

## the case for philosophy for children in kenyan schools

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### abstract

The significance of value-based education in character development and inculcation of ethical citizenship attitudes in Kenyan schools cannot be overemphasized. In the recent past, cases of unethical behaviour among primary school-going children and those who have graduated from this important segment of education have been on the rise, despite the various interventions by the Kenyan government to integrate value concerns in the curriculum. Since 2020, there has been a sharp increase in the cases of student-led arsons in learning institutions in Kenya. From independence, the government of Kenya adopted an indirect approach of value education that advocates for integration of values within regular curriculum. This strategy seems ineffective owing to an increase in the cases of indiscipline among learners. This study seeks to examine the application of Philosophy for Children (P4C) as the architecture for implementing value-based education and the realization of Chapter Six of the Constitution of Kenya because the values that P4C aims to nurture are highly consistent with those of the Kenyan Constitution. Through P4C, the Kenyan Education system can achieve its goal of preparing responsible and ethical citizens of high moral integrity. Chapter Six of the Kenyan Constitution has laid the cornerstone principles of Leadership, Integrity and elements of ethical citizenship. It dictates the code of conduct for state officers and responsible citizenry. Through the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), the Ministry of Education seeks to inculcate these principles in the learners at an early age.

**keywords:** philosophy for children; value education; community of inquiry; competency-based curriculum.

## o caso da filosofia para crianças nas escolas quenianas

### resumo

A importância da educação baseada em valores no desenvolvimento do caráter e na inculcação de atitudes de cidadania ética nas escolas quenianas não pode ser subestimada. No passado recente, os casos de comportamento antiético entre crianças que frequentam a escola primária e aquelas que se formaram neste importante segmento da educação aumentaram, apesar das várias intervenções do governo queniano para integrar, no currículo, preocupações com os

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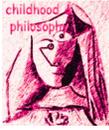
valores. Desde 2020, houve um aumento acentuado nos casos de incêndios criminosos liderados por estudantes em instituições de ensino no Quênia. Desde a independência, o governo do Quênia adotou uma abordagem indireta de educação de valores que defende a integração de valores no currículo regular. Esta estratégia parece ineficaz devido ao aumento dos casos de indisciplina entre os alunos. Este estudo procura examinar a aplicação da Filosofia para Crianças (FpC) como a arquitetura para implementar a educação baseada em valores e a realização do Capítulo Seis da Constituição do Quênia, porque os valores que a FpC visa nutrir são altamente consistentes com os da Constituição do Quênia. Por meio da FpC, o sistema educacional queniano pode atingir seu objetivo de preparar cidadãos responsáveis e éticos de alta integridade moral. O Capítulo Seis da Constituição do Quênia estabeleceu os princípios fundamentais de Liderança, Integridade e elementos de cidadania ética. Ele dita o código de conduta para funcionários do estado e cidadãos responsáveis. Por meio do Currículo Baseado em Competências (CBC), o Ministério da Educação busca inculcar esses princípios nos alunos desde cedo.

**palavras-chave:** filosofia para crianças; educação de valores; comunidade de investigação; currículo baseado em competências.

### **el caso de filosofía para niños en las escuelas kenianas**

resumen

La importancia de la educación basada en valores para el desarrollo del carácter y la inculcación de actitudes de ciudadanía ética en las escuelas kenianas nunca será enfatizada en demasía. En el pasado reciente, los casos de comportamientos poco éticos entre niños que asisten a la escuela primaria y aquellos que se han graduado de este importante segmento de la educación han ido en aumento, a pesar de las varias intervenciones del gobierno keniano para integrar preocupaciones relativas a los valores en el plan de estudios. Desde 2020, se ha producido un fuerte aumento de los casos de incendios provocados por estudiantes en los centros de enseñanza de Kenia. Desde la independencia, el gobierno de Kenia adoptó un enfoque indirecto de educación en valores que aboga por la integración de los valores dentro del plan de estudios regular. Esta estrategia parece poco efectiva debido al aumento de los casos de indisciplina entre los alumnos. Este estudio pretende examinar la aplicación de la Filosofía para Niños (FpN) como arquitectura para implementar la educación basada en valores y hacer realidad el capítulo seis de la Constitución de Kenia, ya que los valores que la FpN pretende fomentar son muy coherentes con los de la Constitución keniana. A través de la FpN, el sistema educativo keniano puede alcanzar su objetivo de preparar ciudadanos responsables y éticos con una alta integridad moral. El capítulo seis de la Constitución keniana ha establecido los principios fundamentales de Liderazgo, Integridad y elementos de ciudadanía ética. El mismo dicta el código de conducta para los funcionarios del Estado y la ciudadanía responsable. A través del Currículo Basado en Competencias (CBC), el Ministerio de Educación busca inculcar estos principios en los alumnos a una edad temprana.



## the case for philosophy for children in kenyan schools

### *introduction*

The significance of value-based education in character development and preparation of ethical citizenship attitudes among the young cannot be overemphasized. Recently, there has been an increase in cases of unethical behaviour among primary school-going children in Kenya and those who have graduated from this important segment of education. Over the last year alone, many cases of school arson have been reported. As per the report released by the Directorate of Criminal Investigation (DCI) in early December 2021, up to 200 learning institutions had been affected by cases of arson in a single month raising the alarm bell (Angira, 2021). The DCI report indicated that the school arsons were spread across the country pointing to a possibility of common causes. Notably, cases of school arson are recurrent, and stakeholders are concerned as to why students resort to violence to air their frustrations. Stakeholders are worried about widespread moral degradation among school-going children right from the primary to the university level (Angira, 2021).

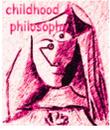
In response to the issue of values among the students and the general population, the government of Kenya has come up with various interventions to integrate values concerns in the curriculum through the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). According to the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) (2017), the values enshrined in the CBC were thought to be the solution to the noticeable behavioral and values crisis in Kenya, since the previous interventions at the curriculum level seem to fail. However, it is not clear how the notion of values as envisaged in the CBC can be taught, reinforced, and evaluated to enhance ethical citizenship and realization of the provisions of Chapter Six of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 on Leadership and Integrity. This study proposes the adoption of Philosophy for Children as values-led pedagogy in the provision of value-based education in the primary school education curriculum. Since independence, the government of Kenya adopted an indirect approach of value education that advocates

for integration of values with the regular curriculum. This strategy seems unsuccessful owing to an increase in the cases of indiscipline among learners.

Value-based education is an essential component in enhancing ethical values among the youth. In Kenya for example, cases of unethical behaviour like student unrest and examination malpractices among school-going children have been on the rise. This is despite the fact that the government has put in place various interventions at the curriculum level to help alleviate the problem. This study proposes the application of Philosophy for Children in teaching values since the integrated approach employed currently seems not to be effective. As such, it aims to analyze Philosophy for Children as a pedagogical strategy for value education in the primary schools' education curriculum in Kenya, and examine the application of Philosophy for Children in the realization of Chapter Six of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 on Leadership and Integrity in the primary school education Curriculum. As such, I have adopted conceptual analysis-- a traditional method of clarifying constructs in form of a philosophical inquiry as the main technique of investigation .

The goal of conceptual analysis is to produce an explicit meaning of a concept by delineating its boundaries and referents (Hanna, 1998; Furner, 2004). It challenges the researcher to develop examples or cases that help to clarify constructs and distinguish them from related terms (Furner, 2004). For this study, ethical values are the educational concepts that were analyzed. Conceptual analysis as a form of philosophical inquiry is particularly useful when trying to identify the underlying conceptual structure of arguments and justification and in particular, unexamined notions of educational practice (Furner, 2004). With regard to this conception, this study is the first of its kind in Kenya and it sets precedence in advocating for the application of Philosophy for Children as a pedagogy that acts to enhance ethical values in the primary school education curriculum.

The shortcoming of employing conceptual analysis is that while it helps educational philosophers to clarify and explicate concept boundaries, it does not pretend to develop the definition of a concept (Kipper, 2013). Many philosophers



caution researchers against assuming that there can ever be an absolute definition for any word, given the fact that various words can be defined and interpreted differently depending on an individual's understanding and the philosophical school of thought that he/she subscribes to (Kipper, 2013). This method, therefore, did not produce a definitive meaning for the various terms used in the study but rather sought to illuminate the relationship between the various concepts, and to suggest how they can enhance the development of ethical values among primary school learners. Another limitation of using this approach is that the study did not produce empirical data regarding perspectives under investigation (Kipper, 2013). Although traditional notions of validity and reliability do not apply to conceptual analysis, this study relied on logic to ensure rigor in the analysis of the findings.

### *are children capable of doing philosophy?*

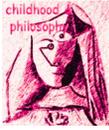
The debate as to whether children are capable of philosophizing is an ancient one. Murriss (2000) observed that this debate has been riddled with confusion between doing philosophy as an academic subject, that is, studying the ideas of the world's great thinkers, and philosophizing; which is thinking about any question philosophically. A majority of educational thinkers have been influenced by the philosophical assumption inherent in Piagetian theory that children's reasoning develops automatically as they grow older, and that any attempt to hasten this process through the learning of philosophy is a waste of time and a form of educational malpractice (Murriss, 2000). Piaget's assumption holds that cognitive development proceeds through irreversible and necessary age-related stages. This stage theory of cognitive development is often reflected in how educational curricula for primary education in Kenya and the world over have been designed.

For years, the choice of educational materials used in teaching children and the pedagogical approaches employed have been designed to conform to the particular intellectual capacities that characterize the children's age as assumed by Piaget's theory. The implication therefore is that education focuses on the age group of the

children and not their unique attributes (Murriss, 2009). This approach exposes the weakness in Piaget's assumption in that it runs the risk of putting too much importance on what children have in common instead of what makes them different from one another (Murriss, 2000). His stage theory also describes what children of a particular age group are intellectually capable of before educational intervention, whereas we do not yet know the effect on the intellectual development of the young child of long-term exposure to philosophical philosophical discourse (Murriss, 2009).

Nevertheless, similar assumptions often underlie criticism of Philosophy for Children. For instance, there is a generally accepted belief from this school of thought that we are a *tabula rasa* when we are born, that all our knowledge comes from experience, and that doing philosophy requires knowledge upon which to reflect (Murriss, 2009). Therefore, from what Murriss refers to as an Aristotelian point of view, the older we are, the more is written in our slate and hence the more knowledge we have acquired (Murriss, 2009). This assumption postulates that children have insufficient experience, which makes them incapable of doing philosophy. The discussion is further complicated by the fact that even if it were true that young children who have just started doing philosophy in comparison with adults who have just started doing philosophy were less capable of doing philosophy, the conclusion does not follow that children should not be taught philosophy (Murriss, 2016). After all, primary school children do not do, for example, mathematics as capably as professional mathematicians. Does it, therefore, mean that children should also not do mathematics?

However, Matthew Lipman (2003), the founder of Philosophy for Children, posits that children start philosophizing when they ask the question 'why?' and question the meaning of words. On this account, children can and do pick up the general spirit of philosophical activities when they are presented to them. According to Lipman (2003), when children are introduced to a philosophical discussion on issues and commitments that make philosophical sense, competencies such as impartiality, critical thinking, consistency, objectivity, and respect for other persons,



comprehensiveness, searching for defensible reasons, and consideration of relevant criteria are usually developed. Further, Lipman (2003) made it clear that when he advocated for philosophy in schools, he was not talking about the traditional academic philosophy taught in the university. Rather, he was talking about a form of philosophy redesigned and reconstructed to make it available, acceptable and enticing to children (Lipman, 2003). Moreover, he held that the pedagogy by which the subject was to be presented would have to be just as drastically redesigned as the subject itself.

*philosophy for children as a values strategy in primary school education curriculum*

Lipman founded Philosophy for Children (P4C) in the 1970s to improve the judgment in children by sharpening their critical creative and caring thinking skills (Lipman, 2003). These skills are sharpened by engaging students in philosophical dialogue during a Community of Philosophical Inquiry. Furthermore, Lipman alluded to the fact that dialogic philosophical engagement plays a significant role in encouraging children to think for themselves, to think with others, and to think well.

Philosophy for Children is fundamental in enhancing a sense of self-worth, logical thinking, appropriate language use in argumentation, listening to the views and opinions of others, and analytical skills. In P4C, dialogue is an essential component. This is because, during instruction, the teacher assumes a facilitative rather than an instructive role. This teaching strategy puts more emphasis on the importance of the teacher's modeling of good critical reasoning for students (Murriss, 2009). Here, the teacher's role is usually conceptualized as a Socratic questioner and a co-inquirer.

Nicola (2013) points out that P4C pedagogy entails the use of stimuli that enhance critical thinking such as the use of children's literature, media, or questions that contain philosophical themes to inspire students' questions, discussions, construction of arguments, and collaboration with others. According to Lipman (2003), P4C is a student-based inquiry approach to teaching and learning. For instance, Nicola (2013) notes that in addition to providing a uniform curriculum in the form of specially written philosophical novels, P4C offers a unified educational design in which students

of various levels start the class by reading a segment aloud. questions are then raised about the story, which learners are encouraged to discuss. During the class, mutual criticism and challenging of beliefs are expressed carefully through carefully monitored dialogical interaction. The program also offers exhaustive manuals, related to the novels, that offer stimulating questions and discussion models (Lipman, 2003).

Philosophy for Children enables children to build a Community of Inquiry (CoI) where participants in the learning process create and enquire into their own questions, and 'learn how to learn'. CoI engages learners collectively in the search for meaning, enhances thinking and reasoning skills and builds a sense of self-worth among learners. The practice of P4C enhances critical thinking skills that contribute to the development of good judgment skills in their day-to-day operations.

The main difference between the philosophical education offered by P4C and that of academic philosophy is that the former is practical and participatory. Learners are taught how to philosophize rather than how to become masters of a canonical body of philosophical knowledge. Ideas are developed by building on and enabling learners to respectfully challenge each other's views on a particular philosophical concept or topic. Moreover, P4C is a collaborative learning exercise that allows the teacher to equally distribute thinking tasks among learners (Golding, 2010).

### *introducing p4c in kenyan schools*

The development and cultivation of students' ethical behavior has been an issue of concern generally in the whole world and specifically in Kenya in the recent past. This has prompted the Kenyan government to put in place various strategies aimed at providing ethical education to children. Despite the various interventions aimed at localizing the curriculum and providing ethical values with an African outlook, no advice has been offered on how to operationalize the teaching and evaluation of ethical values independent of pedagogical strategies used in other conventional academic subjects. The inadequacy in value-teaching strategies is attributed to the lack of a clear and systematized philosophy of education in Kenya (Ndichu, 2013). By contrast, the

application of Philosophy for Children as a strategy for teaching values in the primary school education curriculum introduces a form of pedagogy based on dialogue that is capable of transforming the Kenyan educational system in keeping with its inherent values, which are expressed, as I will argue below, in the Kenyan Constitution itself.

Philosophy for Children as an analytical-based learning approach offers a way of exposing learners to inquiry and exploration of societal ideas. Here, school-children learn that their views have value and that the expositions of other learners have value too. Through P4C, learners get an opportunity to realize that the responses they give while engaging in their discussions must not always be “correct.” This understanding is crucial in gaining confidence to ask pressing questions in class and learn through discussions (Ndoferi et al., 2013). When children explore ideas through discussion, their cognitive abilities are nurtured. Additionally, P4C is critical in promoting positive value attitudes that are key pillars for quality education. Through questioning, P4C enhances the opportunities for interactive learning where children develop personal skills and social attitudes as they interact by sharing, discussing, acting responsibly, using different forms of communication, and accepting diversity (Grima, 2019).

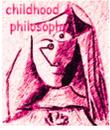
The adoption of P4C pedagogy in primary schools in Kenya promises to enhance children’s capacity to listen to each other, respond to one another’s opinions and ask questions in order to seek clarification on a variety of concepts during their group engagements. Discussions of this nature in a classroom environment can help sustain the learners for considerable periods, with little input from the teacher thereby bringing to fruition the idea of self-learning and of “learning how to learn” among children. Through the vocalization of their thinking as a group and using language as a tool of inquiry, students learn how to think reasonably (White, 2009).

P4C also promises to provide primary school children in Kenya with an opportunity to think for themselves, thus enhancing high-order thinking. Also, the regular practice of CoI can act as a starting point in developing a personal thinking journey for children; it provides them with an opportunity to question the things they find interesting and want to learn more about. When children's questions are shared,

they develop a greater sense that their ideas are valued and valid. White (2009) notes that the practice of P4C not only enhances higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, but lower-order thinking skills, such as knowledge, application, and comprehension as well. Therefore, when children are provided with opportunities to develop the higher-order thinking skills, they are likely to become increasingly self-directed.

Philosophy for Children also promises to help Kenyan children to develop skills and dispositions that will enable them play their roles fully in a pluralistic society. Moreover, it boosts their self-esteem and intellectual confidence (Naji & Hashim, 2017). Philosophical inquiry does this by creating a caring classroom community where learners learn to explore issues of personal concern such as friendship, sharing, bullying, love, fairness, and more generally philosophical issues such as personal identity, truth, and change. Furthermore, it gives children an opportunity to develop their views on varied matters, explore and challenge the views of others and listen to and respect each other through thinking and reflection.

Philosophical inquiry initiates learners into public discussions about meanings and values. It encourages them to think about what it means to be reasonable and to make informed moral judgments. Such discussions are not just 'talking shop' but help to create a moral culture, a way of thinking and acting together that cultivates virtues of conduct such as respect for others, open-mindedness, and sincerity (Ndofiperi, 2011). In a Community of Inquiry, students are encouraged to find their path to meaning via discussions with others. During these discussions, children sit in a circular formation and they read a story, sentence by sentence. After completing the reading, they suggest questions be discussed. These questions are derived from the themes in the story or paradoxes and ambiguities emerging from the text. During the discussions, the role of the teacher is to facilitate critical dialogue within the Community of Inquiry. It is the way the teacher guides community members which makes the discussions more philosophical as opposed to mere conversations. When children are used to these exercises, they are likely to develop into critical thinkers. Moreover, a spirit of tolerance



is fostered through the practice of communal deliberation, which also instills values of empathy among community members. In that community members are pursuing common objectives, the spirit of unity is instilled, cutting across individual and cultural differences. As children get used to this collaborative learning situation, the extrinsic is gradually transformed into intrinsic motivation (Ndondo & Mhalnga, 2015).

Gregory et al. (2017) also allude to the fact that the practice of P4C introduces learners to values that transcend individual interests and desires and put the interest of others first. In this case, transcendence refers to 'putting others before self' that is, taking care of the needs of others before sorting oneself in any given situation, and an awareness of the concept of justice and the principle of fairness. Transcendence looks beyond the self-interest of individuals or groups such as family and friends, to include the wider society. Additionally, it encourages individuals to be conscious of the relationship that they have among themselves and with nature as well as to understand our duties to other species. This form of moral reasoning cannot be achieved without imagination. The use of imaginative reasoning is necessary if children are to coexist with others in the present and future worlds. With the assistance of others, a community of inquiry can help children to transcend the present and to construct an understanding not only of what is but what could be. In short, participation in a CoI aims to give the children the tools they need to question their situations and to begin the search for constructive ways to change or transform themselves.

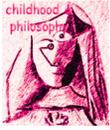
### *the role of philosophy for children in the realization of chapter six of the constitution of kenya on leadership and integrity*

The Constitution of Kenya is founded on certain principles and values under which all Kenyans are governed. The principles and values are expected to create a common culture that Kenyans as a people can be identified with (Omiti, 2012b). These principles and values include national unity, patriotism, accountability, egalitarianism, transparency, social justice, integrity, the sharing and decentralization of power, human rights, and inclusivity. These principles and values bind all state officers,

organs, and public officers as envisaged under Chapter Six of the Constitution (Constitution of Kenya, 2010), which sets out the two general principles of Leadership and Integrity. Article 73 of the Constitution of Kenya requires public officers to be accountable to the public for their discussions and actions since they are holding the offices in trust for Kenyans. This calls for a mechanism of transparency in the manner in which government businesses are transacted. Concerning the discourse on principles of values and governance, honesty and trustworthiness in discharging official duties are understood as the antithesis of corruption and unethical behaviour in public service (Omiti, 2012a). Leadership and Integrity are at the core of fostering and restoring the public's trust in governance and democracy. On the other hand, integrity focuses the leadership on the interest and desires of the citizenry. Nonetheless, Kenya is still grappling with the problem of corruption, theft of public resources, and unethical behaviour among state officers and society at large.

How, then, to prepare a citizenry that practices these principles of the Kenyan Constitution—for which they have become a set of habits, a form of social character? Clearly it would be through educational institutions. However, Setiani and Mackinnon (2015) report that considerable research demonstrates that traditional expository strategies are frequently ineffective in teaching values education, and that to achieve a democratic and civil society, teachers require an array of pedagogical strategies that address the needs of values education constructively. It is to that effect that this study is advocating for the introduction of Philosophy for Children as a pedagogical strategy for teaching values. The introduction of the new subject with a distinct pedagogical approach for value education is envisaged to be instrumental in the realization of the expectations of Chapter Six of the Constitution and of the values being championed by the Competency-Based Curriculum since the current arrangement cannot guarantee the teaching and learning of values.

Doing philosophy with children is critical in strengthening logical skills and the ability to reason. Effective teaching is comprised of three strategies: dialogical approaches, stimulating critical thinking, and encouraging discussions in a classroom



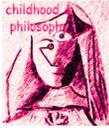
(Zulkfliki & Hashim, 2020). Moral and academic excellence is profoundly affected by effective teaching. Ndoferi (2011) observes that the Community of Inquiry concept of Philosophy for Children invites learners to critically question the ideas around them, to take each other seriously, and to support one another in building a common understanding. In this way, the Community of Inquiry serves as a holistic entity, where each person's way of thinking is mutually dependent on that of the other members. Most creative thinking emerges from the dialogical collaborative activities in the classroom. Children not only develop thinking skills thereby such as questioning, proposing, reasoning, and evaluating but also develop a disposition to think clearly, which is an important ingredient in promoting ethical behavior. At the end of the learning cycle, philosophy will have helped in inculcating values like teamwork, democracy, tolerance, respect for others, collective responsibility, and integrity. It is worth noting that these are the same values that are being championed, not only by the Chapter Six of the Constitution, but by the Competency-Based Curriculum. Philosophy for Children provides a template on how to operationalize the acquisition of these values.

Introducing Philosophy for Children as a central part of school curriculum might also help in the realization of the provisions of Chapter Six by producing citizens who have the emotional, social, and spiritual intelligence that allows them to participate in the life of the society and the country, and to grow a sense of nationalism and patriotism (Setiani & Mackinnon, 2015). Educating people to be responsible citizens dedicated to the service of humanity and their country is the cardinal goal of a nation. and the development and progress of a nation depend on the quality of its citizens. To fulfill this civic responsibility of developing ethical values in its citizenry, this study recommends that Philosophy for Children be made a compulsory subject in schools in Kenya, a deviation from the norm whereby values education has been locally contextualized and taught as an element of subjects such as History, Literature, Religious Studies, and Social Studies.

*research findings*

Unlike Piagetan and Aristotelian schools of thought that suggest the impossibility of children doing philosophy in any shape or form, Lipman's view is clear on this matter: children can not only learn philosophy but also philosophize. As per Lipman (2003), children start philosophizing when they ask the question 'why?' This means children can and do pick up the general spirit of philosophical activities, thereby embracing a philosophical form of life. Children can acquire philosophic competencies such as impartiality, critical thinking, consistency, objectivity, and respect for other persons, comprehensiveness, searching for defensible reasons, and consideration of relevant criteria. As such, Lipman (2003) calls for the need to redesign and reconstruct philosophy to make it available, acceptable and enticing to children. In essence, the mode of delivery to young learners has to be realigned with their level of comprehension. So organized and practiced regularly, P4C promises to improve the judgment in children by sharpening their critical, creative and thinking skills, thereby enhancing a sense of self-worth, a respect for logical thinking, appropriate language use in argumentation, and a capacity to listen and respond to the views and opinions of others (Lipman, 2003).

The introduction of Philosophy for Children at an early age makes education a process of continuous group dialogue, which paves the way for the acquisition of a form of collective knowledge that can be used by the children to change society and champion the moral agenda set forth by the Constitution. During P4C sessions, the teacher acts as a facilitator, asking questions that help children to identify common problems in their lived experience. The teacher also encourages the analysis of learners' prior experiences in their traditional society as the basis of the new understanding and social action. Through Socratic dialogue, children learn to attend to life challenges with open minds. Additionally, the practice of P4C as a form of higher-order thinking represents an initiation into a democratic space that promotes freedom of expression. This is because democracy--a critical requirement for peaceful social coexistence,--is not only a form of mutual governance but also a form of self-governance, and a way of



living together. The latter refers to the process of seeking and increasing self-control over one's own thinking and action towards oneself and others. To obtain that control, children must act, since they can only achieve the results to which their actions are directed. After all, it is the consequences of their actions that will lead society to pass judgment on their behaviors. It is in this respect that Lipman speaks of children doing philosophy as a self-correcting practice through identifying questions that generate further hypotheses, thus developing more reliable criteria in choosing their moral ends.

By incorporating P4C into the Kenyan education curriculum at the lower primary level, young learners in Kenya will experience the benefits of P4C in its capacity to further the nation's dream of raising ethically upright citizens as envisaged in Chapter Six of the Kenyan Constitution, which has laid the cornerstone principles of leadership and integrity in the service of ethical citizenship.

### *conclusion*

This study acknowledges the important role of values education in enhancing character development and enhancing attitudes that can guide children into responsible adulthood. I have adopted Philosophy for Children as a pedagogical approach for teaching ethical values in primary school education because the values it aims to nurture are highly consistent with those of the Kenyan Constitution. I understand Philosophy for Children to be a key strategy in that undertaking, in that it aims at equipping and acquainting children with tools that are crucial for the development of their higher thought processes, while at the same time discussing philosophical issues that arise from their own experiences. Furthermore, I understand the dialogical pedagogy practiced by P4C to be a prime mechanism of ethical thinking, since it enhances the learning of dispositions and values such as humility, turn talking, self-control, and empathy within the community. Finally, philosophical discussions in the Community of Inquiry are critical to the cultivation of ethical consciousness and morally grounded relationships. In short, introducing Philosophy for Children as a curricular centerpiece promises to help actualize the goals of the Kenyan Constitution

by fostering citizens who have high spiritual, social, intelligence, and emotional competencies and a commendable sense of patriotism (Setiani & Mackinnon, 2015). Good citizenry is at the heart of the development and progress of a nation. To attain this civic goal, the study recommends that Philosophy for Children, practiced from an early age, be made a compulsory subject in schools in Kenya.

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received in: 10.08.2021

approved in: 25.03.2022