

Harnessing Educational Technology to Stimulate Critical Thinking among Secondary School Learners for Sustainable Development in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Critical thinking (CT) is an essential life skill that education should seek to equip learners with in order to actualize the attainment of Kenya's vision 2030 and the sustainable development goals (SDGS). Psychologists and philosophers argue that critical thinking provides individuals with the mental ability to think, inquire and interrogate phenomena in society which eliminates bias and blind acceptance of viewpoints. Individuals who are proficient in critical thinking are able to conduct strategic thinking, creative thinking and engage in appropriate decision making and problem-solving processes. Individuals empowered with these competencies are characterized with the ability to adjust to diverse demands of their environment. The outcome are individuals who are highly employable, adaptable and inquisitive with a knack to positively influence society with innovations and social reengineering of communities with ideas. There is apparent disconnect between the expected role of education in fostering critical thinking among learners in secondary schools in Kenya. The scenario implies that students' mental abilities hardly perform beyond mere memorization of facts and information. Learners critically lack the abilities to synthesize, analyze and evaluate information. Such students graduate from school deficient in the life skills necessary for effective living, work performance and inability to engage in activities of daily living in society. Unfortunately, educators in majority of learning institutions in Kenya lack an understanding of how educational technology can be harnessed to stimulate critical thinking skills during teaching and learning processes. This is despite the fact that critical thinking can be infused in pedagogy across all disciplines without occasioning expensive curriculum reviews. This study seeks to provide insights and information to educators and policy makers on how educational technology can be harnessed to stimulate critical thinking among learners during the teaching and learning process for sustainable development in Kenya.

Keywords. Critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, educational technology, inquisitiveness.