

EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

PRESENTED AT A LEADERS GUILD CONFERENCE ON LEADING CHANGE: THE CHALLENGE:
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Education is the process of acculturation which is defined as all the knowledge and values shared by a society. It also constitutes the sum of cognitive and affective content that is passed on from one person to another through teaching, modelling, media or other means. The object of education is to facilitate adaptation in the total physical and spiritual environment.

In today's world, education has been majorly perceived as the engine of development, technological advancement, civilization, peace, human rights, good governance and all other aspects that facilitate the personal development to full potential.

Therefore, the theme of today's conference on "leading change, the challenge" fits very well in what the society aspires to be.

Change means transformation, a movement from one status to another; it could also constitute metamorphosis, where there is a substantive transformation of reality. This is what the leaders guild aspires to achieve in their endeavors.

In the achievement of her millennium goals, Kenya did set out the vision 2030 which has been then translated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the social pillar, where education falls is considered as a critical agent that will transform society. This is not the requisite for Kenya but for the world over. The current education reforms and the Tangaza motto of affective and cognitive transformation as stated in her vision and vision are all geared to target such change.

Any education system or content is geared towards facilitating change. When our parents took us to school, they expected us to live a better life, self-sustaining and movement towards better lifestyle. We can then ask, did this happen to us? To us who are being educated, will it achieve this goal?

The European Union Education Manifesto (2014) also reflected the need to have a transformative based education. It has put a prime cause to educators in pursuit of development, peace, good governance, ethics and moral living.

There are a number of challenges that face education; among them are:

Relevance:

Education must be tailored to meet the personal, economic, technological, social, ethical, spiritual and moral changes. It is important then to note that if these changes are not met, we

shall remain dependent on other outcomes of education in foreign countries. Import of technology, medical resources, and best practices in governance may denote this deficiency in a country. Corruption, poverty, and bad governance will perpetuate among peoples.

Entrepreneurial challenges

Does education stimulate critical thinking, creative minds, and product aimed education? If these variables will not be met, then the nation remains tied up in rummaging for little resources that are available for their development. People will remain on static sources of employment like government, less industries and service sector. Job and wealth creation can be made through entrepreneurs. Value addition and use of raw materials for technology will not take place. The increase in the population will translate to diminishing resources, which is a good recipe for poverty, conflict and insecurity.

Scholarship

Education can only benefit those who understand its value and end. In a recent interuniversity conference in Dar es Salaam, the Chairperson of the chamber of commerce indicated the following deficits in our graduates from the universities:

1. Kusoma: That graduates have not cultivated a reading culture. Their knowledge, and readiness or willingness to study and seek new knowledge is diminished. Your guess can be as good as mine about where most people spend their free time.
2. Kuandika: That the capacity for creative writing is diminished. Producing corporate reports is a difficult characteristic to find. We must therefore cultivate the critical writing skills through studies and practices.
3. Kustahimili: That their level of job endurance is very low. There is a high level of engaging in unproductive activities. Engaging in media that does not contribute effectively to work and transformative activities.
4. Kuelewa: The conceptualization of work place knowledge and processes is not among the priority skills available among some graduates.

These issues contribute much to the challenge that creates gaps in the way education is prepared to meet the industry and work place demands.

Scholarly aptitude demands that learners do not just obtain minimum requirements for passing their examinations. Examinations usually take two to three hours out of 30 to 45 hours of learning. Learners should get more than what is in the course outline. They should get comprehensive skills that include the aspects of writing, reading, wide knowledge and other demands of applying education to the market place.

Integrity and Moral Standing

Without integrity, leadership has no social responsibility, accountability, social fairness and transparency. Leadership becomes a vehicle for self-development at the expense of others. Chapter six of Kenyan constitution deals with leadership, ethics, anti-corruption, integrity, and other values that close the gap between society and its leaders. My question is: has this improved our ranking on the corruption index? Probably not. This is because people entering the market from educational institutions are not transforming leadership in line with universal codes of ethics and morality. They are sometimes too ambitious to catch up with their older colleagues who have benefited from undue processes.

WAY FORWARD

There is need to focus on the best practices in making education useful to the learners as well as the society.

Teaching Methodology (Pedagogy)

Educators at all levels need to teach, while taking into account the ultimate professional end of education. What do we want to make out of our learners? Early professional and career guidance can be very useful to make education meaningful and purposeful to learners. The head start programs should stimulate the professional aspirations, social responsibility and good citizenship.

Value Added Education

This calls for education that inculcates ethics, morals and goodness. Educators should become role models and beacons of positive growth and development to learners. They should be good points of reference. The current scenario of child abuse in schools that has been reported in various places, lack of moral standing, mismanagement of resources among others do not shape such values but model negative practices.

Faith Based Education

The Catholic education is aimed at education and evangelization. Reverence and accountability to God should be another guiding factor in education.

Ultimately, it is notable that the challenges are not beyond reach but require the transformation of mind and heart by all players in education.

