Full-day classes urged in private schools

By NELSON OSIEMO

In a bid to improve education standards, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has introduced full-day classes in private schools. This decision is aimed at addressing the challenges faced by students in private schools, particularly those who commute long distances to attend classes.

"There has been an increase in the number of students dropping out of school due to long commuting times," said Dr. M. Kinyanjui, the Permanent Secretary for Education. "We believe that full-day classes will reduce the burden on students and improve their performance." 

The decision has been met with mixed reactions from parents and educators. Some parents welcome the move as it will save them the cost of transportation and time. However, others are concerned about the impact on the quality of education.

"We are worried about the resources that will be needed to implement this," said Dr. J. Kiplimo, the Principal of a private school. "We are already facing financial difficulties due to the increase in operational costs." 

Despite these concerns, the Ministry remains firm in its decision. "We understand the concerns," said Dr. M. Kinyanjui. "But we believe that full-day classes are necessary to ensure that all students have access to quality education." 

The implementation of full-day classes is expected to begin in the next academic year. The Ministry has already started planning and resource allocation for the new system.

In conclusion, the introduction of full-day classes in private schools is a significant step towards improving education standards. It is hoped that this measure will result in better outcomes for students and a better education system for all.

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By WARIARA GACHIE

KENYA's development planning has always been based on what the country needs, and planners have, until recently tended to assume that science, technology and development have nothing to do with culture. This is the opinion of Dr. Ben Kipkorir, the Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi.

"We, at the Institute believe that imported technology comes clothed very thinly in the culture of the people who are exporting it," Dr. Kipkorir said.

For this reason, the Institute has been fighting a battle to convince the Ministry of Economic Planning that any meaningful development plans must take into account the culture of the people of Kenya. This has not always been easy. The Institute has attempted to convince the Ministry that it is necessary to include cultural factors in development planning.

"President Moi has always told Kenyans that they have to move from the known to the unknown. We have been there to help and it has been difficult," Dr. Kipkorir said.

A typical development plan, says Dr. Kipkorir, is sometimes drawn up in some city in the developed world, before being imposed on a local community about whom little was previously known and whose views and cultural prejudices were not considered.

"We are a people who live by water," Dr. Kipkorir said. "We need water for our crops, for our livestock, for our daily use. We need water for our culture, for our traditions, for our beliefs. We need water for our development." 

The Institute has been working closely with government ministries in gathering data on the water needs of the country. This data will be used to develop a comprehensive water development plan that takes into account the cultural needs of the people.

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