must co-operate in providing in-service training and apprenticeship programmes ... p 40

In the preceding quotation, there is an attempt to draw a distinction between education and other ventures such as training. The distinction is however misleading considering its suggestion that schools do develop skilled manpower. Further, it is not clear as to what distinguishes ‘trades’ from skilled manpower. Whichever way, one gets the understanding that education, according to the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, is two-fold: general and specific; the former being provided in schools, and the latter being offered in vocational training centres and industrial plants.

Generally, this study made two observations. First, that the education so conceived in the preceding description was the formal one. According to Onono (1976), formal education is the kind of education that is institutionalized, often obtained from such places as schools, colleges and universities where trained and qualified personnel attend to learners.

Secondly, the said formal education was considered in terms of the human capital theory. The problem with this position lies in how one is supposed to go about educating, since confusion of economic theories and those of education cannot go without consequences. Education being a human process cannot be narrowed down to an instrument of economic development alone, unless one is only interested in the exploitation of human capital rather than its development. Unchallenged, this position further ignores the multifaceted conception of education. This notwithstanding, the document was not incurable since it made a case for human values, thereby making provision for the normative dimension of education.

According to Wilson and Peterson (2006), understanding of concepts in education (including the concept *education*) is a powerful filter to what one learns and how they learn. This position is corroborated by Barrow and Woods (2006) who contend that clarification of concepts assist in assessing their success. For instance, they hold that selection of learning activities must follow prior thought to the question of what ought to be or not to be done in any given venture.

Instructively, the Ominde report in the previous section anticipated an education that would not only be utilitarian, but one that would build ‘the right relations with, and behaviour to, other people.’ (RoK 1964, p. 27) Further, such education was to provide for continued re-education (lifelong learning?), adaptability to change and movement towards social equality. In this light, one would have expected the document at hand to be a better version of the former, going beyond a purely utilitarian education. But a focus

on utility alone, which mostly translates to psychomotor abilities, is a woefully deficient conception of education owing to the following reasons.

First, education is unthinkable without character. One may gain knowledge and skills for work, for instance, but fail to develop positive dispositions such as diligence, honesty, obedience, tolerance and collaboration – all which, individually and collectively, contribute to efficiency and productivity. A dishonest accountant, for instance, is as harmful as a careless medic – for in the final analysis, their knowledge and skills would be antithetical to the good of the society.

Second, skills and knowledge for particular economic ventures alone are not sufficient, given the protean nature of most careers. Individuals, instead, ought to be highly adaptable and creative. Adaptability and creativity give room for dynamism so that one is in a position to withstand change and disruption. Addressing the concept of education, R. S Peters (1966) and Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) do not hesitate to describe it beyond knowledge and understanding (the cognitive dimension, which utilitarianism presupposes). Whereas none of the said scholars can be said to present an exhaustive conception of education (a toll order, this study reckons), they provide what can be taken as irreducible minimums in the matter of defining education (cognitive, procedural and normative aspects). They, for instance, converge on the normative aspect which, unfortunately, is treated as an afterthought in many education discourses. Ignoring the normative aspect, therefore, lays ground for skilled but inhuman beings. Similarly, relegation of the creative dimension of education results in individuals steeped in rigidity and lack of imagination and innovation, important skills of the 21st century (Pellegrino and Hilton, 2012).

Third, knowledge and skills are but an outcome of learning. The education process is complex, and requires discipline and resilience from both learners and education practitioners. Instructively, good character is not build overnight. Excellence in virtue, according to Aristotle, obtains from habituation; implying that both cognitive and normative aspects ought to be handled concurrently if the education process is to succeed. MacAllister (2011), in his doctoral thesis entitled '*Wisdom and the Life of Virtue: What should discipline be for in Schools?*', advances that learners whose character is well nurtured end up not only as responsible citizens, but most importantly, find the learning process easier and enjoyable. The discipline that attends them makes it easy for teachers to not only teach them, but also make their lives easier while in school. The resultant harmonious coexistence provides lessons enough to build good character that eventually becomes part of them during their work life; a truly *human* resource.

In the final analysis, the study observed that the said Sessional Paper had philosophical principles of education similar to those provided for in the Kenya Education Commission Report (RoK 1964): utilitarian, normative and expressive. Whereas this was so, it is not clear where the train missed the railway, for down the line, so much went amiss leading to uncertainty that was characterized by unfulfilled expected learning outcomes, hence elusive goals of education, specifically the development of a properly skilled human resource.

4.2.3 The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Gachathi Report, 1976)

The commission that bore the Gachathi Report (RoK, 1976) was formed and mandated with the task of evaluating the then education system (7-4-2-3) and formulating new

educational goals. It followed the dissatisfaction that surrounded the overall outcomes of the education system born from Ominde Report's recommendations. From the commission's terms of reference, education is described as: a process; with structures and content; presented in cycles; and with programmes and a training function.

Reading the report, it emerged that the Kenyan conception of education at independence partly contributed to the problems that the country would eventually face. Evidently, education was conceived as a magic wand such that anyone who attended school was assured of a livelihood:

'Practically every student who successfully completed ordinary school certificate level was invited to wage employment in the modern sector of the economy... it was evident at the time that a strong attitude had been established that formal education automatically led to high wage employment in the modernized sector of the economy... many of the problems that have subsequently confronted the country in relation to education derive from the momentum created by the high economic returns that have been expected from formal education.' p. xvii

From the foregoing quotation, the study observed that this document lay blame partly on the way the preceding one (Ominde report) conceived its education policy, thus, education had been conceived as *a process that would prepare an individual for general placement in lucrative, white collar jobs*. Implicitly, one only needed to attend school and they would be assured of clinching ready opportunities. In the report, the study observed two features of the described education that made it problematic. First, the public had regarded formal education as the best access route to individual, societal and economic development (RoK, 1976). This state of affairs would prove counterproductive since the government focused on expansion at the expense of quality, with most graduates from secondary and tertiary education institutions eventually failing to secure formal employment.

Secondly, the report notes that the objective, structure and content of the then education system were highly selective such that only a few individuals qualified for placement in the formal economy. The same report mentioned that the 'academic' education was not in line with the changing social and economic realities in the country. Here, three things emerged. One, the term 'education' was restricted not only to a formal system but an academic one. Two, that this education was seen in terms of a process that equipped individuals 'with skills and qualities required by the economy' p (ix). Three, that other aspects of education, such as the normative ones, apparently had no immediate import. Were moral values, for instance, not education enough in the same manner that the economic ones were? Did the government give a serious thought over the kind of education that it required if it were to meet its well-articulated national aspirations? Obviously it did not, reason why the so called 'general' education prevailed. Granted, such circumstances could not entertain any educational philosophy.

The foregoing argument is corroborated by another interesting observation made in the report: 'The schools as they are today do not have the capability, time or even motivation to teach the values of society' (RoK, 1976, p 3). This statement buttresses the position that education was conceived in purely economic terms, devoid of any other good. Ethical values, though advocated in principle, were not part of this education: 'The teaching of ethics should, therefore, be one of the most valuable traditions to be incorporated into education' (ibid, p 6). This statement implies that ethical values had not been incorporated into the education system.

A further contradiction is captured on page 6 of the document:

‘Traditional education is basically a life-long process because it is based on the continuous need for survival and enhancement of the quality of life for all members of the community.’ (RoK, 1976, p 6)

Here, the report is contrasting traditional education with the formal one. In doing so, however, it runs into more trouble since it implies that formal education (contrasted with the traditional one) is not only a short-term process, but a discriminatory one. Looking at the above description of traditional education, one wonders why it was not preferred and pursued in place of the seemingly deficient formal one. After all, what is the essence of education if not the assurance of survival and enhancement of the quality of life for everyone? Even after it addresses moral values, which basically define human relationships, education ought to help individuals understand and take care of their environment so that the latter supports the former’s survival. It would be interesting to establish the extent to which the said education addressed environmental issues, and equally the stage, for instance, at which children were initiated into environmental education so that they equally value and help conserve their environment. The study contended that individuals would not reap sufficient benefits if they gained all the skills and knowledge, yet lost consciousness of their environment within which they must operate. Further, piecemeal conception of education misleads the formulation of educational programmes and activities, leading to wastage of those who experience the system. Whereas the Gachathi Commission Report had vouched for industrial, commercial and agricultural subjects, these were never implemented. Probably they did not measure up to real ‘education’ as per the government’s conception. Indeed, the Ominde commission Report (RoK, 1964) had equally noted that the secondary education

curriculum was inclined towards higher education and white collar jobs. Ultimately, the affected individuals ended up jobless, hence, viewed education as useless when in actual sense they were innocent victims subjected to a poorly conceived process.

4.2.4 The Mackay Report of 1981

As stated before, education in the Kenyan context was understood more in terms of its goals than its overall philosophy. Whereas considered a panacea for unemployment and economic underdevelopment, it continually became clear that the education so provided was not as efficient as initially presented since unemployment had persisted. In light of this, the government set up a commission known as The Presidential Working Party on Second University in Kenya, led by Professor Collin Mackay. It was meant to find ways of integrating basic education with a practical orientation, alongside its main mandate – that of establishing a second public university, namely Moi University, Eldoret. This was grounded on the reality that the kind of education provided at the time was highly academic and that its products depended on the government for employment. Owing to this, there was a need to equip learners – all the way from the primary school level – with practical skills that would enable them to be self-employed after school. This objective was definitive, as it implied that education was gaining an additional meaning: *a process that made one to be self-reliant.*

Instructively, an education that leads to self-reliance was articulated by Nyerere (1967). For him, it is practical-oriented and geared towards providing real solutions to societal problems (Sanga, 2016). For Nyerere, such an education exhibits five features. One, it must be relevant to society. Two, the educated must employ their education in giving

back to society. Three, they must be integrated in the society; not remaining aloof or alienated by virtue of their education. Four, the educated must address the problems faced by their societies. Five, the education must be work-oriented, so that the educated are in a position to exploit available resources and improve life and living conditions. But most importantly, a self-reliant individual would be one capable of utilizing their education, in their peculiar circumstances, to contribute to society as much as they remain free from overreliance on others. Put differently, the education should lead one to surmount obstacles that may prevent development of the 'self', hence self-reliance (Wamocha, 1997).

Looking at the foregoing description, this study observed that the kind of education that existed in Kenya during the period captured in the Mackay Commission was lacking in the aspect of self-reliance. Instructively, there was so much dependence on formal employment, since majority individuals had been socialized to expect direct employment by the government once they completed school. But this had resulted in extreme levels of unemployment, making the individuals become liabilities to the society. Hence, the education envisaged, going forward, was one that could equip an individual with the kind of thinking that could creatively turn challenging situations into sustainable opportunities. Instead of relying on formal employment, one could innovate a gainful venture, courtesy of their basic education, thereby leading a meaningful life.

Mackay Report implicitly questioned the underlying philosophy in the 7-4-2-3 system of education, since, apparently, the system had not succeeded in its quest to produce self-

reliant individuals. In response, it recommended an education that could enable individuals to embrace technical and vocational skills, hence augment the employment opportunities within the government; an education founded on the philosophies of self-reliance, functionalism, and manpower development. Self-reliance meant that individuals would make use of their education to earn a living away from government employment; functionalism where education was to develop skills in individuals so that they serve the actual needs of their society; manpower development where individuals would be skilled enough to take up various positions within the socio-economic setup. Interestingly, the resultant 8-4-4 system of education that was later formulated to address the issue of self-reliance would equally be declared deficient (RoK, 2015). Among reasons provided for its underperformance were poor teaching and learning methodology and lack of adequate government funding. This, according to this study, points straight to the conceptualization of education – right from the country's philosophy of education. As earlier canvassed, a philosophy of education spells two major things: the purpose of education and the role of schools in achieving this purpose. Whereas the purpose may have been well-articulated, the role of schools was relegated. Schools mean many things; among them are teachers (who must be well developed), the curriculum, and milieu. In a nutshell, the education articulated on paper must be operationalized on the ground. The latter implies implementation, which, the study argued, could partly be possible if all parties – say students, teachers, parents and the government – shared a philosophy that spells the role of each one of them, with feasible plans of action. Just the way a country's laws stem from its Constitution, the study contended that the country's philosophy of education ought to be firmly anchored in the

country's Education Act, and be supported by laws which bind each party to their role, more so the government that funds the implementation.

4.2.5 Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research

This Sessional Paper originated from The National Conference on Education and Training that was held in November 2003, having been sanctioned by the MOEST to develop a new policy framework for education in Kenya (RoK, 2005). It focused on quality, access, equity, relevance and resource management among other aspects in education. In its introductory remarks, the document stated that education was fundamental to the success of the government's development strategy. Further, education was supposed to help Kenyans preserve and utilize the environment for productive gain and sustainable livelihoods. The Paper held that quality education and training contributed to economic growth and employment opportunities, and further described it thus:

‘...education is not only a welfare indicator per se, it is also a key determinant of earnings and, therefore, an important exit route from poverty... Education is an investment in human capital... human capital is a key determinant of economic growth. Indeed, sustainable development is only possible if there is a critical mass of skilled people...education is an important factor in poverty reduction. In addition, there is a strong positive relationship between human capital and earnings as well as the overall productivity...’ RoK, 2005, p. 23.

In the foregoing description, the government uses several terms such as ‘poverty reduction’, ‘economic growth’, ‘sustainable development’ and ‘productivity’ but without clarification. Regardless, this study speculated that the terms in question were employed in a manner suggestive of education for economic growth. Hence, education was viewed in terms of skills that are marketable, so that the more one had, the more their income.

The study found this position intriguing, putting in mind the high rates of unemployment among Kenyans considered to be educated. In the same Paper, there is a statement to the effect that poverty levels had increased despite an increase in access to education; a contradiction to the position held in the quotation. Despite the terms used, the superfluity does not cure the document's limited conception of education. Evidently, the underlying conception is basically utilitarian and instrumental, devoid of the holism that would facilitate the overall productivity of individuals as intimated in the quotation.

In the Sessional Paper, further, the goal of education is captured thus:

‘... the overall goal of education is to achieve EFA by 2015 in tandem with the national and international commitments.’ (RoK, 2005, p. 28)

In plain language, education is supposed to achieve Education for All (EFA)! This sounds tautological, since it is not clear how education can achieve itself. This study interpreted this position as an indicator of the government's obsession with international conventions so that in its bid to conform, it fell short of distinguishing between the role of education and the enablers of the latter. Whereas the goal may have been momentary, it looks defective – more so in an official government document as this. In the end, the equating of education to marketable skills is deficient since such skills can still be acquired through informal means which, according to the document, are not considered as part of education. But most intriguing, the government does not articulate its development strategy so that the reader assesses its relationship with the envisaged education; neither does it illustrate how the said education could lead to the preservation and utilization of the environment. Regardless, the Paper viewed education in utilitarian terms; its implicit philosophy statement being quality education for economic growth, environmental

conservation, employment, and self-reliance. Regardless, the philosophy was not emphatically presented, casting doubts as to whether the drafters were convicted of what they advocated.

4.2.6 Kenya Vision 2030

Kenya Vision 2030 was presented as a vehicle for accelerating the transformation of the country into a rapidly industrializing middle-income nation by the year 2030 (RoK, 2008). In the blueprint, education and training were assigned the task of providing skills that would steer the country into attaining her economic and social goals. The document further envisaged that the education sector would:

‘... have globally competitive quality education, training and research for sustainable development’ RoK, 2008, p. 99.

Investment in education, it is stated, would significantly contribute to other social sectors of the Vision such as health and housing. In a nutshell, education was primed as *a catalyst that would make it possible for achievement of the country’s long term plan, ostensibly industrialization*. Instructively, education and training are treated as inseparable, and conceived as general instruments for transformation of society. Once more, education is viewed purely from a utilitarian perspective, steeped in an implied philosophy of quality education and economic development.

4.2.7 The Report of the Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010

The Report resulted from the work of a task force chaired by Prof Douglas Odhiambo and mandated to provide guidelines for education and training that would be in synchrony with the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and Kenya Vision 2030 (RoK, 2012).

After conducting a situational analysis on the status of education in the country, the task force reported that the then prevailing system did not provide for Early Childhood and Development Education, and, further, that the curriculum did not specify the expected competencies at each level. It therefore recommended the inclusion of the two aspects, and a further restructuring of the system so that there would be two cycles of education – basic and higher education. The curriculum content would consequently be reformed to equip learners with knowledge on technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, among other aspects, as stipulated in Kenya Vision 2030.

Apart from curriculum reforms, the report recommended a progressive assessment framework that would capture the knowledge, skills and competences required for each level from primary to secondary school. At this juncture, two things emerged. One, the government herein conceived education in terms of levels. It reckoned that there was the basic level, made up of Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary education, and the higher level. This is important since the current study was interested in the basic level of education. Two, education was implicitly conceived as *knowledge, skills and competences that could be verified through assessment*. This reflected the philosophical principle of objectivity.

The foregoing conception is somewhat meaningful since it presupposes some expected outcomes (though not specified); the worthwhileness of education. This reminds us of what Aristotle (Aristotle, *Physics* Book II, Part 3) had referred to as the final cause, the *telos*, the end. It boils down to Outcomes-based Education (OBE), reflective of what the taskforce in question hinted at, equally steeped in the philosophy of Aristotelian's final cause. According to Sampa (2014), OBE is an educational approach that stresses what a learner should become and be able to perform over and above other aspects of education. Ultimately, it points to the philosophy of functionalism – where education is expected to serve a practical purpose captured by specific expected learning outcomes.

But OBE is not as simple as Sampa puts it. Spady (1991), conceives OBE outcomes as clear, observable demonstrations of student learning. For him, the outcomes do not include values, attitudes, beliefs, feelings, educational activities and performance scores/grades. Instead, they are limited to what the learner knows and can do with the knowledge, as well as their motivation to act. This position should prompt one to tread carefully in their consideration of OBE, given that it passes as mechanical in so far as education is concerned. Focusing on demonstrable behaviour alone as the measure of education is counterproductive, given the premium that is continuously being placed on moral values. By its very nature, then, OBE's focus on the end implies that the teacher will be more concerned with methodology that facilitates achievement of the expected outcomes, ostensibly behavioural, in total disregard of any other outcomes anticipated by the curriculum.

In as much as Spady (1994) provides hints as to the content and method required for OBE, the study found this conception deficient, given that some facets of education – for

instance the normative ones – could not be measured with certainty, a situation that possibly made education practitioners to concentrate only on those outcomes that were measurable, notably the cognitive ones. Consequently, other equally important skills such as collaboration, creativity and problem-solving – as championed by other models such as the Competency-based curriculum (CBC) – which may not be measured with precision, are relegated. In a nutshell, OBE passed as narrowly focused, even as it shared many aspects with CBC.

In general, the document addressed various aspects concerning provision and management of education, with little recourse to educational foundation. It made an assumption that all readers were aware of what education was, presumably equating it to schooling and tertiary training. But more importantly, it did not seek to present its apparent OBE philosophy in clear and compelling terms, much less, how the new approach stood in contradistinction with the 8-4-4 one, at least meritoriously. Regardless, its philosophy was inclined towards utilitarianism, with education serving the purpose of producing a skilled and competent personnel that would be limited to their career requirements.

4.2.8 The Basic Education Curriculum Framework – 2016 (BECF)

The document was prepared by KICD with a purpose of providing a comprehensive conceptualization of basic education (KICD, 2016). Accordingly, basic education covers pre-primary, primary, secondary and special needs education. The Framework is expected to facilitate actualization of the country’s national goals outlined in the Kenya Vision 2030. Supposedly, education is once more understood as a vehicle for meeting

national goals – a utilitarian view, again. Instructively, the document depicts the government’s conception of education, specifically at basic level:

‘...to enable every Kenyan to become an **engaged, empowered** and **ethical** citizen ... by providing every Kenyan learner with **world class standards** in the skills and knowledge they deserve... This shall be accomplished through the provision of excellent **teaching, school environments** and **resources and a sustainable visionary curriculum...**’ RoK, 2015, p. viii.

Generally, education is not only viewed as a process and in terms of its utility but also tied to universal knowledge and skills that are to be obtained through a school curriculum. For instance, the government envisages provision of skills and knowledge that are of world class standards. Unless these standards are clarified, it may not be possible to come up with a programme that will lead to such. Further, the country’s capacity to provide such education to excellent levels as envisaged needs interrogation, much less whether any education devoid of such standards shall still count as one. Instructively Kenya, is grappling with strained financial budgets that may not guarantee excellent tuition and learning resources (World Bank, 2019). Systems of education are not adopted blindly, but are informed by a country’s economic and socio-political realities. A pragmatic philosophy of education – characterized by its reflection of the actual government’s economic and political philosophy – would be more apt, as opposed to subscribing to what seems progressivist but applicable in an entirely different space. The philosophy looks ambitiously populist, and meant to give the government legitimacy and reputation.

Concerning the country's capability to provide the education anticipated in the BECF, the study sampled a number of video clips that highlighted various educational environments and statements from policy makers, in a bid to understand the Kenyan concept of education from lived experiences. Whereas the study was aware to the limitations of social media as a source of information, for instance uncertainty on the expertise of the content creators and the veracity of the overall content (Kohler & Dietrich, 2021; Allgaier, 2019; Kim, 2012), the researcher resorted to his rationality and familiarity with the actual situation in the country to select video clips that were relevant and had been done by legacy media. Further, the clips were not prescriptive but exploratory, hence described what there was, leaving the viewers to make whatever sense they could from them. Generally, the government had introduced a new system of education – 2-6-6-3 – which was competency-based. The competencies included literacy and numeracy skills, communication, critical thinking and problem solving, digital literacy, moral values, and social skills. Whereas these sounded good and doable, several videos depicted situations that seemed averse to the implementation of the curriculum. For instance, a video by African Uncensored (https://youtu.be/ZQyGYp_kxr8) pointed to the reality in some parts of the country, where it became clear that the country was not ready for the ambitious education system: dilapidated structures and unavailability of furniture (stones for desks), and reports about shortage of teachers and learning materials. The same clip, by juxtaposition, features a private school that looks conducive and fairly resourced, a pointer to possibility of learning. Surprisingly, both schools are said to be implementing the new system of education. This study therefore wondered what the MOE implied by

‘excellent teaching, school environment and resources...’ as had been captured in the BECF?

A similar situation is reported by a second video clip by Al Jazeera (<https://youtu.be/rgR5B-OZdVU>). In it, a community school is featured, characterized by congested classrooms and teachers that are reportedly underpaid. This underscores the existential inequalities among schools across the country. Consequently, it is not difficult to see, this study argued, the future possibility of condemning the new system based on outcomes realized from schools that are poorly resourced.

A third and final video clip by Nation TV, the Cabinet Secretary (CS) for education is heard lamenting about lack of skills among school and college leavers (https://youtu.be/6lhP_lvwQMk). He blames this on the previous 8-4-4 system of education that resulted into production of ‘poorly skilled or unskilled graduates’ so that they remain unemployed. A new education system, according to him, is therefore meant to reskill or skill them differently so that each becomes engaged.

In the transcription that follows, the CS goes ahead to praise the new CBC education system, which was just being rolled out:

‘I have sampled many of them (schools) across the country ... two days ago in the bush somewhere I was thoroughly impressed by what our excellent teachers are doing with our children. A child may be wearing a torn shirt or a torn sweater ... but the child has a book, the child has an IT item, and they are engaging the teacher in the CBC...’ 5:35:00

For him, the learning environment does not matter so long as children are in school. He reports that teachers are competent and schools have books, a stark contrast with what

has been displayed in the previous clips. Apparently, the government's understanding of education is tied to the presence of children in schools and provision of books and such minimums. Similarly, it seems keen on outcomes, specifically job related skills that lead to employment, which happens to be its understanding of true education. It is therefore not difficult to see, this study held, why achievement of various expected outcomes may remain elusive when players focus on the end results at the expense of the entire process, much more, the philosophy of a given education.

Writing about The National Goals of Education in Kenya, Mwaka *et al* (2013) posited that such goals sought to establish the purposes that an education system seeks to achieve. Further, the goals allude to the qualities of mind, the knowledge, skills and values that the country wishes its learners to acquire. From these, policy makers are able to root for appropriate programmes that will realize such goals. Given this position, the current study found it a cause for concern when a country behaves in a manner suggestive of lack of certainty as to what its education should be.

It is a fact that not all knowledge and skills can be developed by the end of the basic education cycle. Regardless, there must be some minimums that must be acquired from this educational process; knowledge and skills that make the school leaver ready for some form of training, or even direct placement in some self-sustaining venture. May be this is what the document meant by the terms 'engaged' and 'empowered'. Granted, the country's education, at least by conception, should presuppose this. That is why, for better understanding, the study ventured into establishing what education meant to the

school going children, and how they regarded it. Even though, the study held that an inquiry should be done to establish the point at which learners would be considered relatively, if not, fully empowered and ethical so that they take up their responsibilities in society. Further, the education cycles, such as basic and higher education, should be interrogated to establish internal completeness – for instance whether a learner dropping out at form four (under the outgoing 8-4-4- system) or Senior School (under the CBC 2-6-6-3 system) would have developed desired human resource skills. The relationship, for example, between basic education and tertiary or higher education *vis a viz* skilled resource development, should accordingly be established.

According to the BECF, the concept of *education* in general and *basic education* in particular, remains unclear. The document, for instance, reads that every child is supposed to be nurtured into the best that they can or desire to be. In short, this kind of education is intended to lead learners into the direction of specialism. Just how basic is such education? According to International Standard Classification of Education, basic education comprises primary education and lower secondary education, and covers a variety of formal and non-formal public and private activities intended to meet basic learning needs for all ages (Delors, 1996). This implies a minimum educational experience that cuts across the levels, effectively preparing individuals for further undertakings.

BECF, in contrast, designates basic education to cover primary, junior secondary and senior secondary school levels. Instructively, the junior and senior schools are equivalent to the lower and upper secondary levels, with the latter being a departure from basic education – for it embarks on differentiated education pathways. Whereas this study does

not have a problem with Kenya's structure of education, it questioned the basis of government's conception of the same. Basic education ought to be true to its meaning so that its role is clearly known. But looking at the manner in which it is locally conceived, one deduces that any learner dropping out after the junior secondary school is totally at a loss as concerns what they can become; yet, by presenting senior secondary school as a level that leads to specialization presupposes that the junior secondary school is basic education.

Mwaka *et al* (2013) contends thus:

‘The way education is conceived can result in exclusion of crucial stakeholders and limiting achievement of the national educational goals to the formal education sector, thus exposing the educational system to inability to achieve the goals’. p. 152

This study concurred, noting the possibility that all stakeholders in the system of education may not have been brought on board. For instance, the document does not mention the aspects that BECF will relieve university education, given that the 2-6-6-3 system offloads 1 year from university education making it 3 (previously 4 years under the 8-4-4 system), bringing it to basic education. Moreover, parental engagement is mentioned but without a clear framework as to the extent of such involvement. Practitioners ought to be clear as to what activities, the purpose they will engage in so that they achieve the expected learning outcomes.

4.2.9 Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on Policy Framework for Reforming Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Kenya

This was the most recent government document on education in light of the current study. It was critical since it operationalized a new competency-based curriculum that was to gradually replace the outgoing 8-4-4 system. This study made a case in the background section to the effect that the 8-4-4 system of education had been declared inadequate, specifically in terms of preparing individuals' skills and competencies for the world of work. In short, the education provided under it was either inadequate or irrelevant. It was therefore imperative for the study to inquire into the conception of education envisaged under the new system of education, with an aim of assessing the probability of its effectiveness.

In its introduction, the document defines terms that it considers pertinent. Curiously, it defines 'training' and leaves out 'education' despite the fact that its title carries both terms. The term 'training' is defined thus:

'The process of acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes of vocational or practical skills and know-how that relate to specific useful competencies, with a goal of improving one's capability, capacity, and performance.'
RoK, 2019, p. xvi

The foregoing definition of 'training' by the government begs the question as to what its conception of education was, given that it had often employed the terms 'education' and 'training' in collocation. Traditionally, the term 'education' was generally defined as the transmission of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (Munyoki, 2013). It is not difficult for one to see that the same definition has been adopted for 'training', save the

addition of the practical aspect. Accordingly, the study concluded that the government regarded education in general and basic education in particular as theoretical, hence the previous practice where one's achievement in education was measured by way of overly theoretical examination.

From the analysis of the foregoing documents, it emerges that the government conceives education in terms of levels and goals. The documents have incidentally made reference to primary education, secondary education, basic education, tertiary education, vocational education, technical education, higher education, teacher education, and such like. This implies that regardless of what education may be, it is conceived as a gradual process, carried out by particular institutions. It is seen in terms of stages; basic education being synonymous to schooling and meant for children, and tertiary, vocational, and technical education being terms that largely refer to training. At one point, education and training are conceived as complementary terms, while at another, they are viewed as substitutes. This position points to a government that is not keen on critical concepts that it deals with, despite its apparent commitment. The current study made reference (in chapter two) to the effect that most problems in education arose from a misunderstanding of concepts employed therein. This is one such example, where education, training and overall development of a skilled human resource – which ought to have a causal relationship – are viewed casually, for instance when the first two terms are employed interchangeably.

Further, education is considered as an instrument employed to facilitate achievement of national goals, with emphasis on the economic development of the country. The other

goals of education have not been given as much attention, making this study to conclude that the Kenyan government conceives education as *an institutional process that comprises programmes which provide individuals with knowledge and skills that render them useful in economic development of the country*. This rather limited, utilitarian view of education is unhelpful when it comes to the formulation of educational activities, since other goals of education such as national unity, moral soundness and socio-cultural consciousness can easily be overlooked.

Eventually, the government passes as a mere manager of what it considers education; providing basic minimums in terms of infrastructure and personnel, and hoping that parents and students will play their roles – roles that focus more on the expected ‘outcomes’, implicitly top grades, than the rightful input required for actualization of the ideal goals. Further, the government appears detached from the main issues it raises in the preliminary sections of its education policies, only mentioning them in passing as if it was more concerned with mere buy-in than commitment. Issues of nationalism, economic and human capital development, personal aspirations, the labour market situation, and interpersonal relationships are not well articulated in a manner that would portray their connection with the government’s political and economic models. This makes the policies look like wish lists, a position that denies them both agency and the wherewithal. In the final analysis, the government lacks clarity concerning the nature of its education, its purpose, and the responsibility of various players, all which could have been captured by a sound, shared national philosophy of education that is supported by its economic and political plans.

General Reflection on the Foregoing Conceptions of Education

Following the various conceptions of education explored in the foregoing documents, most of which are implicit, this study arrived at two conclusions. First, that the lack of a comprehensive conception of education from the very first education commission (RoK 1964), wherein education was viewed as a general way of preparing individuals – through schools – to take over government jobs, cast a dark shadow on subsequent education policies so that none of them committed to a clear educational philosophy. Two, emphasis on the goods that education was to deliver made policy makers lose sight of the process that was to actualize such goods. This study contends that it was not enough for the country to know where it wanted to go; a serious thought about its education, which happened to be the main means to achievement of national aspirations, would have proved more helpful. Such serious thinking would have resulted into identification of an educational philosophy that would have helped guide educational activities required for achievement of expected learning outcomes. From the governments' own reports, the unemployment that obtained was largely occasioned by lack of job-related skills following educational activities conducted in a general manner.

4.3 Philosophies Guiding Education in Kenya since Independence

A philosophy of education represents answers to questions about the purpose of schooling (education?), the role of the teacher, and what should be taught and by what methods (Tan, 2006). Further, such a philosophy helps in evaluation of individual understanding of the basis that underlie given education systems. This is critical, more so for education practitioners, since their educational practices are influenced by either their

philosophies or those of others (e.g. that of the government) (Uzun, 2014; Izalan and Gögebakan-Yildiz, 2018). This study held a similar position, hence, conceived a philosophy of education as a general statement formulated by society to capture its thought about education in light of its purpose and by extension the content and method. Considering a brief philosophy such as ‘Education for self-reliance’, this study held that it not only captured the purpose of education but equally presupposed certain activities. Simply put, the philosophy answers one major question as to *what schools are for*. It defines what schools offer, which, without prejudice, other entities such as homes, churches, mosques, industries, among others, do not.

An educational philosophy, on another plane, represents a framework that guides, filters and considers the efforts of teachers towards what they believe as the purpose of education (Magulod, 2017). Accordingly, it radiates from the general philosophy of education and provides a valid and logical basis for educational endeavours and criteria for selection of sound educational practices. Examples of educational philosophies include Essentialism, Perennialism, Existentialism, Progressivism and Reconstructionism (Demirel, 2010; Moss & Lee, 2010). Such educational philosophies provide theory for education, theory that directs teachers in carrying out their duties in terms of what to teach, how and why.

There is a need to draw a distinction between theory and philosophy. Whereas philosophy encompasses the totality of nature, wherefore everything can be understood through it, a theory is more specific. Carson (2005:2) views a theory as ‘a philosophy in microcosm’. For him, a theory only refers to specific areas of practice such as curriculum and learning. On the contrary, a philosophy must hold specific views with respect to three major

domains: metaphysics, epistemology and axiology. But it should be noted that both employ the same processes of induction and deduction.

In essence, an educational philosophy arises from one's conception of education. If poorly conceived, for instance, the society in question will consequently not adopt any definite educational philosophy. This study therefore sought to examine the philosophies of education employed since independence, since they, by default, presupposed certain educational philosophies. But before then, it briefly explored philosophies that characterized the education offered under the colonial regime, reason being that post-independent education was a reflection of the formal colonial education more than the African indigenous one.

4.3.1 Education for Adaptability and Community Service: Utilitarian Philosophy

Looking at Africa in general, this study observed a general trend in colonial education where its main purpose was to advance the agenda of the colonial regimes. In Nigeria, for example, two types of education displaced the African indigenous education: Islamic education and Western (Christian) formal educational system (Ibanga, 2016). The Islamic education aimed at producing righteous individuals who would worship Allah and act according to the dictates of the religion (Kazeem & Balogun, 2013). Western education, on the other hand, followed, and aimed to proselytize and raise individuals of good character. English grammar, Christian ethics, and arithmetic were taught to enable Africans to read the Bible, communicate with the missionaries, and serve as messengers, clerks, teachers, interpreters and secretaries (Ukeje & Aisiku, 1982). Clearly, the main purpose of the new systems of education was neither to develop the individual, nor the

African society, but to prepare Africans for the service of the new establishment. Ibinga (2016) observes that neither Islamic education nor the Western one intended to build the African's intellect, since, to western philosophers like Hegel and Hume, blacks were incapable of philosophic and lofty thinking. It resonated with Senghor's claim that while reason was Hellenic, emotion was Negro (Serequeberhan, 1994). Therefore the education system was meant to develop western religion which, once adopted, would facilitate entrenchment of colonial indirect rule. Schilling (1980), affirms this position concerning Kenya:

'Policy formation in Kenya was complicated by the presence of a vociferous group of white settlers who had very definite ideas about the kind of Kenya they wanted to create. Convinced they were building a 'white man's country,' the settlers worked to secure a plentiful of cheap land and labor and to enhance their political power.' p. 56.

In Kenya, the Beecher Report on African Education (Beecher, 1949) advanced that education for Africans was to be practical and help them adapt to their environment and serve the community. Instructively, there were three kinds of education and all were based on race: European education, Asian Education and education for Africans (Mwiria, 1991). The study focused on the latter, which had seen Africans (read Kenyans) subjected to industrial and agricultural education so that they could help the colonialists set up infrastructure in the otherwise undeveloped country, as well as meet their subsistence needs. It was conceived in a purely utilitarian view, with an aim of serving the white settlers.

Since a philosophy of education is greatly determined by the purpose of education, this study contended that the then prevalent purpose of education was adaptation to the environment and service to the community, hence adopting a philosophy characteristic of

utilitarianism (viewed in terms of its usefulness) *and functionality* (its practical application to immediate needs). It should, however, be borne in mind that this kind of education was not indigenous; the colonial regime believed that Kenyans were better off with new skills and values that would render them useful in advancing a new development agenda. In essence, ‘service to the community’ (under functional philosophical principle) actually meant ‘service to the colonial masters’ (Onono, 1976), and as such, Africans were to be retooled so that they could fit the purpose. This implied that the philosophy of education at the time was externally originated, hence bore no connection to the needs and cultural history of the country. Ursch (1971), for instance, observed that the education offered by British Africa had neither a uniform policy nor a solid foundation:

The independent nations of Africa now face the task of re-evaluating and reshaping those institutions imposed on them by the former colonial powers. The educational institutions (that) these emerging nations inherited are not linked to the realities of the present African needs...each governor had his own ideas on how to educate the “natives”. Urch, 1971, p 249.

The foregoing quote illustrates the likely futility of the philosophy behind the education so fronted. For instance, Sheffield (1971) reports that most Kenyan Africans were not impressed with the move to relegate them to industrial education, viewing it as inferior. That probably explains why some Africans consequently responded by withdrawing their children from schools, since for them, education devoid of academic and technical disciplines was unfathomable. Their children would as well do better with the manual work that they had been accustomed to at home. One may wonder why industrial education, if good as any other, would be reserved for Africans only. This question found

an answer in a quotation from an Annual Report of the Kenya Colony and Protectorate, Department of Education:

‘...industrial education is a method rather than a subject of education and leads to the benefit of the community as a whole...take the government school at Narok, where boys are brought directly in contact with the community by their dairy work, their ploughing and their care of cattle;... the Missions with their hospitals, training dressers and maternity nurses, their industrial departments and their training of teachers to spread education among the villages – one fact stands out beyond all others, namely, that these schools are not schools in the strict sense of the term so much as social centres, training boys and girls for service to the community...’ Orr, p.5

This quotation, coming from the then Director of Education, James Russell Orr, is testament that what was offered to Africans did not measure up to education proper as conceived by the colonialists. Why did they refer Africans to social centres instead of schools? Were Africans not fit for academic education? Such and kindred glaring errors of commission may have made Africans question vocational education, setting it up for ridicule. There was no way the Africans would have appreciated industrial education, however valuable, when the providers of such an education did not partake of it.

Upon independence, the very first education policy document – The 1964 Kenya Education Commission Report (RoK, 1964) – equally reflected the colonial philosophy of adaptability and community service, upon analysis. With reference to the purposes of education as fronted by the Report, it is evident that no new educational philosophy was obtaining:

- i. Education must foster a sense of nationhood and promote national unity

- ii. Education must indiscriminately serve the people of Kenya and their needs
- iii. Public schools must respect the religious convictions of all people
- iv. Kenyan schools must respect cultural traditions of all Kenyans
- v. Competition in schools must be discouraged so that no one is labeled a failure
- vi. Education must be an instrument of changing the attitudes and relationships of individuals, as well as preparing children to adapt to modern methods of production in as much as they respect human personality
- vii. Education should serve national economic development
- viii. Education should promote social equality and eliminate all forms of divisions
- ix. Education graduates must be adaptable to change.

The foregoing function of education – that of empowering individuals in readiness for their participation in the economic development of the nation, as well as adapting to modern methods of production – was no different from the one reported in The Beecher Commission Report: adaptation to change and service to community. Other purposes such as respect for traditions and promotion of social equality were superfluous and untenable in the face of adapting to change; for change referred to embracing the western system that had been established by the colonialists. The environment referred to is unquestionably the one that had been created by the colonialists: that of racism, competition, disdain for industrial education, value for academic education, and the likes. It was not clear, the study held, as to how the said education fitted in the overall political philosophy and economic model of the nascent Kenyan government, if at all the latter existed. Educational goals of a country emanate from its culture and history, much more, its existent realities (Ibanga, 2016). Granted, the goals that the country identified were

futile in the absence of an overarching ideology for national development. But given that governments are known to first seek self-preservation, it is likely that the then new government stuck on the economic and political model of the departed colonial administration hence saw no need in articulating clear philosophies.

Another document analysed was The Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya (RoK, 1965). This sessional paper is not wholly about education but a blueprint that was meant to set the country on a new path of social, economic and political development. The document stated that under colonialism, Kenyans had no voice in government; and had remained *uneducated* (emphasis by author), untrained, inexperienced and had not benefitted from growth of the economy. The new government therefore intended to have Kenyans get educated, and equally mobilize the country's resources so as to attain rapid economic growth for everyone's benefit. (RoK, 1965). This in effect pointed to a general direction that the country aspired to take under the new political dispensation, and consequently presupposed a need for interventions that would yield the proposed transformation. Schools and colleges were therefore tasked with the purpose of empowering citizens with the urgently needed human resource for social and economic transformation.

Ironically, the document did not demonstrate an effort to set up a wholly new politico-economic ideology that would depart from the one established by the departed colonialists, given that it condemned the education offered under the British colony. Further interesting was its resolve to urgently create manpower through the same schools and colleges that had left Kenyans uneducated, inexperienced and deprived of economic benefits.

It is imperative, going forward, that a relationship or lack of it thereof be established between the purposes of education set out in the Ominde Commission and the societal goals articulated in the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965. A careful scrutiny of the two documents, especially the Ominde Report, paints an ambitious society that aspired to grow in all aspects: socio-cultural, political and economic. For instance, the Sessional Paper in question made a case for education where the latter was to facilitate development of a skilled human resource:

‘Untrained people cannot be used as teachers, planners, engineers, surgeons, doctors, surveyors, architects, managers and administrators without turning growth into decline... In order to grow rapidly and to replace expatriates with comparably qualified Kenyan citizens as soon as possible, we must employ in the near future large numbers of foreign experts both to assist in planning and carrying out the work that needs to be done and also to educate and train in the schools and on the job the Kenyans who will ultimately make the foreign experts unnecessary.’ p 21, 1965.

From this quotation, one observes that the purposes of education enumerated in the Ominde Commission were unnecessarily many. The government of the day was evidently more concerned with economic development of the country than anything else, and this would be made possible by a skilled workforce that would be sourced by all means – even if it meant temporarily hiring them from foreign countries. Here, careful scrutiny reveals a country that was desperate for what it termed as rapid development. Could it be that the resultant education system was expediently crafted, hence failed to be anchored on a formidable national philosophy that would have set stage for a robust national philosophy of education? Whereas the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 addressed itself to Africanization of the economy, it is not clear if, or even possible, that all expatriates and

other facets of the new establishment would be African. Further, the study was cognizant of the weaknesses of the African educational set up, if such were to be revived, and no less awake to the limitations of the colonial systems.

Logically, it would be defeatist to expect non-Africans to drive the agenda of Africanization. This notwithstanding, the concept of Africanization would only make sense if it was well articulated and justified, for only then could clear and actionable policies follow. But seemingly, the government could have been carried away with the newfound independence, hence fell in the trap of crafting goals that were not in synchrony with a definite and actionable ideology. Granted there is a possibility that lack of a clear philosophy of education at this period in time resulted from the hybridity occasioned by the foreign experts who continued to teach around, and the government's mental reverie of the 'good' old indigenous ways. But even so, the government should not have expected expatriates (having celebrated the departure of colonialists) to help them achieve their goal of Africanization.

The study further observed that while the government planned to have natives skilled by foreigners so that the latter would gradually be made redundant by the former, it still did not have confidence in the workability of the plan. This is best demonstrated in the contradiction that appears in the same document:

'Even with these programmes and educational efforts Kenya will not be able to meet from domestic sources the rapidly growing need for high and middle level manpower for many years to come. Therefore, every effort will be made to retain qualified expatriates, to use sources of technical assistance wisely, and to mount recruiting campaigns abroad for particularly critical shortages like teachers, doctors, water engineers, surveyors etc. These efforts will not, however, be enough. The

Government must also take steps to ensure that Kenyans aided in their education by the Government are guided into those studies and occupations where skilled manpower is most urgently needed.' p51, RoK, 1965.

From the foregoing quotation, it may be argued that the then government did not fully believe in the power of education to develop a skilled human resource. That explains why it nursed the thought of retaining expatriates, a contradiction to its earlier scheme of doing away with them once a local skilled workforce was in place. Did the government underestimate the role of education? Was it not an overestimation of the opportunities that would be available for skilled personnel? If not, how does one explain the high unemployment rate that eventually obtained?

This study argued that education could only serve its purpose if a given society believed in such a possibility. And given that education is tied to schools and colleges, as hitherto established, no educational philosophy could be obtained when there was a wavering confidence in the purpose of schools and colleges. But again, it was within the right of the study to speculate the possibility that the new government was not up to the task of delivering whatever it had promised, or still, they may not have taken time to properly diagnose and understand the genesis of their educational problems. Else, how does one explain the fact that a certain thread – existence of systems that could not address community and national development problems – persisted all along the years?

Governments such as Tanzania, the study observed, diagnosed the main problem that set them back, and discovered that the British colony had deliberately minimized education opportunities for black African students. With this, the colony would justify its continued

occupation in Tanzania, on the basis that the country did not have enough local human resource for self-governance (Mwabukojo, 2019). Therefore discrimination in colonial education was identified as the genesis of shortage of human capital in the country. To remedy the situation, the Tanzanian government rooted for mass education under the help of expatriates after convincing citizens of the necessity of engaging foreigners. It initiated collaborations by inviting foreign specialists, scholars and other professionals of good will to work with them in rebuilding their country (Nyerere, 1967). Further, its philosophy of education – self-reliance and service to the nation – could be related to its national ideology of Socialism (Ujamaa) and Rural Development policy (Mwabukojo, 2019) adopted later, aimed at making citizens live together in Ujamaa villages and collectively working on community farms. This boosted agriculture, hence, rural development.

As intimated earlier, national ideologies influence education policies. If Tanzania encountered problems as a result of its education system (yes, it did), such could be traced to its ideologies which, accordingly, could then be interrogated. The same could not be said of Kenya since the immediate post-independent government was non-committal concerning any clear national ideology. Its philosophy of peace, love and unity was at most passive, since these are ends that emanate from assorted efforts. Even *Harambee* (pulling together), a call meant to rally people towards certain developmental activities, for instance building unaided schools, was not comprehensive enough.

Be that as it may, this study does not intend to cast aspersions as concerns the manner in which the new government conceived education. Ideally, the decisions made by the nascent government must have been influenced by the then prevailing conditions. First,

the disruption that was the changeover from African indigenous education to the formalistic western mode must have traumatized locals, implying that they were still oscillating between the two systems. The resultant individualistic philosophy of colonial education did not make things better. Kenyans would need enough time to properly understand the western system and think along its philosophy.

Second, the originators of the new western system had just left – upon Kenya's attainment of independence – and as such, the new government was caught in a tricky situation that demanded them to craft an education system which would not only reflect the African spirit but also develop a human resource that would replace the departed personnel. Logically, replacing such personnel implied adopting a system that would replicate them; such a system would definitely not deviate from the western mode that they were condemning. This study concurred that the post-independent education was merely a quantitative expansion of the education framework inherited from colonialists (Wellings, 1980). Given these circumstances, it is not difficult to see how tricky it was for the new government to formulate an authentic education system complete with a sound philosophy. For one, the new regime claimed to value the African spirit of socialism which conflicted with the new western spirit of capitalistic individualism. Two, it had implicitly accepted the western mode of education as evidenced by the admiration of academic and technical education. Three, the new western structure of governance and economy had taken root, a fact that was attested by the government's elaborate plans which would see the training of personnel that would carry on with the functions established by the colonial government.

4.3.2 The Philosophy of Education for Self-reliance: Essentialism

Another important education document in the history of post-independent Kenya was The Mackay Report (RoK, 1981). The report was reflected upon in terms of its conception of education. It was observed that education therein referred to the acquisition of knowledge and skills that would make one to be self-reliant. Implicitly, the conception was based on the purpose of education – and by extension schools and colleges. Accordingly, this study identified ‘education for self-reliance’ as the country’s philosophy of education as implied in the report.

The Mackay Report was majorly a response by government in tackling runaway unemployment occasioned by overdependence on formal employment. A new system of education was required to equip learners with essential knowledge and skills that would make them engage in self-sustaining economic activities away from formal employment. This was reflective of the philosophy of essentialism which, according to Martin and Loomis (2007), refers to the teaching of core curriculum that covers critical components of academic and moral knowledge.

Following elusive job opportunities that had been anticipated in the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, a need arose for a new philosophy of education. Accordingly, the philosophy of education for self-reliance presupposed an education that hung between technical and vocational training so as to create a pool of skilled individuals capable of relying on themselves. Technical and craftsmanship disciplines were therefore proposed both in primary and secondary school under the 8-4-4 system of education (RoK, 1981; *Mse, 2016*).

When looked at critically, the philosophy of self-reliance, as fronted, presented a quick about-turn from the benefits the previous system of education had promised – white collar jobs. For one, education had largely remained academic – even in the then proposed 8-4-4 system – as attested by the kind of disciplines taught. In essence, the technical and vocational skills were supposed to cater for those who either dropped out after class eight or form four, and had no chance of advancing to higher levels. They therefore had to rely on the skills acquired before they dropped out, or join ‘village’ polytechnics in their bid to fend for themselves and avoid overdependence on the government.

In contrast, those who proceeded to middle level colleges and universities would train in professional courses that largely targeted formal employment in government or private sector, a move that effectively undermined the spirit behind the philosophy of education for self-reliance.

As a matter of fact, the presupposed skills for self-reliance were to be employed in the informal sector known locally as *jua kali*, a sector that was occupied by all sorts of individuals – including those who had never stepped in school. There was therefore no evidence that self-reliance, as understood in this sense, would be attained through education (schooling), for there was no any educational philosophy in place to operationalize the general philosophy of self-reliance. Granted, there was no reason enough to compel one to attend school with the aim of acquiring skills that could as well be gotten outside school. Put differently, most of those who attended school did so with the intention of pursuing academic knowledge and skills that would enable them to enroll in professional courses.

In as much as the philosophy of self-reliance sounds good to the ear, it gained a negative connotation, implicitly being associated with low education and demeaning vocations. Such a negative attitude towards a section of education could not augur well for the country. According to Bennaars (1998), a philosophy of education obtains from a common apprehension by a people on the purpose of their education. When such purpose becomes unclear, or subjectively understood, even the educational practice becomes deficient. This, the study argued, partly explained why the 8-4-4 system would later on be whittled down to a purely academic, exam-oriented education system as captured in the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 (RoK, 2005). Matters were not made any better by the government's inadequate funding which denied schools resources for conducting technical and vocational education.

It should be noted that the 8-4-4 system of education was rolled out during hard economic times (Inyega *et al*, 2021). Donor funding had dipped, and the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank had imposed sanctions on government spending. Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) had been introduced, forcing the government to cut down expenditure on all vote heads including education. Further, things were made worse by the move to have parents contribute towards education costs (cost-sharing), unlike before (RoK, 1981). All these implied a strain on resources at a time the country needed more funds to implement the new system of education. Workshops, laboratories, and other facilities were required to enable proper teaching of practical disciplines such as physical and biological sciences, metalwork, woodwork, power mechanics, art and design, home science, and building and construction. The result was twofold and adverse: declined enrolment and theoretical teaching of practical disciplines. Implicitly, those who

attended school had no much advantage compared to those outside, hence the foundation for skills development crumbled.

Even after the evident failure to fully implement the 8-4-4 system, its underlying philosophy of self-reliance was further canvassed, albeit unsuccessfully, in yet another significant document, the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005: A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research (RoK, 2005). The Sessional Paper makes a clear statement concerning the purpose of education:

‘This vision is guided by the understanding that quality education and training contributes significantly to economic growth and expansion of employment opportunities.’ p. 14

It goes ahead to specifically associate education with development of human resource:

‘...good performance in education and training sector contributes to national development through the production of an appropriate human resource that helps to spur productivity, and eliminate poverty, disease and ignorance, consequently improving human welfare.’ RoK, 2005, p 17.

From the above citation, education is viewed largely with regard to its purpose of developing a skilled human resource that serves to turn around the economy. Any other purpose is, implicitly, auxiliary. Having singled out human resource development as the major purpose of education in Kenya, the Sessional Paper was rooted for content that was inclined towards technical and vocational training as well as sciences and information technology. The Paper went ahead to provide a general statement that summed up Kenya’s philosophy of education at time: Education and Training for Social Cohesion as well as Human and Economic Development (RoK, 2005, p. 25).

Even without looking at other ingredients of a philosophy of education, such as the role of the teacher and how they go about educating, one notices inconsistency between the

stated philosophy and the major purpose of the country's education. Fair enough, the philosophy sounds good for all intents and purposes. It addresses education, training, social cohesion, development of humane people, and the economy. Further scrutiny, however, reveals a false assumption to the effect that social cohesion and human development are functions of economic development. One may be tempted to think that the government was doing damage control by merely mentioning other functions of education, having taken a position that economic development was the real deal:

‘The focus of various sub-sectors of education will be on the acquisition of life-skills and long-life learning. Emphasis will be on the provision of holistic quality education and training that promotes education that involves both cognitive and affective domains. Instilling values such as patriotism, equality, peace, security, honesty, humility, love, honesty, tolerance, cooperation and democracy through education and training will be critical...address emerging challenges such as respect for human rights, drug and substance abuse, corruption, violence and social exclusion.’ p 25

This is rather superfluous. Given the foregoing situation, it is not difficult to predict the challenges that may be faced in formulation of educational activities where the expected learning outcomes are at variance with the general philosophy of a country's education. Further, it was defeatist for the government to expect education practitioners and other stakeholders to focus on the social function of education, after it explicitly stated its preference for an economic one. It was not surprising, therefore, that the government, through MOEST, would persistently focus on the cognitive skills at the expense of the affective domain, eventually leading to problems such as the lack of social cohesion in the country. Human values, as a matter of fact, are not indispensable as far as human resource skills are concerned, much more their place in education.

R. S. Peters (1966) advances three conditions necessary for education. For him, one is said to be educated if they have gained knowledge; if they have gained some values that make them worthwhile, and if they have experienced the two conditions through acceptable procedures. As a corollary, the role of education can only be brought to question if the three conditions have been met. It is not enough to have a highly sounding and populist philosophy of education; such must arise from a thorough understanding of the purpose of education; an understanding that only comes to those who give education serious thought. Instructively, such serious thinking leads to an understanding, interpretation and unification of the concept of education so that it is not viewed narrowly, but guided by a sound educational philosophy that is consistent with the purpose, content and practice of education.

According to Philips (2014), different accounts of philosophy of education are given by individuals depending on their understanding of what constitutes philosophy. Accordingly, it may be necessary that those involved in the formulation of education policies either have knowledge of philosophy of education, or consult those endowed with the same. Philosophy is not a mere abstraction of catchy expression or discourse. Conversely, it entails awareness on the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge (epistemology); the art of correct thinking (logic); spiritual life characterized by the love of the good (axiology); and the understanding and appreciation of reality (metaphysics).

A sound philosophy of education will therefore trickle from a clear understanding of what a society's education is; and therefore hint at the general content of education (knowledge and skills) and its purpose. The purpose will definitely hint at the expected outcomes, the latter being used to identify an educational philosophy that can guide

educational activities. This consistency must hold if education is to obtain. Yet, it was not the case in the Sessional Paper under scrutiny. Whereas the paper captured a statement that describes the philosophy of education in the said period, its fine print still pointed towards the elusive philosophy of education for self-reliance. Instructively, it stated that education and training aimed at economic development and creation of employment opportunities. The latter implies self-employment, since education alone does not create any opportunities apart from making one ready for employment – either given or self-initiated.

4.3.3 The Philosophies of Progressivism, Social Constructivism and Existentialism

Another most recent, critical education document is the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 on Policy Framework for Reforming Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Kenya (RoK, 2019). This document is critical since it is among the few that touches on the topic of a philosophy of education in Kenya, as well as the attendant educational philosophies. Chapter Three of the document pronounces itself concerning philosophy of education:

An appropriate education system of a country is founded on a philosophy, vision and mission, which target goals pursued through clearly stated objectives... The education and training sector in Kenya is hinged on the philosophy **‘provision of holistic quality and inclusive education and training for a transformation to a knowledge economy, social cohesion and sustainable development** (all emphasis mine)’. RoK, 2019, p 41.

There is no doubt, up to this point, that any education system ought to be founded upon a sound philosophy. From the philosophy stated in the preceding quotation, education passes as a transformative process whose outcomes are a knowledge-based economy, social cohesion and sustainable development. Whether tenable or not, they

reflect the purpose of the country's education, and by extension, the basis for its educational objectives. Educational philosophies, programmes and activities, accordingly, ought to be driven by the resultant objectives.

A breakdown of the foregoing philosophy of education is necessary. First, it states that the country aims to provide holistic, quality and inclusive education. 'Holistic' here refers to the development of the whole person, both cognitively and affectively. 'Quality' predicates certain acceptable standards; while inclusion has to do with access and participation, where every citizen is brought on board as and when practicably possible. Whereas all these sound plausible, they are, nevertheless, mere attributes of an envisaged system of education. The system must first be established – basing on the societal needs that inform objectives – before matters of quality (which are purely accidental) are considered.

Second, the philosophy states the ends to which education is geared: a knowledge economy, a cohesive society and sustainable development. This study is not certain whether the said ends were listed in any order of priority; in which case the first would be the most important. However, 'a knowledge economy' passes as the most overbearing outcome by virtue of its straightforward comprehension. Apparently, social cohesion has to do with national unity – an overall goal; while sustainable development makes an assumption that there ought to be development in the first place, since one can only sustain what there is.

This study contended that the knowledge economy, following the foregoing argument, is the *de facto* focal point of Kenya's most recent philosophy of education. According to Unger (n.d.), knowledge economy majorly refers to the reliance on knowledge generation and dissemination as the basis for economic growth. Here, technological advancement and innovation are crucial for any society that aspires to register productivity, and production of novel ideas leads to new or improved goods and services and organizational practices. Ultimately, theoretical knowledge is viewed as the source of innovative ideas (Powell & Snellman, 2004), and any society that wishes to register economic development must arm itself with the power which knowledge gives.

In a nutshell, knowledge economy is the reliance on skilled or specialized human resource as capital that spurs economic development. Accordingly, other means of production such as natural resources and physical input do not count much. The net implication of this philosophy of education is that the major impediment between Kenya and its economic development is the deficiency of a skilled human resource. Granted, a claim such as this stands indefensible in the face of the appreciation that there exist other factors which mediate a skilled human resource and economic development. For instance, a skilled individual may not do much if not supplied with the necessary tools. Similarly, an innovative mind may just be as useless if their ideas are not matched with a supportive environment.

This study has observed before that the purpose of a given education gives birth to the objectives that obtain. According to the Sessional paper under discussion, the Ministry of

education set out seven objectives of education and training in Kenya: To provide access, equity, quality and relevant education and training at all levels; to establish, maintain and manage professional teaching and learning service in education and training; to formulate, review and implement appropriate policies, legal and institutional frameworks for the Sector; to promote innovativeness, creativity and entrepreneurship in education and training; to promote vibrant industry-institutional linkages in the area of skilling for employability; to integrate ICT in curriculum delivery and management in education and training; and to strengthen data management systems to support evidence based decisions in education and training (RoK, 2019, p 42).

Ideally, objectives have something to do with what one aspires to achieve at the end of a given process. Reading through the above, it is not clear whether they are objectives of education and training or mere strategies that the Ministry of education formulated to achieve some end. They sound more of educational management than philosophy, yet they are outlined under the section that addresses the philosophy, vision and mission of education. But taken as they are, the study concluded that the ‘objectives’ related with the stated philosophy only on one aspect: education access, equity, quality and professionalism. Issues such as national development, national unity, as well as social-cultural, economic, scientific, and technological advancement – all hinted at in the philosophy statement – did not feature in the objectives of the new system of education. Is it possible that the ministry functionaries may be clueless concerning philosophy of education? Put differently, what may be their understanding of a philosophy of education?

Philosophy seeks to interpret and unify the cosmos (McLaughlin, 2017). Further, it delights in clarity, logic and consistency. The listed ‘objectives’ bear none of these, and therefore cast doubts on the soundness of the Sessional Paper under scrutiny. It is therefore not difficult to see the challenges one would likely encounter in their attempt to formulate educational experiences owing to the less coherent, obfuscating objectives.

The foregoing notwithstanding, it is worth noting that the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 made way for a new system of education that has adopted a Competency-Based Curriculum approach. The new education system’s Basic Education Curriculum Framework (RoK, 2015), to its credit, explicitly states that the major educational philosophies are progressivism and social constructivism. This is a first. Further, it presupposes philosophical principles of education such as holism, humanism, criticality and communalism where the learner’s potential has to be nurtured wholesomely, and be brought up ethically, with an innovative and creative mind, and in a manner that develops good human relations respectively.

Unlike essentialism where compulsory basic knowledge and skills were provided under strict guidance of the know-it-all teacher, with schools serving as agents of preservation and transfer of culture to subsequent generations (Uyangor, 2016), progressivism advocates individual interests. Here, the teacher serves as a guide by the side, with emphasis on learning through problem solving and experience (Ergun, 2009). Social-constructivism, on another plane, is a behavioural theory that refers to the involvement of the learner in construction of knowledge. This sounds relevant here since the philosophy

of education stated was emphatic on a knowledge economy. Apart from Progressivism and Social Reconstructionism, the system presupposes an existentialist educational philosophy. Existentialism recognizes individual differences among learners, holding the teacher as a facilitator who oversees students as they learn at their own pace (Martin and Loomis, 2007; Belbase, 2011). Students equally make choices of what to learn, when and how – each following a pathway that resonates with their capability. Be that as it may, this study cannot comment much on a system that is just being rolled out, in spite of its educational philosophies that seem alien to local education practice.

Looking at the philosophies herein paraded, it occurs to a keen observer that most of them have common aspects, which implies that practitioners are highly likely to be subscribing to hybridity, wherein particular desirable elements are eclectically chosen among several theories with an aim of patching up a workable theory. However, such ought to be objectively and consistently pursued, given that a country is so by virtue of common goals. If the government, through MOEST, were to lead the country into agreement, for instance to follow a particular educational philosophy – regardless of its nature – then all must go that way, and have it well articulated.

Generally, the study contended that philosophies of education in Kenya, since independence, have been overly fuzzy and idealistic, with no attendant educational philosophy that could guide educational activities. Almost five decades after gaining independence, the progress made towards achievement of the purposes that education was bequeathed was not satisfactory: social cohesion and national unity, equal educational opportunities, a robust economy that supports national development, and development of human and moral values. Interventions that were to realize the listed

goals remain erratic; contradictory policies, catchy slogans that pass as philosophies, absence of clear educational philosophies, and lack of agency, have all conspired to make implementation near impossible. Whereas there was agreement that the colonial system required reforming, there is no compelling explanation from the government as to why it has never fulfilled the goals it promised many years ago. Consequently, the study turned to the practitioners for confirmation as to whether they understood the government's philosophy of education, much more, the way they were required to practice so that they help facilitate achievement of the goals of education. Education practice is critical, for only through it do we test the theories and philosophies, much more, walk the talk of educating.

4.4 Conception of Education by Teachers

In a bid to corroborate various conceptions of education in Kenya, the study featured education practitioners – teachers and students – on two assumptions. One, the latter are directly involved in the implementation process, that is, teaching and learning. Success or failure of any education system is therefore dependent on them as much as is on the government of the day. Two, the said implementation is not only dependent upon their conception of education but also their understanding of their role and stake. The fact that policy makers (government) and education practitioners operated at different levels, and possibly, environments, opened possibility of differing convictions on what education was and how it should be carried out if it were to develop a skilled human resource. In this respect, a brief open-ended set of questions were administered, with the first four questions (a, b, c and d) in appendices III and IV respectively, providing the study with information concerning the teachers and students' conception of education.

Formally, teachers are so by virtue of their professional development, knowledge, skills and values (Demirkasimoğlu, 2010). Granted, they obtain guidance from the syllabus and curriculum designs in the preparation of teaching and learning experiences. Whereas this may be the ideal situation, there is a cause to speculate that teachers carry out various educational activities on the basis of their individual beliefs as to the nature and purpose of education. This forms the origin of their personal philosophies of education, which ultimately contribute to the way they engage in teaching and learning activities. According to Hellberg (2014), teaching approaches are determined by the education philosophy of a given curriculum. This implies that should teachers have a divergent philosophy, then their teaching approaches will vary considerably.

In a bid to establish the teachers' understanding of the concept of education, and by extension the philosophy underpinning the education in Kenya, this study conducted an open question interview with 10 randomly selected teachers. The study had targeted 20, but the 10 were arrived at following saturation of responses, whereupon the informants were providing almost similar information, with the rest being non-committal. The small survey was only for supplementary purposes, just to confirm the general feeling of the teachers towards the significance of an educational philosophy in their teaching and learning activities. All the interviewed teachers, including their schools, were given imaginary names for purposes of the study. The information gathered from them was then subjected to a philosophical analysis for logical insights and synthesis.

Concerning the question of the meaning of education, a majority of teachers interviewed tended to provide a bookish definition despite having been guided to provide their own understanding, at least from their teaching experience. For instance, a teacher from

Mwanzo Secondary School, holding a first degree in education and with eighteen years of teaching experience had this to say:

‘I think education is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable one to lead a meaningful life – like securing a job for a livelihood... It also makes one generally enlightened and well mannered.’ (Appendix IV: A)

According to this informant, education is a process that results to the empowerment of an individual for survival. It is about the individual, and how such is prepared in readiness for life. Issues of general enlightenment and character, for the informant, implicitly come as a second thought. Whereas he claims to be voicing his thought, it is clear that he falls back on a conventional definition that appears in most education-themed books. There is a probability that he never gave the concept a personal thought different from mainstream conception. Also possible is the fact that such a definition is popularized by many teacher education institutions.

Another teacher, from Mwito Secondary School, equally male and a graduate with 13 years of experience, introduced a different perspective:

It depends on who is defining it, and the place. Generally, it involves preparation of individuals for societal roles. The process may be formal or informal. However, in recent times, the concept has come to refer to formalistic learning – stretching all the way from kindergarten to the university. (Appendix VIII: A)

First, this informant does not believe in a conventional definition of education. He however not only views it as preparation for life, just like the one in (Appendix IV: A), but also links it to society. Implicitly, society has roles that are played through individuals by virtue of their being educated, hence, education aims at the good of the society. The

informant further acknowledges two kinds of education – formal and informal – but quickly states his belief wherein education refers to those experiences one undergoes in formal settings like schools and universities.

One thing comes out: as long as individuals go through formal schooling, they should be considered educated (regardless of their capability to effectively play their roles in society). Granted, education then becomes a mere activity which should not be tied to any end. If this position were to be held by all educators, then probably none of them would mind about the educational activities they engaged in.

Whereas it is not necessary for a conventional conceptualization of education, for we have different societies with different needs, it is imperative that some common understanding of the concept specific to a given society be established. This will help members of such a society, for instance teachers, pull in one direction and thereby achieve common aspirations.

When it came to the philosophy underpinning the education in Kenya, almost all the interviewed teachers were uncertain. For instance, a teacher from Mfano Secondary School, holding a master's degree in curriculum development said:

‘I can't remember the actual statement, but it has to do with individual and national development’. (Appendix XI: C)

This response partly captures a former philosophy of education statement explored in chapter two of this study. The informant had some idea about it, though he sounded indifferent. Even though he had mastered education, it passes – and surprisingly so – that

the country's philosophy of education was the least of his concerns. And when asked about the educational philosophy that Kenya subscribed to, he had this to say:

'I suspect we employ philosophies from different schools of thought. It's a tricky situation, since schools, or learning institutions, differ. Some believe in traditional theories where teachers do all the work. Others are student-centric, which is considered the in-thing. Generally, many are embracing progressive schools of thought.' (Appendix XI: D)

The informant painted a chaotic situation where no particular educational philosophies were employed. Regardless, he exhibited some knowledge on what educational philosophy is, even though he insinuated that such mattered less. Another informant, a Diploma holder, male and with 15 years of experience (Mwendo Secondary School) said this about a philosophy of education:

'Am not very sure. Is it something to do with education being the key? I don't hear much of such.' (Appendix VII: C)

Save for mistaking a philosophy of education for what sounded like a school motto, this informant brought to the fore a crucial point: public awareness. There is a possibility that many citizens, let alone teachers, are unaware of the government's philosophy of education. Granted, this explains why little premium is placed on it by teacher educators, and, by extension their students who later become teachers. Why is the country's philosophy of education left out when schools, for example, display their mottos, missions and visions, as observed by the researcher? Seemingly, they may not be awake to its import. It is imperative that the country deliberately creates enough awareness of its philosophy of education. That which is talked about more often tends to stick, as evidenced by one informant, a graduate female teacher with 2 years of experience, who

thought that a certain policy represented the country's philosophy of education. She of Mwendo Secondary School:

“I have never thought about it. Is it a hundred per cent transition?”

(Appendix VI: C)

There is a high probability that the government gave more attention to the ‘One Hundred per cent Transition Policy’ than it did to its philosophy of education. The said policy was aimed at ensuring enrolment of all children into secondary school regardless of their achievement scores at the primary school level. It received massive publicity, hence stuck in the minds of many. This position is corroborated by another informant who remembers the country's political philosophy more than that of education. This is a graduate female teacher from Mwanzo Secondary School, with 13 years of experience:

‘Am not sure about the ministry of education's philosophy. I know of the Nyayo philosophy of peace, love and unity. I can't remember learning of any, though I studied a course in Philosophy of education. The course was so scary.’ (Appendix V: C)

The Nyayo philosophy referred to was for a long time recited by Kenyan school children, having been incorporated in the national loyalty pledge. The pledge has since been dropped.

When asked about the country's educational philosophy, the teacher from Mwendo Secondary School, previously referred to, replied:

‘Am not sure, though I guess it is related to method. We happen to depend so much on western ideas of educating, more so, from Britain. They colonized us, remember.’ (Appendix VII: D)

From the reply, the informant has a vague idea of educational philosophies. However, she is not convinced that the approaches to educating are appropriate – seeing them as colonial relics. Such an attitude does not augur well for the country, assuming that many other teachers share the view. The fact that Britain colonized Kenya may not be used to judge the appropriateness of her educational philosophies for the latter.

This study held the view that a philosophy of education, however good, was of little value if it remained unknown to the people. It was not a coincidence that almost all informants interviewed lacked knowledge on the same. Accordingly, a way has to be found where all teachers will understand and constantly make reference to it in the course of their practice, much more, align it to clear educational philosophies.

The most telling information came from teachers who thought that philosophy of education was an optional, esoteric phenomenon that could all the same have been avoided altogether. A graduate female teacher with 15 years of experience, when asked about the educational philosophy of Kenya, responded thus:

‘It’s so confusing. First, you asked me about the philosophy of education in Kenya. Now you are talking about educational philosophy. You remind me of Prof(name omitted). I hated those things, especially metaphysics! We were keener on our teaching subject areas.’ (Appendix X: D)

The foregoing teacher begs many questions. How was she taken through the education course such that she hated it that much? What is the place of education courses, for instance Philosophy of Education (which the interviewed teacher seems to be referring to)? Is it possible that many other students shared her sentiment, effectively ignoring ‘those things’ which, in actual sense, are educational courses that are meant to help them

deliver? Despite her ignorance concerning the philosophy of education that guided the Kenya's education system, she remained in the dark as to the theories that guided teaching and learning.

One may deduce her conception of education as the impartation of knowledge from various subjects taught. Granted, such a narrow conception is unhelpful since if followed, every teacher may end up confining themselves to their subject areas, effectively defeating the purpose of societal goals of education. A country's education must be united by a common philosophy statement which points to the vision of the society. Such a philosophy will influence educational philosophies, thereby directing teachers on how to proceed with practice. A teacher that lacks knowledge on the same cannot be expected to help facilitate achievement of desired outcomes.

The most interesting part, however, came from those teachers who had some knowledge about the country's philosophy of education. Despite their awareness, this study observed a general lack of conviction. And where some existed, there lay nuances of frustration. Consider the teacher from Mwito Secondary School, a male graduate with 29 years of experience:

'Education for self-reliance is our philosophy.' (Appendix IX:

C)

About Kenya's educational philosophy, he replied:

“I can’t remember any. However, there is nothing new in education. Same old methods, with little bits of technology here and there. It’s such a farce.’
(Appendix IX: D)

From his response, the informant is evidently stuck in the past. His purported philosophy of education was once held by the country as explicated in earlier parts of this chapter. There is, however, a possibility that successive philosophies of education were never publicized. Further, even the one known to him may not have been contextualized in terms of the accompanying educational philosophies, else he could have remembered. His claim on the lack of dynamism in educational methods implied that he had all along stuck on those methods that he learned at college, and further, that he may not have understood how the methods were related to various educational philosophies. For this study, policy makers ought to ensure that teachers not only get to hear of changes in policies but also participate in the process so that they appreciate the rationale behind the changes. Further, such changes may be made known to them through continuous teacher professional development programmes.

A male teacher from Mwito Secondary School, holding a master’s degree in Education Administration and with 13 years of experience, held the same view as his counterpart in the foregoing response. On the country’s philosophy of education, he said:

“Education for self-reliance was our philosophy. That’s what the 8-4-4 system (of education) was about. Seemingly it was never realized, and that’s why CBC has been introduced. To be frank, no one seems to care about the philosophy of our country’s education. We all agree, however, that education ought to be of good quality and accessible to all.” (Appendix VIII: C)

Such a statement, coming from someone who has furthered his studies in education, cannot be taken lightly. First, the informant correctly captures the philosophy of education that once underpinned the 8-4-4 system. This means that it may have been made public, and that he had some interest in it. Probably, that is why he remembered it. Secondly, he appeared frustrated that no one cared about the country's education philosophy. This might have made him to equally ignore finding out the philosophy underpinning the new CBC. For him, there *was* once a philosophy, but under the 8-4-4 system of education. It did not even occur to him that the philosophy he quoted had been changed twice. Further, it did not come to his attention that the newly introduced CBC has an underlying spirit of self-reliance, despite the fact that its philosophy statement reads differently. About the quality, this study questions how such can be contemplated of a phenomenon that is poorly conceived. Society can only establish the quality of something they well understand, and thereby appropriately designate its role.

The foregoing findings led to the conclusion that many teachers, who are immediate practitioners, had a hazy grasp of educational philosophies. At the minimum, the majority of those interviewed had an implicit utilitarian view of education, just as observed in various government documents. Further, most did not have a personal philosophy of education, let alone its conception, a situation that made nonsense of the wider educational philosophy. Strangely, most education documents featured were generous on articulating purposes of education, but silent on the educational philosophies that guided Kenya's education practice. It is not therefore difficult to see the impossibility of employing education to attain particular purposes, when a country does not have a common, clear understanding of the concept of education. This only leads to a

subjectivist epistemology, yet the principles of the education so espoused are grounded in an objectivist ontology. Should some of the goals be achieved, this study contended, then such may be purely accidental, as evidenced by the concept of a hidden curriculum.

This study held that teachers remain a crucial pillar as far as the education process is concerned. They must therefore fully understand the country's system of education complete with its philosophy and appropriate educational theories. This will help them identify or even innovate appropriate educational practices that will lead to the achievement of set goals, much more, raise a red flag when they are not well facilitated to implement the curriculum appropriately. The context in which policy interacts with practice is critical, as evidenced by the foregoing disparity between the government's stated philosophies and the ones on the ground. It is likely to be among the contributors to lack of achievement of the goals of education, ostensibly the one of developing a skilled human resource. But this is as far as teachers were concerned. For further understanding, the study equally sought to examine what students thought about the education they experienced.

4.5 Conception of Education by Students

The study sought to find out student understanding of the concept of education, with an aim of establishing if there was consistency in such understanding among policy makers, teachers and the very students. This was important since a common understanding of the phenomenon would enhance chances of achieving whatever goal that is set. A short questionnaire (Appendix II) was administered to students wherein they filled their

responses. Five aspects were of utmost importance: reason for attending school; individual meaning of education; importance of education; career ambition; knowledge on philosophy of education and school motto, mission and vision. The other questionnaire items were simply a paraphrase of these; a bid to guarantee consistency in the responses.

Reasons for Attending School

When asked why they were in school, most of the informants claimed that they aimed at acquiring knowledge and skills, achieving their life goals and meeting their dreams.

Generally, they expressed learning new things as their main drive. One informant, a form four student from Libra Girls, a national school, stood out:

‘I am in school to learn the activities that my parents were unable to teach me. And also to gain the knowledge on how to improve my living standards.’ (Appendix XII: A)

The informants therefore believed that schools provided a unique milieu which could prepare them for their future dreams, goals and careers through provision of knowledge and skills, consequently enhancing their chances of a better life. This was undoubtedly an instrumental view of education.

Meaning of education

When asked their understanding of education, the informants provided different views. For instance, some understood it as a process of acquiring knowledge and skills. They talked of ‘learning’ and ‘receiving’ knowledge and skills in schools. Others resorted to metaphors as illustrated by a form four student from Scorpio Secondary School, an

extra-county school: 'Education is a key to success in life.' (Appendix XIII: B)

However, the one from Libra Secondary (Appendix XII: B) found it hard to summarize the concept of education, and responded thus:

'Education is a key subject that is learnt by many to gain knowledge and skills to improve the living standards.'

Yet, another informant had a more inclusive conception:

'Education is a formal or informal way of inquiring (sic) knowledge and skills.'
(Appendix XIV: B)

Generally, students saw education either as a process or a product. Nevertheless, it was not lost on them that the said concept had a definite purpose – that of preparing them for some future undertaking, ostensibly by way of being skilled and knowledgeable. Such conception was in consonance with the general position of policy makers who subscribed to the utilitarian view of education.

Importance of education

The study sought to find out how students regarded education. Generally, all informants believed that education was important, for it necessitated acquisition of knowledge, skills, and good behaviour, all which guaranteed job opportunities and a better life. One informant, for instance, stated thus:

'Education enables one to have the opportunity to better his or her life. Education also enhances a student's confidence and values like respect.'
(Appendix XIV: C).

Yet, another informant had their own view of the importance of education:

'Education can make you famous.... to be identified worldwide.' (Appendix XIII: C).

The latter informant views the importance of education far beyond material benefit. All in all, the informants paint a hopeful picture wherein education – in its various conceptions – is still a relevant good, ostensibly in instrumental terms.

Career Ambition and the Role of Schools

Human beings are known to harbour ambitions. It is even more applicable to students, for most are in their primeval days when future lives and livelihoods are incubated. Further, this study has established that education is largely viewed as a formal enterprise often executed by schools. This being the case, the study sought to establish whether students believed that education, and particularly schools, could enable them to dream and fulfill their career aspirations. Instructively, all the informants reported to have some dream career – medical, teaching, accounting, journalism, entrepreneurship, among many others. Further, majority informants believed that their schools were doing enough to prepare them for those careers.

For instance, one informant, with an ambition of becoming an entrepreneur, responded:

‘Yes. This is because we are taught Business Studies and the way of managing business.’ (Appendix XV: F).

Similarly, an accountant by ambition responded:

‘I think school is preparing me well for my career because of the subjects being taught in which (sic) are career subjects.’ (Appendix XIV: F).

But another lot dissented. For instance, an informant from Scorpio Secondary School, an extra-county school, had this to say as far as the preparation at her school was concerned:

‘Actually it is not. In fact in Chemistry, our Chemistry teacher makes me fearful of even answering the question during class time but in other subjects it is preparing me well.’ (Appendix XIII: F)

Still, another one from Aquarius Secondary School, a sub-county school, reported:

‘No. Because sciences are not being done in the laboratory. For example in Chemistry there are more experiments but we carry out only a few.’
(Appendix XVI: F)

If the foregoing responses are anything to go by, one can easily see why there is a need for uniformity in the manner in which education is conceived and practised. Whereas some students are lucky to have their career subjects taught well, others have their hopes dashed owing to inadequate educational experiences. In as much as a student would have wanted to become a Chemistry teacher, for example, their dream gets aborted since their schools do not have the requisite facilities for Chemistry education. In the end, education gains a negative tag – just for this one instance – since it apparently fails in its role of developing the aspiring Chemistry teacher. Yet, in actual sense, education is a human-driven process. This implies that such failure ought to be attributed to agency, for they are the actual drivers of the education process. In a nutshell, education – in whichever construct of the concept – can only stand judgment if its processes are correctly followed through. Then and only then, for example, can one talk of its role such as that of either developing or failing to develop a skilled human resource. If a student can already see that their educational activities are not carried out as conceived and designed, and therefore unable to prepare them for their future careers, what right does anyone have in judging them as failures?

Students' knowledge of the country's philosophy of education, and their school's motto, mission and vision

This study previously made a case for a philosophy of a country's education. It is imperative that all citizens, more so those directly involved in formal education processes, be informed of the prevailing philosophy so that they pull towards one direction. Whereas school mottos can capture any constructive rallying call, their missions and visions must be closely related to their country's philosophy of education; the mission talks of the means to, while the vision points to a given end.

The study observed that students were generally ignorant of the country's philosophy of education. This did not come as a surprise, given that the majority of the teachers previously interviewed were not certain about the same. Further, save for one school, all the others could only remember their school motto; the mission and vision of their respective schools were not on their minds.

Generally, students believed that education was a function of schools. Further, if done right, it contributes to preparing them for their dream careers. For the umpteenth time, the utilitarian view of education resurfaced. Contrary to the assumption of the researcher that some would dismiss education as unimportant, following general public outcry arising from massive unemployment of the educated, the students expressed hope that their future lay in education. For them, education was largely viewed in terms of knowledge and skills acquired through learning experiences at school.

4.6 Summative Reflection on the Various Conceptions of Education

This chapter sought to establish how the Kenyan government, and by extension teachers and students, conceived the idea of education, and how this conception reflected the role that they had assigned education – developing a skilled human resource. Policy documents such as education commission reports, sessional papers, government strategic visions, and a curriculum framework, were analysed. Other sources were video clips that told of the state of education in the country, and a phenomenological study of sampled teachers and students.

Based on the conceptual analysis of the listed sources, it became evident that all parties – government, teachers and students – conceived education in utilitarian terms; an instrument which could be employed to meet particular ends. They viewed it in terms of *knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired in a formal, highly academic environment characteristic of learning institutions – ostensibly schools and colleges*. Regardless of any other expressive goals, they concurred that education was an instrument towards economic empowerment. The study viewed this conception as deficient, given that education is never complete without key dimensions such as the normative and creative ones. Further, the government – through MOEST – viewed education in equal terms with the curriculum, as evidenced by the premium placed on it. Whereas little was said concerning implementation mechanisms, so much was articulated in terms of the curricula fronted, including the merits. Accordingly, it was not surprising that most reforms targeted curricula at the expense of milieu.

Whereas each society conceives education based on its realities, such conception must undoubtedly be tied to the purpose for which the education is prescribed. On this, logic demands consistency between the purposes (often reflected in expected learning outcomes) and the means to achieving such outcomes. Now, the means may include curriculum and method; the former being contemplative, the latter active. Therefore *method*, which should be stretched to include an educational philosophy, educational activities and milieu, largely determines the achievement of the outcomes so specified. Hence, the means – education processes and principles – must be accorded premium by the government if education is to suit the role society assigns it. But the study found otherwise; whereas the government attempted to formulate philosophies of education, these remained unpublicized. Worse, these philosophies of education (general statements reflecting the society's purpose of education) were never accompanied by definite educational philosophies that could guide intelligible education practice, save for the BECF (RoK, 2016) which lined up a number of them.

In essence, any country that designates education as an instrument of national development, for instance the realization of a skilled human resource, must of essence be informed by strong a philosophy of education (Ikuli & Ojimba, 2018). The latter observe that philosophy determines the direction towards which education should go:

Every aspect of education has a philosophic base. Philosophy provides aims for education and these aims determine the curriculum, the methods of teaching as well as the school discipline...education includes philosophy, while philosophy controls and determines the direction of education... This makes it highly imperative to evaluate carefully our educative processes and principles to make it congruent with the nature of the individual and society, as any education that is not founded on good philosophy is doomed. (p.31)

Whereas many agreed that education was instrumental in meeting national goals of development, there was no evidence that the Kenyan society shared a common philosophy of education which could marshal all towards one course. Such a philosophy would obviously reflect the nature of education so espoused, thereby forming a point of reference where evaluation and appraisal can be carried out. In as much as philosophy alone is not a *sufficient condition*, this study reckoned, it was a *necessary* one from which all other plans of actions would flow. But as established, *there was no harmony between the government's presupposed philosophy of education, however inarticulate, and that held by practitioners. Such a rift, the study averred, resulted in a mismatch between theory and practice.* Put differently, it would be futile to even inquire into the effectiveness of classroom activities in developing a skilled human resource, given that the educational theory was in the first place suspect.

The presuppositions embedded in the country's goals of education, all the way from the time Kenya gained political independence, demanded a clear plan of action where education policy would be linked to clear national economic and political ideologies. Whereas policy makers had formulated attractive educational goals and objectives, the study observed, the same could not be said of what transpired in the field. In the end, it is not clear as to what role the various education systems had been designed for given that their implementation was neither satisfactorily supported by the government through adequate funding, nor by practitioners through good grasp of a clear, shared educational philosophy. Atwoli (2020) captures this thought succinctly:

We have been asking for the philosophy of our education system. The answers Covid-19 has revealed are reason enough for us to have a long conversation on why we take our children to school. The first reason seems

to be that to keep them away from their parents to allow them (parents) earn a living. The second reason is more obvious than the first – to have them enter into careers with ‘guaranteed’ income so that they can help us move a rung up on the socio-economic ladder. (Atwoli, 2020, p.31)

The foregoing sentiment is an illustration of the public’s state of uncertainty over what their education is meant for, given its unclear philosophy. Ndemo (2020) corroborated the same:

Since 1964 when the Ominde Commission drafted the first education policy and other subsequent documents, we as a country have never had it right regarding the role of education in our society. It needs to be redefined starting from universities by developing relevant curriculum and cascade it downwards. (Ndemo, 2020, p. 17)

For Ndemo, the education curriculum largely reflects the role of education. Granted, the context of this study would envisage a curriculum capable of laying the foundation for development of various skills and competences needed to realize resourceful individuals. But as the study established, a good curriculum alone is not sufficient until political and economic systems make provision for its full implementation.

In retrospect, this study viewed the foregoing situation as a contrast of what the government held as the role of education, much less, the teachers’ existential conception of the same. Pursuant to that, a *metaphysical problem* arose. According to Descartes (2008), a metaphysical problem occurs when data concerning the common belief that people hold over an issue differ. Resolution of such a problem, Descartes argues, lies in establishing a theory which does away with the conflict by either reconciling the conflicting data, or disproving one of the data sets. This study held that the conflict between the government’s idealistic policy of education, and the teachers’ subjectivist conceptions, could be resolved through a deliberate reconciliation of the differing

positions. Until then, whichever role education is assigned would not hold unless everyone understood it, and consequently espoused common means towards facilitating its fulfillment.

In summary, this study concluded that the government was focused more on the desirable output of education than the education process, hence it lost the opportunity to think through the input required to achieve educational goals. Ideally, education is a development enabler as well as a product of development (Mwabukojo, 2019). This cyclic relationship may have eluded the government so that it only focused on what education could do for the country, without considering that the same education had first to be nurtured through allocation of resources – infrastructure, learning materials and well prepared teachers. And for this to happen, it would require a foolproof politico-economic ideology from which education policies would flow. National ideology determines education policies, hence, curriculum (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986).

It was unacceptable, the study observed, that the country kept on missing its major goals of education all the way from the independence era. The failed actualization of the promises made then – alleviation of poverty, disease and ignorance (RoK, 1965) – must be called to question through interrogation of this phenomenal historicity. The fact that certain shortcomings were persistently identified across times in various government reports on education, the study contended, calls for a separate inquiry into the actual steps that were taken to remedy them, as much as one may want to question the role of education. The mere fact that education policy makers, teachers and students did not share the country's philosophy of education – not even in principle – implied subjective

epistemologies. Granted, the latter could not guarantee uniform and effective development of a skilled human resource since each employed conceptions and consequent practices which they believed worked for them. Such uncoordinated approaches made nonsense of the national goals of education, consequently casting doubts as to whether education could play, at the minimum, the instrumental role arrogate to it.

CHAPTER FIVE

TOWARDS VIABLE CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AN EDUCATION FOR SKILLED HUMAN RESOURCE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sought to achieve research objectives number 3 and 4 of this study. The third objective was to evaluate the potential of Kenya's education as far as development of a skilled human resource is concerned, while the fourth one aimed to propose viable criteria that would enhance development of the said skills. The chapter based on the fact that analysis of a problem alone is not sufficient, hence the study's attempt to prescribe a possible solution. Accordingly, the study examined three systems of education that Kenya has formulated since independence – the 7-4-2-3 system, the 8-4-4 system and the incoming 2-6-6-3 system – with an aim of analyzing how they intended to develop a skilled human resource, why they missed this target (in the case of the first two systems), and what could be done to remedy the situation.

5.2 An Evaluation of the Success of Kenya's Education Systems in Providing Skilled Human Resource since Independence

This study sought to interrogate the suitability of Kenya's education in achievement of the goal of developing a skilled human resource. Its confinement to basic education was informed by the assumption that the latter is foundational, so that any further success in educational outcomes is determined by the success at this level. Consequently, there must obtain clarity and consistency in terms of educational thought, policy and action

(Barrow & Wood, 2006) at this preparatory level so that consequent ones, for instance the tertiary level, build on it. The study therefore endeavoured to understand the thinking behind the education policies that resulted in the education systems explored, before embarking on critique and appraisal. The reconstruction paradigm, as fronted by Rorty (1984) was adopted so that the study sought to understand the systems' underlying philosophies of education *vis à vis* their context, and the interconnection of the educational thoughts and actions. This made way for the reconstruction of the whole presupposed philosophies of education for understanding and interpretation. Instructively, a deep understanding of the concepts, arguments and ideas around a given topic is necessary for insight and critique (Ruitenberg, 2010).

The study set to critically analyse the Kenyan systems of education since independence, following persistent complaints that the systems had failed to satisfactorily meet the educational goal of developing a skilled human resource necessary for national development (Puerta *et al*, 2018; Wanjohi, 2011; RoK, 2012; RoK, 2005). Further, many educational reviews had been done but, unfortunately, failed to address the fundamental principles that underpinned the systems. As such, it was impossible for one to evaluate the education systems in terms of their presupposed action plans (Nasongo & Musungu, 2009). This being the case, this study analysed the systems, with a focus on their goal of developing a skilled human resource. The analysis centred on the expected learning outcomes once their curricula were implemented; the government's presupposed plan of achieving the outcomes; and the actual implementation, together with its impact on society. Further, the reasons that led to the failure to achieve a skilled human resource

were identified, hence solutions were suggested accordingly. The latter resulted in criteria that could inform successful development of an education that would promote skilled human resource in Kenya.

5.2.1 The 7-4-2-3 Education System: Promises, Achievements and Pitfalls

This system was formulated in 1964 by the first post-independent government, following recommendations from the Kenya Education Commission (Ominde, 1964). It comprised 7 years of primary education (Standard 1-7), four years of lower secondary (Forms 1-4), 2 years of advanced high school (Form 5 and 6), and a minimum of 3 years of university education. The commission identified 9 purposes of education as captured in Chapter 4 of this study, which could be summarized as: preparing adaptable individuals capable of employing modern methods of production in serving the needs of the Kenyan society, hence contributing towards national economic development (Ominde, 1964). Further, the commission identified 6 broad goals of education, among them individual and national development – which is the subject of this study. Instructively, the system was to replace the colonial one which was described as racially stratified, non-inclusive, and insensitive to the immediate needs of native Kenyans (Wanjohi, 2016; Otiende & Sifuna, 1994). It majorly aimed at restoring Kenya's African identity, building national unity and creating a skilled workforce that would replace both the departed and existent expatriates. As follow-up action, the government developed Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on *African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya* (RoK, 1965), representing the national blueprint on social, economic and political

development. According to the document, Kenyans had no voice in the outgoing colonial government, and had remained *uneducated*, untrained and inexperienced. Implicit, the new government sought to empower them through education and training, hence development of a skilled human resource that would enable them fully participate in the country's economic development, among other roles.

Moving forward, the government retained some expatriate teachers, banned racism in schools, began expanding schools and offered bursaries to boost enrolment (Simiyu, 2001). It further initiated free universal primary school, embarked on in-service training of primary school teachers, and, in 1966, formed the Kenya Institute of Education (the current KICD) which made way for a common syllabus and examinations (Mackatiani *et al*, 2016). A local examination body – The East African Examinations Council – was established, replacing the British-based Cambridge exams body. Under the latter, the Kenya Junior Secondary Examination (KJSE) was introduced for students at Form 2 in *Harambee* schools (9th Grade) so that they would, if they wished (majority did), join the labour market, as the rest proceeded to government schools. *Harambee* schools were those learning institutions established through communal efforts, hence, given their deficiency in both human resource and learning facilities, did not go beyond the 9th Grade. Actually, allowing students to opt out at this level was by default a quick way of boosting the country's human resource.

Now, the foregoing plans and educational activities impacted upon the country differently. On the positive side, the system managed to develop some manpower,

however elementary, as evidenced by the government's assertion that all vacant positions in the civil service were filled within ten years (RoK, 1976). This would be confirmed by the resultant unemployment of those who continued to be educated under the system (Mse, 2016). Whereas the government continued to accommodate expatriates, especially in areas requiring specialist knowledge and skills, most common cadre administrative jobs were occupied by native Kenyans. This partly saw the achievement of the government's aspiration of *Kenyanization*.

Despite the noted achievement, the study contended that the level of skills realized then could not be vouched as adequate, given the context in which education and training was conducted. For example, a class seven leaver, or Form Two finalist, could not have had similar capabilities like those individuals who completed secondary education. This, the study argued, was a systemic problem since the education system contemplated education levels that were both terminal in themselves, as well as preparatory for higher ones. A case in point was the KJSE examination offered at Grade 9 (Form 2), wherein learners would either proceed to government secondary schools (for the case of those in *Harambee* schools), or join sections of the labour market that could accommodate lower level knowledge and skills. Reportedly, many individuals saw academic education (attendance of school) as the key to success, following testimony by those who landed jobs ostensibly in urban areas (Inyega *et al*, 2021). This situation, the study argued, contributed to the uncritical consumption of the education so offered until the time unemployment levels became unbearable.

The foregoing argument led the study to delineate the negative outcomes of the 7-4-2-3 education system. First, it was unresponsive to the dynamics in the labour market (Owino, 1997). Second, it passed as elitist and developed individualistic tendencies in its products, the latter being arrogant and discriminative of blue-collar and pink-collar jobs (Simiyu, 2001; Sifuna, 2008; Inyega *et al*, 2021). Sifuna (1976) observed that vocational disciplines had no place in the then Kenyan secondary schools. Indeed, Gachathi Report (RoK, 1978) indicted the system for its lack of capability, time and motivation to teach societal values. Further, the performance of the civil service towards the end of 1970 was reported to be poor in quality and efficiency, with staff being undisciplined and unethical (Ong'era & Musili, 2019). Third, the resultant rural-urban migration in search of wage employment in the modern sector of the economy hampered rural development, yet the latter had been one of the aspirations of the post-colonial government (RoK, 1978). Fourth, a lot of wastage resulted, following the selective nature of the system wherein only a few individuals qualified for placement in the formal economy. Fifth, those who got 'educated' ostensibly up to the primary level made up the majority of the human resource, hence it was safe to speculate that the Kenyan human resource was generally inadequately skilled.

The foregoing situation would be reflected much later in a report on Capacity Assessment and Rationalization of the Public Service (CARPS) in 2015, which found out that majority of the civil service was aged (definitely, products of the early education system), and struggled to perform certain functions, owing to their low levels of

education and lack of requisite skills such as proficiency in information technology (Ongiri, 2015; RoK, 2017).

Looking at the whole picture, this study made several observations. First, *the philosophy underpinning the first post-independence education system – 7-4-2-3 – was not explicit.* Apparently, the major goal of educating – never mind the ones stipulated in the Ominde Report (R0K, 1964) – was to develop human resource that would replace the departed colonial workforce. This, accordingly, had a tinge of expediency so that the quality of education offered could not have been a priority. It is instructive that education policies were in their early days of being developed and implemented, a classic definition of ‘work in progress’, hence, not much was in place to appraise the education system . One can therefore safely speculate that teachers were largely untrained, and dealt with learners who were eager to pick only elementary knowledge that could afford them employment in government installations.

Second, majority citizens were living subsistence lives so that they could not immediately discover the need for formal education. Compounded with socio-cultural aspects such as gender inequality in education (hitherto a challenge in some parts of the country) and traditional lifestyles, it is highly likely that many did not acknowledge the importance of formal education. Given such a situation, the possibility of having low enrolment was high, hence, those who attended school felt self-entitled to any opportunities regardless of their competence. Granted, it is not difficult to see why the resultant products of the education system would not become adequately skilled.

Accordingly, two things would likely ensue. One, the many cycles of education – primary, lower secondary, advanced high school, and university – were likely a deterrent to many learners. Being relatively new to formal education, and not used to the benefits of such, individuals would likely get fatigued by the time they completed lower secondary school. Put differently, there was likely no major motivation as to why an individual would go through all those cycles when one cycle alone (7 years of primary school) would guarantee them some job opportunity. This study argued that the resultant low education, hence incompetence, would reverberate across sectors of the economy, effectively casting doubts to the quality of the education system. Two, their attitudes of elitism and self-entitlement could not allow them to think beyond government employment, a position that explains why they thronged urban centres, resulting in masses of unemployed town dwellers while at the same time causing a shortage of productive workforce in their largely agrarian rural economies.

Owing to sustained indictment of the 7-4-2-3 system of education, a government taskforce – Gachathi Commission, 1976 – recommended its replacement (RoK, 1976). This would be followed by another recommendation from a Commission Report referred to earlier (The Mackay Commission of 1981), which then made way for a new order – the 8-4-4 system of education (RoK, 1981). Worth noting, the latter reduced the cycles of the education structure from four to three, in a way enhancing transition as well as the terminal completeness of the cycles.

5.2.2 The 8-4-4 System of Education: Promises, Achievements and Pitfalls

The 8-4-4 system of education was rolled out in 1985 to make up for the shortcomings of the 7-4-2-3 one (RoK, 1981; Mse, 2016). It comprised 8 uninterrupted years of study at primary school (Standard 1-8), 4 years at secondary school (Forms 1-4), and a minimum of 4 years at the university level. The system of education had a broad goal of preparing youth to participate in national development by equipping them with technical and vocational education, so that anyone graduating at whichever level could find a productive venture (Mse, 2016; Wanjohi, 2011). To make this possible, the government, through MOEST, formulated curriculum content in favour of technical education, and emphasized continuous assessment tests and practical engagements in the learning process.

The primary level had 10 objectives of education, the fifth one being the focus of this study: acquisition of suitable basic foundation for the world of work in the context of economic and manpower needs of the nation (KIE, 2002; Mse, 2016). This level offered 14 learning areas – English, Mathematics, Kiswahili, Mother Tongue, Agriculture, Home Science, Art, Craft, Music, Religious Education, Geography, History, Civics and Physical Education. The secondary level had 6 main objectives, three being directly relevant to this study: preparing the learner to positively contribute to the development of the society; enabling the learner to choose with confidence and **cope with vocational education** after school; and acquisition of attitudes of national patriotism, self-respect, **self-reliance**, cooperation, **adaptability**, sense of purpose, **integrity and self-discipline**, respect and consideration for others, loyalty and **service to home, society and nation**

(emphasis mine). A total of 28 learning areas were offered, including English, Kiswahili, German, French, Mathematics, Music, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Physical Science, Biological Science, Geography, History and Government, Commerce, Economics, Metalwork, Woodwork, Electricity, Power Mechanics, Typewriting with Office Practice, Building and Construction, Art and Design, Home Science, Social Education and Ethics, Religious education and Physical Education.

Generally, the graduates of any of the education levels were required to gain skills for self-sufficiency and productivity in agriculture, industry and commerce, courtesy of the technical, scientific, practical, and lifelong education and knowledge offered (RoK, 1981; Inyega *et al*, 2021). This reflected the philosophy of self-reliance established in the previous chapter of this study, wherein individuals were expected to creatively and innovatively earn a living without necessarily depending on direct employment by the government. Overall, the study viewed the arrangement as a good vision, subject to its implementation. Interestingly, many reports – both from government and private entities – would later condemn the system, mostly dwelling on its shortcomings. For instance, it was described as unnecessarily wide, hence, burdening both teachers and learners. Further, it was highly theoretical and examination-oriented so that its products held certificates that were not backed by adequate knowledge, skills and competencies (RoK 1988; RoK 2005; RoK 2012; Mse 2015; Inyega *et al*, 2021).

Eventually, the Prof. Douglas Odhiambo Commission report (RoK, 2012) recommended the replacement of the 8-4-4 education system, paving way for the incoming 2-6-6-3

system that is modelled on a Competency-based Curriculum (CBC) (RoK, 2015). This system, officially rolled out in 2019, comprises 2 years of pre-primary education (not provided for in previous systems), 6 years of primary education, 6 years of secondary education (3 years of junior, and 3 years of senior school), and 3 years of university education. The main purpose of this system is to inculcate skills and competencies that define a truly skilled human resource. Implicitly, the question of inadequate skills among the Kenyan labour force could no longer be ignored.

In retrospect, the 8-4-4 system of education was bound to fail owing to lack of a definite sustainable programme of funding. Whereas the system had a plausible goal – developing productive individual independent of government employment – it lacked the requisite means (read method) of achieving the goal. It is also instructive that its reduction of learning cycles from 4 (under the 7-4-2-3 system) to 3 (the 8-4-4 structure) was a positive step towards enhancing transition. However, the benefits anticipated to accrue from the move went unrealized since majority of learners dropped out after the first cycle owing to the cost-sharing requirement. Further, inadequate content and pedagogical knowledge among teachers, especially in technical subjects such as woodwork, metal work, power mechanics, and art and design, among others, meant that even those learners that completed the second cycle (secondary education), on a large scale, left school without developing the expected learning outcomes.

The foregoing state of affairs, this research argues, was informed by a warped philosophy that could not reconcile the goals of education, the methods of achieving the

goals, and the methods of assessing whether the goals had been achieved or not. If schools lack the necessary equipment for a particular subject, for instance in metal work, it follows that examiners cannot set tests on practical skills. Instead, theoretical testing will be their recourse. Consequently, individuals will leave school unprepared in terms of their capability to either directly apply the knowledge and skills acquired for survival or train in specific trades. Given such circumstances, a change in the system of education – in a bid to remedy the situation – is the most unreasonable decision that a government can do; yet, that is exactly what Kenya did. It is tantamount to dumping a car that has broken down as a result of improper maintenance, in favour of a new one whose costs of running are equally prohibitive.

5.2.3 The 2-6-6-3 System of Education: Prospects and Pitfalls

Following the supposed failure of the 8-4-4 system of education, the government, through MOEST, launched the 2-6-6-3 competency-based system of education (CBC). Under it, learners are supposed to undergo a 2 years preschool education; 6 years primary school education; 3 years junior secondary education; 3 years senior secondary education; and at least 3 years of university education. Instructively, the major goal of the education system is to nurture every learner's potential (RoK, 2016). Here, schools are expected to identify individual learner's interests and potential and assist in their development through appropriate learning environments. Instructively, the philosophy of the education system is explicitly stated in the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 (RoK, 2029), namely provision of holistic, quality and inclusive education and training for transformation to a knowledge economy, social cohesion and sustainable development.

Whereas it reads well, this study faulted it as ornamental since the promoters of the system have been overly emphatic on development of employable *skills* than acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and competencies. Put differently, learners are supposed to be aligned to certain pathways that are more definitive of specific careers than creation of useful knowledge (which typifies a knowledge economy). Again, the economic situation of the country may not support the education system, given that majority citizens cannot afford the requirements of the education system. It is common knowledge that quality goes hand in hand with adequate provision of the necessary learning resources. But given the absence of the latter, the country's education is not only likely to suffer quality issues but lack of inclusion as well. Already, most parents are decrying the long list of requirements which schools keep on demanding (Akala, 2021). Further, most schools – especially in rural areas and slum settlements – suffer inadequate facilities such as electricity, reprographic equipment and stationery. This implies inequality, hence contradicts the country's philosophy of education that vouches for inclusion. The less said about values the better, for the latter is best taught through habituation and modeling. On this, it is not difficult to see why social cohesion may not obtain in an environment rife with inequalities and bad models. In a nut shell, an education system alone, viewed in the narrow sense of a progressive curriculum framework, cannot amount to anything unless supported by other societal institutions such as the government, the economy and the family.

Still on the said philosophy statement, however generic, one finds difficulties linking it to a specific educational philosophy. Put differently, the major goal of CBC is to

actualize the potential of each learner. This, accordingly, should be underpinned by the philosophy of pragmatism which bases on learning by doing (Khasawneh, Miqgad & Hijaz, 2014), as well as the understanding that what works for one learner may not be the case for the other. In short, individualized teaching and learning is critical, hence, the philosophy statement should have been specific to the learner so as to provide direction to the educational activities expected. This study held the position that quality, holistic and inclusive education applies to any serious education system anywhere, and, as such, says nothing about a specific education system such as CBC.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the government has rolled out the 2-6-6-3 education system in earnest. In a bid to achieve the goal of nurturing individual potential, the system lines up several learning areas at different levels. The pre-primary one (not present in the older systems) has 5: Language Activity, Mathematical Activity, Environmental Activity, Psychomotor and Creative Activity, and Religious and Moral Activity. Moving up, the junior secondary one has 9 in lower primary, while 10 (with an extra optional one) at upper primary school. The lower primary level has Literacy, Kiswahili Language Activity/Kenya Sign Language for those with hearing impairment, English Language Activities, Indigenous Language Activities, Mathematical Activities, Environmental Activities, Hygiene and Nutrition Activities, Religious Education and Life Skills Activities, and Movement and Creative activities. The upper primary section offers English; Kiswahili or Kenya Sign Language; Home Science; Agriculture; Science and technology; Mathematics; Religious, Moral and Life skills Education; Creative Arts; Physical and health Education; and Social Studies.

Of note is the high number of learning areas offered, a clear contradiction to one of the reasons that informed the departure from the outgoing 8-4-4 system – an overloaded curriculum. Further, one of the selling points of CBC is the inculcation of the 21st century skills and competencies, with the most overarching one being digital literacy. Surprisingly, this is not listed among the learning areas, but indicated as an appendage where it is stated that teachers will employ information and communication technology tools across all teaching. Actually, there is no guarantee that such will take place, and, even so, the threshold of such ICT employment is not stipulated. Instructively, one of the shortcomings of most teachers is their lack of digital literacy skills (Mwang'ombe, 2021). It is puzzling how they will offer what they do not have, let alone the provision of ICT infrastructure in all the schools.

Again, a new aspect – parental engagement – has been roped in the education system so that children are provided with assignments that require collaboration with their parents. Whereas a good thing, this aspect makes an assumption that all children have readily available parents, and, that such are equally capable of providing the required assistance. This study viewed this position as a major oversight on the part of MOEST, hence, emphasized the vitality of a sound philosophy of education that unequivocally pronounces itself on the purpose of schools. Schools are so by virtue of specific learning experiences that distinguishes them from homes and kindred spaces (Barrow & Woods, 2006). Accordingly, there runs a risk of teachers relegating their work to parents in the name of parental involvement, never mind the willingness and competency of the latter.

Further, the fact that learner-teacher ratio is high, yet CBC requires intensive individual learner attention, gives teachers more reasons to outsource their work to parents. The net effect, therefore, is that those children without close parental support (such as orphans, learners in boarding schools, those with uncaring parents/guardians, and those from illiterate or even economically unstable parents) will be left to their own devices, hence negatively affecting the expected learning outcomes. The result will be what the country has perennially been running away from by way of tweaking education systems: incompetence, unemployment, inequalities and moral rot. All said, this study could not write off the 2-6-6-3 system completely, given that it was still in its formative stages, and that most of the identified shortcomings stood a chance of being remedied. Even so, the situation hitherto did not promise better learning outcomes.

From the foregoing reconstruction of the three systems of education, it became clear that things were not working out right. Instructively, various reports had persistently indicted the systems for their incapacity to facilitate achievement of national goals, ostensibly development of a skilled human resource. Worth noting, education in Kenya was conceived metaphorically as the 'key' to success, yet the 'educated' largely remained unemployed (Cunningham, 2006). For Cunningham, this state of affairs resulted from incoherent policies, a clash in practices, and the little hope that attended the whole education enterprise. The current study, accordingly, viewed the obtaining situation to be reflective of what Barrow & Woods (2006) described as the confusion of the descriptive and normative character of education. For Barrow and Woods, there was a difference between being 'educated' and being 'well-educated', hence, any individual

contemplating education proper was best advised to consider how the latter could be achieved.

Similarly, R. S. Peters (Peters 1969;1972), as previously noted, addresses the concept of education, observing that it cannot be captured in one sentence. Just like biologists find it hard to define ‘life’, hence, resort to listing its definitive characteristics, Peters elects to enumerate three *criteria* which any process must fulfil for it to be called *education*. These are: transmission of something worthwhile to individuals who become committed to it; involvement of knowledge and understanding via a cognitive perspective, the former not being inert; and employment of acceptable means of transmission. All these imply the aspect of quality which, accordingly, calls to question the manner in which education systems are conceived and implemented. The study argued that a good curriculum, on its own, would not be helpful without an instrumental environment for implementation (milieu). Metaphorically speaking, it would be like a ship on land. This lack of agency, the study argued, was the genesis of the elusive skilled human resource.

Indeed, various gaps in skills were identified in a World Bank Survey Report titled *Skills towards Employment and Productivity (STEP)* (Puerta et al, 2018), where a total of 509 firms in urban areas of Kenya were surveyed between 2016 and 2017. Accordingly, respondents indicated that many workers lacked cognitive, technical and socio-emotional skills, and occupied jobs that did not match their qualifications. The latter position meant that the workers’ skills could not be applied to their jobs (hence viewed as unskilled, *in situ*), nor could they access on-job training opportunities for growth

(What will they build on?). The Report singled out advanced computer skills for white-collar workforce, and foreign language skills (apart from English) for the blue-collar one, as the most significant of all skill gaps. Further, innovative firms decried a dearth of practical experience, noting that technical and vocational training institutes produced graduates who did not meet the required skills. The same position had been reported by a 2013 World Bank Enterprise Survey (World Bank, 2014) which observed that 30% of Kenyan firms reeled from inadequately skilled workforce that hampered its operations. Whereas this study did not focus on tertiary education, it held an assumption that success at the tertiary level was largely determined by the effectiveness of basic education.

But why the persistent failure, despite changes in education systems? This study argued that unless the weak links were identified, successive reforms in education – however necessary – would not yield much. Chances that even the incoming 2-6-6-3 system of education would fail were high if previous shortcomings were not going to be addressed. For instance, the outgoing 8-4-4 system of education was founded on the premise that it would emphasize technical subjects, employ continuous assessment as the main mode of evaluation, and adopt practical engagement throughout the learning process. Whereas the reduction of the education cycles (from four, under the 7-4-2-3, to three in the 8-4-4 one) may have enhanced transition within the basic education level, the resultant secondary school leavers were found to be largely deficient in the required skills and competencies. As discussed before, the plan remained a pipe dream owing to the elevation of theoretical learning at the expense of the much touted experiential learning.

In the final analysis, this study observed several weaknesses of the featured education systems.

First, education was narrowly conceived by policy makers, and subjectively understood by practitioners. This metaphysical problem resulted in all manner of practices, for instance the pursuit of top grades in examination at the expense of skills acquisition (Amutabi, 2003; Cunningham, 2006). Further, the equation of education to schooling, as exemplified through expansion of schools (mistaking quantity for quality) (Otiende & Sifuna, 1994) and hiring of unqualified teachers (Inyega *et al*, 2021) the way it happened after independence cast doubts as to what the said education aimed at. This view of education (read schooling) as a gate pass to certain goods (employment) probably drew the government away from considering the issues of quality, much more, any other dimensions that education presupposed. Most likely, expediency was pursued at the expense of efficiency, hence, the *rationale* behind the whole education venture could not be understood. Things were not better under the 8-4-4 system where teachers did not share the government's philosophies of education, making them pursue ends that were subjectively held. As adduced earlier, performance grades arising from theoretical examinations were pursued at the expense of practical skills and competencies. Further, the government did not adequately retool the teachers for the new curriculum, much more, failed to equip schools with requisite learning facilities as established earlier. The latter case is hot on the heels of CBC.

Second, the government's erroneous equation of education to the curriculum, and consequently, the syllabus, appears to have contributed to the elusive goal of developing a skilled human resource. From the previous reconstruction of past education systems, it occurred that little was said concerning the philosophy of education, principles guiding educational activities, and the enablers of education. On the contrary, so much was provided in terms of the learning areas (just like the current CBC) that learners were to be subjected to within the school environment. According to Cunningham (2006), a focus on one part of the education process implies exclusion of others hence negative consequences. For instance, lack of a common understanding of the purpose of education made teachers focus only on instruction in their various subjects, without linking them to others (the concept of transfer) or even relating them to the outside world. Hence, for Cunningham, the cognitive aspect of the curriculum – performance scores, assessment and theories of learning – would become the target of evaluation and reforms since this is what education meant to the policy makers.

This study concurred with Cunningham, and argued that a curriculum, let alone an aspect of it, was not sufficient for achievement of any goal of education. Whereas necessary, it would only work if it is understood by the implementers, and resourced accordingly. The study further observed that whereas the initiators of the first ever post-independent system of education would be forgiven owing to their supposed naiveté, much more, the circumstances surrounding a new political order, the same could not be said of the movers of both the 8-4-4 and 2-6-6-3 systems. Instructively, the 8-4-4 system was introduced 23 years after independence (RoK, 1988), while CBC came after a

whole 45 years. By then, the policy makers should have learnt from previous experiences so that they prepared teachers for the new systems. As it were, most of the technical subjects introduced in 1985 lacked qualified teachers (Mse, 2016; RoK, 1988), just like the new ones under CBC (Akala, 2021; Koskei & Chepchumba, 2020). Further, learning facilities – laboratories, workshops, kitchens – and learning materials were unbudgeted for, hence, the practical-oriented technical and vocational subjects could not be taught as required. It is no wonder that the whole implementation process under the 8-4-4 system turned overly theoretical, with teachers focusing on academic knowledge only, while some subjects being dropped altogether owing to lack of expertise and learning materials (Korir, 2016; Gikungu *et al*, 2014). Consequently, individuals and government reports called for the overhauling of the curriculum, in total disregard of the challenges that attended its implementation. Consider the following sentiment by Amutabi (2003, p. 136):

The 8-4-4 system of education introduced in 1985 remains the most radical and perhaps *mindless* change in education in Kenya since independence. It has already caused great devastation to Kenya that even if it were changed today, the toll on the Nation will be felt for many years to come.

Whereas this study did not agree that the said change was radical (the colonial regime had advocated technical and vocational education as early as 1909) (Schilling, 1980), it concurred that the change was not well thought out. As argued before by Inyega *et al* (2021), the reforms were inconsistent with the then prevalent economic state of the country. Instructively, Kenya was undergoing economic hardships occasioned by donor fatigue and the Structural Adjustment Programme initiated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, whereupon the country was compelled to cut down on its

expenditure, including on education. Further, the Mackay Commission (RoK, 1981) had recommended sharing of education costs between parents and the government, implying that parents were to fund part of the expensive education system. Curiously, this state of affairs perfectly explains the circumstances under which the 2-6-6-3 system of education has been rolled out. Unless something different happens, the study contends, one is justified to cast doubts on the success of CBC.

The foregoing exposition, the study argued, further explains why curriculum alone, or even education policies, are not enough unless tied to the socio-economic ideology of the country. This is to say that the success of curriculum implementation depends on cultural as well as economic factors. Culturally, Kenyans had been socialized to trust academic education more than the technical/vocational one (Cunningham, 2006; Gikungu & Thinguri, 2014). Vocational disciplines were rated lowly and seen as a preserve of failures. As a matter of fact, primary school dropouts were encouraged to join Village Polytechnics, never mind the negative connotation of the term 'village'. According to Onono (1976), the term 'Village Polytechnics' had come to refer to low-cost post-primary training centres situated in rural areas and catering for primary school leavers that would become rural handymen. It is not therefore difficult to see how technical and vocational education, meant to develop skills, would be hard to sell.

The economic factor needs no belabouring; the government's failure to view the education system in general and educational policies in particular as offshoots of its economic ideology meant that the resultant education system would equally lack

economic anchorage, hence crumble under financial deprivation. In fact, this study did not establish any evidence of the government's linkage of education to any national ideology or plan all along, until 2008 when Vision 2030 was crafted (RoK, 2008), a vision that presupposed a certain kind of education. Even though, the government did not demonstrate fiscal commitment that would facilitate the education sector to achieve the said vision.

The foregoing situation seemed to play again, given the rollout of the 2-6-6-3 system which different parties questioned the government's ability to finance it, much more, its failure to adequately retool teachers (Owala, 2021; Akala, 2021). This study had previously established that parents were unreliable when it came to the aspect of cost-sharing, yet the competency-based system placed certain demands that had a cost factor. But it is worse at school level where, owing to lack of resources, teachers are being hurriedly trained, have no digital literacy skills, lack content knowledge in some learning areas, hence, are not receptive to CBC (Mwang'ombe, 2021; Momanyi & Rop, 2020). Further, lack of sufficient teaching and learning resources for CBC – computers, projectors, reprographic equipment, smart boards, laboratories, sports and games equipment, among many others – are testimony to the government's inability to fully support the 2-6-6-3 system of education. Apparently, all the country seems to have are the main goals of the education as opposed to clear strategies of achieving the goals.

Concerning the structure of the competency-based education system, the issue of transition is cropping up again given that the third cycle (six years of secondary

education) is divided into two (Junior and Senior Secondary School), effectively presupposing two levels within secondary education (It's no wonder that the system is variedly referred to as 2-6-6-3 and 2-6-3-3-3!). Reading its curriculum framework (RoK, 2015), one gets a feeling that the Junior Secondary School is not terminal but a preparation for the Senior School; yet, it is highly probable that for varied reasons, some learners may not join the Senior School, hence, miss out on the skills and competencies developed at that level. This study was cognizant of the fact that the Senior School had three pathways, and, that the nature of some schools would inhibit learners from discovering their talents which, supposedly, determines their placement in the said pathways. Further, as a matter of speculation, some learners may find it convenient to drop out at the end of Junior Secondary School, now that it seemingly marks the end of some level. Such and kindred psychological hindrances are real, hence, a change of structure requires serious thought whenever reforms are carried out on an education system.

Arising out of the foregoing, the study identified two other reasons hampering development of a skilled human resource in Kenya. One was the poor transition of learners owing to various inhibitions – chief being economic instability; the second was poor implementation. Whereas the latter has herein been canvassed at length, the study endeavoured to reflect on the implication of low levels of education occasioned by school drop-out. As hinted at before, many learners dropped out at various levels when cost-sharing was introduced upon the roll-out of the 8-4-4 system. Ordinarily, low levels of education are known to contribute to low skilling, since the affected learners miss out

on the benefits accrued from the foregone higher levels. For instance, a USAID Report (2014) indicated that the labour youth supply in Kenya was dominated by low levels of education. Out of a labour supply of 14.3 million youth (between 15 and 35 years), 13.1 million (91.6%) had not gone beyond secondary education (basic education). Actually, 4.3 million were primary school dropouts, 5.3 million had dropped out at secondary level, while 3.5 million were secondary school graduates. Only 1.2 million had graduated from tertiary levels.

Implicit, the foregoing situation was representative of the country's human resource situation (barring the older workforce), hence, this study advanced, any conversation around the status of skills was supposed to consider the levels of education attained by the dominant demographics. Evidently, the majority were under basic education level (9.6 million, equivalent to 67%, had not completed secondary school!), implying that development of a skilled human resource was supposed to target this level. Put differently, the low levels of skilling could partly be explained by low transition rates, in as much as the tertiary level (out of the province of this inquiry) contributed to actual training of various job-specific skills.

Going forward, the study argued that the problems identified in the Kenyan systems of education had to be resolved if a skilled human resource was to be realized. Policy issues, economic implications of various systems, and development of teachers was to be prioritized by the government. Further, there was a need for MOEST to critically examine the structure of education, especially with regards to the number of cycles. But as things stood, both past and prevailing systems of education were not capable of *fully*

developing a skilled human resource fit for individual and national development. It is even worse for CBC, given its restrictive nature characterized by boxing children in limited pathways characteristic of training. This study has previously argued that schools are not places for training job-specific skills, but rather, centres that should aim to prepare learners for the ever-changing world of varied possibilities. But more importantly, the government's position of mistaking a system of education (goals, philosophies, policies, curriculum, and milieu) for a curriculum (a single component of the system) continued to be an impediment to quality education. The study argued for a resolution of all the shortcomings, hence proceeded to craft a matrix that could enhance development of a skilled human resource through education.

5.3 Criteria for an Education Instrumental to Development of Skilled Human Resource for Kenya

This study has established 6 major shortcomings in previous systems of education in view of their quest to offer education for a skilled human resource: narrow conception of education that led to subjective educational practices; lack of clarity on the nature and purpose of basic education; inadequate resourcing, both human and material; lack of linkage between the education system and the country's socio-economic ideology; deficient milieu; and low transition rates, especially in situations where the systems had many cycles. In view of the foregoing shortcomings, the study developed a philosophical matrix that offers an analysis and prescription for an education system capable of providing for development of a skilled human resource in Kenya.

To do the above, the research adopted R. S. Peters' analytical method (Hirst and Peters, 1970; Peters, 1969; 1972) wherein he defined education based on its fidelity to certain irreducible minimums; namely, its worthwhileness, its capability to impart new knowledge and understanding, and its allegiance to desirable means of transmission. Subsequently, the study synthesized five criteria, each presented together with a corresponding condition that would make the prescribed criterion workable. These criteria are: the Rationale criterion; the Essentialist criterion; the Instrumental criterion; the Social criterion; and the Authenticity criterion. Accordingly, the conditions were listed respectively thus: generic preparation condition; irreducible curricula experiences; utilitarian condition; edupolitico-economic alignment condition; and functionality condition. It is instructive that the implementation phase of education had been identified as one of the weak links that led to underachievement of the expected learning outcomes. The criteria and their respective conditions, therefore, were a response to the deficits identified in the preceding section, hence, together formed a matrix that represents what the study believed could characterize an education capable of developing a skilled human resource.

5.3.1 The Rationale Criterion

In the first chapter, this study established that societies designated education as the process responsible for preparing their members to take on tasks that contributed to survival and the general good, hence, continuity. Further, that such education was intentional and contemplative of the needs of the societies. As such, this study held that any meaningful education, specifically that which aimed at developing a skilled human

resource, was by essence supposed to be founded on a definite purpose. Ideally, such a purpose presupposed the good that societies desired, and at the minimum, their most pressing, immediate needs. The study summarized all these as the *rationale* behind a given education, accordingly mirroring R. S. Peters' normative criterion of education. But most importantly, it held that the said rationale would serve to remind both the education policy makers and practitioners the need to share in the identified purpose, hence, work towards it. Implicit, the rationale would be the answer to an age old question alluded to in the fourth chapter: what are schools (read education) for?

The study found the foregoing question critical, for upon answering it, one becomes clear of what counts as education, hence focus on it. It further guards education practitioners against subjective and wasteful ventures, much more, helps them to objectively appraise their practice as much as they assess their students. Writing about the concept of education, Peters (1972) was quick to distinguish education from training. For him, training or 'know-how' was not a critical component of knowledge, in as much as the latter counted as part of the criteria for education proper. He further cautioned against the designation of specialist training as education. For him, education involved a rational understanding of a broad spectrum of established systems of knowledge.

Accordingly, the study held that a definite, clear and shared philosophy of education will provide direction for Kenya as far as the rationale for education goes. Concerning clarity of the philosophy, the study advocated the need for the government, through MOEST, to clarify the purpose of schools as far as development of skills went. Indeed, schools were

the major agents in the education process (Brunner, 1960), hence, such clarification would make it possible for identification of the requirements they should meet if they were to perform given roles. Further, it would point to the means required for achievement of the specified goal(s), effectively presupposing the qualification of educators (Barrow & Woods, 2006) and the role of the government in enabling curriculum implementers to acquire requisite material resources. More importantly, the study argued, appropriation of the purpose of schools (read education) would make way for appraisal of educational goals so that only those capable of being fulfilled through schooling are retained. According to Oates (2010), a national curriculum – which informs educational (school) practices – should not be driven by sophisticated functions (read goals). For him, greater problems arise when a country expects too much from schools. Consequently, such expectations would contribute to curriculum overload and, in turn, lead to shallow teaching and learning activities in a bid to meet the plethora of goals.

In her book entitled *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice are Undermining Education*, Diane Ravitch (2010) identifies education, specifically schools, as the key to developing human capital. She further emphasizes the place of a sound philosophy of education:

‘Untethered to any genuine philosophy of education, our current reforms will disappoint us... Our schools will not improve if we continually reorganize their structure and management without regard for their essential purpose...we must first of all have a vision of what good education is. We should have goals that are worthy striving for. Everyone involved in educating children should ask themselves why they educate. What is a well-educated person? What knowledge is of most worth? What do we hope for when we send our children to school? What do we want them to learn and accomplish by the time they graduate from school?’ Ravitch, 2010, p. 113-116.

The foregoing quotation echoed the thesis of this study. A sound educational philosophy provides direction without which the goals of education cannot be met. It is critical to understand why a country sends children to school, when they have an option of educating them from elsewhere. According to Mullis & Martin (2007), schools (ideally) provide an appropriate context that is characterized by a robust curriculum, experienced teachers, effective instruction, adequate resources, willing learners and a society that values education. It follows that if particular goals of education (which schools largely work towards) are to be achieved, then the context described by Mullis and Martin ought to be enabled. A clear philosophy of education presupposes this arrangement, consequently providing direction as concerns educational activities.

Concerning the aspect of a shared philosophy, teachers ought to be in concurrence on their approach to educating, as much as they understand the purpose of such education. This study established that Kenyan teachers, generally, lacked information concerning their country's philosophy of education, and, as a consequent, were not keen on specific educational philosophies. Indeed, such information was hinted at in a few documents, but not given the premium that would make it be connected to any educational philosophy. The net impact of this was a likelihood of idiosyncratic goals and practices, for instance a focus on performance scores through unacceptable means. Barrow and Woods (2006) hold that a teacher cannot arrive at the correct educational activities without giving prior thought (read theory) to the question of what ought to be done:

Teachers ought to think about the why and wherefores of their everyday classroom practices, for the simple reason that such thinking is what is meant by a 'teacher', not in the sense of a 'child minder' or in the

institutional sense of ‘one whose job consists in going daily to a school’ but in a normative sense of a ‘good teacher’. (Barrow and Woods, 2006, p 189)

In light of the foregoing, this study submitted that education practitioners ought to be deliberately brought on board concerning the country’s philosophy of education, once explicitly articulated. Accordingly, it rooted for awareness creation among teachers so that MOEST reminds them of the various philosophies in existence. This would probably prompt them to align their educational activities to the established educational philosophies, hence proceed with informed consciousness. Instructively, the method is informed by what one wants to achieve. If the latter is unclear, the method will equally be haphazard. Prior knowledge of one’s educational philosophies boosts preparation and innovativeness (Ilhan *et al*, 2014). In contrast, low awareness logically hampers focused practice, for in the final analysis, any education is as good as the teacher. In a nutshell, a definite educational philosophy will presuppose certain conditions which, when adhered to, will enable fulfilment of whichever goals of education a country identifies. For the case of this study, it will enable development of a skilled human resource.

In pursuit of the foregoing, this study vouched for an education that was *preparatory* in nature, and less specialist on particular skills alone. Hence, it identified ***generic preparation*** as a condition that complemented the *rationale* criterion. In defense of this position, the study referred to its previous argument that schools were not training grounds for job-specific skills. In any case, tertiary education played the role, but still fell short owing to the shifty demands by industry. In the final analysis, the study held that it would be much profitable if basic education limited itself to development of

certain knowledge and understanding instrumental to pliable minds capable of taking on varied training, hence, contributing to development of a skilled human resource.

5.3.2 The Essentialist Criterion

Upon identification of a definite purpose of education, the study advances that an education capable of developing a skilled human resource has to meet certain minimums in terms of content. These can be likened to Hirst and Peters' (1970) forms of knowledge. Pursuant to the Rationale criterion that conceived education as preparation for further learning, the Essentialist criterion vouches for specific learning areas which, once exposed to, an individual will be in a position to venture into a variety of trades, especially those that do not require high levels of specialization (and these are the majority) or still, be able to see how various fields of knowledge are interrelated, hence, either transfer or apply the knowledge and skills with ease.

The flexibility alluded to in the foregoing is critical, as argued before, given that most careers are transient. Hence, for adaptability and lifelong learning, the education should be premised on the condition of *irreducible curricula experiences*, the latter predicating the essentialist criterion. The minimum curricula should be in form of compulsory but vital learning areas such as languages, mathematics, general science, liberal arts and digital literacy. With such, the learner – regardless of whatever else they choose to specialize in – stand a chance to retool in case they lose their initial trades. This, instructively, is a reflection of what R. S. Peters implied when he talked about ‘a wide spectrum of established systems of knowledge’ (Peters, 1972). Such would enable one to

dabble in various fields, ranging from sciences, liberal arts, humanities and psychomotor activities. Instructively, CBC's approach of confining learners to specific pathways (akin to training), for instance, may become counterproductive in the long run given the transient nature of most careers.

The foregoing position might beg the question as to what skills should be developed by the end of the basic education cycle. To this, the study advanced that a country which believed in the power of education as a contributor to skills development must design each education level with an element of internal completeness. In other words, the end of each level – say primary or secondary level (for the sake of the 8-4-4 system), or Junior Secondary/the Senior one (for the 2-6-6-3 system) should be designed in a manner that affords leavers at whichever level certain skills critical to their resourcefulness. Given that many did not proceed to the tertiary level, it was imperative that certain essential knowledge, skills and competencies requisite for a skilled human resource be identified and integrated in *basic education*. This ought to be the case even with the 2-6-6-3 system which has two sub-cycles within the secondary education level (the Junior and Senior School), divisions that may further hinder transition, hence, make nonsense of the basic education idea. With prior skills, school leavers will find it easier to fit in various work environments, much more, train on the job – where applicable – hence become fully skilled.

Instructively, basic education is ideally essentialist, and concerns itself with those matters which, once learned, facilitate the student to learn all others, whether simple or complex,

which cannot properly be assigned to elementary and secondary education (Koerner, 1959). It presupposes other higher levels which initiate individuals into different specialties. Its basic nature, therefore, makes it so critical that it ought to be formulated and implemented right, if further or higher levels are to make sense.

This study observed that the outgoing 8-4-4 system of education aimed at, among other objectives, making individuals self-reliant without necessarily proceeding to higher levels of education. Through certain disciplines, for instance Home Science and Business Education, one would gain skills instrumental for self-employment. This position informed the introduction of the competency-based 2-6-6-3 system, premised on the fact that the former one had failed to produce competent and self-reliant individuals. Be that as it may, this study found CBC somehow antithetical to the spirit of basic *cum* essential education. For instance, its proposal to have teachers place individual students within paths wherein they displayed potential and affinity (KICD, 2016) was perfectly in order, only that there was no evidence of teachers having been trained on definite parameters which they would employ to identify career paths for students. Just like competitive examinations had acted as gatekeepers to students' future career choices, the same could happen with teachers who would, by default or design, misplace learners in some pathways. Further scrutiny revealed a situation where students would be boxed into some corner so that they only focused on particular areas at the expense of the wider possibilities.

The study, for instance, considered a learner who would be identified as possessing a talent in theatre arts, and consequently steered towards disciplines which would nurture their talent – with exception of those which seemed irrelevant. What would become of such an individual if they did not eventually make headway in the said field? What guarantee did they have that they would be capable of training in an entirely different field to enhance survival? This study argued that *a dearth of a skilled human resource would persist if individuals were not prepared to be adaptable and pliable for retraining, given the dynamism that characterized many occupations*. Basic education, the study contended, should be one that prepared individuals in such a way that they become easily adaptable by being able to take on other careers once theirs became obsolete. Technological and scientific advancements such as robotics, Artificial Intelligence, factory automation, and communication technologies, among many others, have meant that some careers get done away with. A robust basic education should make way for on-job and vocational training, hence, enabling development of a skilled human resource – at least for the lower and middle-level skills that comprise the bulk of the labour force.

Accordingly, the study argued for a basic education that would render individuals ready for any eventuality; for instance being in a position to be trained as machine operators so that the country did not produce a human resource which would be replaced by machines, but one capable of operating the machines once adopted. Implicitly, *basic education should be so only if it lay a foundation for lifelong learning*. According to the European Commission (2000), lifelong learning involves ‘all purposeful learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and

competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective'. Delors (1996) held that lifelong learning went beyond formal school and college education so that individuals were able *to learn how to continue learning* throughout their lives. Granted, this could only be possible if the said individuals were socialized into a solid foundation of education which provided for flexibility, versatility and adaptability. Critical knowledge and skills in communication, mathematics, digital literacy, general science, humanities, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, for example, should be made mandatory irrespective of the learner's preferred education pathway. That, according to this study, would proffer a relatively precise definition of basic education, hence, provide clear direction that would enhance chances of training in diverse careers.

5.3.3 The Instrumental Criterion

As argued under the Rationale criterion, all education has aims. The latter presupposes its purpose, hence, its underpinning philosophy. Granted, the aims lead to objectives that in turn presuppose means without which the former is impossible. Whereas R. S. Peters abstracted the procedural criterion of education, which essentially imply method, this study derived the *Instrumental criterion* that hypothesized consistency between the means employed and the expected learning outcomes. These were akin to curriculum designs that specify the relevant activities that result in learning. Accordingly, the study originated a *utilitarian condition*, whereupon an education instrumental in developing a skilled human resource, of essence, ought to demonstrate consistency in its philosophy,

attendant policies, curriculum, practice and expected learning outcomes. This would portray practicality.

For illustration purposes, a country that aimed at industrializing would be expected to adopt science and technology-oriented education policies; lean towards a science-based curriculum; and recommend hands-on learning activities preferably in laboratories and workshops. Similarly, an agricultural economy would be expected to feature such learning areas as Agriculture, Agri-business, and farm-based projects – with all the attendant facilitation. But over and above these, all learners would be expected to be subjected to a standard and compulsory curriculum that cuts across all these areas so that they can shift careers with minimal difficulty. This, ostensibly, should be provided for in a manageable curriculum (not so loaded) that puts emphasis on certain competencies. According to the study, these competencies could be acquired through well-resourced teaching and learning of language, mathematics, general science, life skills, liberal arts, and computer studies.

Languages, for instance, will enable the learner to communicate whatever ideas they have coherently, as much as they will be able to decode various literature. Embedded in the languages should be the introduction of mild forms of liberal arts, for instance, where learners would be exposed to great literature, writing, philosophy and creative arts. This will boost their power of argument and communication, as well as their grasp of basic universal ethical principles. Efficient and effective communication, both spoken and written, cannot be gainsaid, and so is refined character. Besides languages,

Mathematics is also critical. Apart from being foundational in many courses – both professional and technical/vocational, will equally sharpen their thinking ability. Moving on, basic science is critical since it informs the logic behind all the human interventions expressed through technology. Instructively, technology is that which takes over the tasks that would otherwise be performed by human beings. Put differently, it is the extension of human capabilities – a phenomenon that is advancing in leaps and bounds. Lastly, learners would do well if exposed to digital literacy. Purposeful computer studies, provided in computer laboratories by trained teaching staff, will go a long way in preparing learners for the now and the future. Indeed, there is no single facet of life that has not been linked to computers. Automation and robotics, both industrial and domestic, is the order of the day. Further, the internet provides the widest outlay of information, hence, learners ought to be versed in its operations so that they reap the benefits therein. They therefore ought to be educated on how to safely navigate around the internet, mine useful information from credible sources, and use the same avenue for dissemination of their new-found solutions.

Indeed, development of a skilled human resource is not only a preserve of formal education but individual effort as well. As a matter of illustration, there exist many individuals who have learned new trades through electronic media such as YouTube, as well as self-paced online programmes such as machine learning and Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs). These require an individual who has been initiated into self-directed learning. With such, many will be predisposed to lifelong learning tendencies

which, this study argued, is one of the surest ways of promoting development of a skilled human resource.

The study did not venture into explicating the specific learning activities in each proposed subject area, but contended that should they be adopted, then they ought to be taught in ways that will enhance achievement of the learning outcomes. Instructively, teachers are the major implementers of the curriculum. If well prepared and resourced, they should be in a position to teach any system of education in accordance to the expected learning outcomes.

5.3.4 The Social Criterion

Ideally, education is a societal function, hence, addresses the needs of society – whether economic, political or social. Consequently, society must of essence provide for the actualization of its education. Whereas education outcomes contribute to economic development, the former cannot be achieved without a favourable economy (Stewart, 2013). This mutual relationship, the study argued, has to be acknowledged if the two are to be sustainable. As intimated earlier in this chapter, the Kenyan government did not have an explicit articulation of how its education policies were linked to its political and economic ideologies. For instance, its national policy of manpower development crafted just after independence seem not to have been anchored on any national plan, hence, the then resultant system of education (7-4-2-3) churned out many individuals whose target was government white-collar jobs. Eventually, many individuals remained stranded after the few positions they targeted got filled. The 8-4-4 system would later be introduced

without reference to the status of the economy, consequently collapsing majorly as a result of underfunding. Whereas the system's curriculum was practical in principle, it became theoretical in practice owing to poor implementation. A clear and shared understanding of the purpose of the 8-4-4 system of education by the government could have helped it equally understand the demands of such a system, hence, budget for it accordingly.

As a condition for adequate development of a skilled human resource, this study prescribed *edupolitico-economic alignment*; an alignment of national systems of education with the national fiscal plans and political ideologies. The study derived the term 'edupolitico' from Pianta and Willis' 'EduPolitical Research' (1988), a phrase they employed in reference to the intersection between education research and federal intervention that informs policy. Accordingly, edupolitico-economic alignment presupposes that the government should initiate education systems that it can adequately fund.

Put differently, education funding should be prioritized, given that a well-funded education produces better outcomes in terms of properly skilled manpower, making way for productivity that in turn boosts the economy (USAID, 2014; Puerta *et al*, 2018; Mutuku & Korir, 2019). But the state apparently treats the budgetary allocation for education as a favour, and at times, reduces the funding in successive supplementary budgets. This study found it ironic, for instance, that the government initiated an economic plan dubbed Kenya Vision 2030 (RoK, 2008) and pegged its success on an

education system (the 8-4-4 system) that it, among other players, had already condemned (RoK, 2005). Whereas a skilled human resource (by means of education) was required to facilitate industrialization, the government appeared oblivious of how it had incapacitated the then prevailing system of education. It is not surprising that it took 11 years before official roll-out of CBC which MOEST believed would afford learners skills and competencies required to achieve the said vision. Be that as it may, the new system may equally be unsuccessful if its demands are not addressed by way of deliberate fiscal plans.

5.3.5 Authenticity Criterion

This study observed that the government was so preoccupied with the curriculum and its supposed good outcomes that it forgot to consider the enablers of the latter. That explains why it dwelt on curriculum reforms more than the implementation process. In turn, teachers equally focused on some perceived outcomes (good grades) hence employed subjective means to achieve the same. Whereas delineating expected learning outcomes is critical (they influence practice), all players must share in them, much more, direct their efforts towards activities that are instrumental in achieving the outcomes. Accordingly, teachers should help learners engage in educational activities that relate to the skills and competences so targeted so that schools do not have to be places of *information* about the expected competencies but *formation* of the same. This, for the study, comprises the ***authenticity criterion***. Accordingly, the criterion shall be operationalized by the ***functionality*** condition.

For instance, students of Agriculture could breathe life in the subject through cultivation of vegetables and related produce (where possible), and supply them to their school so that money meant for procurement of food partly remains in school. Home Science students could prepare and supply the school canteen with pastries; students of Economics and Business Studies could be organized to receive and sell the produce/products to the school stores, operate the school canteen at designated times, and keep records of accounts. Such authentic learning environments (without necessarily moving out of school) will augment the teachers' efforts, and most importantly, help learners to appreciate the practical use of knowledge taught – characteristic of the philosophical principle of functionalism. Effectively, this will enable them to further transfer and extend the applied knowledge and skills, hence create more solutions. Implicitly, educators should explore the school environment for any opportunities that provide immediate application of knowledge learnt, even as they prepare to extend the same beyond school. This study had established that majority learners terminated their studies at basic level, hence, there was a need to ensure that this level was packed with enough activities capable of developing stimulating a variety of knowledge and skills that will make learners ready for any eventuality.

5.4 An Essentialist Educational Philosophy as the Key to Skilled Human Resource Development

The study sought to prescribe an educational philosophy instrumental in the development of a skilled human resource. Accordingly, such a philosophy would provide guidance as to how education practitioners would proceed, and presuppose the resources that they

would need. In the preceding discussions, two things emerged. One, that human resource cannot be sufficiently developed in schools, the more reason why the tertiary level exists. Two, that schools provide basic education, the latter being generic in nature and preparatory in function. By virtue of being basic, the study established, this kind of education ought to capture certain essential knowledges and skills that make way for other levels such as tertiary and higher education, levels that train human resource. In a nutshell, an education that will help develop a skilled human resource must be one that instills those basics, those essences without which one will not be in a position to train for anything. Trainability is the currency here. In light of the foregoing, this study did not find difficulty in prescribing an educational philosophy that may guide development of human resource in diverse skills. Accordingly, the study vouched for **neo-essentialism** as a sound educational philosophy. Whereas essentialism as a philosophy would do, neo-essentialism brings in a new element of contemporaneity so that it is guarded against the traditional accusation of being conservative. Education policy makers can capitalize on the strength of traditional essentialism, that is, its tendency to delineate essences of a given phenomenon (what is most essential about schooling, for instance?), and infuse contemporary elements in terms of content and methodology. The study contended that such an educational philosophy, operationalized by the five criteria described in this chapter, is likely to promote, to a great extent, the quest towards development of a skilled human resource in Kenya.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter reflected on the general practice of education in Kenya, vis-à-vis its potential to develop a skilled human resource. It further attempted to prescribe a theoretical framework that would inform an education capable of facilitating development of a skilled human resource. The study established that Kenya had plausible goals of education, much more, ambitious educational policies and curricula, only that they were not aligned to its political and economic ideologies. Since implementation of an education system depended on the latter's goodwill, there existed a rift between policy and action; intentionality and actuality. This extended to education practice, where teachers engaged in subjective epistemologies – having been deprived of teaching and learning resources, much more, left in the dark as to what philosophy of education the government held. The resultant lack of a definite direction, coupled with deficient milieu, presupposed a negative influence on the objective of developing a skilled human resource.

To remedy the foregoing situation, the study prescribed five criteria of an education that can develop a skilled human resource: the rationale criterion, which vouched for a clear articulation of the purpose of education; the essentialist criterion, which delineated core knowledge areas capable of preparing learners for adaptability and lifelong learning; the instrumental criterion where the right educational activities could be prescribed in the curriculum designs; the social criterion, where the government was to align its educational needs with the political and economic ideologies of the country; and the authenticity criterion, where the right learning environment was to be created.

Pursuant to the criteria, the study derived 5 conditions which, if met, could lead to the implementation of the education hence laying grounds for development of a skilled human resource. First, a definite philosophy of education was necessary so that it provides direction concerning the purpose of schools, hence, the role of each player in actualizing the requisite milieu. This was captured under the generic preparation condition. Second was the irreducible curricula experiences condition, where the government was to redefine its conception of basic education, so that it encompasses knowledge and skills instrumental to versatility, adaptability and lifelong learning. Third was the utilitarian condition where method was to be consistent with the expected learning outcomes. The fourth one, accordingly, was the edupolitico-economic condition, where the country's fiscal plans were to be aligned with educational needs. The fifth and final was the functionality condition, where the learning environments were to offer authentic tasks capable of developing the required competencies. All these, the study prescribed, were to be guided by a neo-essentialist educational philosophy.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter evaluated the potential of Kenya's education system in developing a skilled human resource, and then proceeded to propose more plausible criteria of an education that would enable the country to achieve the goal. This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations accruing from the study.

6.2 Summary of Findings

This study sought to achieve four objectives, namely; one, to establish the understanding of the concept of education as articulated by the Kenyan government; two, to establish the educational philosophy that underpinned education in Kenya, hence, its appropriateness; three, to evaluate the potential of Kenya's education in achieving the national goal of developing a skilled and competent human resource; and four, to propose a viable implementation criteria for an education instrumental in developing a skilled human resource.

The study made four main deductions from its findings. From the first objective, it established that the Kenyan conception of education was subjectively held, such that it varied according to historical times as well as the parties involved. The colonial regime, for instance, viewed education as an instrument of enhancing proselytization that would facilitate easy governance. Acquisition of basic literacy, numeracy, proficiency in the English language, and values favourable to the white settlers (loyalty, obedience, punctuality, submissiveness, and hygiene) were considered education enough. Post-

independent, the first government viewed education as a formal schooling process where knowledge and skills would be acquired for human resource development. In a nutshell, children were supposed to attend school so that teachers would subject them to a state-sanctioned curriculum, culminating in examination wherein certification would designate education – acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for employment. Students and teachers would therefore employ various strategies to enhance chances of passing examinations, for the latter was considered the *de facto* aim of education – at least at basic education level. Generally, the study observed that a utilitarian view of education was held by all parties across all times.

Second, the study sought to establish the educational philosophy that underpinned education in Kenya. On this, it found out that there was no definite educational philosophy that the country could point out as its lead philosophy. For one, an educational philosophy emanates from a society's general philosophy of education. The fact that the latter was shrouded in mystery, largely unknown to the public, much less, to the teachers that were key implementers of the curriculum, worsened a bad state. This would make it hard for practitioners to focus on common learning outcomes since the purpose of education had not been clearly understood by all. Consequently, teachers would resort to subjective goals (for instance preparing students to pass examinations) and, in turn, employing all kinds of strategies to meet the goals. This position was confirmed through interviews where the sampled teachers not only expressed ignorance on the educational philosophies they espoused, but also insinuated that such philosophies were inconsequential. Instructively, most of them – as demonstrated by those sampled –

concentrated more on teaching their subject areas oblivious of the significance of one's epistemological beliefs.

Thirdly, the study sought to evaluate the potential of Kenya's systems of education as concerns the achievement of the national goal of developing a skilled and competent human resource. Since it was not possible to evaluate the whole education system, this study limited itself to basic education, with a bias on secondary schooling. The latter was informed by the fact that at secondary school, children were engaged in learning activities that were a little more definitive of their prospective careers. Further, a number of studies had indicated that the majority of Kenya's labour force had not gone beyond secondary education, hence, evaluation of their skilling was akin to evaluation of their secondary school education. Overall, the study established inconsistency between the ideal education that was to lead to development of skills and competencies, and the actual educational practices employed towards the same. For instance, the two immediate former education systems – 7-4-2-3 and 8-4-4 – had been well conceived in principle, so that they promised to develop knowledge and skills that could render individuals gainfully employed. However, intentionality was not translated to actuality owing to the government's failure to empower agency. Teachers were neither well developed nor equipped with necessary tools of trades, let alone being clear of the rationale behind the education systems. Further, economic hardship rendered many parents hapless so that they could not play their part, for instance under the resource-intensive 8-4-4 system that called for cost-sharing. The government's inability to play its role by adequately funding the requirements of technical and vocational subjects made matters worse. Furthermore,

socio-cultural factors weighed in where citizens harboured negative attitudes towards vocational education. Previously, they had been socialized to value academic disciplines more than vocational ones, with a belief that academic education was a gateway to the more coveted white-collar jobs. A dearth in technical and vocational skills could partly be explained by this state of affairs.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the study established a disturbing finding concerning the 2-6-6-3 system of education which was touted as competency-based. First, its philosophy – just like the previous ones – was neither articulate enough nor shared by the public. Whereas it was early to evaluate its success, this study observed that the system was demanding in terms of human resource and teaching/learning facilities, which, unless provided, would negate its goal of developing skilled and competent individuals. Further, the study questioned the subtly restrictive nature of the system, whereupon learners are to be boxed in particular career paths in their early days of learning, akin to specialization. Implicitly, they would likely face challenges later in life just in case their careers became obsolete. This study was cognizant of the dynamism in career worlds, a reality that necessitated individuals to be prepared for retraining and diversification of skills. Finally, its additional cycle, occasioned by splitting the secondary education into two – Junior and Senior – threatened smooth transition since some learners were likely to drop out after the Junior Secondary level, hence, miss out on the last cycle of basic education. In short, the system did not offer much promise as concerns the alleviation of the current challenge wherein there existed a shortage of particular skills and competencies, the latter having been occasioned by either redundancy (which could be cured if individuals were adaptive) or poor education processes that led to poorly skilled individuals. For instance,

it was not clear how the CBC arrangement which envisaged every learner pursuing their area of interest (according to talent) could guarantee all the skills and competences required for national development.

Fourthly, the study sought to propose plausible criteria for an education instrumental in developing a skilled human resource. On this, it advanced five criteria and subsequent conditions for each. One, that basic education was so critical, hence, its purpose was to be unequivocally specified and shared by both policy makers and education practitioners so that all focus towards the specified end (**the rationale criterion**). It was important for the country to be clear about what schools were for, and, for the present case, the study established that basic education was to prepare one for an uncertain future, hence the *generic preparation* condition. Two, that most skills and competences were transient, often getting obsolete pretty fast, a fact that policy makers were to be awake to as they designed education systems meant for developing a sustainable skilled human resource. This implied that the education so proffered was to have its rationale as inculcation of adaptability and elements of lifelong learning, hence an **essentialist criterion** that delineated compulsory, core knowledge and competencies. Here, the respective condition was designated as *irreducible curricula experiences*. Accordingly, learners would be subjected to essential knowledge and skills such as numeracy, language literacy, digital literacy, general science and liberal arts. Three, the said curricula would be taught using the right methods so that the means employed would be consistent with the expected learning outcomes (**the instrumental criterion**). The respective condition was *utilitarian*. Four, the **social criterion** would see the government align its national plans, ostensibly its political and economic ideologies, with educational needs so as to

guarantee funding. This, accordingly, informed the *edupolitico-economic alignment* as a condition. Five, the **authenticity** criterion would ensure a learning environment that provided for authentic, practical tasks in line with the knowledge and competencies taught. Accordingly, the functionality condition would apply as established by the study.

Three major reasons made it critical that learners under basic education be made adaptable as concerns human resource development. First, they would be capable of training in a variety of occupations, and not being restricted to their supposed talents. Individuals must adapt to the world, since the same world can fail to recognize their talents. Second, they would have high chances of retraining in other occupations just in case their occupations became obsolete. Lastly, those unable to pursue tertiary training would have basic survival skills. According to the study, it was probable that part of the challenge that went in the name of unskilled human resource was actually the presence of irrelevant skills and competences where individuals occupied jobs that did not match their qualifications. This could partly be solved through mapping of skills demand. The study further advanced that even as the country mulled over the dearth of a skilled human resource, it would be reasonable to not only think about the new entrants in the education system, such as the young, but also those who trained and became victims of redundancy. These too had a life to live, much more, a responsibility of building the nation, subject to their empowerment. Above all, policy makers would do better by grounding the education system in a sound philosophy of education. This philosophy, the study contends, should encompass three ingredients. First, it should be reflective of the country's national development agenda. Second, it should espouse the element of

inclusivity so that as many children as possible are enabled to complete basic education. Third, it should focus on developing individual capabilities that are in line with the needs of the nation – socially, politically, economically, scientifically, and technologically. Fourth, it should capture the aspect of lifelong self-learning so that individuals become ready for emergent eventualities. Lastly, it should presuppose practical educational policies, away from the utopian ones that characterized wishful thinking. Accordingly, the study prescribed a neo-essentialist educational philosophy, owing to its advocacy for certain essences in whichever education that is offered, as well as keeping in tune with contemporary demands at workplaces.

6.3 Conclusions of the Study

This study endeavoured to answer four research questions, namely;

- a) What is the Kenyan government's understanding of the concept of education?
- b) What educational philosophy does Kenya espouse?
- c) To what extent does the practice of education in Kenya presuppose its intended role?
- d) How should an implementation matrix of an education that is instrumental in developing a skilled human resource look like?

Accordingly, the study arrived at four conclusions. First, successive governments have viewed education in terms of the curriculum, structure (levels), and enrolment, hence, focused more in designing idealistic curricula and enrolling children in schools. Further, its major educational reforms targeted these curricula and the structures (levels), implying that everything rose and fell with them. A change of the education system, for example,

meant a change in both the curricula and the structure, with less attention to other factors such as provision of quality and adequate human and material resources. The net effect was poor skills development since not everyone completed the basic education cycle. Further, those lucky to complete were variably inadequately prepared owing to educational environments that were not instrumental to development of the intended skills and competencies.

Second, the study concluded that the Kenyan basic education had no definite educational philosophy, a fact that was compounded by its equally unclear national philosophy of education. Consequently, a common understanding of education, *vis à vis* its purpose, could not obtain among policy makers and practitioners, a situation that left room for subjective and idiosyncratic educational practices such as examination-oriented teaching – all curtailing the suitability of whichever education so adopted.

Third, the education in Kenya fell short of the capacity to adequately develop a skilled human resource owing to a mismatch between policy and action. Whereas MOEST's educational policies and objectives envisaged proper development of individual capacities for resourcefulness and adaptability, the actual practice depicted the contrary: subjective educational practices, lack of authentic learning environments, absence of common essential knowledge and skills (typical of basic education) that could guarantee adaptability, and lack of internal completeness among levels of basic education. Further, many issues kept recurring in different education reports, a fact that pointed to lack of political good will and deliberate strategies of action. For instance, the issue of developing an assortment of skills – both vocational, technical and professional – had

featured in many reports, some dating as early as the beginning of the 20th Century. And so was the element of education financing.

Fourth, an education that would be instrumental to development of a skilled human resource required consistency among national policies, educational policy, education practice, and the expected learning outcomes. As established in the fifth chapter, education was a key driver of all national plans. This was exemplified by Kenya's Vision 2030 whose success was pegged on individuals with scientific knowledge and skills. Further, educational policies that were not linked to the country's fiscal plans tended to fail owing to lack of funding, since the latter implied shoddy educational practices. Ordinarily, teachers that are neither well-developed nor equipped with requisite teaching and learning resources cannot be relied upon to implement whichever curriculum, however superb. In the end, the expected learning outcomes remain elusive. This, as previously discussed, was the case for Kenya, hence, development of the much desired skills and competencies was bound to remain underachieved in the absence of synchrony among the four elements.

6.4 Recommendations

In light of the foregoing conclusions, the study arrived at the following recommendations:

6.4.1 Policy Recommendations

- i. The Kenyan government should not only institutionalize a clear and overarching philosophy of education, but also find ways of bringing all education stakeholders to its attention – specifically economic planners,

curriculum designers, and implementers. A country's philosophy of education determines both its educational theory and practice, consequently abstracting the role of each relevant agent.

- ii. The MOEST should clearly demarcate the roles of each level of education, as opposed to the current amorphous one. Notably, basic education should be made highly accessible, and be formulated to provide specific level of preparation, such as compulsory training in languages, basic science, mathematics, digital literacy and humanities, a foundation that would enable an individual to train in a variety of trades, and further retrain in case their occupation becomes obsolete. This will also enhance internal completeness in both primary and secondary education, a level that the majority of the country's labour force attain.
- iii. The government, through MOEST, should ascertain that any educational reforms are based on a comprehensive evaluation of the whole education system, and, consequently, apportion blame where it is due. This will be possible if they acknowledge that education is more than the curriculum, and that a curriculum is as good as its implementation. A confusion of the two had previously resulted in reforms that exclusively targeted the curriculum, yet other aspects such as teaching and learning resources/milieu possibly contributed towards non-achievement of the set goal.
- iv. The government should link educational policies to the national economic ones to guarantee adequate funding, and, through MOEST, ensure consistency

among the educational policies, education practice and the expected learning outcomes.

6.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research

- i. This study recommends an inquiry in the complementarity of the Kenyan basic education and its tertiary one. There is a need to establish the extent to which basic education contributes to the success or otherwise of tertiary education, given that the latter is the *de facto* level for development of specific job-related skills and competencies/human resources.
- ii. Further research should be conducted on how the government could help unskilled adults gain capabilities that can render them trainable, hence, skilled. This is informed by the fact that national development, which depends on a skilled human resource, will not be realized if this lot is ignored.
- iii. Another study should be taken to establish the actual steps that the government has taken, all along, in a bid to remedy the systemic shortcomings that were identified by various commissions and task forces on education. It is probable that the country may be repeating past mistakes and expecting different results.

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APPENDIX I

Interview Schedule for Secondary School Teachers

My name is Osabwa Wycliffe, a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am doing a study on the general understanding of the concept of education by educators. Accordingly, I request that you share with me your own conviction of what education is – as regards your experience as a teacher – regardless of any other definition that you may have come across. Your identity and that of your school shall be kept confidential through use of pseudonyms. Participation in this study is purely voluntary, and that you are free to opt out whenever you feel uncomfortable. Information gathered from this short interview will strictly be used for academic purposes. Your participation will be highly treasured.

Part I: Personal Data (Confidential)

- a) How long have you been in the teaching service?
- b) What is your highest academic qualification
- c) When did you last attend any in-service training on any education issue, and what was the topic of concern?

Part II: The Concept of Education

- a) According to you, what does education refer to?
- b) From your experience, what is the purpose of education in Kenya?
- c) What philosophy of education does Kenya espouse (a general statement that captures the spirit of education in Kenya) as articulated by the Ministry of education?
- d) What is the educational philosophy/educational school of thought that guides teaching and learning in Kenya?

- e) Which principles guide education practice/teaching and learning in Kenya?
- f) Does the education provided in secondary schools have the capacity to prepare students for the world of work? Briefly explain your answer.
- g) If you were to suggest a major reform in Kenya's education system, what aspect will you target?
- h) According to your own understanding, are you educated? Briefly explain.

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX II

Interview Schedule for Secondary School Students

My name is Osabwa Wycliffe, a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am doing a study on the general understanding of the concept of education by students. Accordingly, I request that you share with me your own conviction of what education is – as regards your experience as a student – regardless of any other definition that you may have come across. Your identity and that of your school shall be kept confidential through use of pseudonyms. Participation in this study is purely voluntary, and that you are free to opt out whenever you feel uncomfortable. Information gathered from this short interview will strictly be used for academic purposes. Your participation will be highly treasured.

The Concept of Education

(The researcher shall pose the questions to students as a group, and record several answers for each question)

- a) Why are you in school?
- b) What is education, according to you?
- c) What is the importance of education?
- d) Have you ever heard of a philosophy of education or something like that? Briefly explain.
- e) What do you want to become upon completion of your schooling?
- f) Do you think your school is preparing you well for your prospective career? Explain.
- g) What would you like schools to do so that you achieve your career dreams?
- h) Do you think education is important, drawing from your experience?

- i) What is the motto of your school? What of the mission? Vision?

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX III

Introduction to Appendices

I conducted a brief study between September 2020 and November 2020 in 10 secondary schools within Busia County, targeting 20 trained teachers and 120 senior secondary school students. The study involved a semi-structured interview which aimed at collecting information concerning their understanding of the concept and purpose of education. It was meant to complement the findings of a larger philosophical study which was a reflection on the suitability of Kenya's education towards development of skilled human resources. Whereas the latter based on content analysis of various documents, live interviews were meant to bring on board lived experiences which would be checked against with secondary data.

For most of the informants contacted, responses were less varied; a fact that made the researcher's work easier. The interviewed teachers were at first cagey, but opened out when the researcher took a casual, common talk approach. For students, their responses were written. They had been planned to be oral, but the situation changed in response to the Covid-19 containment protocols which called for minimal contact. Most schools were not ready to allow strangers to hold close-range talks with students. Regardless, the information sought for was found.

Whereas the identities of the informants have been concealed by way of pseudonyms, the appendices represent a true account of their views which were transcribed and edited for ease of reference. Each appendix contains a brief background of the informant.

APPENDIX IV

(Mwanzo Secondary School, Teacher 1)

Background

This informant is a male graduate teacher, with 18 years of service. He reported to have last attended a refresher course a year before. The course concerned teaching of Science, Technology and Mathematics (STEM).

A. Meaning of education

I think education is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable one to lead a meaningful life – like securing a job for a livelihood... It also makes one generally enlightened and well mannered.

B. Purpose of Education

Education mainly prepares one for their prospective career. But of late, some people pursue it as a mark of actualization. Remember the deputy President and his PhD!

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

I am not very sure of our philosophy of education, but I believe it has to do with curbing ignorance. Philosophy was a difficult course.

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

I am not sure, not unless you rephrase your question.... I think it is Progressivism. We are being encouraged to move away from learner-centred methods of teaching. Most of us are stuck with the teacher-centred mode.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

These vary from school to school; also from teacher to teacher. You see, different individuals have different approaches depending on the type of students.

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

I think we are trying, although jobs are scarce. We need to align our education with the job market. Some employers have been complaining of half-baked graduates.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

Staffing. The ratio of students to teachers is so high. Also, the government ought to provide enough learning materials and pay teachers well. Funding of education is the elephant in the room.

H. On Being Educated

Why do you think I am not? Well, it depends on what you mean by education. If going to school is being educated, definitely I am. Education equally refers to one's general thinking and acting. Going to school helps. But these days, fellows just go to school to get certification. You can never know for sure (what motivates them).

APPENDIX V

(Mwanzo Secondary School, Teacher 2)

Background

This informant is a female graduate teacher, with 13 years of service. She reported to have last attended a refresher course a year before. It was a workshop on teaching the English language.

A. Meaning of education

I think it is the knowledge and skills acquired through learning. It isn't necessarily gotten from schools, as is the case with traditional society. But these days it generally refers to what one acquires from schools, all the way to university. That's why we talk of higher education, or what do you think?

B. Purpose of Education

Definitely education provides one with skills that make them employable. People attend school even in old age so that they get promoted at the workplace. Education is associated with higher income, even though some never get the jobs. It is very unfortunate.

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

Am not sure about the ministry of education's philosophy. I know of the Nyayo philosophy of peace, love and unity. I can't remember learning any, though I studied a course in Philosophy of education. The course was so scary.

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

Is it to do with schools of thought? We learnt so much. I have forgotten most of them. I guess we are under competency-based education where learners are to be taught useful things and skills that they can apply in life.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

Am not sure. Sorry, have I understood your question? Which principles?... Did you mean the requirements before one can practice?

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

On this, I will answer both yes and no. You see, we have people working in many sectors. This means our education is helpful. Unfortunately, we have cases where some people get poorly educated. Individual circumstances can contribute to this. Generally, our education requires reforms. For instance, the many unemployed youth are an indication that something is amiss. Let's hope CBC will offer a solution.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

Universities and colleges. Many students pass exams from our end, but something happens when they proceed for training. Most colleges are poorly resourced. For instance, the ministry of education recently condemned some of the courses offered in our universities. It's such a pity. Let's hope Magoha (the Education Cabinet secretary) will not relent on this.

H. On Being Educated

I am not sure where you are headed. A tricky question. But if education means going to school all the way to college, then you may say that I am. Of course I can't say that I am uneducated. Otherwise I wouldn't be here (in the teaching service).

APPENDIX VI

(Mwendo Secondary School, Teacher 1)

Background

This informant is a female graduate teacher, with 2 years of service. She attended the last workshop approximately a year before this interview.

A. Meaning of education

Education refers to acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It also includes holistic development, so that one's general conduct, as in character, counts.

B. Purpose of Education

Education is mainly meant for job placement. Even politicians are going back to school so as to be allowed to vie for higher positions. A governor, for instance, is required to have a degree. To be sincere, it's all about career prospects.

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

I have never thought about it. Is it a hundred percent transition?

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

Again, I am not sure. We are however urged to embrace learner-centred approaches to teaching and learning. Here, the teacher ought to be viewed as a guide. I wasn't so good at philosophy, however.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

Are they not similar to educational philosophy, or whatever we've just talked about?

Today, you caught me off-guard. I really need to revisit my college notes.

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

Not really.... Not really. There are few courses, such as teaching, where one can be sure to get a job. Even in this, one has to wait for a while before being employed. I tarmacked for 6 good years. Most of my college mates remain unemployed, resorting to casual engagements. Something is wrong with our education. Further, the economy is also not doing so well.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

Funding... I think the education sector is underfunded, right from primary schools. That's why private schools and universities are doing better. We have children studying in different types of schools, only to be subjected to the same examinations. It is very unfair. Again, schools need enough teachers. You see, I am the only teacher of Physics in this school. When I came, students had gone for a whole term without being taught Physics. A whole term!

H. On Being Educated

I have a degree in education, if you like. What is the threshold of being educated, if I may ask? Personally, I consider myself educated – though I intend to go for further studies. Maybe then I will be more educated. Education never ends.

APPENDIX VII

(Mwendo Secondary School, Teacher 2)

Background

This informant is a male diploma teacher, with 15 years of service. He reported to have last attended a refresher course a year before. He was not keen on revealing the nature of the course.

A. Meaning of education

For me, education refers to the process of acquiring skills and knowledge for positive change of behaviour.

B. Purpose of Education

To enable one to earn a livelihood, period!

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

Am not very sure. Is it something to do with education being the key? I don't hear much of such.

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

Am not sure, though I guess it is related to method. We happen to depend so much on western ideas of educating, more so from Britain. They colonized us, remember.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

They are similar to educational philosophy. We tend to draw a lot from educational foundations, especially educational psychology. Every teacher must have learned psychology.

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

It is suitable since it makes way for training. But again, some people still live meaningfully without further training. Consider those who engage in business ventures straight after secondary education. This means the education is somehow suitable.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

The syllabus needs reform. The government will do well if it explores content that is relevant. Many graduates are unable to secure employment because we teach irrelevancies.

H. On Being Educated

Of course I am. But I can't say that I have all the education.

APPENDIX VIII

(Mwito Secondary School, Teacher 1)

Background

This informant is a male graduate teacher, with a Master's degree in Education Administration, and 13 years of service. He reported to have last attended a refresher course two years before.

A. Meaning of education

It depends on who is defining it, and the place. Generally, it involves preparation of individuals for societal roles. The process may be formal or informal. However, in recent times, the concept has come to refer to formalistic learning – stretching all the way from kindergarten to the university.

B. Purpose of Education

Education is largely meant for livelihood. However, some pursue it for its own sake, maybe for self-actualization.

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

Education for self-reliance was our philosophy. That's what the 8-4-4 system (of education) was about. Seemingly it was never realized, and that's why CBC has been introduced. To be frank, no one seems to care about the philosophy of our country's education. We all agree, however, that education ought to be of good quality and accessible to all

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

Our education is guided by the learner-centred philosophy. I think it borders progressivism. Generally, we are running away from traditional theories of teaching and learning.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

I am not sure about this, though I believe that we aim at holistic learning. Again, the learning ought to be individualized. Learners differ, with each having their own strengths and weaknesses.

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

This is debatable. Apart from numeracy and literacy aspects, there are no specific skills imparted in relation to work. The education is largely a preparation for specialized training.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

A lot. First, the curriculum needs review, especially with regard to content taught. Further, there is a need to review the supply of staff, as well as teaching and learning materials. They are not adequate. Again, education needs adequate financing, specifically the cost of tuition. There is a lot of mismanagement here.

H. On Being Educated

I cannot provide a definite answer, since education has no end. Yes, I have the education that can enable me to do what I do. However, I still wish to pursue a PhD. Again, education is much more than books. In that sense, I believe I am educated. It is all about intelligence and personal commitment to virtues such as integrity and liberal thinking. Regardless, I stand judged by those I interact with. The jury is always out there.

APPENDIX IX

(Mwito Secondary School, Teacher 2)

Background

This informant is a male graduate teacher, with 29 years of service. He reported to have last attended a refresher course 2 years before. He could not divulge the details of the course.

A. Meaning of education

If you insist, I will say that it's a process that enlightens and liberates one so that they can survive.

B. Purpose of Education

Education enables survival, wherever, whenever.

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

Education for self-reliance and national building

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

I can't remember any. However, there is nothing new in education. Same old methods, with a little bit of technology here and there. It's a farce.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

The good teacher talks. The best teacher acts. Learners remember most what they do, reason as to why the new CBC approach stresses on doing. The 8-4-4 one had the same spirit but it was hijacked along the way and diluted. We only teach for understanding, fullstop!

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

It's supposed to be suitable, but it's not. Sometimes back, secondary education was a luxury. Yet, primary school graduates still excelled. But our current education is just hollow. Even university graduates are a disaster. I see it here when pre-service teachers come for practicum. Terrible. We shouldn't even judge secondary school graduates.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

One, teacher training. The current crop of teachers is a disaster. We have just been counseling one. He was employed barely two years ago. It's just chaos. Two, curriculum needs to speak to the needs of industry, and schools be well equipped. This done, the rest will fall in place. The current unemployment levels weren't there when I began teaching.

H. On Being Educated

I don't know. What do you think? I have heard of professors who do weird things. Education is like salvation, assuming you are a Christian. I don't regret going to school.

APPENDIX X

(Mfano Secondary School, Teacher 1)

Background

This informant is a female graduate teacher, with 15 years of service. She reported to have last attended a refresher course a year before. The course concerned pedagogy.

A. Meaning of education

It is a process wherein individuals acquire knowledge' skills and attitudes to enable them work and also fit in society.

B. Purpose of Education

It is meant for self-development as well as nation building

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

I have no idea. Is there one, really? I don't know.

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

It's so confusing. First, you asked me about the philosophy of education in Kenya. Now you are talking about educational philosophy. You remind me of Prof Wambari. I hated those things, especially metaphysics. We were keener on our teaching subject areas.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

It depends on individual beliefs. Some schools, also, have their own programmes and strategies of teaching and learning which I believe reflect what they think guides teaching and learning. Generally, established principles largely remain in books. Some may not easily apply in our unique situations.

F. Suitability of Kenya's Education to the World of Work

No, no; not at all. Without further training, form four graduates are at a loss.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

Is there a need for them? The more we hear of reforms, the more things remain the same.

Reforms need to begin with the government's resolve. They never mean what they say.

H. On Being Educated

I believe I am educated, at least in terms of my line of duty. To someone else, I may not pass as educated. That's why the government thinks that we should take further courses in professional development. You've definitely heard of Teacher Professional Development and things like TPAD (Teacher Performance and Appraisal Development tool)

APPENDIX XI

(Mfano Secondary School, Teacher 2)

Background

This informant is a male post-graduate teacher, with a Master's degree in Curriculum Development and 9 years of service. He reported to have last attended a refresher course approximately 2 year before this interview. The course was based on teaching STEM subjects.

A. Meaning of education

I believe education is the acquisition of desired knowledge, skills and attitudes, for positive impact on oneself and society.

B. Purpose of Education

To develop an individual's character, together with their ability to fit into and take up societal duties.

C. Philosophy of Education in Kenya

I can't remember the actual statement, but it has to do with individual and national development.

D. Educational Philosophy Guiding Education in Kenya

I suspect we employ philosophies from different schools of thought. It's a tricky situation, since schools, or learning institutions, differ. Some believe in traditional theories where teachers do all the work. Others are student-centric, which is considered the in-thing. Generally, many are embracing progressive schools of thought.

E. Principles Guiding Education Practice in Kenya

There are no clear-cut principles here. However, most educators rely on principles found in educational psychology. These are the learning theories, if you may like.

F. Suitability of Secondary Education to the World of Work

You really want me to respond to that? Then colleges would not be there. Individuals who don't advance beyond secondary school education are like drop-outs. This level is merely for preparation to training.

G. Areas that Require Reforms in Education

The curriculum. Actually, much of what is taught is irrelevant. Learners have a host of subjects which take a lot of time and resources. The recently-introduced CBC is worse.

H. On Being Educated

That is not the right question, if you asked me. Education has no end. We continue experiencing it. Regardless, everyone is educated on something.

APPENDIX XII

(Libra Secondary School, Student 1)

Background

This informant is a Form Four male student, in a national secondary school.

A. Reason for Attending School

I am in school to learn the activities that my parents were unable to teach me. And also to gain the knowledge on how to improve the living standards.

B. Meaning of Education

Education is a key subject that is learnt by many to gain knowledge and skills to improve the living standards

C. Importance of Education

It helps us gain knowledge and skills. It also helps in raising the living standards of people due to job creation.

D. Knowledge on Philosophy of Education

It means the creation of jobs. Through education, many people are employed on the basis of the knowledge and attributes learnt.

E. Career Ambition

I would like to be an accountant

F. Role of Schools in Career Preparation

Yes it is. This is because through learning Mathematics and Computer Studies I learn more about my career.

G. How Schools Can Help in Achievement of Career Prospects

Schools can help us achieve our career dreams through the employed teachers, mostly those of Business Studies and Mathematics. They should teach me about the management of accounts.

H. Thoughts on the Practical Importance of Education

It is important because it separates me from being illiterate. Further, it helps me in expanding my knowledge for my career.

I. Motto, Mission and Vision of the School

School motto: Strive for excellence

School mission: (Can't remember)

School Vision: To be productive members of society

APPENDIX XIII

(Scorpio Secondary School, Student 1)

Background

This informant is a Form Four female student, in an extra-county girl's secondary school.

A. Reason for Attending School

To learn and pass (examinations) so that I have a bright future.

B. Meaning of Education

Education is a key to success in life.

C. Importance of Education

Education can make you famous, therefore be identified worldwide.

D. Knowledge on Philosophy of Education

Yes, it is the key to success, whereby if you have not worked hard in education you will not succeed.

E. Career Ambition

After completion of my high school (education) I want to get a quality grade and go for nursing studies.

F. Role of Schools in Career Preparation

Actually it is not. In fact in Chemistry, our Chemistry teacher makes me fearful of even answering the question during class time but in other subjects it is preparing me well.

G. How Schools Can Help in Achievement of Career Prospects

To work extra hard in my studies, especially in morning preps. This is the time I can read and understand well.

H. Thoughts on the Practical Importance of Education

Education is very important, when I consider the learned people against those who are not. The learned ones have an enjoyable life.

I. Motto, Mission and Vision of the School

School motto: Strive for excellence

School mission: (Doesn't know)

School Vision: Nurture girls in the society

APPENDIX XIV

(Gemini Secondary School, Student 1)

Background

This informant is a Form Four female student, in a County mixed secondary school.

A. Reason for Attending School

I am in school to acquire knowledge and better my future life and that of my parents.

B. Meaning of Education

Education is a formal or informal way of acquiring knowledge and skills.

C. Importance of Education

Education enables one to have an opportunity to better his or her life. It also enhances a student's confidence and values such as respect.

D. Knowledge on Philosophy of Education

I have ever heard of the philosophy of education. It is simply an organisation that emphasizes education for both boys and girls.

E. Career Ambition

Upon completion of my schooling, I want to become an actress.

F. Role of Schools in Career Preparation

I think school is preparing me well for my career because of the subjects being taught in which (sic) are career subjects.

G. How Schools Can Help in Achievement of Career Prospects

I would like schools to introduce Career as a subject, just like English and Kiswahili, and be taught in both public and private schools.

H. Thoughts on the Practical Importance of Education

I think education is important because it has taught me how to relate with people within my surroundings.

I. Motto, Mission and Vision of the School

School motto: Strive for excellence

School mission: To nurture girls to be reproductive (productive?) women in society.

School Vision: To be a centre of exemplary performance.

APPENDIX XV

(Leo Secondary School, Student 1)

Background

This informant is a Form Four male student, in a sub-county mixed secondary school.

A. Reason for Attending School

I am in school to learn.

B. Meaning of Education

Education is the act of acquiring and receiving learning.

C. Importance of Education

It enables one to access knowledge.

D. Knowledge on Philosophy of Education

Yes. Education empowers and brings out important people in society.

E. Career Ambition

I want to pursue business and become a great entrepreneur.

F. Role of Schools in Career Preparation

Yes it is. This is because we are taught Business Studies and the way of managing business.

G. How Schools Can Help in Achievement of Career Prospects

They should teach subjects related to students' career dreams.

H. Thoughts on the Practical Importance of Education

Yes, education is important since you are able to learn and know what you never knew before.

I. Motto, Mission and Vision of the School

School motto: Strive for excellence

School mission:

School Vision: (Doesn't know)

APPENDIX XVI

(Aquarius Secondary School, Student 1)

Background

This informant is a Form Four female student, in a County Girls secondary school.

A. Reason for Attending School

To acquire knowledge and be stable and independent in future.

B. Meaning of Education

Education is the knowledge and skills that are acquired in school.

C. Importance of Education

It helps students acquire knowledge and skills which can later on earn him/her a job.

D. Knowledge on Philosophy of Education

No.

E. Career Ambition

I would like to become a nurse.

F. Role of Schools in Career Preparation

No. This is because sciences are not being done from the laboratory. For example, there are more experiments in Chemistry but we just do a few of them.

G. How Schools Can Help in Achievement of Career Prospects

Schools should impress upon students the importance of studying sciences and carrying out practicals so that more people can be in a position to pursue nursing and medicine courses.

H. Thoughts on the Practical Importance of Education

Yes, it's important.

I. Motto, Mission and Vision of the School

School motto: Endeavour to succeed.

School mission: (Doesn't know)

School Vision: To be produce a wholesome person in society. Am not sure though.



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 020-8704150

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 23rd July, 2020

TO: Mr. Osabwa Wycliffe
C/o Department of Educational
Foundations

REF: E83/38051/2017

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

We acknowledge receipt of your Research Proposal after fulfilling recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 26th February, 2020.

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking and Progress Report Forms per semester. The Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

By a copy of this letter, the Registrar (Academic) is hereby requested to grant you substantive registration for your Ph.D. studies.

Thank you.

EDWIN OBUNGU
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

CC. Registrar (Academic) Attn: Mr. Richard Chweya
Chairman, Department of Educational Foundations
Supervisors:

1. Dr. Francis M. Likoye
C/o Department of Educational Foundations
Kenyatta University
2. Dr. Francis Ndichu
C/o Department of Educational Foundations
Kenyatta University



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 556860

Date of Issue: 13/September/2020

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Mr.. Wycliffe Osabwa Ayieko of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research in Busia on the topic: A Philosophical Reflection on the Suitability of Kenyan Education towards Development of Skilled Human Resource for the period ending : 13/September/2021.

License No: NACOSTLP/20/6633

556860

Applicant Identification Number

W. Ayieko

Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THE PRESIDENCY
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT

cchusia@gmail.com

COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
BUSIA COUNTY
P.O. BOX 14 - 50400
BUSIA (K)

When replying please quote

RefNo. ADM/15/4/VOL.V/144

18th September, 2020

All Deputy County Commissioners
BUSIA COUNTY

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Reference is made to research authorization License Vide No. NACOSTI/P/ 20/ 6633 dated 13th September, 2020 by National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation on 'A Philosophical Reflection on the Suitability of Kenya Education towards Development of skilled Human Resource'.

This is to inform you that Mr. Wycliffe Osabwa Ayieko has been authorized to carry out research in Busia County for the period ending 13th September, 2021.

R. K. Kimosop
For: County Commissioner
BUSIA COUNTY

Copy to:
Mr. Wycliffe Osabwa Ayieko of Kenyatta University.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION**

Telephone: 055-22152
Fax: 055-22152
When replying please quote
Email: cdebusia@gmail.com

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
BUSIA COUNTY
P.O. BOX 15 - 50400
BUSIA (K)

17th September, 2020

Ref No. MOEST/BSIA/TR/4/6/2020

Sub-County Directors of Education
BUSIA COUNTY

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

This office is in receipt of letter from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation dated 13th September, 2020 authorizing research on "*A Philosophical Reflection on the Suitability of Kenyan Education towards Development of skilled human Resource*" in Busia County. The research period is expected to end on 13th September, 2021.

This is to inform you that Mr. Wycliffe Osabwa Ayieko has been authorized to conduct the research. Kindly accord her necessary assistance.


W.N. MAKORI
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
BUSIA COUNTY

C.C.

Mr. Wycliffe Osabwa Ayieko
Kenyatta University