

Vocationalization of education in Kenya: the Classroom Practice and the Learners' Responsibilities for Change in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The essence of education is to prepare an individual for lifelong experiences after schooling. Education as offered in schools today is expected to give the teacher a chance to impart knowledge and skills in the learner, and for the learner to be informed and be able to put into practice what has been gained in the course of time. The Kenyan curriculum and goals of education are clearly stipulated if followed to the latter. Basically, the classroom practice by both the teachers and the learners exhibit an academic rather than a dual system that is expected to meet the needs of both the individual and those of the communities which form subsets of the society at large. It is upon this premise that education of a given country must prepare its individuals in schools so as to meet the goals of education at any one given time of a country's history. This paper looks at the perspective of vocationalization of education in Kenyan at this

century. The history of education ever since independence in 1963 by focusing on the Ominde commission through the Koech report of 1999 have been emphatic that education must meet the national goals of education as stipulated in the curriculum. But what is edging the practice that has not revolutionalized the socio-economic, cultural and political development of Kenya? Differentiated Instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classroom aimed at achieving diversified learning and common practices in the career. The challenges herein are: where have we gone wrong as a nation, what is the practice in the classroom, when can the nation be out of this dilemma, who is to blame for the status quo and finally what is the way forward? By addressing these questions, the education system will be responsive to the changes in time and Kenya will be on the path to successful recovery.

1.1 Background to the Study

Traditionally, the vocationalization of secondary education has been seen as an effective measure for developing human resources world over. In society today, education has developed on both academic and vocational dimensions, except in cases where a nation is biased towards one form of training at the expense of the other. Although, developing both academic and skilled form of education is regarded as being a major component applicable for both developed and developing countries, the politics of vocationalization of secondary education have determined that it has developed differently in two contexts depending on the nature of society and the goals embodied in the rationale for technology education of a given nation or society. As argued by McLean and Kamau (1999), the policy shift in developing countries during the 1990s was consistent with the changing priorities, from pre-vocational courses to strengthening general education, as formulated by the World Bank (1991). As for Lauglo (2005), vocationalization is seen as an appropriate initiative for developed countries, with well-functioning and well-resourced secondary school systems that enroll the great majority of young people to study.

Vocationalization of educations usually means the introduction of practical and/or vocational subjects, teaching and learning that offers the learners an opportunity for fieldwork or visit to the industry for practical exposure/practicum, providing vocational guidance and a more applied way of teaching general education subjects (Psacharopoulos and Loxley 1985; Hoppers 1996). This can only be practical in an organized system of training where, for example, the institutions for teacher training prepare teachers to adequately carry out the mantle of practical teaching targeted at the philosophy of vocationalization of secondary education. By teaching and providing vocational skills to the learners, it is hoped that students would more easily find work when they leave school and become more productive and trainable. Studies carried out in both developed and developing countries have shown that economic goals were and very particularly one of the main motives of introducing pre-vocational education, practical subjects and a curriculum more oriented to work (Ondigi, 1996; Ondigi, 1998; Lauglo, 2005; MacLean and Kamau, 1999).

1.2 Why emphasize on vocationalization of education?

Vocationalization of education will have different rationales, depending on the main policy goals of a given country as stipulated in its education policies. There are several categories of goals of vocationalization as suggested in this paper for such goals include: personal development goals, socio-political goals, economic and cultural goals. These goals of vocationalization are important in preparing the learner for a world of work:

1.2.1 Personal Development Goals

Existing beliefs and basic theories of general education point to the idea of a well-rounded education system that can educate “the whole person” in a manner that education should develop and nurture in the learner moral, aesthetic, physical, and practical capacities, not just cognitive knowledge as organized in academic disciplines. Equally important is the assertion that practical subjects should have the additional justification that they allow students to learn from more active “doing” than what is typical in academic subjects (Sizer, 2001, Twoli & Maundu, 1994; Tunbridge, 1995). This practice in teaching of practical skills and familiarization with the “world of work” guarantees the learners hands-on experiences that are highly required in the world of work today. The personal development goals are therefore legitimate parts of the general education and should be introduced at ‘age-appropriate’ stage in the learner’s progression through the education system as embraced in the Kenyan 8-4-4 system of education, not necessarily only in the last educational leg before labour market entry as witnessed in most systems. According to Bloom’s taxonomy of learning, the three domains of learning: Psychomotor, cognitive and affective are necessary in preparing the learners vocationally. Essentially, education about the “world of work” is valued because it imparts knowledge and skills about an important part of learners’ lives, and purports to enable the young people to make better informed choices about their future once out of school. Thus, a system of education must nurture personal development skills, but the question is: Where has the Kenyan system of education gone wrong?

1.2.2 Socio-political Goals

There is need for a diversified school curriculum structure that can be seen as a means to greater equality of opportunities because it would purportedly cater to a wider range of talents and prepare for a wider range of future activities of the learner, than do purely academic curricula. Educational reforms world over are based on this rationale view of vocationalization aimed at improving education in teaching and learning institutions. The reforms ought to envisage policies on education that also favoured the inclusion of practical and vocational subjects as a means to break down social class barriers and inculcate respect for manual labour that will perpetuate the socio-political agenda of a nation that thrives on its educational goals. The history of colonial education in Kenya still haunts the existing reforms of education since independence that continues to perpetuate a class-system structure intended to ensure that the future educated elite would retain identification with ordinary working people and build national solidarity through influence as witnessed in most world systems including Kenya. A vocationalized system of education that can break the socio-political elite class will stand the challenges of time to ensure equity, equality and efficiency of services to all citizens in society (Sifuna, 1992; Swainson, 1993). The authors of this paper wonder: Can it be achieved given the trend of events in

the education systems of this world and more particularly in Kenya? If the socio-political goals are not achieved, then the majority will be marginalized and remain at the mercy of the elite in society.

1.2.3 Economic and Cultural Goals

In the world of educational reforms today, the issue at the heart of policy debate on vocationalization of education has unequivocally been on economic relevance and existing cultures among the people of a given nation. By teaching content and relating it to the national goals of education and offering vocational skills, the hope has been that students would more easily find work when they leave school, and become more productive and trainable in society. The talk today in the labour market is a declared goal in the preparation of school-leavers for self-employment and self-reliance long after schooling. Indeed, education through vocationalization, must and should prepare school-leavers for a transition of school-to work to avoid the likelihood of massive unemployment that generates the prevalence of antisocial behaviour among the youth and creating a culture of political uncertainty in most nations of the world that results to anarchy.

According to Coombe (1988), economic goals were the main motives behind vocationalization policies of education in Commonwealth countries whereby Kenya is a member. The goals included provision of skilled and semi-skilled manpower, reduction of wasted resources caused by weak articulation between education and the labour market, technological literacy, and generally facilitating economic growth and national development. Thus, the curricula and syllabuses have been framed by educationists, personal development goals have been more evident, but these goals have not politically driven the policy interest in vocationalization or defined the issues in the policy debate concerning vocationalization of education. It is interesting to ask whether vocationalized secondary education is more 'economically relevant' than purely general education, and whether it is affordable in implementing upon recommendations by the commission reviewers? This remains a challenge bedeviling most educational systems, more particularly the 8-4-4 system in Kenya.

1.3 The Educational Reforms in Kenya Since Independence

The policy on economic relevance has been the thrust behind the educational reforms in Kenya that has seen the country enact about five educational reforms among which include: The Ominde Commission of 1964; The Gachathi Commission of 1976 referred to as *National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies* (NCEOP); The Kamunge report of 1981; The Mackay report of 1984 referred to as *The Report of the Presidential Working Party on the Second University in Kenya* and The Koech report of 1999 commonly referred to as *Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training* (TIQUET); Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System (Kenya, 1999). According to Mwiria (2002), the policy documents cited above point to six ambitious broad aims for vocationalization, namely:

- Provision of increased training opportunities for the rising numbers of school-leavers with a view to preparing them for self-reliance and self-employment through the promotion of practical skills and attitudes;
- Promotion of education and training that responds to Kenya's overall economic development and in specific sectors such as agriculture, industry and commerce;

- Development of vocational entrepreneurial skills as the basis for further individual development;
- Improvement of the production of skilled artisans, technicians and technologists for both the formal and informal sectors;
- Exposure of students to scientific and technological trends, skills and ideas and promotion of life-long skills that enable learners to better adjust to their work and domestic worlds through the inculcation of competencies that promote creativity, communication, cooperation, innovativeness and problem-solving abilities; and
- Preparation of students for further training in post-secondary middle -level training institutions as well as the university.

The Koech report marked an important watershed in the Kenyan system of education by strongly recommending that: education with the additional responsibility of teaching must ensure: . . . a core of generic skills that would aid the graduate to better communicate, work in teams with less supervision, use information technology to access new ways of doing things, promote entrepreneurship education that has become invaluable to those in paid employment or in self -employment...and the ability to be creative, innovative as well as an intrinsic initiative for problem-solving... (Kenya,1999).

The educational reforms as instituted urge our Kenyan education system at all levels to:

- Be clear about the outcomes we seek to establish in society.
- Collaborate to redesign structures and processes for effectiveness, efficiency, and flexibility in our daily operations.
- Continually monitor and measure our performance against agreed global standards.
- Hold our education system accountable for progress and results in every step of the way our country grows and develop.

Today, the instituted educational reforms have not brought about robust changes expected for the education system remains academic and examination- oriented in nature rather than being vocational by practice. A dual system of education as in Canada, USA and Germany can guarantee both academic and hands-on experiences to our graduates that when they complete schooling, they are able to realize the national goals of education (Ngome, 1992; Mwiria, 2002). Technologizing education through vocational training will offer some positives that are likely to bring change to society. Just as technology is at the core of virtually every aspect of our daily lives and work, we must leverage it to provide engaging and powerful learning experiences, content, and resources and assessments that measure students' achievement in more complete, authentic, and meaningful ways. Technology-based learning and assessment systems will be pivotal in improving student learning and generating data that can be used to continuously improve the education system at all levels. Technology will help us undertake collaborative teaching strategies combined with professional learning that better prepare and enhance educators' competencies and expertise over the course of their careers (Ondigi, 2009). By instituting existing educational reforms, Kenya can learn from other kinds of enterprises

that have used vocational education and technology to improve outcomes while increasing productivity.

1.4 Issues of Concern in the Kenyan Education System

As a nation, Kenya needs to rethink its education system if the country is to address the socio-economic, cultural and political inadequacies that have persisted over time. The nation should work on the belief that education is the key to socio-economic growth, development and prosperity and to Kenya's ability to compete in the global economy (Muya, 1993). Ideally, this change in thinking is the path to good jobs and higher earning power for citizens to realize the effects of educational reforms and change. It is necessary for our education system to rationally and democratically revolutionize the thinking and innovativeness of school-leavers to put knowledge and skills to work long after schooling. Vocationalization of education should work to foster the cross-border, and cross-cultural collaboration required to solve the most challenging problems of our time that include poverty, underemployment/unemployment and slow pace of socio-economic, political and cultural socio-economic and cultural development in society. Why have the educational reforms in Kenya not revolutionized the society to expected levels of change?

Essentially, education can bring about the expected changes if the system is to recast and forecast the expected changes. This situation is only possible if a nation must embrace innovation, prompt implementation, regular evaluation, and continuous improvement. Therefore, the educational programmes and projects that work must be brought to scale so that every system of schooling has the opportunity to take advantage of that success. The pertinent question to ask is: Has the Kenyan system been responsive to the labour market demands? If not then, the Kenyan system of education must establish regulations, policies, actions, and the grand investments that must be strategic and coherent. In essence, is vocationalization the answer to the challenges facing the education platforms in Kenya or where has the system gone wrong? These yet remain to be challenging issues today.

1.5 Justification of this Study

Whereas it is possible that vocationalization can bring about change in society, the question is whether this goal is realistic and under what circumstance can the expectations be realized? The authors of this paper feel that this can be achieved where the efforts are geared towards comprehensive educational policy reforms that are focused on the stated objectives. However, there are several advantages of vocationalization of education which include among others:

- a) Vocational courses that can produce personnel with necessary drive and dash to give a lead to society in the matter of self-employment and commitment to development.
- b) Society might benefit by an enlarged supply of technical manpower and leadership at grassroot level.
- c) Vocationalization can help to accelerate the economic growth by producing the right type of personnel for initial level of absorption.

1.6 The Policy on Vocationalization of Kenyan Education

According to Akyempong (2002), vocationalization policy has broad objectives which can add value and meaning to an existing system of education and these include:

- a] Exposing pupils at the Basic Education level to a range of practical activities in the vocational field in order to make the learners familiar with, and stimulate their interest in, vocational subjects and so give them equal opportunity to choose their future careers in either the technical or general field.
- b] Equipping students who have completed Basic Education with those occupational skills that will enable them to enter into gainful employment in industry and commerce.
- c] Equipping students with the relevant productive and entrepreneurial skills that will prepare them for self-employment in the communities, society or labour markets.
- d] Providing trained human resources in science, technology and commerce, matching supply of skilled labour with demand.
- e] Providing personnel with the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial and commercial and economic development while at the same time paying attention to environmental issues.
- f] To give training and impart the necessary knowledge and skills to trained manpower leading to the provision of operatives, artisans, craftsmen, technicians, and other middle -level technical personnel.
- g] To enable the youth to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of science and technology through systematic exposure to modern technology.
- h] Encouraging the increased participation of women in education, training, and employment in the technical field.
- i] Providing a sound foundation for further education for those students who may wish to continue with their education later in the context of life-long education (Baiden, 1996, p.93).

1.7 Pedagogical Practices That Will Provide Change the Vocationalization of Education

In classroom practice, the teacher has the opportunity to transform the learner into an all-round person that operates in the society with ease (Kibera, 1993; Kerre, 1991). The pedagogy used must in part be about the production of identities which in essence the curriculum is modeled after the institutional culture that is enormously successful in preparing students for low skilled, service work in a society that has little to offer in the way of meaningful employment for the vast majority of its graduates. Institutions of teaching/training and learning should therefore, provide some insights into how education should be reformed to meet the expectations of the learners and society they are bound to serve (Ellis & Worthington 1994; Omulando, 1988). The pedagogy used should base its operations on the problem-solution based approach which is built on the premise that first it is to establish the existing problem, learn about it and consider other possible alternatives to the problem; second, outline the best cause of action to the problem by identifying a team to look at the best alternative methods to the problem; third, outline the solution approach to the problem for implementation; fourth,

work closely on the problem and where necessary improve on the shortcomings, and finally monitor and evaluate the procedures of operations that work best for each case under review. The authors of this paper acknowledge that this process will offer the best solution to existing problems rather than accumulating knowledge for the sake of being knowledgeable. Apparently, without the education system offering meaningful socio-economic, cultural and political changes, then a nation will neither grow nor develop but rather the status quo will persist unless vocationalization of education is given a chance as in Europe, America and Asia.

The issues of quality education are best understood through teaching and training of individuals in the institutions of learning. The question of classroom practice should have to recognize that the problems of meeting the goals of education and expectations of all individuals in the society must be achieved through accountability, transparency and cost-effectiveness of doing one's duty, that is, time management of resources and the blight of the individual and society. The problems of education and its objectives must be addressed in the realms of values and politics of the day while engaging critically the most fundamental beliefs citizens have as a nation regarding the meaning and purpose of education and its relationship to democracy, socio-economic, political and cultural development. Education must address the very woes of the society and make the individual satisfied.

The existing conditions and experiences show that institutional corporate cultures are a threat to faculty and students given the way programmes and the daily operations of these institutions are conducted. Universities world-over are increasingly modeling themselves after corporations and therefore, it becomes crucial to understand how the principles of corporate culture intersect with the meaning and purpose of the university, the role of knowledge production for the twenty-first century, and the social practices inscribed within teacher-student relationships. Apparently, the operations are not encouraging as universities have become "markets of knowledge" and therefore, there is more at stake in university reforms than the realities and harsh principles of cost cutting.

One consequence of the prevailing policies in universities is an attempt to curtail academic freedom and tenure of staff which results in resignation from within and fear among the staff. Institutions of higher learning have become business oriented and therefore, have to focus on the priorities of developing infrastructure and not the individual as exemplified in some universities in Kenya. Despite the increase in enrolment of students in these universities, there are sparingly no efforts in recruiting staff to meet the increases in student enrolment which compounds the problem of effective teaching/training through vocalization. The student-teacher ratio in one of the seven Kenyan universities is about 1: 43, but this does not apply to all schools, for example, the school of education. The downsizing and deskilling of faculty is also exacerbated by the attempts on the part of many universities to expand into the profitable markets of distance education as exhibited (n.d).

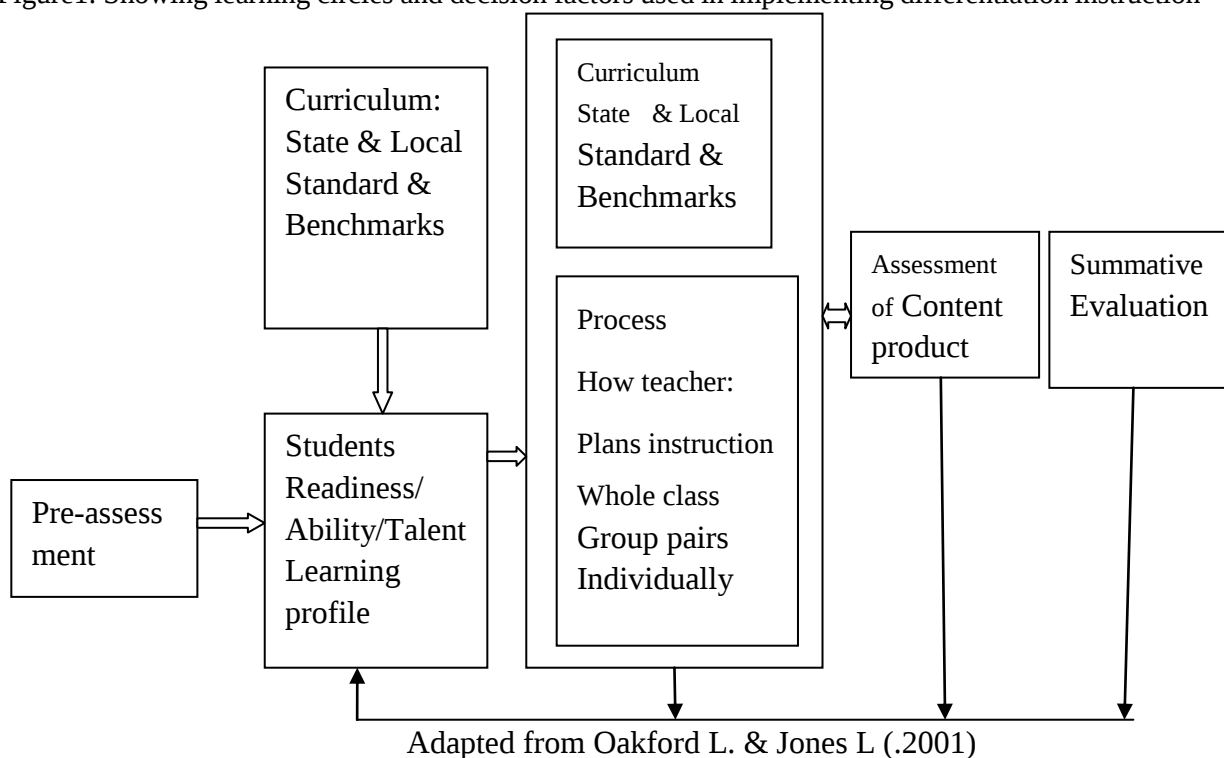
1.8 Classroom Teaching; Learning practices and the Learners' Responsibilities

The use of differentiate instruction is to recognize students varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, and to react responsively by providing education that meets the interest of the learners and desires of society (Guild & Garger, 1998; Willis & Mann, 2000). The units covered must fit the objectives of the curriculum and contain

content that offers knowledge that is relevant to the career development of the individual and the very needs of the society (Lauglo & Maclean2000; Mazrui, 1994; Muya, 1993). Differentiated instruction is a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class but on diversified skills. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process for the market skills (Oaksford & Jones 2001; National Educational Technology Plan, 2010; Tomlinson, 1995 & 2000).

According to the authors of this paper, several key elements guide differentiation in the education environment that influences the teaching and learning of students in the classroom. Tomlinson (2001) identifies three elements of the curriculum that can be differentiated: Content, Process, and Products as seen in figure 1 below:

Figure1: Showing learning circles and decision factors used in implementing differentiation instruction



According to figure 1, teachers need to develop ideas around differentiating instruction based on:

[i] Content: It is important for both the teacher and the learner to be aware of the content to cover and the teaching and learning resources to be used in the process. Several elements and materials are used to support instructional content including: acts, concepts, generalizations or principles, attitudes, and skills. The variation seen in a differentiated classroom is most frequently the manner in which students gain access to important learning. Teachers are expected to use varied pedagogic strategies that will enable the learners realize the goals of

education. This is only possible if the teacher prepares for the lesson by emphasizing on Bloom's taxonomy of teaching and learning domains.

The pedagogic strategies used in the classroom should be focused on aligning tasks and objectives to learning goals. Designers of differentiated instruction determine as essential the alignment of tasks with instructional goals and objectives. Goals are most frequently assessed by many high-stakes tests at the state level and frequently administered standardized measures. Objectives are frequently written in incremental steps resulting in a continuum of skills-building tasks. An objectives-driven menu makes it easier to find the next instructional step for learners entering at varying levels.

While in the classroom, instruction should be concept-focused and principle-driven with an effort to realize the expected vocational skills. Teachers must focus on the concepts, principles and skills that students should learn. The content of instruction should address the same concepts with all students but be adjusted by degree of complexity for the diversity of learners in the classroom to gain meaningful knowledge and skills.

[ii] The process should use flexible grouping approach for the strategies of flexible grouping are essential in making the learners design their own learning. Learners are expected to interact and work together as they develop knowledge of new content and likely skills to be learned. Teachers may conduct whole-class introductory discussions of content, big ideas followed by small group or pair work necessary in perfecting skills. Student groups can be coached from within or by the teacher to complete assigned tasks as the grouping of students is not meant to be fixed. Based on the content, project, and on-going evaluations, grouping and regrouping must be a dynamic process as one of the foundations of differentiated instruction.

This approach needs a well-organized classroom management that can benefit students and teachers. Teachers must consider organization and instructional delivery strategies to effectively operate in the classroom using differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2001). The learners have a responsibility of designing their future given the accumulated knowledge and gained skills. The learning process must be critically planned, endured during the course of study and perfected by engaging in practical learning at all stages of the training. The learners have a responsibility to give back to the community and society at large for they have a role to play in nation building as articulated in the goals of education of any given nation. The future of the nation depends on the blight of the learners.

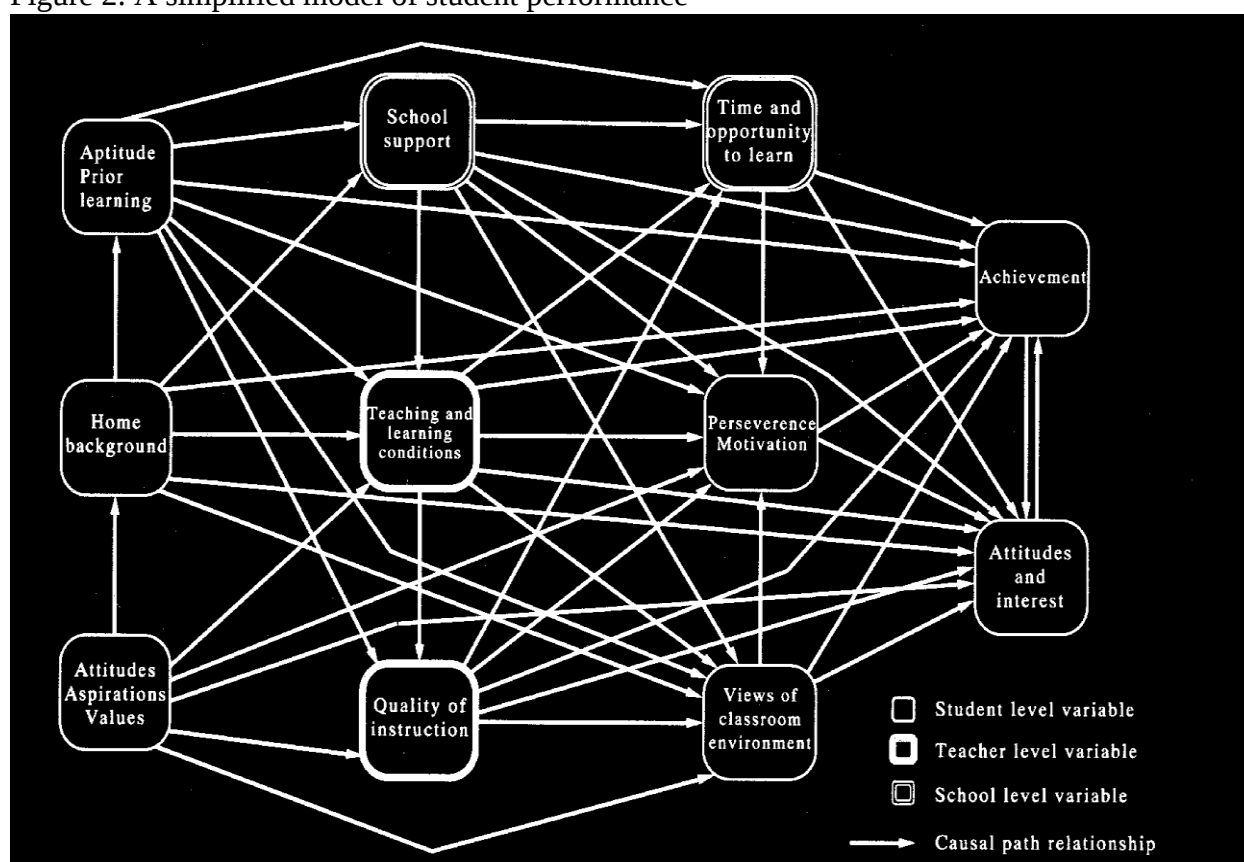
1.9 Challenges Facing the Training of Teacher Trainees in the Kenyan Universities

The challenge to our education system is to leverage the teaching and learning of content and modern technology to create engaging, relevant, and personalized learning experiences for all learners that mirror the students' daily lives and the realities of their future to society (Ondigi, 2009; Kerre, 1990). In contrast to traditional classroom instruction that has been the norm over time, there is apparent need that requires our education system to put students at the center and empower them to take control of their own learning by providing flexibility on several dimensions. This opportunity will give the learners a chance to have hand-on experiences and realities in life that concretize their skills so as to meet the desired career goals. Thus, the existing system of education should endeavour to provide work tailored to individual goals,

needs, interests, and prior experience of each learner. Today, the system of education is expected to advocate for a curriculum based on vocationalization of education that will support student learning in areas that are of real concern or particular interest to them, for personalized learning adds to its relevance, inspiring higher levels of motivation and achievement. The biggest challenge is how can this ambition be achieved under the prevailing circumstances in our training institutions?

Essentially, educational reforms ought to focus on the practices that guarantee training in hands-on experiences besides knowledge acquisition. Figure 2 model below identifies some of the variables and sketches of the relationships influencing student performance that guarantees vocationalization of education.

Figure 2: A simplified model of student performance



Source: Adopted from Keeves and Adams (1994)

The success of an education system as shown in figure 2 depends on the interrelationships between and among the concepts of teacher quality, policies designed to enhance them, the context of schooling, and the dynamics of teaching and learning which are highly complex and dependent upon time available, prevailing circumstances and attitude of all those involved in the realization of the expected desires and goals. As for the schools to provide opportunity to learn, they must operate regularly and provide the required infrastructure to give students a chance to learn and be able to put knowledge into practice. Essentially, teachers must be prepared and care about what students learns, and they should also be competent to teach the

curriculum that is broad, blended and progressive for society is changing every day. Otherwise, education and training must vividly seek and specify those inputs which determine academic achievement and knowledge skills which translate directly into increased productivity of labour or those that can enable learners' acquisition of further formal education that is vocational in nature.

Therefore, the process of vocationalization of education is not possible without concerted efforts that specifically address the learning environment as stipulated in figure 2, but it is not only limited to: aptitude prior learning, home background, attitude aspirations values, school support, teaching and learning conditions, quality instruction, time and opportunity to learn, perseverance motivation and views of classroom environment, all of which lead to career achievement in life. The school characteristics of a quality institution are important in the process of vocationalization and these must include:

- ✚ Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking among learners;
- ✚ Capable motivated, and well-trained teachers who can provide the required guidance;
- ✚ Appropriate and well-designed curriculum that can withstand the tests of time;
- ✚ Effective teaching and learning equipment and materials including, but not limited to, textbooks, laboratories, workshops, tools and machinery;
- ✚ A safe and well-maintained teaching and learning environment;
- ✚ A valid and reliable examination system that tests both academic and practical skills;
- ✚ Effective school leadership that operates on systems approach including instructional supervision;
- ✚ Ample direct instructional time for the completion of the syllabi;
- ✚ Adequate financing; and effective organizational structure and support (World, 1997, 92).

An education system can only be responsive to changes in society and add value to the learners when it in-cooperates the objectives of basic technology that include developing skills and knowledge for:

- (i) Designing, problem-solving, decision-making, researching and the application of information, in order to carry out practical and useful tasks in the home and community;
- (ii) Using and operating the different tools and equipment safely and efficiently and
- (iii) Understanding personal, physical, mental, and emotional growth.

Lauglo and Maclean (2000) argue that a system of education, theory of pedagogy, or national education policy that does not promote the institutional role in nurturing learners' self-esteem fails to carry out one of its primary functions. The institutions of learning should therefore build on the management roles that foster new relationships between school and community and redefining the organization of schooling and educational policy that enhances practical learning of vocational nature. Therefore, vocationalization of education refers to a curriculum structure in which students devote a share of their class time to vocational or practical subjects that enhance their future prospects for higher education.

1.10 The Way Forward in Providing Quality Education for the 21st Century and Societal Transformation.

The world is changing rapidly and has become a global village due to rapid expansion of technology. The education system of any given country must be responsive to meet the labour demands as school-leavers look for jobs all over the world. The globalised economy creates opportunities, challenges and unpredictability to the learners. The great challenges of sustainability and the shifting demographics of global population requires new thinking, and collective responsibility of action to overcome labour challenges through an organized education system that is responsive to change (World Bank, 1991; Hoppers, 1996; Psacharopoulos & Loxley, 1985). Apparently, there is dimensional need to increase our understanding of human intelligence and behaviour so as to know more about how we can prepare learners effectively, for the value of learning throughout life requires a vocationalized education system. In essence, young people nowadays bring with them to class the expectation not just to sit and listen, but to participate, to interact, and to shape their future through an education system that guarantees opportunities.

Ever since independence in 1963, Kenya has seen and realized improved standards in education, the quality of teachers at all levels is getting better though not significantly, and investment in infrastructure, IT and resources are growing though the concerted efforts have not realized the expected international levels. However, in our changing context, the old models of education born of the colonial era has not realized significant change and therefore, there is a need for an overhaul that reflects the desires of the nation, the needs of the community and commitment of the citizens to adaptive change. If we want to help our young children to be in charge of their own destiny and leaders of tomorrow who can thrive in the 21st century, then we need not just to adapt, but to transform our education system to meet our expectations. Therefore, the Kenyan policy on education should be enforced on the set out principles that we believe should inform future development of education for young people, which include learning of all kinds, whether formal, informal or non-formal, and whether offered by schools, colleges, universities, training organizations or elsewhere that is based on the principles of vocationalization.

In the vocationalization of education, the primary purpose of the stipulated educational policies must awaken a love of learning in the young people, and give them the ability and desire to carry on learning throughout life that meets the ultimate goals of education. The authors of this paper propose that the Government of Kenya and other educational stakeholders need to recognize that education has many aims among which include:

- i] Nurturing innovativeness, creativity and capacity for independent and critical thought.
- ii] Embracing teaching and learning through hands-on processes that guarantee young people formal education equipped with the confidence, aptitude and skills they need for life and for work.
- iii] Helping young people to be holistic in their career goals, to develop and maintain their own emotional, physical and mental wellbeing.

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- iv] Teacher at all times being creative and professionally involved in the design of curricula and learning environments, and should be supported and developed to fulfill that role.
- v] Educational policy must offer a partnership in which learners have a valuable role to play in contributing to the design of their own learning, and in shaping the way their learning environment operates in order to put into practice the knowledge and skills gained through schooling or in a non-formal setting. This is necessary in ensuring that learners do not acquire knowledge theoretically without hands-on experience.
- vi] The learning environment must promote a symbiotic environment in which the education of young people should be a partnership of the government, schools, parents and the wider community in a local area so as to benefit all. Education is meant to develop all parties in all aspects possible but not the individual alone.
- vii] Any changes anticipated and initiated must enhance a climate where schools should be inclusive, enhanced creative communities which build tolerance, respect and empathy in young people for the good of society. If communities stand to be condemning, then society will never advance or positively impact growth and development.
- viii] Experience has it that education should engage the learner with exciting, relevant content and opportunities for learning through experience and by doing.
- ix] Evidently, the curriculum in schools and other institutions of learning should balance academic and practical knowledge so that every learner can access high quality academic and vocational opportunities that present a school-leaver with opportunities in the global market.
- x] The educational success of learners should not depend on their background as this will create social classes, but schools, communities and families must work together to close gaps in attainment. The current educational practice in Kenya provides a fertile ground for class education that will result in social class segregation in the distance future and very limited hands-on experiences.
- xi] Learners are endowed with different talents and can only prove their potential if given an opportunity. Thus learners need to be supported to enjoy success no matter where their talents lie. Therefore, learners should be given an opportunity to exploit their best talents and potential but not coerced to undertake programmes that are well paying like medicine, engineering and business studies. Open Vocational Education places emphasis on vocational education, which equips the learners with skills of productive work and prepares productive workers to actively participate in the development of the society (Rajkhowa, nd).

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