

The Impact of International Education on Private Secondary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

International education is most probably the means by which we will be able to bridge the cultural and linguistic divides that exist not only within our country, but also globally. In the last decade Kenya has had an increase in the number of schools that are offering one form or another of an international education curriculum such as the British National Curriculum (BNC), the International Baccalaureate (IB), the Business Technology Examination Council (BTEC) and the American system of education. This paper explored the impact of international education in high schools in Nairobi County. This study was prompted by the need to find out whether there has been a paradigm shift. It attempted to answer the following questions: Is global citizenship still a foreign concept to Kenya? Does international education contribute/establish a greater formal equality of opportunity for all? Does international education cater for individual differences? Do students at post primary level appreciate the multicultural environment? How does it impact on the cost of education in Kenya? How do stereotypes about international education affect the implementation of these curricula? The study adopted a survey design where stratified random sampling was used to select schools from the private international secondary schools in Nairobi. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect primary data from the respondents. A combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques was used in the analysis. The outcome of this study was expected to make recommendations that would enhance appreciation of diversity in education and encourage adoption of various positive attributes that would continue to add value to Kenyan education. It also proposed ways of minimizing the negative influences that international education may have on the Kenyan educational structures.

Keywords: *International education, Kenyan education, Private secondary schools*

Background

The term international education includes all educational initiatives that aim to build intercultural competency, knowledge of the international community and a sense of global citizenship amongst students and education professionals. Some well-known initiatives are student exchanges, teacher exchanges and second language learning programs. However, the term broadly refers to any initiatives that promote:

Cross-cultural dialogue

Second language learning (at home or abroad)

Exposure to and discussion of international issues

Informed and responsible global

citizenship and active involvement in international issues.

In Kenya, international education curriculum has often been stereotyped as being shallow and 'easy' and comes as an option for learners who are academically weak. It has therefore been viewed as one that does not give adequate preparation for learners to cope with post high school challenges.

This paper looks at a comprehensive approach to an education that intentionally prepares students to be active and engaged participants in an interconnected world. It involves the development of citizens of the world in accordance to culture, language,

and social cohesion, building a sense of identity and cultural awareness, encrypting recognition and development of universal human values, encourage discovery and enjoyment of learning, equip students with collectivist or individualistic skills and knowledge that can be applied broadly, encourage global thinking when responding to local situations, encourage diversity and flexibility in teaching pedagogies and supply appropriate forms of assessment and international benchmarking.

History of international schools in Kenya

International schools have been in existence in Kenya since the 1940s. Most established between the mid- 1960s and early 80s. Some of these include Hillcrest 1964, Rosslyn Academy 1967, International School of Kenya (1976), Rusinga Schools (1975), Brookhouse Schools (1981), and Braeburn Schools {1979) among others. Of note is that the majority of these schools started off with less than 10 students who were predominantly white or Caucasian but over the years they have grown to populations of between 400 to 1000 students, cutting across all races and nationalities. Most of these schools record admissions of learners from over 28 nationalities worldwide. The curriculum taught in these schools has evolved over time and is constantly under review. These curricular emphasize child-centred learning and stand out as child friendly and incorporating the ability of every learner

Theoretical framework

This study is informed by various theories among them, Instructional, Curriculum - Social Meliorist and Behaviourist theories which focus attention on the development of learners' emotional and behavioural qualities. Instructional theories which focus on the methods of instruction for teaching curricula believe that instruction should be customized to suit the learners' needs and the instructional context, and to

be personally meaningful to the learner (Tessmer, et al, 1990). One part of this view is using the characteristics of children and youth as the source of the curriculum. The international school in Kenya advocates for unity in diversity and differentiation is exercised within the same classroom environment.

These include the methods of autonomous learning, coyote teaching, inquiry-based instruction, lecture, maturationism, Socratic method, outcome-based education, taking children seriously and transformative learning: Reigluth (1983) advocated for instruction which is designed to be prescriptive, effective, efficient and appealing to the learner.

Curriculum theory (CT) is an academic discipline devoted to examining and shaping educational curricula. Within the broad field of curriculum studies, CT includes both the historical analysis of curriculum and ways of viewing current educational curriculum and policy decisions. A large section of the International Baccalaureate (IB) focuses on historical analysis of a particular discipline. CT views include those of Kliebard (2004) and Schiro (2008) who advocated for a curriculum that is holistic and concerned with values.

One of the common criticisms of curriculum of broad field curriculum is that it lays more emphasis on mental discipline and education. "Mental disciplinarians" and Humanists believe in all students' abilities to develop mental reasoning and that education was not intended for social reform in itself but for the systematic development of reasoning power. Good reasoning power would lead to the betterment of society. Kliebard (2004) cites Harris (2012) who described the subjects to be taught as the "five windows" into the soul of the student: "grammar, literature and art, mathematics, geography, and history" and prescribed that they be taught in that order. These five windows have been embraced by the international curriculum alongside other

subjects that enhance both social reform and systematic development of reasoning power.

Social Meliorists believe that education is a tool to reform society and to create change for the better. This socialization goal was based on the power of the individual's intelligence, and the ability to improve on intelligence through education. An individual's future was not predetermined by gender, race, socio-economic status, heredity or any other factors. "The corruption and vice in the cities, the inequalities of race and gender, and the abuse of privilege and power could all be addressed by a curriculum that focused directly on those very issues, thereby raising a new generation equipped to deal effectively with those abuses" (Kliebard, 2004). Some critics contend that this group has goals that are difficult to measure and a product that has slow results. It is within this context that Gay (2001), Villegas & Lucas (2002) and Jabbar & Hardaker (2012) provide frameworks that help prepare academics and teachers to develop curriculum that supports ethnic and cultural diversity that focuses on understanding the learner and developing curricula and practice that are consistent and thoughtful.

Methodology

There were 70 participants from international schools, which included several head teachers and teachers, Students and parents of these students were also included. Borg and Gall (1989) explain that it is traditional to use thirty subjects for a quantitative research and that the larger the sample. In line with this, the sample population of the study was nine schools out of the 26 international schools in Nairobi. Using purposive and stratified random sampling, one head teacher, two teachers, two students and two parents were selected from each school to participate in the pilot study. A

questionnaire and oral interview were combined as the research instrument. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) along with descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data in the study.

Findings and Conclusions

The study was organized around the findings and conclusions to these questions. Is global citizenship still a foreign concept to Kenya? Does international education contribute/establish a greater formal equality of opportunity for all? Does international education cater for individual differences? Do students at post primary level appreciate the multicultural environment? How does it impact on the cost of education in Kenya? How do stereotypes about international education affect the implementation of these curricula?

Global citizenship is not a foreign concept. The benefits of international education are integral to the curriculum and go beyond the personal growth and skills acquired by individuals. It has positive cultural, political, academic and economic impacts on our society especially in light of the new technologies. International education has provided a greater formal equality and a multi-cultural dimension that is inclusive of all the individual differences of students at the post primary level. Concurrently, the impact on the cost of international education has not deterred accessibility but has increased parents' desire to enrol their children in these curriculums. Students educated in these curriculums are highly sought after by international institutions of higher learning locally and globally due to their stellar performance in the examinations. The aforementioned positive impact of international education has been as a result of the following:

School Administrative and Management Structures

The administrative structure in most international schools is made up of a head

teacher, two deputies (one in charge of academic programmes the other. in charge of pastoral programmes). They are supported by other middle managers in the academic and pastoral lines. There are clear guidelines on both academic and pastoral programmes which are run concurrently and complementarily to form a comprehensive and holistic educational experience. Pastoral programmes are not treated as extra-curricular activities but as co- curricular and are an integral part of the whole process.

Cultural Diversity

International education at high school has served as a bridge between Kenya and the global community. This kind of interaction therefore begins at the formative/grass root level and not just at the professional level enabling exposure to global learning concepts and is therefore a key to internationalism. It exposes learners and teachers to foreign and diplomatic cultures. Many of the clients are diplomats or professionals who work in international organizations. These are quite exposed to varied cultures and experiences hence their families in international schools facilitate the extension of internationalism and cultural diversity.

By learning about different cultures and languages, students not only develop a better sense of cultural understanding, but also gain greater insight into their own culture and way of life. This exposure to foreign cultures gives the learners and teachers a chance to appreciate their own cultures and other world cultures. Besides, this provides an environment to familiarize with international and global issues.

Students gain skills in working effectively in global or cross-cultural environments, and using information from different sources around the world. They acquire and demonstrate the ability to communicate in multiple languages and dispositions towards respect and concern for other cultures and peoples. The ability to engage

effectively with the international community and exert positive influence in world affairs requires knowledge about the culture, conditions and aspirations of citizens in other countries.

International education exposes students to social and cultural differences, new educational methods and systems, and unique global perspectives. This contributes to the development of an internationally and intercultural competent labour force within the globe. In addition, the cross-border relationships that are formed during a student exchange, for instance, are sometimes lifelong relationships that may become the foundation of future economic transactions or business collaborations. The outcomes and impacts of international education are global. Students develop and maintain networks worldwide. These benefits need to be protected and cultivated to ensure they are sustained. Graduate Labour Mobility is boosted as a result of international education. It is reasonable to consider that students who are exposed to international education are a mobile group given that they venture outside their home countries through curriculum as they undertake their studies. Interaction between humans has therefore been enhanced because of international education. The transition process of these learners is eased because the international school programmes prepare them well for global interaction.

Curriculum

The teaching/learning process in international education is highly learner centered. Students gain satisfaction from international education as the curriculum is learner friendly and provides real life situations with which they can easily identify. International curriculum embraces the idea of unity in diversity. In the IB curriculum for instance, the selection of content must be spread across cultures and, historical periods and the books studied give preference to books in translation in order to get the deep flavour of that specific culture deeply. An appreciation of different

backgrounds is developed through the given curriculum.

This system of education encourages collaborative learning and team work. Projects, which form an integral part of learning are assessed both at the individual and group level. The learners then, become beneficiaries of team work and acquire increased levels of confidence and research skills. It focuses more on bringing out the learner's passion and initiative and not so much on examination and grading.

The international curriculum appreciates the child's bank of knowledge. In the BNC, the learner is only given 40 -60% while in IB, the teacher only gives 40%. The learner is expected to explore and make deep inquiries into areas of study because the expectations of international education do not assume that the child is "tabular rasa". The teacher is not expected to drill but to guide.

International education offers a variety of examinable subject options aside from those offered in the national curriculum. CIE Cambridge offers over 66 examinable subjects. Apart from traditional subjects, these include emerging subjects such as Travel and Tourism, Drama, Music, Design and Technology, Environmental Management, Law, Psychology, Sociology and Media Studies to mention a few. Learners are exposed to and prepared to work towards both traditional and emerging careers based on the broad curriculum options. They are sensitized to varied career options and have many to choose from therefore augmenting their decisions early enough.

Extended use of advanced technologies by way of widespread use of ICT encourages research using the internet as a supplement for the text book. ICT cuts across all subjects through research and presentation by the learners. This opens up their thinking-and enjoyment of learning activities and enhances ownership of the process.

The teaching of English language and Literature as two distinct yet complimentary subjects enables fair exploration and optimization of ability. Components of different subjects are integrated resulting in both horizontal and vertical articulation of courses. Whereas IB focuses mainly skill acquisition while BNC focuses on content, both curricular clearly explore all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and operate significantly above application level The product of this is a highly analytical, decisive learner who rationalizes issues easily. Curriculum reviews for these courses are enacted and not stored in the archives

Assessment

Both formative and summative assessments are treated seriously and a regular tracking trend is emphasized in most schools. Summative assessment of international education is done by a range of bodies including CIE Cambridge, Edexcel International and IB. Due to competition, these bodies strive to maintain high standards and stakeholders enjoy the security of not being confined to the monopoly of a single examination body.

International education provides an opportunity for learners to upgrade their weak areas. BNC examinations, for example allow re-sits in individual subjects where a student may want to upgrade or improve performance. Preparation of the learner is geared towards bloom not doom. It is an all-inclusive system which incorporates the ability of every learner without rejecting or throwing out weak students.

Courses by the Business Technology Examination Council (BTEC) offer vocational and advanced learning opportunities for young students who may not excel at timed and written examinations. The structure of school courses allows time for maturity and gives adequate preparation for university/ higher education life. It is structured as key stage I to 5 which is early

Years, prep school, middle school, high school and post International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). There is summative assessment at all these levels. The approach to international education focuses heavily on content and skill acquisition and is not just examination and grade oriented. It caters for different abilities and offers opportunities for Differentiated Learning through Core, Extended and Accelerated Learning approaches. Other approaches include the Learning Support and Gifted and Talented programmes. Assessment for Learning (AFL) and Assessment of Learning (AOL) are emphasized in all the key stages.

Resources

The quality and standard of resources and teacher competence are key components of international education attracting a vast majority of students and highly qualified professionals. The human resource is well exposed to elements of accountability. As a result of a competitive market, adequate resources and an attractive learning environment in most schools acts as measures for attracting and retaining clientele. Clamour for accreditation by bodies such as Council of International Schools (CIS) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification has compelled these schools to upgrade their resources.

ICT is integrated in the curriculum so the schools have well equipped computer labs and computer access is as wide as textbooks for both teachers and students. Most international schools pride themselves in having well-equipped libraries which are managed by qualified librarians and library managers. These are regularly upgraded to meet the global trends and serve as resource centres for the schools and also local community. The phased out material is usually donated to the local community as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The environment is nurtured carefully to

improve and bring to life the teaching/learning of individual subjects, thus the provision of subject specific rooms in most international schools.

Enrichment Programs

These are advantageous to students through programs such as work experience, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) which enhance the student capacity to make informed career choices and furnishes them with important life skills. Community Service and Work Experience programmes give the students an opportunity to serve in and experience the labour market. This enhances the development of life skills that are a necessity to survival. Relevant work placements for learners and partnerships with universities, employers and professional bodies provide students with invaluable workplace experience and create relationships with prospective employers. The learners are exposed to other programmes such as Youth Leaders International (YU), East African Model United Nations (EAMUN), Global Youth Leaders International and International Climate Challenge (ICC) all of which afford them an opportunity to interact with global issues and current trends. Unwritten curriculum values tapped in integrity are experienced in high measures.

Career Opportunities

Local universities and other higher education institutions now recognize and appreciate the value of international education in Kenyan secondary schools as can be seen through their advertisements which now incorporate A-level and International Baccalaureate (IB) graduates and also others like the American systems of education. Exposure to the international curriculum and education as a whole grants easier access to international universities since learners are prepared in advance by the Career Advisory Personnel. The personnel liaise with affiliated university bodies which give informed guidance on course selection. These are geared towards individual learners' abilities. This is done in the course

of study and often formative assessment results are used to inform the decisions made as summative results are awaited. Such bodies include University and College Application Services (UCAS), Australian Education Consultants (AEC), Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AUSSI), Common Applications (Common Apps) among others. This kind of interaction helps to save time between completion of high school and entry into university.

International education contributes to the economic growth through contributions of expatriate families and teachers who are beneficiaries and service providers respectively. It also provides employment opportunities for workers such as house helps, drivers, gardeners and security. Landlords too are beneficiaries. International Education has given Kenya the advantage of retention of our students. - this helps to reduce economic funds transfer where they migrate to other countries in search of the same. Most of the international schools are co-educational and these form a good training ground for collaborative growth of the sexes. The limited class numbers of about 20 learners maximum give learners the advantage of receiving individual attention from their teachers.

Staff Professional Development

Contractual employment and well structured, regular appraisal of staff has enhanced their performance. Appraisal is taken seriously and renewal of contracts is subject to this. Rarely do private international schools employ staff on permanent basis. Staff Professional Development (SPD), is fussed about and both local and expatriate teachers are kept on their toes to keep upgrading their professional profiles. They must explore, be aware of exercise good practice and embrace modern trends. Opportunities are also offered for online trainings by CIE, Edexcel, IB and other examining bodies for teachers to continue upgrading their

professional profiles. Regular Insets and accreditation courses equip the teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Who is the Product of International Education?

International education nurtures and brings forth a learner who is

Confident, focused and is clear on the objectives of what they are learning.

Independent and innovative. One who is prepared to be an employer more than employee.

Works significantly above the Application level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Nurtured to view the learning process as a joyful, interactive and engaging process and not a tedious one.

Able to interact easily with people from all walks of life.

An empowered individual.

Holistic in his/her approach, and an open minded, global citizen,

Challenges of International Education

Customizing the international curriculum to fit to the local context has been a major challenge. We need to consciously adopt the curriculum and keep our learners well connected to our context. There is a serious disconnect in some areas. Even menus in some of the international schools leave a lot to be desired. The other challenge for educators is how best to contextualize theory in an unknown culture. Our own languages too are alienated from us and a language like Kiswahili has most recently been categorized with Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) which further adds on to the alienation of our culture. A good number of indigenous learners will opt for other foreign languages and Kiswahili may be taken as a last resort.

Extensive use of and over reliance on ICT has interfered with literacy skills. Learners prefer to read e- books and write using computers which will spell check for them. This stunts their ability to develop basic grammar mechanics, numeracy and other

literacy skills. Their language competence, and particularly the writing skills, for a number of years have been frequently reported as wanting in the area of grammar mechanics. This issue continues to be hotly debated, by disgruntled employers as well as by frustrated tertiary educators. Language is often cited as one of the biggest challenges for teachers of international students, both onshore and offshore.

Rising cost of acquiring international education has been prohibitive for many learners in Nairobi wishing to join the system. The financial requirements of most of the international schools, is prohibitive for many Kenyans. If not well handled, learners could leave with knowledge gaps. IB for example will equip learners with maximum skills but content may be minimum. This study calls for close and keen supervision to ensure quality learning.

Some learners may suffer from a measure of cultural alienation by way of not appreciating their own cultures while trying to ape the myriad of cultures around them so as to 'fit in'. Others may simply be alienated from their own cultures by way of getting swallowed up in internationalism. In conclusion, the findings indicate that international education has not only had a positive impact on the private secondary schools in Nairobi but has had a positive impact on private secondary schools throughout Kenya. This is due to the fact that all the international private schools in Kenya operate under the purview of Kenya Association of Independent International Schools (KAIIS).

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Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are as follows:

1. The international examining bodies should make provision for curriculum to explore the local context. Some components of the international curriculum embrace aspects of the local culture. This could include a local unifying language like Kiswahili. Learners would be encouraged to research and appreciate the local context. These bodies should work in collaboration with the national examining body to an extent to moderate sections of the curriculum.
2. The use of ICT should be controlled to enable learners to work independently especially in the cited areas of language where basic mechanics of study have been interfered with. Much as international education takes a learner centred approach, close and keen supervision must be made to ensure no gaps in curriculum delivery and learning. If we fail to review the programs we offer to international students, we are arguably guilty of assuming that Western education and Western public relations values are superior.

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Contribution of Headteachers' Leadership Styles on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Turkana County, Kenya

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Abstract

The success of what is done in the school is attributed to the head teacher. He or she is the pivot around which many aspects of the school revolve, being the person in charge of every detail of running the school, academic or administrative. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of head teacher leadership style on performance in KCSE in Turkana County Kenya. Objectives of the study were: to identify leadership styles of secondary school head teachers in Turkana District based on Bolman and Deal's theory of leadership frame, to identify the extent to which the head teacher use the leadership styles; and to find out how the head teacher leadership style influences KCSE performance among secondary schools in Turkana County. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis guide. Stratified sampling was used Target population were head teachers and teachers. The findings of the study showed that symbolic leadership style had a negative effect on school performance. There was a low correlation between the political leadership style and performance in KCSE in public secondary schools in Turkana County. Performance in KCSE was positively related to the human resource leadership style employed by school head teachers. It was recommended that head teachers should be encouraged and trained to use the human resource and the structural frames.

Key Words: *Head teachers' Leadership Styles, KCSE Performance*

Introduction

According to Dunklee (2000) the differences in students' behaviour and academic outcomes are influenced to a large extent by the head teacher leadership style. The head teacher leads from his/her values. The activities of the school are determined by what the head teacher does. The head teacher influences everyone else's

behaviour: his/her values are contagious, his/her good sense of ethics instils respect and trust in the system; he/she communicates a powerful message about what is important, how people are to be treated and how the school should operate daily.