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Abstract

The history of formal education in Kenya reveals a range of educational policies each of which has had a bearing on, or been impacted by educational planning initiatives and outcomes. These policies depict the evolving national aspirations of the nation. A brief walk through the history of formal education in the country; right from early missionary education, through to colonial and post-colonial education, and right into education in the 21st century; provides a rich insight.

Keywords: *Education, policy, planning, reform initiatives*

1.0 Introduction

Educational policy makers and planners play a critical role in national development. This is because education has widely been viewed as the primary determinant of national development. Consequently, education is at the core of national development planning. The general concession is that education is the elixir of national progress; and that the advancement of a nation, or lack of it, is ideally mirrored by its education system. Again, education is presumed to be a demonstrable remedy for the myriad developmental challenges that a nation may be confronted with.

Educational policy makers have the primary duty of cascading national development policies to the education sector by ensuring that educational policies are derived from, congruent to and complement national development policies and planning initiatives. The longstanding Education Act Cap. 211 {replaced by Basic Education Act of 2013} stipulates:

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..for the purposes of carrying out his duties under subsection (1), the Minister may from time to time formulate a development plan for education consistent with any national plan for economic and social development of Kenya {Part II 3(2)}

Subsequently, educational policies, by extension, align educational planning initiatives to national development goals. They define, clarify and delimit educational planning efforts and activities. Diez-Hochleitner (1967) observes that educational policies are the soul of education, and that educational planning is at the service of educational policies. Congruously, policies are affected by educational planning as a result of the planning process. Educational planners ought therefore, to be conversant with education trends and policies since plans are the pipeline for policies to become realities in action.

To get a clear understanding of the nexus between educational policies and plans, it is useful to shed light on the concept of policy. A policy may be defined as a body of principles and associated guidelines, formulated and enforced by an organization to direct its actions (BusinessDictionary.com). Policies may be expressed or implied; but typically, they are published in booklets or other forms that are widely accessible. Comparatively, formal written policies have the edge for reducing misunderstanding that may arise from inaccurate presentation and misrepresentation; fostering evenness and consistency by enhancing uniformity of thought, procedure and application; ensuring immutable transmission free from distortion; and providing a convenient and authoritative reference.

The primary role of policies in organizations is in decision making. Policies guide the formulation, implementation and control of an entity's strategy; and define, direct and restrict any planning decision and action that the entity can take. For routine actions, policies provide for management by exception such that a new decision is only required in exceptional circumstances (Murugesan, 2012). In a nutshell, policies lay down the firm's response to known and knowable situations and circumstances.

Organizational policies are derived from thorough consideration of an organization's long term goals. They reflect and actualize the vision and mission of the organization. Ideally, they embody the aspirations of the stakeholders. Given that education is a distinct function of the national government that is charged with clear roles as captured in the constitution (The Constitution of Kenya, 2010) and corresponding Acts of parliament; educational policies in Kenya have embodied national development policies at given periods of time.

Over the history of formal education in Kenya, educational policies have been informed by the findings and recommendations of various advisory committees, commissions of inquiry, taskforces, working parties and national conferences. Renowned among these are the Fraser report, 1909; the Phelps-Stokes report, 1924; the Beecher report, 1949; the Binns report, 1952; the Ominde report, 1964; the Gachathi report, 1976; the Mackay report, 1982; the Kamunge report, 1988; the Koech report, 2000; the report of the National Conference of Education and Training, 2003; the Gachukia report, 2007; the Odhiambo report, 2010; and the report of the Taskforce on the Re-Alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya. These reports serve as indicators that educational policies are outcomes of public participation, mainly through surveys.

2.0 Educational Policies and Planning Initiatives in Retrospect

Ideally, policy consideration in educational planning ensures the implementation of strategies consonant with the educational needs of a country (Diez-Hochleitner, 1967). The history of formal education in Kenya reveals a range of educational policies each of which has had a bearing on, or been impacted by educational planning initiatives and outcomes. These policies depict the evolving national aspirations of the nation. A brief walk through the history of formal education in the country; right from early missionary education through to colonial and post-colonial education, and right into education in the 21st century provides a rich insight.

Extant literature credits the original concern for formal education in Kenya to the works of early Christian missionaries. The missionaries believed that education and formal schooling were powerful instruments for evangelization and promoting religious dogma (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992 & Sheffield, 1970). An implicit policy of using education as a tool for evangelization is traceable in the kind of education provided by all the missionaries. Hardly any literature documents any proactive involvement of the colonial government in the provision of education until 1908 when Prof. J. N. Fraiser was appointed the educational advisor to the colonial government (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992; & Ojiambo, 2009). Educational planning and provision efforts were thus wholesomely left to the inventiveness of the various missionary agents. This had important implications.

Given that education was offered by different missionary agents free from any form of control or accountability to an external agent, there was no possibility of curriculum uniformity both in content, quality and structure. Across the board however, the curriculum was principally catechumenal; comprising reading, writing and Christian doctrine. This is quite in line with the aforementioned core objective of education then. The local languages were the media of instruction which was suffice given that the desired output of the missionary schools were catechists who would then carry out evangelical works in their own local villages. Rote-learning was the chief methodology. Resource paucity however, so limited quantity (access) that by 1910, only 35 mission schools had been opened in Kenya (East Africa living Encyclopedia, n.d)

During the early period of government involvement in education in the country, planning initiatives were largely premised upon the recommendations of the Fraser and Phelps-Stokes reports. Both reports advocated the adoption of education as a wheel for advancing colonialism. Available literature reports that by 1925, education had already been recognized as an important part of colonial government policy (Pearce, 1988). The Colonial Government's Advisory Committee on Native Education under the chairmanship of Ormsby-Gore had by then presented to the secretary of state, a Memorandum on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa. The ideals and principles of the memorandum were expected to guide all those engaged, directly or indirectly, in the advancement of education in British Colonies in Africa. At the heart of this policy, was the increasing recognition of the principle that the controlling power was responsible, as trustee, for the moral advancement of the native population.

Besides demonstrating the colonial government's increased interest and participation in native education, the policy document asserted the prerogative of the government in the control of education in the colony. It made noteworthy recommendations on educational reforms without maligning the input of other interested parties. It encouraged the continuation of voluntary efforts in the provision of education provided that such efforts were in conformance with the general educational policy; and promoted cooperation between the government and other educational

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agencies. It also advocated for a system of grants-in-aid to schools that conformed to prescribed standards. Such standards would however not be limited to examination results. Without exception, the government reserved to its discretion, the general direction of the educational policy.

The policy championed adaptation of education to the native life. This would be achieved through Africanization of the syllabus, content, methodology, media of instruction, and training of native teachers. An elaborate mechanism for continuous educational monitoring and evaluation would also be instituted. Additionally, concerted efforts would be devoted to attitudinal restructuring with regard to technical and vocational training in order to counter the deeply entrenched tendency to frown upon manual work. Attention was also given to the structure of education.

The grave reality however, is that the principles espoused in the 1925 Memorandum on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa barely had any impact on native education in Kenya. Ormsby-Gore's Advisory committee had themselves observed that the success in realising ideals of education depends largely on the outlook of those who control the policy and on their capacity and enthusiasm. True to their thesis, educational planning initiatives in Kenya were informed and perfectly fitted with the colonial policy: to strengthen the colonial government's political and economic power over the African majority (Mwiria, 1991). In this regard, and in line with the Fraser report of 1909, a racially segregated education system continued to be in place until independence, with minimal resources allocated for African education. Education was craftily tailored to prepare each race for their assigned roles in society (Sheffield, 1970; Shiundu & Omulando, 1992; Mwiria, 1991; & Nwanosike and Onije, 2011). Informed by racial prejudice, education was purposively designed to reflect the bigoted presumptions of differences in cognitive, social, political and economic development of each race. For the Africans, education was aimed at preparing them for cheap skilled labour for the colonial government and the European settler farms.

This notwithstanding, and in spite of the criticism that the calibre of education provided for the Africans has justifiably attracted, a significant stride was made in provision for their education as evidenced by qualitative and quantitative expansion of education for Africans vis-à-vis what had previously been provided by the missionaries. No doubt, there was (though barely perceptible) government involvement in African education by way of offering grants to select missionary schools. The Department of Education was founded in 1911. The curriculum was broadened to include vocational and industrial training. In 1913, the first official government African School was opened in Machakos (Central Technical Teacher Training School) where simple academic education was offered to produce teachers and clerks. Following the Phelps Stokes Commission report of 1924 which embodied improvement in the administration and planning of education; an education ordinance was enacted in (1924), with the government fully taking charge of education. Particular focus was given to participative decision making through an advisory committee on African education. The interests of the Africans were advocated, assumedly and quite paradoxically so, by representatives who were non-Africans.

In sum, early government involvement in education improved both access to education and the scope of the curriculum for Africans. It is noteworthy however that up to the time Kenya attained its independence, such access and quality were purposefully and strategically constrained to fit into the colonial policy which aimed at advancing insubordination of Africans. The ambitious Ormsby-Gore's memorandum of 1925 was not actualized as intended.

Educational policy issues and planning initiatives in the decade preceding independence should be viewed against the backdrop of heightened strife for African liberation and the state of emergency (Sherffield, 1971). At the heart of educational policy and planning initiatives in the 1950's were the Beecher Committee Report (1949) and the Binns Report (1952). During this period, the government had begun to shoulder greater responsibility for African education but at a slow pace (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Progression beyond the primary level of education continued to be restricted by a series of selective, and in the view of the Africans, punitive public examinations and a curriculum that underlined the superiority of the European over the African (Mwiria, 1991). Both Beecher and Binns reports recommended the linkage of education planning initiatives to overall national development.

As a result, educational planning efforts were directed to increasingly orienting the curriculum to agricultural training; agriculture being the main source of livelihood for Africans. Nudged by the economic growth realized in the country, and the prevailing political milieu, educational progression for Africans was also accelerated towards the close of the decade through expansion of post primary vacancies. To improve the selection process for higher education, school records and interviews lessened overreliance on examination results. Increased focus was also given to teacher training not only as the basis for africanizing teacher training (refer to Ormsby-Gore's 1925 Memorandum on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa) but also as the basis for improving quality of education for Africans. Additionally, attention was given to quality assurance through supervision and inspection. At the threshold of independence, and with increased pressure from African Teachers Unions {which culminated to the founding of the Kenya National Union of Teachers in 1957}, educational policy makers and planners began to warm up to a paradigm shift towards the ultimate unification of schools (Sheffield, 1971).

The tremendous change brought about by the attainment of independence presented significant challenges to policy makers and planners from all sectors of the economy. The immensity of these challenges have been explicitly captured by Kang'ethe (1994) in *Policy Analysis in Eastern Africa, Especially Kenya*. He observes:

The passage of power into indigenous hands induced uncertainty among non-citizens about the country's economic and political future and created fears regarding their role in the newly independent nations, leading to virtual stagnation of investment. There was substantial capital flight from the country and a decline in employment in the modern sector of the economy. Poverty was rampant, illiteracy pervasive and the general state of health poor. The government also had to address the high expectations on the part of the indigenous Kenyans with regard to the immediate control of the economy. Kenya inherited a largely rural economy based primarily on subsistence agriculture with a modicum of industrial and commercial activity, much of which was focused on the greater East African market (pp.3).

Clearly, there was an urgent need for the formulation of policies to institute programmes that would steer the country ahead. The first Independent Kenya's education commission was formulated under the leadership of Prof. Simeon Hongo Ominde in 1964 (Sheffield, 1970). Its guiding principle was 'education for manpower development and to foster a sense of nationhood'. Among the chief concerns of the policy document was to alleviate skill shortage among domestic workforce in order to fill up vacancies created by mass flight of expatriates; and to create equal economic opportunities for all citizens (Ojiambo, 2009). The resultant educational planning efforts

and outcomes included a total overhaul of the curriculum: in content, structure and evaluation; and a review of syllabi to make them Kenyan oriented. A common national system of education to foster a sense of nationhood was also instituted. Focus was directed to re-training (in light of curriculum changes) and training of more teachers. To match increasing demand for education, a rapid expansion in education access was initiated.

Such drastic changes in the sector were not without negative impacts on education. A serious shortage of trained teachers to take up teaching roles in the newly started schools was evident. This impacted the quality of education. Increased demand for access and the rapid expansion of educational opportunities put a strain on the economy to the extent that attempts to provide universal free and compulsory education as envisioned in country's development plan 1970-74 (Sheffield, 1971) could not be sustained. Additionally, the policy document together with the corresponding planning initiatives failed to address the long standing tendency for the citizens to look down upon technical and vocational training. Demand was skewed towards humanity disciplines in pursuit for white collar jobs. Conversely, inadequate efforts were directed towards skills development to the extent that towards mid 1970's secondary school graduates exceeded labour market opportunities; leading to high unemployment rate since labour output was neither matched with increased job creation nor improvement in national economic growth rate. The need for policy review was clearly evident.

The input of the Presidential Working Party on Establishment of the Second University in Kenya -Mackay report of 1981- can be paralleled to the Ominde report of 1964 in the sense that it brought about radical changes in education policy which subsequently led to an overhaul of the curriculum content and structure. Though its terms of reference were delimited to Higher Education, it proposed a restructuring of the total education system after paying attention to the reports and recommendations of ILO mission 1971 and the Gachathi Report 1976 (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). The Mackay policy advocated an education for self-reliance to address the shrinking labour market and the consequent high rate of unemployment among graduates. Its goal was to make the education system relevant to the socio-economic realities of the nation (MoE, 2019). Such an education system would equip learners with technical, scientific and practical knowledge vital for self and salaried employment, and lifelong skills requisite for nation building.

The resultant educational planning efforts and outcomes included the expansion of university education with the establishment of the second university in the country (in line with the terms of reference); a total overhaul of curriculum- in scope, content and structure - with a chief emphasis on technical skills and lifelong learning. The 8-4-4 system of education was formally introduced in 1985. Planning initiatives were however maligned by a number of challenges including resource constraints (given the extensive scope of the curriculum); paucity of infrastructural facilities and skilled personnel to implement the curriculum; problems of manageability of scope in terms of what and how to be taught; limited stakeholders buy-in and a glaring lack of an organized approach for monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum implementation process (MoE, 2019). Additionally, and like all other sectors of the economy, the education sector was not spared of the economic constraints experienced in most developing nations. Financing of education needed to conform to IMF structural adjustment policies, which advocated for reduction in social sector expenditure. Consequently, a presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond was constituted in 1986 under the chairmanship of James Kamunge to look into financing of education at all levels among other duties. It made policy

recommendations that had far reaching effects on educational planning and outcomes (Kamunge, 1988).

A strategy for cost- sharing of educational burden between the government, parents and the entire community was instituted. Attention was given to the establishment of day schools as the most cost effective way of expanding and providing secondary education. Attention was also given to encouraging establishment of private secondary schools. Universities were tasked with establishing ways and means of raising funds from the public and private sectors to strengthen research. A bursary kitty was also put in place to assist needy students. Additionally, increased focus was directed towards training of educational administrators in financial management. Albeit these prolific contingency measures to support the policy, the unintended outcomes of the cost-sharing strategy were manifest in declining enrolment due to increased cost of education in the face of a rising cost of living; increased wastage as a result of high drop-out rates; and declining education quality due to teacher shortage occasioned by limited government spending on teacher employment.

To counter these undesirable outcomes, a turn-around strategy has dominated education policies in the 21st century as education access, retention, quality, equity, relevance, and efficiency gain traction across the globe (Koech, 2000; Sessional Paper # 1 , 2005; Gachukia, 2007; Sessional Paper # 1, 2019). These policies echo the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Kenya Vision 2030, Kenya Constitution 2010 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG, 4). The resultant educational planning efforts and outcomes are manifested in expansion in enrolment which was accelerated by the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 and Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) in 2008. A marked improvement has been registered in important educational parameters including: gender parity index, and special needs education (SNE) to the extent that in some regions, female enrolment surpasses male (MOEST, 2014). Increased advocacy and marketing for technical education, with corresponding increase in resource allocation for technical colleges and universities have enhanced both uptake and expansion of technical and vocational training. To improve access to education in general, special consideration has been given to the marginalized and vulnerable (ASAL & informal settlements). Special focus has been given to Special Needs Education in terms of increased participation and access. The present day Competency Based Curriculum aims at keeping focus on relevance of education.

Quite expectedly, there have been a few grey areas in educational policy initiatives, planning efforts and resultant outcomes in spite of the significant achievements realized. Certain policy reform guidelines have not been implemented due to the huge cost of implementation. The Koech report of 2000 is a case in point. Job-skills mismatch is still a challenge due to weak collaboration between policy makers, educational planners and the market industry. A weak balance between the quantity (access and participation) and quality of education across all levels of education (MOEST, 2015) is perennially documented. Increased student enrolment has also not been supported by increase in teacher recruitment. Inequitable distribution of education resources has perpetually dominated educational and political rhetoric. Additionally, efficiency in resource management in education is far from being realized due to corruption, embezzlement, fraud and rampant wastage. The random registration of new schools continues to put a strain on limited resources, particularly teachers. Weak curriculum monitoring and quality assurance still plagues the sector. The critical question in education in Kenya at 2022 is: “Is Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) the long sought after tonic for the realization of access, relevance and quality in education?”

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3.0 Highlights of CBC in Educational Discourse

Curriculum review and reform are vital and demonstrable tools for regulating education systems and processes in order to ensure that such systems and processes not only serve the needs and aspirations of the users, but are also responsive and adaptive to changing social dynamics. In reference to educational reforms, the President of Kenya, H. E. Uhuru Kenyatta, in his speech during the official launch of the CBC Taskforce Report on 10th February 2021, observed that every era in the history of the nation has placed unique demands on the skills and competencies needed in the workplace, which in turn has created the need to reform and recalibrate the design and content of the nation's education system.

The adoption of CBC, now fully operationalized in the country, has generated divergent views from educational stakeholders. While some embrace it as a timely wheel for aligning education to national goals and aspirations for economic transformation, skeptics have discredited it as a grandiose project only feasible on paper, and which is likely to suffer the same fate as the 8-4-4. Education being inextricable from governance and politics, a total overhaul of the curriculum has also been subjected to conspiracy theories as is perceptible in the seemingly logical arguments that successive regimes in Kenya tinker with the education system in order to leave a lasting impression (Kahura, 2018).

Evidently, educational stakeholders from diverse backgrounds have formally and informally subjected CBC to their own evaluation based on the varied information they have. The grossly conflicting impression of a curriculum that is already operationalized is useful feedback for both educational planners and policy makers as it points to the level of support the curriculum is likely to receive. Considering the disruptions and weighty demands of a total curriculum overhaul, a major question among education stakeholders is: 'What is the additive value of CBC vis-à-vis its immediate predecessor?' Guba and Lincoln (1981) provide a curriculum evaluation orientation that gives insights into the divergent views and reviews of CBC. The orientation proposes a two-concept paradigm for understanding the purpose of curriculum evaluation and reform.

Evaluation in their thesis must devote itself to assessing the merits and worth of the curriculum. Merit, in their interpretation, denotes the inherent value of a programme independent of its application and context. Worth on the other hand, is based on the value of a programme with regard to its applicability in a given context: the benefits to be obtained from it. Drawing from this orientation, it is argued that a programme may be highly merited based on parameters of sound theories, philosophies and principles; but of little worth, in terms of solving problems and addressing pertinent issues in a given context. Debate on CBC demonstrates profound interest in both the merit and worth of the curriculum as presently conceptualized.

CBC has been lauded as a student centered approach to learning with the potential to revolutionize learning in Kenya by removing the heightened pressures of learning commonly associated with the content intensive 8-4-4 system. It is basically geared towards equipping learners with the requisite knowledge and skills to enable them thrive in the 21 century (KICD, 2019). In principle, CBC is founded on the manpower planning approach that mainly base investment in education and planning initiatives on the manpower needs of the economy. Without maligning the benefits it offers, Akala (2021) contends that such an approach so narrows the mission and purpose of education to economic gains, that the intrinsic and philosophical value of education is overshadowed. Inordinate pressure is exerted on education to prepare learners for their future roles

in the economy rather than their holistic development to enable them function even beyond the job market.

Majawa (2020) observes that education is meaningful and relevant only if it corresponds to the nature of the person to be educated. It must devote itself to the growth and formation of the whole person in their individual capacity, as members of a society and in full appreciation of their needs, history, freedoms and missions. By nature, humans are not merely economical beings. Again, the issues that face humanity today, though interwoven with, far transcend economics and the economy. In addition to establishing a human resource base to drive the economy, Majawa underscores the value of an informative, formative and transformative education. CBC here takes credit for giving focus to value-based education seemingly to parallel life skills education that feature in the 8-4-4 curriculum. Albeit the change of terminology, the fundamental difference between the two is hazy; only that semantically, value based education is an attribute/subset/topic in life skill education. The pedagogical approach in both is similar: integrated in other subjects.

Competency, as conceptualized in CBC and extant literature, denotes the ability to apply appropriate knowledge and skills to successfully perform a task. Without dwelling on the esoteric of learning theories, one is drawn to wonder: ‘What is the exact stage of learning that it can be objectively suffice to say that a skill, commensurate with the target skills requirements for a given stage, has been developed or not?; What is the practicality of ensuring equity and evenness in skill development among learners in incomparable situations of resource distribution and levels of exposure? And what is the likelihood of guaranteeing credible, objective and standardized skill measurement amidst a deeply entrenched culture of assessment and evaluation malpractices?

It is arguable that CBC, as conceptualized, gives a lot of focus to knowledge application (competencies) and little to knowledge acquisition/ transfer (informative domain); and knowledge creation. Though it is feasible to acquire, transfer and even create knowledge both by way of and in the process of applying it, it is only logical to say that one cannot apply knowledge that they do not possess. Rather they augment and enhance the knowledge already in their possession, through application. It is this indeterminate conceptualization and presentation of competency that has generated calls for clarity in the usage of terminologies in CBC, in a way that they can be operationalized by all stakeholders at all levels of education (Akala, 2021).

One of the cited justifications for overhauling the 8-4-4 system of education is that it has proven rigid and places inordinate emphasis on content as opposed to competencies; and raw knowledge as opposed to hands-on skills (Kenyatta, 2021). Paradoxically, evidence indicates that 8-4-4 as originally designed, was primarily a practical-oriented curriculum, with great promise for arresting the growing rate of unemployment among the youth by aligning skills to available jobs, and creating more jobs through the expansion of the informal and agricultural sector (Kahura, 2018 & Milligan, 2017; MOE, 2019). An essentially resource intensive curriculum, 8-4-4 began to falter right at the onset of implementation because the necessary support systems and infrastructure were never put in place. Needless to say, the present day 8-4-4 barely has any semblance to the intended one; rather, it is a conglomeration of a host of subsequent reform recommendations-add-initiatives, and with little focus on practical, technical and vocational training.

It is not lost on educationists that 8-4-4 was introduced on the premise that its immediate predecessor, the 7-4-2-3 system, lay more emphasis on academics as opposed to orienting learners for employment and prevailing market dynamics. When the cost of the model 8-4-4 became too burdensome to bear, the first casualties were its practical and technical elements. This overtly took

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education back to the 7-4-2-4 that it was meant to replace, save for the structure. On the Basis of technical and vocational orientations, a comparison of the remnant 8-4-4 primary curriculum to its 7-4-2-4 counterpart would yields little difference. Without disparaging the merits of CBC, it is quite evident that the issues it addresses; including skill development, the need to free education from examinations, the cost of education, and the instrumental role of education in arresting rising unemployment, have perennially featured in education evaluation reports and curriculum reform ever since the ILO Mission to Kenya (ILO, 1972), through to subsequent reform initiatives leading to CBC.

Having considered the merits/demerits in and of principles, ideologies and approaches of CBC vis-à-vis the model 8-4-4, due diligence must shift to the theory of worth proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1981) in assessing the feasibility of CBC under the prevailing educational context. Attention must focus on the capability, preparedness and commitment of the country and the economy to the full and uncompromised implementation of a comparably resource intensive curriculum (Sossion, 2021& Kahura, 2018). Besides infrastructure, and resource endowment and distribution; demonstrable engagement need to be devoted to attitudinal restructuring. In observing that the success of realizing the ideals of education depend largely on the outlook of those who control the policy and on their capacity and enthusiasm, Ormsby-Gore's had in 1925 inadvertently also predicted the fate of 8-4-4. A significant hurdle that confronted the model 8-4-4 was low stakeholder buy-in. Needless to say, history is repeating itself with regard to CBC.

Amunga, Were & Ashioya (2020) report that though CBC assigns parents the critical role of co-educators, they are reluctant to do so either because of the added responsibilities, lack of knowhow, sheer apathy or a multiplicity of factors. It might also interest educational planners that in addition to reports of lack of adequate training for teachers (Sossion, 2021, Kahura, 2018 & Amunga et al., 2020; Mwiti; 2022) the larger fraction of these teachers are graduates of the 8-4-4 system. To echo Kahura (2018), among these teachers maybe those who have an affinity for a system that they identify with and might consequently, not see anything intrinsically wrong with the model 8-4-4. It is plausible as Kahura alludes to, that graduates of the old 7-4-2-3 system may have failed to embrace 8-4-4 not on the basis of inherent merits and/or demerits of 8-4-4, but much more due to their own attachment to the old. Since perception has a bearing on receptivity, increased engagement with stakeholders is a definite prerequisite for productive and sustainable educational reforms.

During the launch of the CBC taskforce report, the president and head of government remarked that citizens do not fail; rather, systems fail them. Reflecting on this statement, we aver that systems are instruments of the people; made by people for people; they are operated by people and are under the heels of people. They can be reviewed, augmented, sabotaged or utterly discarded by people. In retrospect, we are not without credit or blame for the flaws and strengths of our system(s).

4.0 Summary and Recommendation

A review of the history of formal education in Kenya reveals the critical linkage and interaction between educational policy and educational planning initiatives. Clearly, education policy guidelines have over the years informed educational planning initiatives. Plans are essentially, instruments of policy; and plans give substance to policies. Plans are what we use to put policies into practice. While policies are general, plans are narrower and action oriented. Diez-Hochleitner (1967) observes that a policy of quality for instance will help planners set limits of content: what

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to teach, who to teach, how to teach, and how to assess. Weak policies bear unsteady plans. Similarly, ‘bad’ policies make planning difficult if not impossible. The starting point in planning is therefore to have a ‘good’ policy: clear, and pertinent to the phenomena or issue(s) under consideration.

From this overview it is quite clear that Policies can be so ambitious (given a context say of resource constraints) that they render planning impracticable. Similarly, ‘good’ policies can be aborted by poor planning and lack of goodwill. In this review, an attempt has been made to provide an insight into the probable reasons why the country has had so many educational reforms initiatives since independence. Though reforms are to be expected in response to evolving social economic dynamics, constant and fundamental change in policy and planning initiatives may be indicative of poor strategic analysis and erratic decision making. It is recommended here that a consultative approach be adopted between educational policy makers and planners for the purpose of productive educational reforms. As Diez-Hochleitner (1967) puts it: “In order to realize policy, it is necessary to work out a plan for its achievement over a given period of time and with indication of the resources available.”

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