

## Conceptualizing Patristic Domains in the 8-4-4 System of Education: Towards the Realisation of Holistic Education in Kenya

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### Abstract

*The 8-4-4 system of education as a strategy is a national outlook that addresses the provision of equitable, accessible, relevant and quality education at the three levels of education; primary, secondary and university respectively, in Kenya. Early childhood education, literacy and life skills programmes can not be ignored. Using formal, non-formal and informal education, Christian education (True Education) plays a major role in any state as it affirms education is a gift from God and hence the family, church and the state are complementary in its provision. It should not be compromised by secularism and materialism that corrupts the entire society depriving people of dignity, meaning and harmony. The discussion is based on 8-4-4 system, historical background, challenges and projection into the future to what should be addressed to realize the divine wisdom from God which is formative, transformative, liberates the intellect, disciplines the mind and purifies humanity to live in peace thus patristic education which is Christo-centric is salvific (redemptive) education to eternal life.*

**Keywords:** Education, Holistic, Patristic, Learners, Goals

### 1. Introduction

The paper discusses 8-4-4 system of education as 'the education system' of Kenya. While appraising it in the light of Patristic Education towards the realisation of relevant and holistic education, the paper has addressed concepts of secular and patristic education, the evolution of education in Kenya since the pre-colonial, colonial and the period after independence. The 8-4-4 system of education was recommended by the Mackay Report of 1981, the primary cycle was effected in 1985 and secondary cycle in 1986. The rest of the paper analyses the system and the objectives of education in the light of holistic education (a divine gift from God to man/ woman). Some challenges and critiques are included where applicable and finally recommendations given to chart the way forward. The analysis is focused on the primary and secondary cycles although tertiary is mentioned.

### 2. Conceptualizations

#### 2.1 Education

Education is the key to the store house of wisdom, the wealth of knowledge and development of the society (Agabus Hentozens); it brings revelation of truth, harmony and transformation to the culture and individual. Education is the aggregate of what has been learnt and expressed in terms of abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of positive value to the society. In this conception, education refers to the end product, in which learners attain necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values as a result, the individual lives comfortably and securely in an environment. Education changes with years and is sensitive to places as it is to time. It bears different meanings in different countries, cultures, rural setting or crowded industrial area. It changes in a given society as the culture evolves and grows from simple to complex. We can conclude that education is the totality of experiences individuals go through in learning to cope with their physical and social environments.

Education when viewed as a process refers to acquisition of accumulated knowledge, skills and values as passed down through generations and which is needed for playing roles in the society. It involves moulding the youth towards a desired goal or a personal awakening to what they already potentially are. Education comprises organised and sustained communication designed to bring about learning. Education is responsible for maintaining cultural heritage and improving self and society (UNESCO, 1975).

## 2.2 Patristic Education

Patristic education involves the development of a human being physically, spiritually and mentally. St. Augustine of Hippo states that patristic education is an integrated methodical imparting of all feasible means in the light of divine wisdom or truth so as to effect a harmonious formation and development of corporeal, spiritual, moral, social and intellectual faculties for committed participation in all inclusive community in order to attain wholistic goodness, progress, happiness and lifelong vision of salvation. The definition emphasises two aspects, corporeal (exteriority/body) and inner self (interiority/conscience).

However, St. Thomas Aquinas goes further and defines patristic education as a life long process of imparting, acquiring the whole knowledge and experience ordained by divine truths involving integral formation, development and maturity of the whole person in his individual spiritual, moral and social dimensions for vision, responsible and value oriented relationship between God, man and society in history of human beings.

Church fathers felt they were called to pneuma-centric task for the church and society. The four elements of patristic education according to church fathers that is the essence of education are:

- i) Wholistic knowledge or divine wisdom from God and faith in God.
- ii) Wholistic transformation of human beings
- iii) Wholistic participation and commitment in the society.
- iv) Wholistic experience of eternal salvation

Any education system such as the 8-4-4 system should address and embrace the definitions and the four elements that are complementary. Appraising 8-4-4 system as the assessment of the value, quality or nature of the system is given. Wholistic education, the cosmotheandrian education, refers to the relationship between man, nature and God and which prepares a person for integrated developed life. The discussion is based on the extent to which 8-4-4 system develops the individual fully (spiritually, mentally and physically). In addition, an attempt is made to appraise 8-4-4 system in terms of relevance that is how closely the system is connected with societal needs or how the education system is appropriate to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is evident that education

- 1) Is broad and complex, with plurality of elements
- 2) Distinguishes between true or false
- 3) Offers direction

## 3. The Value Condition of Education

Education has a direct relationship to both human and natural development in a way that the two are inseparable and mutually supportive processes in the active and productive life of a community. Education involves the art and act in which people are prepared to create or recreate new working values and habits for their changing lives in a dynamic environment while development refers to aspirations and actions of people towards higher levels of socio-economic performance. Education is seen as necessary for participation in a development process and to individual's life (World Bank, 1971 p.6). It opens doors to broadened thinking, and empowers people to make informed decisions and nurture self-confidence (MoEST, 2005).

Studies that have been carried out affirm that education impacts on development by improving quality of life, raising awareness on environmental conservation and uplifting one's socio-economic status in the society. In support of the role of education in development, the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) contend:

*Education is the cornerstone of economic growth and social development and a principle means of improving the welfare of individuals. It increases the productive capacity of societies and their political economic and scientific institutions. It also helps to reduce poverty by increasing the value and efficiency of labour offered by the poor and by mitigating the population, health and nutritional consequences of poverty. As economies worldwide are transformed by technological advances and new production methods that depend on a well trained and intellectually flexible labour force emerge, education becomes even more significant (IBRD/ World bank 1990:8, in Digolo, 2002).*

This is the main reason why all countries of the world are investing in the education of their citizens despite serious socio-political and economic problems they have had to contend with. Education as a vital tool for human survival took a different course when the United Nations declared it a human right in 1948, in its universal declaration of human rights. The 1989 convention on the rights of the child made education a basic and compulsory right for every individual (UNICEF, 1999; Achola & Pillai 2002).

Education, especially for girls, results in higher productivity in non- wage activities that improve household welfare

by reducing fertility, infant and child mortality rates, improvement in health by influencing nutritional and health care practices as well as national cohesion (World bank, 2000, Achola & Pillai, 2000 and UNDP, 2002 in Achola et al (2004). Available evidence shows that educational benefits in quantitative terms are much more manifest at elementary (Abagi, 1997, in Achola et al 2004). Thus, in considering the effects of education on economic productivity, a wide number of studies concluded that investment in primary education yields returns that are well above the opportunity cost of capital (IBRID/ World bank 1990 p10). In this regard, developing countries, Kenya included, need to put more emphasis on the provision of education.

Basic Education refers to educational activities that cover initial cycles of formal schooling, non-formal and early childhood education, literacy and life skills programme. Education at this level, cover basic needs for survival which involve knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for improvement of the quality of lives which assist its recipients continue learning for life. Although theoretically the Ministry of Education Science and Technology would prefer considering the first twelve years of formal school (Primary and Secondary cycles) as basic education, it is generally accepted that basic education refers to primary (Standard one to eight) cycle.

As indicated by various studies, the socio- economic benefits occurring due to formal education are now clear. The countries with high literacy rates among women and men have lower levels of fertility, lower infant and maternal mortality, longer life expectancy and better approach to gender and equity issues in development (Psacharopoulos and Woodwall, 1985). Education stakeholders, for example, the government, donors and parents have continued to invest heavily in education. Table 1 shows expenditure in five selected countries in Africa.

**Table 1:** Public Expenditure in Primary and Secondary Education, in Five Selected Countries in Africa.

Country	Public expenditure in education		
	Real Per Capita Gross National Product	% of Total Government Expenditure	% Of Gross National Product
Botswana	5367	20.5	9.6
Senegal	1596	33.1	3.6
South Africa	2821	20.5	6.8
Kenya	1404	23.7	7.4
Namibia	4027	21.3	9.4

**Source:** UNESCO, 1998. World Education Report.

Kenya has allocated 87.2% of its social spending on basic education alone but enrolment rates declined in 1990's (UNDP, 2002). The heavy investment is justified to be in line with the national philosophy spelt out in 1965 Session paper No.1 on African Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya (GoK, 1965). Various policy documents such as National Development Plans, Economic Surveys and Sessional papers No.6, & 2 of 1988, 1999 and 1996 respectively, have emphasised the role of education and provided a framework for investment in the sector by various players.

#### 4. Education in African Traditional Domain

The African Traditional Education had a cosmotheandrian approach. It provided relevant education that was simple, appreciated God, instilled discipline and produced useful products. The pre-colonial African societies had both formal and informal education related to the kinds of production systems in existence. Division of labour by sex characterised education. Learning was by repeating, imitating, observing and participating, the roles of girls and boys were predetermined by the society.

The girls were taught by elder sisters, aunts, mother and grandmothers on proper methods of farming, weaving baskets, pottery making, child care, cooking, collecting firewood and water. The boys were taught to be strong, brave and protective hence were involved in developing hunting skills, building houses (by women among Maasai) herding cows, animal husbandry and tool making. They were taught by elder brothers, uncles, father and grandfathers. Both were taught skills in medicine and rituals.

Although learning was informal, there were times when boys and girls who had attained puberty would be secluded as they pass through initiation rights to adulthood. The elders had a task of training the youth in clan history, religion and life skills for adulthood survival. In some ethnic groups circumcision was the rite, others removed one, two or six teeth. The graduates attained a new status hence forth boys or girls were mature to marry. Today in the 2000s the family, a symbol of the African culture passes on the vital component of culture to the youth though some of the values have

changed with time.

## 5. Education in the colonial era

Christian Education was introduced by the missionaries before colonisation. The education influenced by the state through commissions set by the governor. Missionaries engaged in formal education to improve literacy and enable the converts to read the bible. They set up churches, schools and hospitals in accordance with Christianity and evangelization. However the British colonialists used the existing system to get personnel to do clerical jobs.

Education for Africans was elementary from standard 1-4; later class 6 while secondary school education was minimal. Education system was segregated with the white getting the best, then the Asians, but the Africans had the lowest quality of education. The content for African education included vocational subjects such as carpentry, agriculture, animal husbandry, tailoring, writing, arithmetic, reading, elementary simple hygiene, masonry, shoe making and road construction. For higher education, the successful white children went abroad to join university. There was only one university started in 1949, at Makerere in Uganda for the three East African countries (Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania).

The following were the education commissions before independence that formed the base for legal and policy formulation:

- Fraser Education Committee, 1909, set up the three segregated education systems for whites, Asians and Africans.
- Phelps Stokes Commission Report, 1924, recommended to the government to give missionaries funds to run the schools as segregated entities.
- Beechar's Report, 1949, introduced 4years primary, 4 years intermediate & 4 years secondary (4-4-4 system) with examinations that were stiff and oriented to the European education. The intermediate schools were reduced from 80 to 20; secondary from 10 to 5.
- Binn's Report, 1952, supported 4-4-4 system, co-education, expansion of higher education and recommended that teachers be considered and paid as government departments.

Commissions had recommended use of vernacular but people preferred English, as it looked more sophisticated. The discord was sown. The recommendations did not augur well for the Africans who started demanding for more intermediate and secondary schools. They started an African Independent College, for example, Githunguri to train teachers. Education for the African was to obtain bare minimum of skills and knowledge, to serve as manual labourers, and to boost the colonial economy. Even those two worked as junior clerks or junior officials, basically facilitated and reinforced the functioning of the colonial administration and to teach their kin. The Africans were meant to be submissive and subservient, to feel inferior and to accept the superiority of the colonial masters. Content of education was vocational, religious and of low academic level. Few went to school and the rate of attrition was high (Sifuna, 1980, pp 2- 47).

The Limitations for the African system were:

- a. Africans were many
- b. Lack of funds
- c. Number of schools few
- d. Social and occupational roles for which they were destined were low.

Education for whites was intellectual, elitist and universal as was practised in Britain. Bogonko (1992) is harsh claiming the whites were trained to become capable rulers and empire builders, to manage problems and exploit the vast opportunities in the region. They received kindergarten education and studied in universities outside Kenya, notably Britain (Altrincham n.d. pp 12-14, 1992, p. 2 ). Asians had strong economic and religious bases to create viable Asian school systems supported mainly by self help (Abreau, 1982 in Bogonko, 1992).

Teacher training was haphazard as each Christian society (denomination) trained their own teachers, the salary payment depending on the employer. The quality and salaries of teachers were not standardised. Only a small fraction of eligible Africans benefited from the colonial system of education which evidently failed to provide Education for All and uphold human dignity as advocated by Patristic fathers. That was the system inherited at independence.

## 6. Education in Kenya after the Achievement of Independence

After independence in 1963 the government was committed to fight poverty, ignorance and disease. In pursuit of this the government adopted a policy of providing education to all citizens regardless of their economic, social and cultural status. The national commission on education, 1964, provided the policy framework for operationalizing a unified education system (Ominde Report, 1965 in EFA, 2000) and the Sessional paper No.10 of 1965 on African Socialism and Its

Application to Planning in Kenya, set a policy and pace for fighting illiteracy, ignorance and poverty (GoK, 1965). Since the 1964 Education Commission, the Education sector has been subjected to about nine reviews by state funded special commissions and working parties. Some are:

- i) 1964: The Ominde Commission.
- ii) 1976: The Gachathi Report.
- iii) 1981: The Presidential Working Party on the Establishment of the Second Public University (Mackay Report)
- iv) 1988: The Presidential Working Party on Educational and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond.
- v) 1998: Master Plan on Education and Training Task Force.

It is evident that the government tried to improve education by setting up Education Commissions to strategise on educational issues to provide legal framework and policy that would enhance its achievement

## **7. The 8-4-4 System of Education**

The system will be discussed in the light of the four elements of Wholistic Education. St. Thomas Aquinas definition of Patristic Education and the four conditions of integral education namely: social empirical analysis, philosophical critique, scriptural and theological exploration, and pragmatic praxis.

The 8-4-4 system was introduced in Kenya in 1985 through a recommendation given in the Mackay Report, 1981 whose main mandate was to recommend the establishment of a second university in Kenya, after the University of Nairobi, 1970. The Report recommended a change from 7-4-2-3 system which meant, seven years of primary education, 4 years secondary education; 2 years 'A' level and 3 years in university, to be replaced by 8 years primary education; 4 years secondary and 4 years of university. Note that 'A' level was abolished, one year added to primary and the other to university. The inception has had criticisms but many changes have taken place since then.

Preparations to usher 8-4-4 system in 1985 had not been completed. The resources such as books were hurriedly done and many were lacking, for example, Form one books in 1986. The task of building extra classrooms to accommodate class eight and workshops for carpentry and other practical subjects by parents had not been completed in many areas due to poverty. Teachers had not been adequately in-serviced for some subjects and there was inadequate training in the newly introduced subjects such as Music, Art & Craft, Business Education and Carpentry. The subjects included English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, Religious Education, Agriculture, Science, Physical Education, combined Geography/History/Civics a total of thirteen subjects.

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) lecturers from the Mathematics Department, presenting their case to the Koech Education Commission in 1999 said, "The 8-4-4 system of education should be replaced by 7-4-2-3 system as its graduates at every level are neither practical oriented nor thinkers." They advanced two arguments:

- i) The system had failed to meet its objectives of being practical oriented as advanced by its proponents and
- ii) The primary level's curriculum is overloaded with too many subjects leaving pupils with little time to play or do organised homework. There are times parents are forced to do homework for the children.

St. Clement of Alexandria believed that true educational curriculum should employ teaching methodology which liberates and transforms man, environment and the universe. The cosmotheandrian nature of true education targets to educate the whole environment, geographical features, land, cultural traditions, religious institutions, and tribal groupings a view backed by St. Thomas Aquinas that all subjects are important. Quality education in terms of relevant curriculum, empowering pedagogy and monitoring learning achievement is important in any system. The major challenge of 21<sup>st</sup> century is the development of viable programme of actions and strategies at national, provincial and school level that would enhance the achievement of Education for All.

Others argued that adding one year to university made education more expensive and inaccessible for those of poor background. The haphazard implementation of the primary cycle undermined the objective of making education practical oriented by weakening the learners achievements in practical subjects. It was evident learning in schools was mainly memorisation because the KCPE examination was not practical. Preparations for KCPE impaired learning practical subjects through projects which were not scored. Development Plan of Kenya indicated that the education was irrelevant as the country moved towards industrialisation by 2020. The aim was to produce standard eight graduates who would be able to participate in national development by applying the scientific and practical skills for salaried, self employment and self reliance. Some critiques argue that fourteen- year olds are not old enough to be engaged in gainful employment.

The quality of education was undermined by the recruitment of 12, 000 untrained teachers to teach the new subjects in which teachers had not received specialised training. This included subjects like music, woodwork art and

craft. Some of the projects were done by specialist adults on behalf of the pupils. Examination was to be based on continuous assessment but this also undermined by the fact that some project work was not work of the individual students. It was also apparent that getting standardised tests that were valid and reliable from the whole country was not realistic. This would lead to subjectivity in the results that would be presented hence no yardstick to measure the better students to proceed for further studies or be selected for various courses.

An education system can only succeed if there is a true teacher. The Greek anthropocyclic sophistomies contend that a true teacher is prudent in his/her inner self as well as outer self and knows the limitations. The teacher is described as democratic, consults, does not impose his ideas and generally be of moral integrity. The hiring of untrained teachers could jeopardise teaching methodology and affect quality of education.

Viewing this system in the light of Patristic Education, it is evident that the first element of knowledge and faith in God are met. This is because of the wide variety of subjects offered including religious education. The second component of wholistic transformation is partially achieved because the students were not adequately and appropriately exposed to the practical subjects. They were not transformed hence could not take responsibilities outside school and they were too young to take up their places in society as initially planned. The third aspect of commitment and participation is unlikely at primary level as already mentioned. However at secondary and university levels the graduates are likely to have acquired some skills necessary to fit in the society. In mind are courses such as woodwork, art and music which form four leavers have used to further related careers. University education has also provided specialised training in areas such as engineering, accounting, medical practice and sociology.

However, the fourth element of wholistic experience of eternal salvation is not explicitly put forward. The curriculum contains aspects of religious education which could be Christian, Islamic or Hindu therefore not necessarily the Christian redemptive religion. Christian Religious Education is compulsory in primary school although other areas read the faith they practice. In secondary schools and university level the subject is optional a situation the church is concerned about. Pope Pius XI is convinced that education should be in a position to face and overcome the difficulties and correspond to the demands of the times in which it exists. He recognises that a perfect Christian of today is a child of his own era, knowing and cultivating all the advances made by science and technical skill. This is in agreement with the goal to be industrialised by vision 2030.

## **8. Education as a Basic Human Right**

Pontifical commission stated:

*Human personality, through the emergence and exercise of conscience is an ontological and psychological reality which is autonomous in the civil sphere. Within its own sphere, its liberty and basic rights, take precedence in certain cases over social and political structures.*

We find the bill of rights is an integral part of Kenya's democratic state to preserve the dignity of individuals and communities and to promote social justice. It also entails realization of the potential of all human beings. Kenya is one of the signatories to the world declaration on the Education for All (EFA). The goals for attaining EFA agreed at in Jomtien Thailand 1990 were further reiterated during the follow up World conference held in Dakar, in April 2000. This is in accordance to the will of God that all are equal.

What is the basis for human right? In the book of Genesis, God created man and woman in his own image, in the image of God he created, male and female, he created them (Genesis 1: 27). This gives us the basic right of equality in gender issues and gives man claim to knowledge. If God is wisdom and man was created in the image of God, then it remains true that man has knowledge just as God. However man must develop this through learning from each other, society and God.

In the new Kenyan constitution, every person has a right to education. It is important that the state institute a programme to implement the right of every child to free and compulsory education. To this end, the state is committed to provide teachers, text-books and other learning resources. The provision in law and enforcement are two different issues. An attempt was made in the 1970s to have free education but failed due to lack of funds, distance from schools in the sparsely populated areas and substantial proportion of unqualified teachers (Bogonko 1992, p28).

However in 2003, Kenya made another attempt to provide Free Primary Education (FPE) although this faces many challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, admission of overage persons, for example, Murage 84 years old in class one, 2003, the undisciplined street children, drug abusers are cases that teachers are not well prepared to handle. There were cases of misappropriation of government grants in-aid to schools by the head teachers, some with limited



skills in financial management. Schools were urgently required to open bank accounts that were hitherto non-existent a sign of under development.

Having established the basis of man's right to education, we now consider the legal and juridical implication of the universal right of the human person to education. We also need to consider the agents responsible for education – the family (parents) by natural right (positive divine right in relation to a Christian family), society and lastly the church, in virtue of her mission received from God. The French Bishops “stress the need for democratization of education, the possibility to have access to culture. The poorer ones have a right to education to enable them attain a full development of their cultural life in harmony, with their capabilities and traditions. It enables the young to participate actively in their own formation, to serve the community or adults for the benefit of the youth. The provision of quality education is based on the following:

- i) Spirit of service
- ii) Competence of teachers
- iii) Their sense of adaptation and dialogue

### 9. Gender, Accessibility, Transition Rate

There were about 130million children in the developing world between 6 and 11 years of age currently out of school of which girls are 81 million, 62% (UNICEF, 2000; FAWE 2000, Achola and Pillai 2000, in Achola et al 2004). Piliplili, O (2005, November 17) reports that Kenya is among 44 countries that stand a low chance of achieving Universal Primary Education by 2015. Kenya has achieved the goal of gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 with gender ratio of 96.5% for male and 94.9% for female in primary schools 2002/2003 enrolment. Uganda recorded 187.4% 192.2%. While the national gross enrolment rate at primary school level by 2000 was 88% , there are wide regional and gender disparities. Table 2 shows enrolment rates by province and gender.

**Table 2:** Primary School, Gross Enrolment Rates by Province and Gender, 1999.

Province	Boys	Girls	Total
Coast	83.3	68.5	75.9
Central	93.3	96.5	94.8
Eastern	95.5	94.5	95.0
Nairobi	59.0	49.8	54.1
Rift Valley	89.2	87.2	88.2
Western	99.6	100.7	100.2
Nyanza	85.6	92.9	84.3
North Eastern	34.0	17.4	26.2
<b>National Total</b>	<b>88.3</b>	<b>85.8</b>	<b>87.1</b>

**Source:** Ministry of Education Science and Technology.

This shows that there are concerns for various provinces. According to ( Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001) boys from Central Province drop out and are underachievers in school compared to girls. In Coast, North Eastern and some pockets of Nairobi, the problem is with the girls. In some districts the primary schools enrolment of both boys and girls is very low compared to national figures. This indicates that gender disparity is an issue but which Patristic Fathers say should not be so as both males and females are equal in the eyes of God.

The transition rate from one level to another is low, the projected completion rates for years 2000,2005 and 2010 at the current growth rates are 47%, 48.7% and 50.5% respectively, while the projected transition rates are 46.7%, 49.9%, 53.2% for the same years. This low transition rate would affect the reading culture and higher learning in the country thus creating an elitist group( Abagi & Olweya ,1999). Commenting on low enrolment and lack of places, the then president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere had remarked, “it is unacceptable to a country which claims to be building socialism”. It is true there are not enough schools for Kenyan children.

The transition rate to university is low which means that the system has failed to provide access to all who may qualify. St. Gregory of Nazianzus (330-390 AD) regarded education as one of man's greatest privileges, denouncing attempts to deny higher education which he claimed to be a God-given right ( Jordan, E.B.p7). According to St. Augustine of Hippo “education of people unto harmonious and peaceful co-existence” at all levels is core aim of Christian education.

On **plurality** of school systems Pope Pius stresses that:

*Persons are created one by one, not in series, by God, to whom it pleases not to make them one equal to the other. They are called to be creatures of God, for His own glory, they are such in diverse ways.*

Every person has a special relation with God grounded on the mystery of the incarnate word that Jesus Christ lived in a particular nation and culture, a particular minority family group, raising the family to the dignity of sons of God. Education is cooperation in God's own design and action, not in its starting point. It enters into the God-given dynamism of the creature, individual and society, to lead it to the divine image ( *Justitia et pax*). St. Justin describing **individual development** would say;

- i) Education is a complex growth from the helplessness and weakness of the baby to the strength and self-reliance of the adult;
- ii) From the fears and self-centeredness of a newly born, to the courage and ability to trust and love of the mature person;
- iii) From the ignorance of the infant, to the light of learning of the educated.
- iv) St. Justin continues, it is growth from the constraints of social structures to the authenticity of freely chosen values and goals
- v) From moral warpedness, to the possession of the divine spirit of holiness,
- vi) From inner conflict, to peace and finally
- vii) From the negative forces and values, to the freedom of the children of God.

The intellectual nature of the human being is perfected by wisdom, which gently attracts the mind of man to a quest and a love for what is true and good. Thus education of the whole man has its focus on growth unto real freedom. However, schools are instruments for handing over to each generation the accumulated knowledge and abilities acquired by the past in a desirable way ( *Peters,1966*).

## 10. Educational Objectives

In this section the system's educational objectives are analysed in their historic, socio-economic and cultural context 'comparing and contrasting it with patristic education.

### 10.1 *Historical Perspective in Kenya's Educational Development*

#### 10.1.1 *Promote National Unity*

To promote national unity, education system adheres to common syllabi for Primary Teacher Training Colleges, Primary School cycle and Secondary School cycle. Kiswahili and English are the common languages used while educational institutions raise the flag and sing the national anthem on Mondays and Fridays. The education system is centralised, for example, Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) develops and implements new curriculum, in-services teaches and prepares teaching-learning resources. Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) is mandated to set ,moderate and administer common national examinations in the country, Kenya Certificate Of Primary Education (KCPE) marks the end of primary level and Kenya Certificate Of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination after the four years of secondary education. This prepares the graduates for placement in the next level of education or job opportunities.

#### 10.2 *Socio-Economic perspective*

The 8-4-4 system was also responding to the goal of national development. The education was to create the correct values, skills, attitudes and knowledge for the man- power so required, both skilled and medium skilled labour. This is when the question of relevance is important. The broad based education would introduce pre-vocational skills in upper primary school and hence learners introduced to a world of work. The broad base would also offer a wide range of employment opportunities after acquiring scientific and practical knowledge.

In this regard, education is cosmotheandrian, affirming that education is a right hence "denial of education is tantamount to denial of human life itself." Without education one is not able to participate in this community as a full member, for he lacks the ready abilities to perform the acts that are most effective and meaningful in this society. Denial means limiting his role in the society to support economic growth. It would also hinder the development of the youth for



social change in the wake of rapid modernisation and globalisation.

Education is a conscience of humanity, reminding man and woman that they are above other creatures, guided by the inner voice of God. Where education is for personal and selfish programmes and comprises its noble and divine mission with secularism and materialism, it corrupts the entire society. St. Justin asserts 'this venom corporal education deprives people of human dignity, meaning and harmony.' The conventional communities influenced by sensual pressures, face all sorts of socio-moral contagious crisis, havocs and pandemic. In this, true education gives a third eye for the truth of life, hope of productive existence, liberation of intellect purification of humanity and the vision of eternal salvation.

### *10.2.1 Promote Social Equality and Responsibility*

The aim of providing equitable distribution of education resources was seen to foster a sense of social responsibility. It would give children varied and challenging opportunities for self fulfilment and corporate social service. In this regard A-level was seen as a devastating bottleneck, which gave false hope to many students wanting to get university education. The marginalised areas, arid and semi arid lands did not benefit from the A- level due to inequitable distribution of opportunities. Church fathers would argue that upholding the right to education and providing the same are two different issues. By scraping A- level, all form four leavers had equal opportunities for university education.

### *10.2.2 Imparting Literacy and Numeracy Skills*

This has been achieved successfully, the candidates scoring 600 out of a possible 700(1985-2000); and 400 out of 500 maximum is commendable (2001-2005). They are able to go to secondary school and university. Evidence shows that the bright students have attained quality grades in the university courses take. There is no doubt that both primary and secondary cycles have both laid down firm foundation for further formal education and training and life long learning. The students who have joined universities outside Kenya have done well often getting academic awards. The pedagogical influence at primary level introduces the learner to reading habits and intellectual curiosity as it lays the foundation on future learning activities.

Without theoretical and practical knowledge one is ineffectively closed within oneself from the true reality of Christ, imprisoned by ignorance and the mob who appeal to the sensual appetites (5 senses) than to reason according to St. Ignatius of Antioch (Tixeront, J., 1934). The 8-4-4 should be guided by human pre-focal, focal and formation, interformation and transformation in a Christian enterprise. According to St. Ignatius, 'education elevates one to meet substantially with self and sensate life enabling communication with other people and God with the discipline of intelligence, body and society. Hence the products of the system have presented themselves in a competitive manner.

### *10.2.3 Promoting education in all round development of learner*

Kenya Institute of Education (now Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development) has endeavoured to diversify the curriculum at both primary and secondary school levels. In primary school, we have already seen the subjects increase to thirteen which include religion, Physical Education, music, art and other practical subjects. However, after complaints from the citizens, the curriculum for primary school was reviewed in 1992, 1995 and 1999. The practical subjects were removed and are no longer examinable in Kenya Certificate Primary Education. In secondary schools, the Form 1 and Form 2 students initially did twelve compulsory subjects and ten were examinable. The practical subjects were examinable in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education, each paper consisting of theory and practical papers ( O-Level Syllabus) In 1992 the syllabus content was reduced and the students sat for 8 subjects instead of ten. Koech Report recommended further reduction in content and the number of examinable subjects reduced to seven.

With a lot of emphasis on sciences, subjects like history, Christian Religious Education have witnessed a decline in numbers of those who opt to do them. In some schools, CRE is seen as a booster, to improve overall grades. Yet in other schools the introduction of Social Ethics Education to replace CRE was as undermining CRE as a whole. There is a challenge from Christ's mandates "go therefore and make disciples of all nations".

Teaching profession is a vocation in which members uphold the noble and sacrificial demands, to avoid imparting knowledge with a heavy selfish and jealous heart. They should not aim at the wages as God has called them to cooperate and continue his work of recreating the face of the earth through christocentric development. This is a special vocation, God-given unlike secular professions. Where education is for personal and selfish programs and comprises its noble and divine mission with secularism and materialism, it corrupts the entire society. St. Justin asserts this venom

corporal education deprives people of human dignity, meaning and harmony. The conventional communities influenced by sensual pressures, face all sorts of socio-moral contagious crisis, havocs and pandemic. In this, true education gives a third eye for the truth of life, hope of productive existence, liberation of intellect purification of humanity and the vision of eternal salvation.

### 10.3 Cultural Perspective in Kenya's Educational Practice

The education system makes learners aware of other countries and international communities. Globalisation has made the world look like a village. What happens in Europe and America anytime is quickly communicated to other continents and vice versa. All should have opportunity to exploit the communication system, through telephone, computer, radio, television and other electronic devices. Church Fathers claim there is knowledge explosion and man should prepare for the influence the media has on youth especially in moral, ethical and spiritual growth.

It is also responsible for the 'Respect and Development of Cultural Heritage,' to instill in the youth respect for unfamiliar cultures. This is done by participating in national music and drama festivals, national sports and athletics competitions and science congress for secondary schools. The students share and experience others who are made in God's likeness and image. In agreement with patristic fathers, education provides for the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enhance acquisition of sound moral values and to help children grow up into self-disciplined, self-reliant and integrated citizens. This is made possible through religious studies.

Education inculcates in youth the value of good health in order to avoid indulging in activities that will lead to physical and mental ill health. This is done by including HIV/AIDS curriculum which is infused in relevant subjects. Education is to foster positive attitudes towards environmental conservation, development and appreciate the need for a healthy environment.

## 11. Disciplinary Factors in Kenya's Educational Practice

St. Clement of Rome on inculcation of discipline asserts that every family should become an integral part in the process of inculcating discipline in the students for quality education. God the Father, is the source of perfect education, the Son, model of perfect education and discipline, and the Holy Spirit the power or energy for realizing perfect education and discipline.

Parents, teachers, students, civil and religious authorities need to inculcate discipline in themselves and in the institutions of learning, if quality education is to be relevant by Christian principles. Humanistic education and humanistic discipline are complementary in such away that through discipline, education becomes a practical investment for internal communication, moral integrity, professionalism and development. Quality education of the truth and discipline is exemplified through teachers, parents and student's behaviour. It makes it easier and effective the process of evangelization and implementation of the state's developmental projects and is the key to healthy governance, community and salvation. [Richardson, 1935 pp60-75]

The process of education is important that if one is deprived of education then he/she is ignorant of one's self, society, God and destiny. One stops to exist as an authentic being in the history of salvation. If one lacks education willed by Christ, the Universal Educator, then one becomes a dysfunctional knowledge and a non-committal parasite of the prince of darkness who opposes powers of light and development.

Discipline is an issue in Kenyan schools marked by recent burning of school administration blocks and dormitories. Some students have died in the process as in the case of Kyanguli where 65 students died, St. Kizito rape and killings, Mbombolulu Girls' School fire & deaths and Nyeri High school, four prefects were killed and many other mass misconducts. The universities have been on strike on many occasions over the years, University of Nairobi since 1970s, several times recorded for Kenyatta, Egerton and Moi Universities. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, man and woman are mandated to keep order, peace and observe harmony in their own lives and society. Therefore he emphasises that the Ten Commandments are a source of effective discipline, hard work and development in schools, religion and society.

### 11.1 Authority and Agents of Education

St. Irenaeus of Lyons maintains that God gave man anthropological authority over creation for order meaning and development. The authority from God is part of the armamentarium of understanding those who control educational systems, God, parents, teachers, students' society and nature. St. Irenaeus furthermore states that genuine authority is Christocentric, exercised in schools with love, humility, understanding, justice and patience for the common good.

Authority is source of unity and tranquillity, amicably shared with teachers and students for reciprocal development of education. Implementers of authority and discipline in schools strive to bring health and sanity to educational innovation, are hygienists.

The principals and head teachers imitate the perfect Trinitarian authority of God based on love, equality, dialogue and responsibility, never corrupt or allow favouritism, rejoice in mistakes or failures of students or subordinates but aims at bringing all modes of *ecclesiastical*, psychological and state expertise to remedy the tension and indiscipline in schools. Nationalistic and laic governments of the 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> century erroneously conceived education as a means of preparing citizens indoctrinated with nationalistic ideals and consequently tended to make education a state monopoly, a tendency that has persisted today.

According to St. Polycarp of Smyrna, teachers who uphold Christian values and communitarian virtues, are mandated by God through civil authority to bring transformation in teacher, students and the world. If they are professional, industrious, exemplary in life, always prepared and show humility and respect for students, they are Christ like in the educational system.

One of the challenges facing 8-4-4 is the parental role in education which St. Authanasius (Aube, B. 1861) brings out clearly, that parents have an overall responsibility of helping a child to know, articulate, and elucidate the intellectual facilities present at birth. They have a God-given right of inculcating aggressively ethical principles and religious values in the students. The Parent Teachers Association (PTA) in schools work with school to provide basic needs but it is the duty of the parent to follow the intellectual development of student in school and outside school as they are the spring boards of leading the youth to responsible adulthood. Parents are challenged to take the responsibility and not to leave everything to teachers. In order for education at both primary and secondary level meet the needs of learners in a changing society, emerging issues have been incorporated:

- HIV/AIDS pandemic
- Drug and substance abuse
- Gender parity
- Human and children rights
- Morality
- Social responsibility

## 12. Challenges facing Education system

### 12.1 Lack of policy or/and inappropriate policy frameworks.

Inadequate policy and legal frame works and statements have negatively affected the development of quality education. No clear vision and mission statements on education to enhance quality through changes have been there over the years. Despite practical aims of 8.4.4 system, education has maintained to a large extent, the colonial orientation by promoting rote learning and is still elitist, instead of education policies being politically instigated, the process of planning, implementation and policy making should be based on systematic evaluation of the sector.

- Overloaded, inappropriate and gender insensitive curricula
- Laws and regulations which don't address equity issues in education.
- Centralization of education management.
- Passive participation of parents and communities in education governance.
- Inadequate transparency and accountability within the education sector.
- Political interference.
- Non involvement of all stakeholders in policy formulation and the management of education.

### 12.2 Poor economic growth

Poor economic growth has led to persistent poverty, 50% Kenyans live below poverty lines, unable to access basic needs, food, shelter and health. This undermines education, as poor communities are unable to invest and support the development of education. The parents from rural areas, Arid and Semi Arid Lands [ASAL], slums in urban centres have not been able to provide school requirements. Results in non enrolment of school requirements this results in children despite free primary education policy adopted in 2003. Reasons:

- Pulling out those in school to supplement household income as seen in cases of child labour: coffee picking, house help etc.
- Lack of family investment in school materials such as books and uniforms.
- Lack of active participation in school affairs, morale and low dignity.
- Drop out of girls to marry pregnancy

### 12.3 HIV/AIDS Pandemic

Evidence shows many qualified human resources are being lost from the pandemic. Many teachers are infected and affected which makes them less efficient and effective in their work. Many children are orphaned and others take care of sick parents, which undermine participation. Some dropout out of school, due to lack of support from home. The government also spends a lot of money to meet medical expenses and other requirements.

Education is seen as a strategy for reaching young people therefore HIV/AIDS awareness has been infused into the existing subjects. The church works together with the state about the issues and stigmatization that the disease has caused. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology and UNICEF have launched HIV/AIDS education programme at Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), the main task is to in service teachers and facilitate their acquisition of skills and knowledge. The curriculum for HIV/AIDS is infused into related topics of other subjects further showing plurality of true education, divine wisdom.

### 13. Recommendations

Since society is dynamic, the education should be evaluated from time to time ensure that it addresses the needs of contemporary society. Since inception, 8-4-4 system has been reviewed several times, 1990, 1995 and 1999. This should continue if the curriculum has to be relevant to the society.

Undertake steps to review objectives that are unrealistic, not easily achievable within the given time and resources. This can be done by reducing the number of subjects and the scope of the content. Divine wisdom demands that the learners should be taught what is relevant and useful in the society as the knowledge should be formative, transformative and liberative.

Kenya Institute of Education in its mandate to in-service teachers should organize such courses to improve the competency of teachers especially in the practical subjects. Pope Pius XII cautions that teachers should be chosen with all the care that is called for by the treasure (learners) entrusted unto them and every good teacher undergoes quality on going training. The teacher role model is an important method of teaching (Matsagouras, 1977).

The curriculum should address vital issues that have emerged since the last reviews. Apart from including them in the syllabus, the implementation should be monitored to meet challenges of globalisation. The areas include HIV/AIDS pandemic, drug abuse, gender parity, social responsibility, industrial transformation and environmental education. According to patristic fathers, this is the only way education can make human beings live in harmony and peace with God, self and others.

Development of curriculum designs, syllabi. Teachers Handbooks, Teachers Preparation Guides should be developed and regularly revised to meet the changes in the societal values.

The objective of sound moral and religious values has to be emphasized in schools. Pastoral education lessons in schools should be strengthened while in secondary schools religious education has not been emphasised. Parents, church and state should complement each other in order to have a disciplined society transformed to redemptive salvation.

Parents /family are called to recreate the face of the earth and must not abdicate its directive office and must be the most solid support of the teacher in all levels. Parents need to do more now in the light of modernisation.

Cost sharing in the provision of education has undermined the poor and marginalized people. The state and church should continue uplifting such areas by putting up more schools there to increase opportunities in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) and areas of nomadic peoples. Use of improvised materials and reduction of subjects will also reduce cost.

The 8.4.4 system should also encompass the early childhood education, literacy and life survival programmes because this is what will eventually improve the status of the country and enhance development.

Quality of education should not be compromised hence provide trained teachers in appropriate ratios. The introduction of free primary education has met many challenges such as large classes, few classrooms, high poverty levels that fail to support children. Apart from providing books, the government could still do more to keep children in school through lunch programmes.

Discipline should also be maintained in families, schools and among children. Teachers should be professionally competent and adequately remunerated. Patristic fathers advocate this because teachers can corrupt a nation through the learning process if their work is not appreciated. Government should also budget for those who have no access to school and those who drop out of formal education system.

Effective time and classroom management and updating records of work, lesson plans and schemes of work will ensure systematic learning. There is no public office greater than teaching and instructing the youth a human responsibility that supercedes all hence should follow systematic methodology..

Supervision of schools by government and church is important in maintaining standards. The people concerned with (quality assurance or inspectorate staff) should be competent and in appropriate ratios in the country. This area has met challenges especially training, experiences and numbers. Aspects of educational management and administration from policy makers, implementers and learners should be under constant supervision and evaluation.

Finally educational philosophy should be developed to guide the education system as to what is expected. The policies and legal framework should be updated. The Education Act should be reviewed to meet current challenges and specify the role of PTA. The government should re-allocate resources to education from other sectors, for example, defence, general administration to education; and from tertiary education to primary.

More finance is needed for research.

There is need for a national gender policy should act as framework for gender mainstreaming education.

#### 14. Conclusion

The paper has traced the development of education from pre-colonial times to date. The 8-4-4 system of education is a strategy for development for fighting poverty, ignorance, disease and conserving the environment. Although it was implemented without proper logistics such as inadequate in-service of teachers, limited teaching-learning resources several reviews in the twenty years of existence have improved quality. The Free Primary Education policy of 2003 has undermined quality.

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