

**A CRITIQUE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR SELF RELIANCE IN KENYA IN  
LIGHT OF EXISTENTIALISM**

**BY**

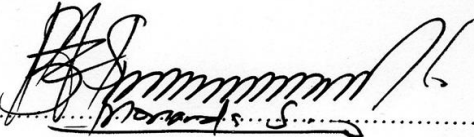
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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
EDUCATION IN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NAIROBI**

**JUNE, 2014**

**DECLARATION**


I declare that this is my original work and that the contents therein have not been presented for an award of any degree in any university or college.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated especially to my Son, Ken Rubi Annan Monanda.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

When your work has been done with the commitment, love and help of many a person, it is extremely difficult to know who to thank. Without the assistance of my family members, friends, colleagues where I teach and my able lecturers, probably this work would have not been completed.

To start with, I'm greatly indebted to my dear Supervisor, Dr Atieno Kili K' Odhiambo, in whose able hands this specialized work has been completed. His honest guidance and criticisms have built me; he has made me love philosophy. To my lecturers: Prof. Gunga (Dean School of Education), Mr Edalia, and The Hon. Dr Sammy Rutto and all the other Lecturers of the department of Educational Foundations, University of Nairobi, in whose able hands I have gone through while pursuing this M.Ed. programme.

To my family members, my late mum Teresiah and my late father Mikisi, without whom, I would have not existed. They taught me to struggle in life and for sure, struggle I have. Dear dad and mum, rest in eternal peace. To my love, Zippy Kemunto, her unwavering support has made it possible for me to complete this programme. She is a great woman in my life.

My two sons, Ken and Mbarak and my daughters Gloria and Angel, I can't forget them. They have been a source of inspiration throughout the entire period I was working on this project.

My brothers James, Laurence and Joshua, my sincere and loving sister, Grace and your husband Nyairo, my sisters Janet and Mariah, all of whom have given me support in all spheres foreseeable. You are a wonderful people and you have truly made my work a success.

Finally, to Ayieko George Mogaka, a true friend who patiently edited this work and gave me all the support he could. The gap of a brilliant brother has been perfectly filled. May your God bless you and your family.

“Every true faith is also infallible...it does accomplish what the respective faithful person hopes to gain from it. But it does not prepare a reference point whatsoever which could guarantee its objective truth. If you prefer peace of mind and happiness, then better believe! But if you would like to be a disciple of truth, turn to research!” Letter to Elizabeth Nietzsche, 11 June, 1865 (Nietzsche, 1887/1974).

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

**ICR**-Christian Organization Institute For creation Research

**YEC**-Young Earth Creationists

**CRS**-Creation Research Society

**KIPPRA**-Kenya Institute for Public Research and Analysis

**KIHBS**-Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey.

**GEN**-Genesis

**PROV**-Proverbs

**MATT**-Mathew

**MK**-Mark

**LK**-Luke

**1COR**-First Corinthians

**2 COR**-Second Corinthians

**SDA**-Seventh Day Adventist Church

**ISA**-Isaiah

**JN**-John

**SAM**-Samwel

**PS**-Psalms

**PPI-** Pastoral Programme of Instruction

**USA-** United States of America.

**U.o.N-** University of Nairobi

**M.Ed.-**Master of Education

**YCS-** Young Christian Society

**CU-**Christian Union

## ABSTRACT

*The rise of Christianity has affected every area of life in Kenya today. Eighty percent (80%) of Kenyans are arguably Christians. This study sought to address the negative influence of Christianity (particularly its determinism philosophy) in various educational settings. This discourse argued in support of existentialism as a philosophy necessary for self-reliance. This treatise discussed the Christian theory of truth and how if the same theory is upheld might lead to individual misery and societal dependency. Formal education is one single most factor that affects all spheres of life. As such, the classroom has been a target of the Christian point of view of life and of the world. Accordingly, care must be called upon to assess the dangers that such an approach to life might bring to each individual. In the world today any person who holds atheist view of the world is regarded with great caution. Existentialism stresses the need for taking the single individual subjectively for the greater good of society. This appears to be the opposite of Christian truth that emphasizes self-denial and external factors in the name of Christian ethics and God. This study tried to argue in support of existentialism in Kenyan educational system in order to achieve its educational goals particularly self-reliance. On the same note, this study tried to analyse the authoritative Christian values and theories that negate the very existence they purport to foster. This research used two main methods of philosophical research. These were, the critical method also called philosophical analysis or Socratic Method and the descriptive method. The Socratic Method used the question approach in the study of educational issues in Kenya. This method tried to find answers to questions such as, what is the meaning of the concept, self-reliance. What is the good life for humans in Kenya? What is the meaning of Christianity? What are the salient educational theories and practices in Christian education? What is the meaning of the term truth? What are the salient philosophical theories that encourage self-reliance? On the other hand the descriptive approach was used to describe the real state of affairs in the Kenyan educational system. The study attempted to evaluate how Kenya has embraced aspects of Christianity in the school system. This study contended that self-reliance as an aim in Kenyan educational system has not been achieved. It argued that it is possible to achieve this elusive aim if appropriate philosophies discussed in the theoretical framework are adopted in our school system. Finally, the study recommended a total separation of religion (Christianity) from the school system as a probable pathway to attainment of this elusive goal.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This is the introduction to the project that has been undertaken on the topic: Analysis of Christian truth and its implication for education for self-reliance in the light of existentialism. This chapter presents the introduction, the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the theoretical framework of the study, and the conceptual framework of the study. Objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of operational terms, research methodology and organization of the study are discussed in this chapter.

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Education systems world over are guided by certain principles that originate from a combination of a number of factors that may take the form of political, legal, social, cultural, psychological, and philosophical dimensions. Education systems therefore attempt to achieve given societal goals and aims, at any given time in point. Education ought to meet the ends of any given society at all times. In Kenya one of such educational aims is self-reliance.

Self-reliance has been and is one of the aims of education in Kenya since independence (Basic Education Act, 2013; Constitution of Kenya, 2010; Gachati Report, 1976; Koech Report, 2000; Kamunge Report, 1988; Mackay Report, 1981; Ominde Report, 1964). But over the years, Kenya as a nation has had challenges in attempting to achieve this important aim. This begs the question: Why has it been difficult for us as a country to achieve this goal fifty years after independence? The economy lags behind and looks gloomy today (Okoth, 2014). This being the case, where is then the problem?

For purposes of this study, a few fundamental questions brought this research into sharp focus. What kind of society is Kenya trying to build? What good will such societies have on

the individual person? What role do schools and the religious bodies play in building such a society? (Hingen & Hundsdorfer, 1979). Education systems world over have been always tasked with preparing the incoming generation to participate in their meaningful future. Kenyan educational system ought to at least aim to achieve this task. That future means individuals with skills and knowledge to enable them to be economically efficient, socially and politically competent, morally acceptable and intellectually endowed (Nyerere, 1967).

There are many problems in Kenya today that are ethically, politically, socially, and economically experienced. These problems are good indicators of lack of achieving the aim of self-reliance. Unfortunately education has not alleviated many of these problems and human suffering and moral decadence abound in our country. The following few examples illustrate our problems and clearly indicate that the Kenyan education system has not fully enabled her citizens to attain self-reliance.

Corruption perception index of 2012 ranks Kenya position 139 out of 176 countries (Lydia, 2012). Peter, (2013) claims our soldiers looted during their rescue mission in the Westgate terror attack where over 67 people died. Acts of terrorism abound. In 1998 terrorists attacked US embassies in both Nairobi and Dar es Salaam where 224 people died in Kenya and 10 in Tanzania and over 4650 injured (CNN Library, 2013). In 2002 there was bombing at Kikambala in the Kenyan coast.

An act of bestiality at the Kenyan coast where college girls were allegedly having sex with a dog is another example of moral degeneration in our society (Majani, 2013). Chacha, (2013) reports on the same bestiality act but based his argument on the health risks associated with bestiality. These examples show how low morality has sunk in our country and beyond. Most of these acts are done by people who have gone to school and have had education. It has been alleged that the girls in the coast bestiality act were Mombasa Polytechnic University

students (Majani, 2013 and Chacha, 2013). Osama Bin Laden who was alleged to have been the mastermind of bombings at US embassies in East Africa and the World Trade Centre in New York was an Islamist graduate of civil engineering and formerly worked in the USA before he became a terrorist (CNN Library, 2013). The late terrorist, Fazul, killed in Somalia was alleged to have been an IT expert (Wikipedia, 2014). Fazul Abdullah Mohammed is said to have been educated in Saudi Arabia and was good at computers. He is alleged to have been in charge of outlawed terrorist group, Al-Qaeda, in East Africa. He was the number 26 most wanted terrorist before he was gunned down in Mogadishu having been linked to the bombings in USA embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. What then drives these men and women to do these heinous crimes despite their level of education and religiosity? Fazul and Osama bin Laden are said to have been serious Islamic faithful.

Educational institutions, religious bodies and cultural societies are charged with the responsibility of moulding the character of the youth in good moral sense, good habits, values and interpersonal relationships. These are to be imparted in our mind and practiced daily. Acts of obedience, sincerity, order, hard work, patience, generosity are greatly emphasized. This is the normative dimension of education (Sifuna, Chege, & Oanda, 2006). It has been assumed that our educational system has achieved this aim of education. This being the case why do we have moral erosion in our society today particularly from educated individuals?

The Kenyan government is a secular state (The Kenyan Constitution 2010, Chapter 2 Article 8), though, she has still embraced a number of religious (Christian) aspects in her governance. Through descriptive and philosophical analysis, this study analysed and explained the Christian determinism philosophy and pursued society to hermeneutically review this philosophy with the sole aim of critically examining it in relation to existentialism, free will and their contribution towards achieving self-reliance. Though this discourse did not discuss whether God is or He is not, the latter was preferred.

Self-reliance is a key aim of our educational system. For it to be achieved, education ought to be a subjective process where one learns to be a self-reliant person in society in all aspects of one's life (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986, p.248-250). Self-reliance will connote meaning associated with terms such as self-sustainability, self-sufficiency and self-support in this study (Ruwa, 2002). Irrespective of the limited resources in nature, a self-reliant individual uses the resources efficiently, effectively and sustainably to uplift one's own life and the lives of his or her fellow human beings. Creativity is a key to self-reliance and this concept is cardinal to reducing poverty and human suffering in Kenya (Ruwa, 2002, p.11). Self-reliance is the concept that negates dependency and fosters independency.

In an attempt to address these questions in relation to education, liberalists: Paulo Freire, Franc Fanon and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere see education as a source of developing the individual; that is fostering personal development and self-fulfilment in terms of mental, physical, emotional, spiritual and character development.

Individuals who have developed in all the above aspects of the human person are liberated from dependence and spring forward to independence. This is the concept of self-reliance that means ability to depend squarely on oneself in an independent society that takes care of her affairs. A society where each person works and is exploited by none (Hingen & Hundesdorfer, 1979, p.20). In all its dimensions, education must at all costs strive to create independent individuals in all foreseeable spheres of life.

Thus accordingly; for one to be said to be self-reliant, the individual should possess skills that will enable one to depend on oneself as well as contribute to the societies' wellbeing. Such fellows should be socially and politically competent. This implies that these fellows should be having the ability to participate in decision making in society. Such a fellow must be one that shows respect in character and who will strive to lie in harmony with others in the



society, not one who is crude. This fellow must be intellectually endowed; one who can logically and intellectually participate in social activities.

Therefore, the need to have self-reliant individuals in any community results to a self-reliant community. Kierkegaard argues that in a community, the individual person is so crucial since that individual is the prior condition for making a community. Every individual in the community guarantees the community, '*the public is a chimera, and numerity is everything*' (Hanmony, 1996, p.8).

Having discussed this concept of self-reliance and investigated it as one of the main aims of Kenya's educational system, this study now turns to analyse the following fundamental questions: what is the role of Christianity in attaining this educational aim in Kenya? Has Christianity in any way contributed negatively towards these educational goals? What role does using the Bible to teach self-reliance play in attainment of this goal?

The rise of Christianity has affected every area of life in Kenya today. Eighty percent of Kenyans are arguably Christians (Wikipedia, 2014). Of this percentage, fifty eight percent are protestants while forty two percent are Catholics. This study therefore sought to address the influence of Christianity (particularly its determinism philosophy) in various educational settings. Christianity as a religion has several theories regarding God and the nature of life. These theories are believed to be true and are highly held and fanatically, if not dogmatically, followed.

Sectarian Christian religious groups are fundamentalists and believe in the inerrant truth of religious sacred texts, and these have a substantial negative effect on educational attainment (Darnell & Sherkat, 1997; Sherkat & Daniel, 1999 and Glass & Jacobs, 2005). These groups (Biblical fundamentalists) especially affect women negatively since women marry early; have

many children whose care and responsibility is left to them (Roof & Mckinney, 1987 and Sherkat, 2007).

The Roman Catholic Church, a denomination in Christianity, holds that humans were created by God to serve Him. The Catholics believe that they can only learn certain truths from God regarding nature. Thus they believe that education essentially is purposed to serve God (John & Francis, 1956, p.6-7). The SDA church believes that the Bible is the word of God and the sole truth regarding God is revealed therein (Thomas, 2012, p.156-157). The Bible holds that our destiny is predetermined into a hell- heaven hypothesis (Revelation 13:10). The events for the future are predetermined and preconceived as per God's plan (Proverbs 16:4, 9). These and many more biblical truths leave human being a desolate entity dependent upon a power so uncertain and so unsure. This in education encourages fatalism and dependency.

The Bible expresses Christian truth in many of its passages. For example, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction*" (Prov. 1:7)...*and fools hate knowledge* " (Prov. 1:22). Galatians 5:16-25 advocate for what they consider moral values of pity, kindness, patience, peace and condemn immoral acts of envy, jealousy and hatred. Blessings have been associated with obedience to God (Deutr. 28: 1-15). On the other hand, curses have been associated with disobedience to the same supernatural being called God (Deutr. 28:15-68).

Biblical truth gets support from secular laws and authoritative figures in Kenya. The Kenyan constitution promulgated in 2010 puts forth values such as patriotism, national unity, equity, social justice among others as tenets that constitute the norms and values that the Kenyan people cherish and encourage and these have their foundation in Christian ethics. In the preamble of the Kenyan Constitution, a concept of God is introduced and this favours religion, '*We, the people of Kenya-ACKNOWLEDGE the supremacy of the Almighty God of*

*Creation.* The National anthem as a national symbol has the following verse, “O God of all creation, bless this our land and nation”. It is the common practice in Kenyan courts of justice and taking of oaths (in swearing in ceremonies) to find the Bible used when people commit to either tell the truth or commit to service delivery to the people of Kenya. Kenya still observes Christian public holiday such as Good Friday, Easter Monday and Christmas. Many public offices are closed on Sundays as it is argued that it is a day of worship for majority of Kenyans. These are just a few examples showing the Christian religious support given by the state.

Many Christian scholars have argued for the support of their faith in educational endeavours and have diminished any secular education that does not acknowledge the supremacy of their God. The works of White (1913, p.49) shows clearly the Christian perspective of life and education. She says that the aim of every one of us should be to gain knowledge and wisdom that each one of us may become a better Christian. Each person is urged to prepare for greater usefulness rendering more faithful service to their creator. In order to understand what is comprehended in the work of education, we are required to consider both the nature of humans and the purpose of God in creating human beings.

White (1913, p.423) believes that the study of other related literature without the Bible is defective. White discourages the reading of fiction books, books that discuss love, storybooks and seems to limit the learner to reading the Bible as the main text. Merrimon (1961, p.68) agrees with White and has to say the following concerning education and Christianity: *‘education divorced from religion is doomed to spiritual sterility; religion divorced from education is doomed to superstition...If religion is human’s search for, and response to, ultimate meaning, and if education is human’s total preparation for a meaningful life, it follows that only religion can give ultimate meaning and depth to human’s aspirations...’*. This is the Christian view of education and life. Robert (1961, p.76) argues

that education in the Catholic religious dimension should create a superhuman being. Is this not an alienation of humans from reality? Is this not determinism per excellence where humans are at the mercy of a super being called God who ideally controls all about humans? Doesn't this make human hopeless unless that hope is in God?

Christian religion is by mere faith and not reason as Kierkegaard puts it (Wikipedia, 2014). The biblical story of Abraham and Isaac is by mere faith. No scientific evidence will prove that God was talking to Abraham to kill his son. And when Abraham moved to mount Moriah, a contradictory instruction was given not to sacrifice Isaac; no objective reason will have helped him to know for sure whether it is God or the devil talking. It required an act of blind faith to believe both (Gen.22:1-24).

Must we remain quiet and watch as we starve to death? Must our labour cheaply be sold for the benefits of a few crooks? Must we adopt silence and prayer and refuse to stand up as individuals? These and many more questions were asked by prophet Habakkuk (1:1-10).

This study bases its analysis in the philosophy of existentialism from an atheistic perspective. This theory holds that there is no fixed essence to which we have to conform in order to qualify to be human beings. We are what we decide to be and this is one of the cardinal principles of existentialism (Bailey, 1954). Freedom and choice should be an integral part of human existence. To arrive at authentic decisions, one must not follow a moral code external to themselves. Therefore, we must learn to live as people and in order to be people and refuse to be a God (Charlesworth, 1975, p.17). As Freire, (1970) puts it "... Every human being, no matter "ignorant" or submerged in the "culture of silence" they may be, are capable of looking critically at their world in a dialogical encounter with others. This is the theory referred to as existentialism.

It was important in this study to reflect upon our own lives. What is the meaning of life? What is good life for a person? And how should a person behave insofar as they are moral beings? What should human do in order to be happy? How can education provide solution to any of these questions? Why is humanity thrown in the world of injustice, exploitation, oppression and violence? Why is our world so disorderly?

Accordingly, the Bible remains a critical document as a reference point in trying to attain information regarding God. It is a biblical requirement to believe that God exists *ab initio* (Latin-from the beginning), declares (Heb. 11:6). How do these views affect our perspective of being as being? How do these ideas become sources of making our life meaningful or meaningless? That in our struggle to find our place in society, our task is predetermined by forces beyond our control since ours are controlled by the Supernatural being called God. “I know, Lord, that a human’s way of life is not their own; no one who walks determines their own step” (Jeremiah 10:23). Thus we are not left alone, to work and try to be self-reliant; but the plan and organization of our life depends upon the Almighty God. Will we ever be free then? Will we ever be individuals charged to determine our destiny? What happens then to us, are we properly responsible for ourselves? Although the Bible is thought to stand for the good of the society, there are verses worth re-examination because they suppress independence and encourage dependence.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

From the above discussions, it has become apparent that Kenya has not yet attained self-reliance at personal and societal level. Many problems abound and are clear indicators of lack of attainment of this goal. Christianity has over the years played a critical role in the field of education thus the theories regarding God, His nature; His purpose for humanity cannot be underestimated. In most educational institutions in Kenya, Christianity plays a key role. The view that God *per se* determines human conduct, gives the objectives of life and its meaning

are cherished ideals in Christianity. This makes human beings to be just recipients of the supreme order without the ability to determine their own meaning of life.

As already explained, Christian truth as expressed in the Bible apparently lulls the minds of learners in educational institutions, especially in Kenya, and as a result they may fail to critically examine their lives for self-reliant aims of education. The study analysed Christian truth as given in the Bible in the light of making educated individuals self-reliant. Christian truth as explained in the Bible requires self-critical examination of the learner that can enable the learner to be self-reliant. As early mentioned, religion (Christianity) forms a very important part of our education curriculum, which is also supported by secular laws such as the Basic Education Act, 2013 and the Kenyan constitution (2010).

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were to:

- i) analyse how biblical truth makes learners critical;
- ii) assess the implication of using the Bible as a basis of teaching self-reliant aims of education, and
- iii) evaluate human problems that persist in the society whether people get good education which is combined with good Christian upbringing.

### **1.4 Research questions**

This study attempted to answer the following three questions

- i) Does biblical truth contribute to the critical thinking of learners?
- ii) What are the educational implications of using the Bible as a basis of teaching learners for self-reliance?
- iii) What is Christian view of the human problems that persist in society?

### **1.5 The purpose of the study**

The purpose of this research was three fold. To start with, the researcher endeavoured to investigate the true meaning of the concept ‘self-reliance’ as an educational philosophy in the Kenyan education system. It was from the same concept that the study investigated whether the same aim has been achieved at individual and societal level. The current societal problems in Kenya were hypothesized to be indicators of lack of attainment of this important educational goal.

Secondly, this study sought to investigate what the Christian view of truth and education is. The Christian interpretations of the meaning of good life were thoroughly interrogated with a view to understanding their educational implications on the philosophy of self-reliance in Kenya .This research sought to analyse the relationship that exists between the government of Kenya and religion, with special emphasis to Christianity and the effects that any such relationship have on the attainment of this important aim of her educational system.

Finally, this study analysed existentialist philosophy and its role in attaining this elusive goal of self- reliance. As such, the study sought to propose reasonable ways that this educational aim (self-reliance) could be achieved.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study addresses the religious aspect of philosophy and how it plays a role in the teaching-learning experience. It has been realized that biblical teaching greatly influences the process of education and the character of both teachers and learners (Darnell & Sherkat, 1997; Sherkat & Daniel, 1999 and Glass & Jacobs, 2005). The approach of the study intends to stimulate thought among stakeholders in education to examine the effect of theism in individual and societal development. The study is envisaged to benefit stakeholders, to

enhance development of a curriculum that nurtures the unique interest of learners for self-reliance aims of education.

### **1.7 Assumptions of the study.**

This study assumes that the following statements are true and valid:

- i. That existence precedes essence.
- ii. That there is no God; and that if He is, He is infinitely incompressible, since He has neither parts nor limits, and has no affinity to humans.
- iii. That human problems that persist in Kenya are indicators of our inability to attain self-reliance.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

Limitations are issues outside the study that we cannot control. Religion encompasses many aspects of human life. Christianity has a great influence on human conduct (psychology), in ethics and in formation of code of conduct in various occupations such as medicine, teaching etc. It was not possible to study all these aspects due to time and financial constraints.

### **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

Delimitations are issues within the study that we have control over. The study is restricted to education. It is further narrowed down to philosophy of education as a discipline. This study discussed only the aspects of Christian truth and how it influences education for self-reliance.

### **1.10 The theoretical framework of the study**

Education by its nature is a human activity. Therefore aspects of the human beings are always core in all educational endeavors. Such areas as the nature of the human person, the nature of society, what good life means and the meaning of ultimate reality all find their footholds in educational theory and practice (Kneller, 1971).The theoretical design of this study was based



on the philosophy of existentialism that addressed the aspects of the human person mentioned above and how this philosophy is necessary to attainment of self-reliance. Details of this philosophy are discussed in chapter two; however a brief discussion on this philosophy sufficed in this theoretical framework. Other philosophical positions that were considered important in this study and briefly discussed in light of existentialism were: the philosophy of progressivism, the philosophy of realism, the philosophy of naturalism and the biblical theory of '*special creation*', with the sole aim of analyzing their positive role to attainment of self-reliance.

### **1.11 Existentialism**

The term existentialism can be traced back to Socrates who discerned in the Socratic imperative '*know thyself*' (Encyclopaedia Britannica.1981 vol. X, p.73-77). Though many educators today look at Soren Kierkegaard as the father of existentialism (Mavino, 2004).Existentialism is a group of theories that explain human existence and stresses its concreteness and its problematic character (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1981. vol. X, and p.73-77). The principal concerns of all existentialists are based on the following key questions: What is it that exists as human being? Do humans exist as beings? And if they do what is their role for themselves and society? What is the point of man's life? Is there any sense that human beings can make out of human existence? What do human events mean?

Existentialism rejects any doctrine that sees human as a manifestation of the absolute or infinite substance or God. The theory equally rejects any idealism and objectivism which stresses on crass (gross insensitivity or lack of intelligence) reality of external self, that is, reality that shows a gross insensitivity to empirical reality (Encyclopaedia Britannica.1981 vol. X, p 77). On the same note, existentialism reject any *necessitarianism* since life is full of opportunities amongst which humans must choose and then propel themselves forward for

*'if man remain without possibilities, it is as if he lacked air'* (Encyclopaedia Britannica. 1981 vol. X, p.74).

This philosophy is relevant to this study. It makes humans have a focus on their lives knowing clearly that any meaning they draw from the world is a subjective reality based on individual perception and interpretation of. Etymologically speaking - the word existentialism means to 'stand' out or to 'emerge' from (Popkin & Stroll, 1967, p.30). Thus for an existentialist, the key point is to find the inner meaning of human existence from a subjective point of view as Rene Descartes puts it in his second meditation: *'I think therefore I am'* (Popkin & Stroll, 1967, p.30).

For the purpose of this study, we have taken the atheist point of view of the world as regard to existence. Thus for us (atheistic existentialists), it is the individual human being that is the central point and it is the lived experience of the individual that is the touch stone of all knowledge. The Christian aims of education that want to transform humans into perfect beings that live supernatural lives is thus rejected in this study (Connel, Debus & Nibett, 1966, p.8). This is the antagonistic view of Christians who find the centrality of life not on an individual but rather in God. Accordingly, individuality of humans is supreme and greater than anything else. This is a rejection of all "systematic thought" – of the abstract and the universal – for the sake of the individual (Charlesworth, 1981, P.11).

Hence accordingly, what is important is the individual person looking in their own consciousness, their recognition of individual responsibility of giving their life meaning amidst the obvious obstacles of despair, angst, absurdity, alienation and boredom that must be overcome (Charlesworth, 1981, p.10). Thus our main concern is looking at persons left alone in the world; without external and sovereign assistance, their struggles, their finding a stand point in the world and finding a way forward for themselves. Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

will call this '*struggle for existence and survival of the fittest*'. Thus just like the biblical Jesus; without God we proclaim a loud '*eloieloi lama sabachthani*' meaning "my God my God why hast thou forsaken me" (Mark 15:34-35).

Having rejected the God thesis, then each individual must put enough reflection on their own life in addressing the aforementioned existential questions. Thus human beings are thrown into a meaningless world and any meaning they obtain is purely on what they construct themselves (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.247). For this reason, existentialism is a *realistic philosophy*. This study recognizes that humanity has its imperfectability and it will be an exercise in futility to expect human perfection as Christianity tries to do (Connel, Debus & Nibett, 1966, p.8).

The struggle of this study from an existentialist view is to reveal or describe to every human being: - their condition in the world. It is up to the person, not their fellow citizens to make that bold move with a unique power and consciousness to leap forward and solve their salient issues. Charlesworth will put it this way: human's soul, the quality of their soul, their virtue, is the matter to be decided, not by their fellow citizens but by themselves, the lonely individual in relationship to their 'God' (Charlesworth, 1981, p.10). From the foregoing, fatalism and determinism in biblical context negate human life and perpetuates a culture of silence and mere hope. Unfortunately as Freire (1970, P.13) would put it; the education system has over the years perpetuated this culture of silence. Any simple obedience without asking the question *why* is absurd. This culture of silence is found in education as well as in Christianity and is greatly discouraged from an existentialist view. The Bible seems to discourage investigation and inquiry and requires its adherents to only deal with revealed knowledge (Deut. 29:29). For whatever activities that we do, for whatever beliefs that we believe in, one must always ask, *why*? Why must I believe in the existence of God? Whose interest does our educational system serve?

The philosophy of existentialism found progressivism a complimentary philosophy in this study. This is a political philosophy that advocate for gradual social, political, and economic reform. It finds its origin during the time of industrial revolution in Europe (19-20<sup>th</sup> C.), with sole aim of negotiating for reforms. In education, progressivism advocates for an educational system based on social change and has its foothold on behavioural sciences. Proponents of this philosophy include: John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Dewey, John Child, and Boyd Bode. Existential progressivists believe that individuality, progress and change are fundamental to one's education. They hold that education is life and not a rehearsal to life. For this reason the learning process is the interpretation and reconstruction of experiences and that each learner has a different experience that education must aim to develop (Kneller, 1971). This is the uniqueness that is emphasized in existentialism for self-reliance. This unique individual experiences are oriented towards what interests each individual learner. Abstract theories that make no meaning to one's life in reality are discouraged and if this were practiced, then there is a likelihood of making individuals self-reliant. Learning according to this theory should be in the form of solving problems similar to those faced in the daily living experiences. The role of the educator is to guide, help and advice learners using their vast knowledge and experience and not to direct or order the learners. To progressivists, human beings always arrive at a satisfactory relationship through mutual love, partnership and cooperation not compulsion (Boyd, 1956).

Education is the process of on-going growth, not a process of preparing one to be an adult. Thus Dewey encourages learning through discussion and democracy (shared experiences) (Dewey, 1943). Rote memorization of facts ought to be replaced with active participation. Schools therefore ought to be utilized as forces for both social and cultural changes for realisation of self-reliance.

It is worth noting that progressivism is so beautiful a philosophical approach to education. However, this philosophy has had a share of its own reproaches. It will be unwise to allow a child who has not reached maturity to influence and therefore control the curriculum for example. One may also argue that the concept 'child-centred growth' is obscure and requires to be defined and delimited. Progressivism too tends to allow immediate gratification of the child's desires (presentism) that may be egocentric and immature (Dewey, 1934). Schools are only an ideal and it may be hard to make them be a replica of the real life situation. Finally, progressivists are criticized for being conformistic due their emphasis on democracy and cooperation and this may hinder creativity and independent thinking hence lead to intellectual blindness (Boyd, 1956).

Irrespective of these setbacks associated with existential progressivism theory of education, it is relevant to this study. To start with, it allows for curriculum change to cater for new experiences that may lead to the attainment of our elusive goal of self-reliance. On the same breadth it allows various teaching-learning methods in a school situation. Learners and teachers are therefore able to create a friendly environment for the process of education. Finally this approach encourages the use of problem-solving approach and this helps in evaluating persistent human problems with a view of finding realistic solutions to them. If this could be practiced in our schools, learners are most likely to be critical, creative and self-reliant.

Another important philosophy that was found to compliment existentialism towards attainment of self-reliance was the philosophy of realism. This is a philosophical school of thinking that attempts to represent matter truthfully, without any artificial, implausible, foreign or supernatural elements. Philosophically speaking, realism means *our reality*, ontologically independent of our conceptual schemes, linguistic practices and our beliefs. Realism from an existential perspective thus attempts to build a body of knowledge that is

certain, objective and which agrees with the standpoint of physical sciences. Realism in education thus is purely scientific depended upon observation, experience, experiment and scientific reasoning. Experience is the cornerstone of reality. Wherever the simple and direct experience fails to determine the objective truth, then common sense puts its intelligence into scientific research.

Realists believe in the usefulness of the material world. Thus whatever is, is and it exists, its presence of existence is independent of the 'knower'. Thus individuals do not make reality but rather discovers it. Realism thus acknowledges that the world that we see or perceive is real, the truth and aim of life is to develop the present unsystematic life, and there is no truth other than in reality and that there is a clear distinction between 'appearance' and 'reality'.

Criticisms have been levied against educational realism as a philosophy. To start with, realism is criticized for assuming that knowledge is objective *per se*. It therefore ignores the subjective aspect of knowledge. Realists take for granted other sources of knowledge and only lay emphasis on knowledge obtained by sense perception. It is however a fact in life that illusions may occur such as seeing a mirage. Other questions that may arise would be: how does knowledge then become fallacious? Where does the external object go in dream? Finally, it may be said that realism does not support art and literature in education.

Irrespective of the above ferocious attack on realism, existential realism was a useful educational philosophy in this study. It emphasizes on specificity of learners and disagrees with general educational aims that do not cater for individual differences. Education is thus purposed to prepare humans for the practical life in the world and not in an ideal world yonder as Christianity tries to do.

Realism encourages the spirit of inquiry through critical thinking and does not encourage blind adherence to authority. It is through inquiry that true meaningful knowledge is obtained.

The philosophy of naturalism too complimented greatly to the philosophy of existentialism discussed in the theoretical framework of this study. This philosophy refers to the view point of the laws of nature. This theory holds that nothing exists beyond the natural universe, and if it does, then it has nothing to do with the natural universe. The proponents of this theory include: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Roberat T. Pennuck and Paul Kurtz. These philosophers hold that there are material principles that govern nature such as energy, mass, and other physical and chemical processes that are acceptable by the scientific community. Naturalists thus deny the existence of spirits, deities, souls and ghosts. Naturalism as a philosophy denies that there is a 'purpose' in nature. For naturalism educational philosophy, all hypothesis and events are to be explained and tested empirically in reference to natural causes. Thus naturalism is a theory of knowledge that is concerned with cognitive approach to reality and matter is the ultimate reality (Redden & Ryan, 1956, p. 392).

Just as atheistic existentialists, for naturalists, the theories about God are simply not tenable for they explain supernatural powers and agents that are far above and beyond the natural world, and are not governed by natural laws. Since humans belong to the natural world, it is an exercise in futility to try and apply natural knowledge to understand the supernatural. Any claim that the natural knowledge can sufficiently explain the supernatural, and then by definition such beings or ideas cannot be supernatural, since the supernatural by definition is something mysterious to us. Naturalists rely on scientific testable things not unscientific meaningless ones like miracles (Redden & Ryan, 1956, p.400).

In this study, in educational theory and practice, naturalists are realists who describe life realistic including the less pleasant aspects of it. This philosophy rejects spiritual explanation of things and any acceptable religious beliefs ought to explain everything from nature and natural causes not from revelation or mystery. As such, for naturalists, there is no God and if He is, then, He is within nature. As such, any biblical aspects of explaining human problems are rejected by atheistic existentialist and naturalists. To achieve self-reliance, they contend on using realistic and natural processes.

Finally in our theoretical framework, the philosophy of special creation was considered. This is a theory that tries to stipulate on the origin of the universe. The theory is called '*special creation theory*' (Gen.1, 2 and 3). This theory proposes that the universe originated from an act of creation by a supernatural being referred here as 'God' (Powell, 2009, p.1). The same theory puts humans at the helm of all things and allows humans to take charge (be in control) of all creation (Gen: 1:26). Thus humans is given meaning to his life through the works of the supernatural act of a 'God'. The purpose of life is thus defined this way. This theory rejects evolution as the cause of all things. This is the theory held by Young Earth Creationists (YEC) that includes: many protestant Christians, Christian Institute for Creation Research (ICR) found in California in USA, and Creation Research Society (CRS) in the USA (Powell, 2009, p.12). In biblical terms, the theory holds that the Abrahamic God of Judaism, Christianity and Islam is responsible for creation. To this end, Christian truth is an immortal reality based on predestination or foreordination involving a divine creator of the universe? (Chukwu, 2002, p.233). The theoretical framework thus takes the whole view of the universe or cosmos, as a creation of God. K'Odhiambo (2010, p.4) contends that Cosmos means concord and cosmology is the framework of concepts and relations that humans erect in satisfaction of some emotional or intellectual drive mainly to bring order in to the world. Christians have remained faithful to this Dogma about creation inherited from Judaism



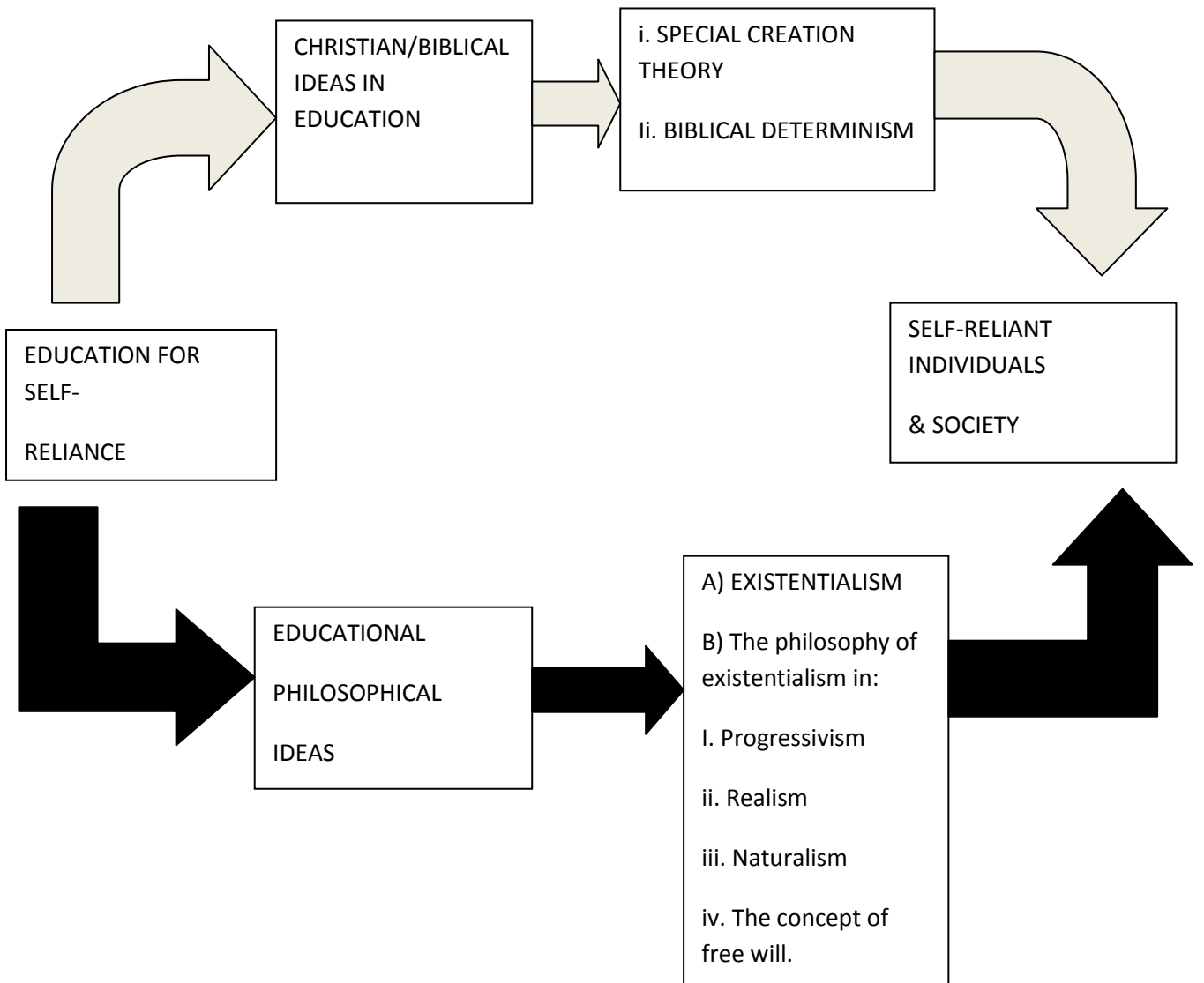
(Borruso, 2007, p.56).According to this theory; things in the universe are maintained in existence by a continued action of their creator (Borruso, 2007, p.56).

Several criticisms have been levied against this theory. These are discussed in detail in chapter 2 and chapter 4 in this study. This theory is relevant to the study. This study had used this theory as one of the philosophical theories to evaluate its contribution to the concept of self-reliance. This theory is still held by many a Christian in Kenya and in our educational institutions, and is still considered true and valid. It is from this theory that a critical pedagogical analysis had been done to analyse its efficacy in attainment of self-reliance and solving societal problems.

Critical Pedagogy being a human activity done in the universe has relationships with other phenomena including Christian truth. The critical pedagogy method opens up a space where individuals are able to know their own power as critical agents (Joel & Shirley, 2007, p. 1).The aim of critical pedagogy is to make the learners be critical agents of issues in society; be they in education or religion (Joel & Shirley, 2007, p. ix). This method creates health scepticism about the world, accepted and acclaimed beliefs (in the Christian sense) and therefore critical pedagogy is reflective in nature.

Various Philosophers have had a varied view of Christian truth, depending whether one is theistic or atheistic, and the interpretation given to this truth in different. Critical pedagogy will go a long way to re-interpret meaningfully the theoretical framework of this study.

### 1.12 The conceptual framework of the study

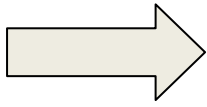


**Fig.1a**

**Key:**



These arrows represent the variables that were theorized to significantly contribute to self-reliance and should be included in our educational system so that that end may be achieved.



These arrows represent those variables that were theorized so insignificant in their contribution towards the achievement of self-reliance and in fact contribute negatively toward this end and ought to be completely excluded from our educational curriculum.

From the above scheme, the theoretical framework of this study is based on the philosophical ideals of existentialism. It is this philosophy and other educational philosophies of progressivism, realism, naturalism and the concept of free will from an existential dimension that are most likely to lead us to self-reliance. The Christian ideals in education that negate self-reliance have been recognized in the scheme and ought to be excluded from the educational institutions if self-reliance is to be attained.

### **1.13 Definition of operational terms**

**Compatibilism-** it is the view that two seemingly incompatible ideas are compatible. In this study, it is the view that natural causality does not rule out the possibility of free will.

**Existence-** The state of existing as a being, as a human being.

**Essence-** This term connotes the particular attributes of a person as an existing entity able to face the crowd.

**Existentialism-**This term as used in this study means actual living, thinking and reasoning as an individual entity. It is a philosophy that objection to submersion of individuals by the crowd.

**Philosophy-**This refers to the intellectual undertaking that deals with an attempt to understand, interpret and unify reality. Used in this study, philosophy will mean both aspects of technical and general conception of the term

**Biblical Paternalism**-The thinking that biblical knowledge is a supreme guide to humanity concerning good life and a guide against danger by the 'evil' one.

**Quietism**- This refers to an ethical philosophy which advises people to accept and succumb to adversity.

**Sect**- This is a term used to describe religious groups that hold that religious rewards (heaven) will fall into the adherents of that sectarian faith-everyone else will receive punishment( hell).It will be used synonymously with the word denomination. It is from this term that the term **sectarian** is derived.

**Fundamentalism**- This is a religious orientation of people that value religious sacred texts (Bible), as the sole source of true knowledge and meaning in life

**Determinism**-This is the thesis that all events and states of affairs are 'determined' by antecedent events and state of affairs. it is the doctrine that all human actions and all human events are predestined and predetermine. The terms fatalism and pre-determinism will carry the same meaning as determinism in this study.

**Creationism**-The theory that holds that the universe and all that there is were created by a supernatural being called God usually held in religious writings as the Quran and the Bible

#### **1.14 Organization of the study**

This treatise is organized into seven chapters. Chapter one is an introductory section to the study. The introduction is an overview of what is contained in the whole body, that is, a condensed summary of this discourse. A brief discussion of some of the theories and philosophies that formed the theoretical framework of this research, that is, the philosophies of existentialism, progressivism, Realism, Naturalism and Creationism from an existential point is discussed. The background information, statement of the problem, the theoretical

framework of the study, definition of operational terms, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, assumptions of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study are briefly discussed. It is in this section that research methodology has been dealt with. This discourse had utilized two main method of study in philosophy; that is, critical method and the descriptive method. However other methods such as, Prescriptive method, Speculative method, and Phenomenological method found themselves intertwined within the study.

Chapter two dealt with an in-depth study and review of related literature. This chapter discussed in depth the theory of existentialism, existentialists and their school of thought. The concepts of self-reliance, its broad aims to education theory and practice were then discussed. The philosophies of Christian determinism, the concept of free will, are discussed and finally a critical analysis of these concepts was done from an existentialist point of view.

Chapter three dealt with Christian religious education in perspective. The following concepts are discussed in detail: the meaning of the terms education and Christianity, history and the origin of Christianity, education in the early Christianity and education perspectives of Christianity today. Finally Christian education in the light of self- reliance and existentialism is criticized.

In chapter four, we discussed the meaning of the terms truth, the theories of truth, the meaning of Christian theory of truth, destiny of humans and the purpose of life, the educational implications of the above ideas regarding God and critique of all these concepts from an existentialistic point of view.

In chapter five, we discussed existentialism as a theory for self-reliance and in chapter six we discussed self-reliance education

The last part, chapter seven, summarizes the work and offers some recommendations.

### **1.15 Research methodology: Critical analysis**

The method used for this research was critical analysis. This method was appropriate for the study because issues that surround Christian truths in an educational setting cannot be dealt with only by describing what happens but also by analysing all bits of information and probing *why*. Critical analysis is a method that sought to find out whether Christian teaching of truth leads the learners to be critical and independent thinkers who can be self-reliant in the society. The method enables the researcher to continuously ask questions applied in Socratic style of interrogation, whereby every question asked leads to more questions and at the same time attempts to provide some answers thus stimulating further thought that produce knowledge or awareness of one's ignorance (Mautner, 2005, p. 581). Other methods that aid reflection like descriptive and prescriptive have also been indirectly applied.

Critical analysis is characterized by reflective thinking; thinking about thinking/thoughts. It is a process of looking for reasons for beliefs of one thing instead of another; while taking nothing for granted. It intends to clear confusion and carefully concentrating with the intention of clearing confusion (Mautner, 2005). This method grows through asking questions out of curiosity. It is nourished with scepticism i.e. intellectual doubt. Being on the lookout, being alert to assumptions and values being appealed to or paying attention to one's prejudices and biases. It means reading between lines and asking oneself whether one's reading or writing or perception has meaning or makes sense (Krishnananda, 1992).

Critical analysis uses rules of logical thinking, rules of inductive or deductive reasoning to evaluate the validity of results or arguments (Krishnananda, 1992). Therefore it involves identifying arguments or parts of arguments and even stating them in one's own words while recognizing that there is no single right way to understand and evaluate the truth. This is an

active process of searching for meaning, searching for the truth and searching for reality. It is vigorous, detailed, and abstract and encourages initiative. It involves active imagination; creating possibilities, finding relationship, seeing patterns and breaking habits to discover new possibilities. It is also problem solving. It proceeds, by encouraging awareness for problem, keeping one's mind to open to a variety of solutions, breaking problems into small units for easier management i.e. defining problems (Krishnananda, 1992).

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## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section presents literature review concerning the research topic, which focuses on Christian religious truth in relation to self-reliance and its implication for education in the light of existentialism. This study first describes how existentialism is understood in philosophy as explained by philosophers such as Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Rene Descartes, Jean-Paul Sartre and others. Thereafter, the literature review focuses on self-reliance and education as brought forward by liberalists, Paul Freire, Frantz Fanon and Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere. Biblical determinism is discussed according to deterministic philosophy. Finally the concept of free will is discussed. To discuss these concepts better, the researcher has reviewed literature on existentialism, absurdity, despair, anguish, abandonment, boredom, self-reliance and its aims.

#### 2.1 Existentialism

The term existentialism as known in academic circles today can be traced back to Socrates who discerned in the Socratic imperative *'know thyself'* (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1981 vol. X, p.73-77). However the philosopher who deliberated upon this philosophy is Soren Kierkegaard (1813 – 1855) (Greece, 1963). Another earlier philosophical thinker with which this term is associated is Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). Many educators today look at Soren Kierkegaard as the father of existentialism (Mavino, 2004). Existentialism is a group of theories that explain human existence and stresses its concreteness and its problematic character (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1981. vol. X, and p.73-77).

The principal concerns of all existentialists are based on the following key questions:

- a) What is it that exists as human being?
- b) Do humans exist as beings? And if they do what is their role for themselves and society?
- c) What is the point of human's life?
- d) Is there any sense that human beings can make out of human existence?
- e) What do human events mean?

Here are some fundamental questions that existentialists; atheists or theist, encounter and reflect upon. They try to find out what humans are, if indeed they are. This is trying to explain the meaning of *Dasein or being* since human (*Dasein*) exists in the world and has discrete or particular relationship with it. This is the point of existentialism – thus the foundation for a notion of humans is (according to existentialists) to find it in the inner life of the existing individuals. Existentialism rejects any doctrine that sees human as a manifestation of the absolute or infinite substance or God. The theory equally rejects any idealism and objectivism which stresses on crass (gross insensitivity or lack of intelligence) reality of external self, that is, reality that shows a gross insensitivity to empirical reality (Encyclopaedia Britannica.1981 vol. X, p 77). On the same note, existentialism reject any *necessitarianism* since life is full of opportunities amongst which humans must choose and then propel themselves forward for *'if humans remain without possibilities, it is as if they lacked air'* (Encyclopaedia Britannica.1981 vol. X, p.74).

This philosophy is relevant to this study. It makes humans have a focus on their lives knowing clearly that any meaning they draw from the world is a subjective reality based on individual perception and interpretation. Accordingly, we find ourselves in this world the way it is, a world full of problems and disorders, a world which seems against us and does not want us with a determinism making our efforts impossible (Encyclopaedia Britannica.1981 vol. X, p.74). This view is called abandonment and makes humans feel continuously being

left out to pain, frustration, sickness and death. What then shall we do and what should one believe under these circumstances? Etymologically speaking - the word existentialism means to 'stand' out or to 'emerge' from (Popkin & Stroll, 1967, p. 30). Thus for an existentialist, the key point is to find the inner meaning of human existence from a subjective point of view as Rene Descartes puts it in his second meditation: '*I think therefore I am*' (Popkin & Stroll, 1967, p.30).

For the purpose of this study, we have taken the atheist point of view of the world as regard to existence. Thus for us (atheistic existentialists), it is the individual human being that is the central point and it is the lived experience of the individual that is the touchstone of all knowledge. The Christian aims of education that want to transform humans into perfect beings that live supernatural lives is thus rejected in this study (Connel, Debus & Nibett, 1966, p.8). This is the antagonistic view of Christians who find the centrality of life not on an individual but rather in God. Accordingly, individuality of humans is supreme and greater than anything else. This is a rejection of all "systematic thought" – of the abstract and the universal – for the sake of the individual, (Charlesworth, 1975, p.11).

Thus the existentialism philosophy has to do with the lived experience as the source of truth; that is, the individual human existence as opposed to bourgeois culture and any dehumanizing values. The key questions in this study still remain:

- a) What is it that the individual exists?
- b) What is the meaning of individualism?
- c) What is the nature of the individual?
- d) In nature a fixed entity predetermined or is it what one makes?

Accordingly, what is important is the individual person looking in their own consciousness, their recognition of individual responsibility of giving their life meaning amidst the obvious

obstacles of despair, angst, absurdity, alienation and boredom that must be overcome (Charlesworth, 1975, p.10). Thus our main concern is looking at persons left alone in the world, without external and sovereign assistance, their struggles, their finding a stand point in the world and finding a way forward for themselves. Charles Darwin (1809-1882) will call this '*struggle for existence and survival of the fittest*'. Thus just like the biblical Jesus, without God we proclaim a loud '*eloieloi lama sabachthani*' meaning "my God my God why hast thou forsaken me" (Mark 15:34-35). Thus humans must find an orientation in space without a God thesis. It is from this existential stand point that this study finds the possibility of self-reliance in reality. Having rejected the God thesis, then each individual must put enough reflection on their own life in addressing the aforementioned existential questions: what is the point of human life? Is nature a fixed entity predetermined or is it what one makes? Thus human beings are thrown into a meaningless world and any meaning they obtain is purely on what they construct for themselves (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.247). For this reason, existentialism is a *realistic philosophy*. This study recognizes that humanity has its imperfectability and it will be an exercise in futility to expect human perfection as Christianity tries to do (Connel, Debus & Nibett, 1966, p.8). Thus our struggle has nothing to do with proving ideas or thesis but rather to show that something is existing and that existing thing is a human being whose essence is not pre-determined but rather an essence of what one wants to become. The struggle of this study from an existentialist view is to reveal or describe to every human being: - their condition in the world. It is up to the person, not their fellow citizens to make that bold move with a unique power and consciousness to leap forward and solve their salient issues. Charlesworth will put it this way: human's soul, the quality of their soul, their virtue, is the matter to be decided, not by their fellow citizens but by themselves, the lonely individual in relationship to their 'God' (Charlesworth, 1975, p. 10). From the foregoing, fatalism and determinism in biblical context negate human life

and perpetuates a culture of silence and mere hope. Unfortunately as Freire (1970, P.13) would put it, the education system has over the years perpetuated this culture of silence. Any simple obedience without asking the question *why* is absurd. This culture of silence is found in education as well as in Christianity and is greatly discouraged from an existentialist view. The Bible seems to discourage investigation and inquiry and requires its adherents to only deal with revealed knowledge (Deut. 29:29). For whatever activities that we do, for whatever beliefs that we believe in, one must always ask, *why*? Why must I believe in the existence of God? Whose interest does our educational system serve?

It is common practice world over in our educational systems to find religion a key component. For instance in Kenyan schools the national flag is raised accompanied with the singing of the national anthem which starts with, “*O God of all creation, bless this our land and nation*”. Similarly most programs in schools are preceded with words of prayer and songs. It is government policy that all Christian sponsored schools have pastoral programs of instruction (PPI) and this perpetuate aspects of Christianity and a belief in a deity. Doesn't this then perpetuate fatalism and determinism?

Freire (1970, p.14) argues that society has made most of us objects and programmed us into conformity to what he calls *logic of its system*. This in turn has submerged us into a new culture of silence. It is this “*culture*” that this study investigates. Freire will put it this way: It is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained ...the individual who has not staked their life may, no doubt, be recognized as a person; but they have not attained the truth of this recognition as an independent self-consciousness person (Freire, 1970, P.4).

Thus existentialism is a principle guide or map towards freedom, choice and commitment. This involves the struggle between the individual and the public with regard to the orientation of the individual in space – the obvious threats of anxiety, fear, death, despair, nothing and



nihilism, and the rejection of science (casual explanation) as adequate frameworks for understanding being and the introduction of authority as a norm for self-identity tied to the project of self-definition through freedom, love, commitment and responsibility (Audi, 1999, p.297).

Paul Sartre argues: humans first of all exists, encounters themselves, surges up in the world and defines themselves afterwards (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 249). In this regard man thus is not definable; he is nothing until he will be what he makes of himself.

The individual is squarely responsible for giving their life meaning; that is living the life passionately and sincerely in spite of many existentiality obstacles. Existence precedes essence, i.e. human first exist before they make or have meaning in their life. Meaning in this sense means “the worthy of life”. Existentialism puts upon each person the task of achieving in their life and not earning it as in heredity. This is contrary to the Christian view of life where those who claim its providences are hopeful of a bountiful inheritance in heaven (Deutr. 4:21; 4:38; 9:26; 10:9, 12:12, 15:4) and are encouraged to be satisfied or contented with their little accomplishments (1 Timothy 3:13, Rev.18:23). If this were to be taken literally, self-reliance aims of education would be myth and not reality.

Thus each person insofar as they are existing individuals must raise to themselves the fundamental questions Kierkegaard raised: ‘*What is the point of human’s life? What sense can they make out of their existence? What is the purpose of human events?*’ (Popkin & Stroll, 1967, p.288).

But to us and any other atheistic existentialist, the solution to these fundamental problems does not lie on the belief for a solution from the supernatural or deity as Kierkegaard tried to explain. The solution lies with our dreadful freedom, freedom to choose our view of the world and way of living in the world.

From the same choices, we learn to accept the consequences of the choice we have made. There is no guide to help us make choices. The choices require an act of faith, an act of belief-blindly and irrationally. This is what Kierkegaard calls 'a *leap of faith*'. Since he was a Christian, he argued that each human being is a lonely individual in an objective, science oriented world and one can become a true Christian through 'leap of faith' since there is no proof that such a God exists. In this absurdity, one abandons reason and accepts groundless belief (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.245).

But where is our freedom? According to Fredrick Nietzsche; freedom will only be available if we accept that we are the judges of ourselves (Nietzsche, 1887/1974). As for Nietzsche, there is no moral law that we are forced to follow (Nietzsche, 1887/1974). But freedom and free will can only exist in the absence of the '*God Thesis*'. As Charlesworth (1975) will put it: if God exists, then human beings cannot be free, and if human beings are free then God cannot exist. Thus human beings must learn to live and to die, and in order to be humans, to refuse to be God. The concept God is meaningless, Nietzsche thought, since '*God is dead*' and it is us who have killed him (Makumba, 2006, p.97). Therefore, accordingly, existentialism is humanism as Jean-Paul Sartre says. Nietzsche as an existentialists in addressing this irrational meaningless world, found the solution in the individual i.e. dealing with one's experience so as to make life meaningful without appeal to any God since the traditional pillars of religion, metaphysics, science and morality no longer hold (Makumba, 2006, p.98). The aim therefore is to face the problems that confront the world and humans with the aim of showing the individual that finding a solution to human predicament is possible without a God hypothesis. Existentialism accordingly is a relevant philosophy towards attainment of self-reliance. This philosophy has vividly explained the need to reject any metaphysical explanation of human events and problems. Kenya can put herself on the part of self-reliance if she adopted this

unique philosophy that stresses subjective individuality. Christianity and its superhuman perfect hypothesis ought to be abandoned for the sake of self-reliance.

For us to fully understand the theory upon which existentialism is founded, it is critical to discuss *anguish/angst, abandonment/alienation, despair, absurdity and boredom* as we will wish them understood in the existentialist perspectives and their individual contribution to education for self-reliance.

Despair means that our actions are only limited to our 'wills' or within the sum total of the probabilities that are feasible. Despair means that our actions must be within the realm of reality and our actions must be without hope (Sartre, 1989). Moore, (2002) sees human self as a composition of the various aspects that must be brought into conscious balance, the finite and infinite. The finite are limitations such as those by the one's body or one's concrete circumstances. The infinite are those capacities that free us from limitation such as imagination. The finite and infinite always exist in tension that humans must bring into balance.

Thus when the self has the wrong understanding of who it is able to be, depending on the circumstances prevailing, a person is in a state of despair, an emotion that makes one feel a loss of sense of self. When one has wrong sense of oneself, despair hinders oneself from any help.

Thus for the existentialists, it is important to limit ourselves to a reliance upon that which is within our wills, which is the sum of all possibilities that render our action feasible. This is an existential dimension, the adaptation should be simple, as an individual rely only in yourself to complete your commitment; be without any illusion and do what you can do and count upon nothing to accomplish your tasks.

Therefore there is no reality except in action, thus human beings are the sum total of their actions and that is what their life is. That each one of us has a range of viable abilities, inclinations and potentials that will help us achieve self-reliance (Sartre, 1989). This is the existentialists' view point, that there are plenty of options to each one of us and these are dependent upon who we are and what actions we undertake. The destiny of humans accordingly is in the hands of themselves. Therefore existentialism is an ethic of action and self-commitment. There is no universal essence called human nature, but a human universality of condition. This means that we say, 'this is the condition we find ourselves in' rather than say this is human nature or nature of human beings. The human condition means, all the limitations, which *a priori* define human's fundamental situation in the universe; and this historical situation, are variable by being born a slave or a feudal lord. But the necessities of being in the world are a constant of having to labour and to die there.

This concept of despair is relevant to this study. Through it, we are able to recognize that there are limitations to human life. These limitations are objective and subjective; objective because we meet with them everywhere and are recognizable, subjective because they are lived and are nothing if a person does not live in them and freely determine themselves and their existence in relation to them.

For an existentialist, a critical point of our limitations is thus the way we interpret them (our limitations), and the actions we take. We may attempt for example to:

- a) surpass these limitations,
- b) widen them,
- c) deny their existence and live in denial or
- d) Attempt to accommodate oneself with them (quietism)

Therefore every purpose, however it might be, it is of universal value, that is, the purpose may be comprehensible and may be entertained again and again. The absoluteness of the act of choice does not alter the relative offer of each epoch. Thus the individual must have a free commitment, where each person realizes himself in realizing a type of humanity.

Finally this concept enlightens us regarding our lives. Regarding self-reliance, we are able to recognize that we are what we decide to be, and we must arrive at authentic choices i.e. choices that have no reference to external moral code or set of procedures. We are made more critical in addressing issues of our human existence especially those that limit our independence.

Existentialism recognizes that every individual ought to stand up and attend to their individual limitations. Within this limitations are a wide range of subjective abilities, potentialities and inclinations that have not been used and yet are perfectly viable to bring subjective meaning to our lives (Sartre, 1989). Quietism, that is, the attitude of saying ‘let others do what I cannot, is not an option for existentialism philosophy for self-reliance.

The term absurdity was first used by Kierkegaard in an attempt to find inherent meaning in one’s life and the human inability to find any. This term is clearly illustrated in the biblical story of Abraham and his son (Genesis 22:1-13). The story goes, Abraham a faithful servant of God was commanded to offer his only son (Isaac) as a sacrifice to God at Mt. Moriah. Obedience in the part of Abraham was obligatory yet this command contradicted the ethics of his time that did not allow anyone to kill (Gen. 4). Later a contrary demand was issued at the site of the sacrifice. Anyone faced with this Abrahamic situation must ask the following fundamental questions:

- i. I’m really Abraham a faithful servant of God?
- ii. Is it an angel that speaketh to me?

iii. Is the angel from hell or heaven?

There are no proofs to answer, affirm or deny any of these questions, whether indeed he was Abraham or whether it was an angel that was speaking to him. Thus our action will squarely be left to each lonely individual. Thus truth exists squarely as a subjective, personal certainty of the believers. This is called absurdity, because there are no guiding principles for ourselves. But in our actions we ought to worry ask whether our actions could be used as a yardstick upon which *humanity regularities itself by our actions* (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 249). Thus absurdity in this regard is connected to anguish.

Absurdity is important to the concept of self-reliance and Christian educational concepts. This existential concept puts each person at the helm of their affairs. Choices thus one makes have their own consequences. This concept encourages autonomy and authenticity of living.

The term anguish/angst is defined as the deep realization that our actions are like legislation for the whole humans is what one might call anguish (Sartre, 1989). Anguish may be said to be the feeling and the reality of being trapped from the sense of complete and profound responsibility (Moore, 2002 & Sartre, 1989). It is the disturbing 'thought' or 'anxiety' that follows an omission or commission that: what will happen if everyone did so? This anguish is for all humanity that has borne responsibilities and always there is a plurality of possibilities and in choosing any of them has value because it has been chosen. This is the existential anguish. This is the anguish that may be likened with the anguish of the biblical Abraham when he was commanded, 'thou, Abraham, shalt sacrifice thy son' (Gen. 22:2).

This concept is important in this study. Analysis of this concept helps reveal the importance of human choices that we make. It is through this choices that our lives and the lives of our fellow human beings that meaning is achieved. Whilst when we are in such anguish, biblical determinism will encourage looking unto our God for help, existentialism encourages each

one of us to take our actions squarely on our own accord while answering this important question: what will happen if everyone did so?

Abandonment in existential terms means that God does not exist, and the consequences of His absence ought to be realised up to the end (Sartre, 1989). This abandonment in our sense is the same as freedom, the absence of an external supreme deity in whose commands we are guided. In the absence of God, all things are permitted (freedom). And since existence precedes essence, there is no human nature upon which actions are based. As such, humans are free, and humanity is freedom and there is no determinism (Sartre, 1989). Thus we ourselves decide our being. Thus according to Martin Heidegger, we encounter the world or group or situation in the world, and one needs to attempt to become what one envisages instead of being carried away with surge of events in it (Diane,1987, p. 152.). Thus accordingly we are left in the world to act as individuals, whether our actions are outlandish or mundane without the influence of external factors – especially from the unthinking communal practices of ‘they’ of the world (Diane,1987, p. 152).

Thus accordingly, since God does not exist to give a guide/realism of values humans is left alone without guidelines, humans are condemned to be free and at liberty to act and are squarely responsible for their actions, and their passions. It is through these acts that humans will be able to invent themselves (Sartre, 1989).

This philosophical concept is relevant to this research in the sense that when one is confronted with a situation, it is the personal instinct that matter and thus is ratified by their actions. Thus we are free therefore to choose, in other words invent ourselves. Self-reliance is therefore left subjectively to all of us uniquely and individually. Thus as existentialists we are left alone and we should not take refuge in bitterness and despair but rather take responsibilities of the choices that we make. If this philosophical concept of existentialism is

practiced in our schools at all levels, then our educational system is most likely to be able to produce self-reliant individuals.

Boredom is an unpleasant, transient affective state in which the individual feels a persuasive lack of interest and difficult in concentrating on the current activity. In philosophical terms, boredom is a condition characterized by perception of the environment as dull, tedious and lacking in stimulation. It is escaped through religious activities because boredom may be taken as a human condition to which 'God' and wisdom are ultimate answers.

According to Kierkegaard; true individuality is selfhood in our honest reflection on who we truly are and what purpose there is in our life, and how we will live towards it. If we struggle to be hedonistic and simply try to find available pleasures of happiness, entertainment, ecstasy and euphoria and if our pleasures are only immediate verifications of our desires and propensities of distractions – then we might be gliding through life without meaning or purpose (Hanmony, 1996).

Thus we shall never feel alienated from society, that feeling of discontent with society, feeling that there is a moral breakdown in society – feeling of powerless in the face of solidarity of social institution. This concept encourages individuals to accept their society and deal with its issues subjectively. Any mere hope is meaningless as Christian determinists sometimes do in adversity and difficulty (Acts 16:19; 24:15; 26:6-7; Rom.5:2-5; 12:12; 15:12).

Being aware of our plight in our seeming insensitive and unintelligible world, we shall always be faced with the following questions. What shall we do? What should one believe? Since there is no God or supernatural being to supply us with a solution, we seek for humanistic faith that consists of a basic commitment to the importance of certain human values (Popkin & Stroll, 1967, p. 439-440).



Just as abandonment, boredom is an existential obstacle to self-reliance that must be overcome subjectively. What one decides to be in one's life is squarely on one's own shoulders and their commitment to it. One's actions on such commitment, organizes one's experience in terms of these choice. No divine being will provide the sanction for the choice human can do more than make their own decision and live by them.

Existentialism is thus a subjective philosophy, according to Martin Buber (1878-1965), that tends to put value at every human person irrespective of their status in society, since human beings are beings or *Dasein*. If a mistake is done to ignore or discount this subjective reality, then society will continue to suffer from absurdities that it finds itself intertwined in (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.246).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1979) argues that the individual lived experience is key to interpreting and constructing a subjective world of meaning (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.247). This experience may be an experience of the individual to the world (*Umwelt*), an experience of the individual in relation to others from a subjective point of view (*Mitwelt*) and the experience of the individual subjectively and distinctively (*Eigenwelt*) when one asks the question '*who am I?*' As it were, there are no answers, laws or guidelines and each individual must answer the question singly and lonely (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.248).

In the absence of a God hypothesis, Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) thought that all ideas are independent physical realities that draw immutable meanings that we ourselves make. He thus argued that since God does not exist, nothing hinders anyone from becoming whichever thing one wants to be for there is no predetermined self or essence and all restrictions, absolutes, rules are simply Puny and absurd creations of humans and nothing determines anybody, we are all condemned to be free (Charlesworth, 1975) . Freedom comes with responsibility and choices for our omissions and commissions. One cannot do something and

claim that it is because of forces beyond the person be they God or society or authority. Determinism only is a concept that exists in the presence of a God. Human problems of hunger, disease, ignorance, war, racial strife, unemployment are a creation of human beings and not God. Humans are at the centre of nature with an ability to control or manipulate it for their own good if enough effort is put towards that end (Charlesworth, 1975).

According to Nietzsche, the religious connotation 'Sin' with which human problems are associated is an invention of the Jewish people (Nietzsche, 1887/1974, p.187). Christianity has always aimed at 'Judaizing' the world. The Christian assumes that their God is so overpowering and enjoys revenge. He is portrayed as having so immense power that nobody could possibly bring any harm to Him except for His own honour. Sin is thus an offense against Him not against humanity. Every action is to be considered against its supernatural consequences without regard to its natural effect and that what the Jewish demand for natural things are ignoble (Nietzsche, 1887/1974, p.188). This Christian perception is so unreal that if it were taken seriously in Kenya then, we are unlikely to achieve our aim of self-reliance.

One may ask the relevance of existentialism to this study. Existentialism has analysed the obstacles that must be overcome to realise self-reliance. The need for the educational system in Kenya to marshal her forces to the subjectivity of individuals cannot be overemphasized to the realisation of self-reliance.

## **2.2 Self-reliance**

It is natural when individuals reflect upon their own lives. What is the meaning of life? What is good life for human beings? And how should human beings behave insofar as they are moral beings? What should mankind do in order to be happy? How can education provide solution to any of these questions? Why is humanity thrown in the world of injustice, exploitation, oppression and violence? Why is our world so disorderly? Education has been

previously thought as a subjective process of learning to be a self-reliant person in society (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986, p.248).

Vinoba (1956/1964, p.30) says that our children are thought bits of information but are not thought how to independently get the knowledge by themselves. The independence admired here is ability to use one's hands in crafts, intellectual self-sufficiency that produce independent thinkers (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.30). Self –reliance means total '*freedom from dependency on others*' or on external support for one's needs. Freedom is three forked. In the first place, it means one with skills in craft necessary for one's survival. Secondly, it means ability to acquire new knowledge for oneself and finally, it means freedom of one's moods and impulses (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.30). Vinoba argues, '*the person who is a slave to their senses and cannot keep their impulses under control are neither free nor self-sufficient*' Vinoba (1956/1964, p.30).

In an attempt to address these questions in relationship to education, liberalists: Paulo Freire, Franc Fanon and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, see education as a source of developing the individual, that is fostering personal development and self-fulfilment. The development in terms of their: Mental development, physical growth, emotional/psychological, political development, spiritual growth, character development and economic independence (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986, p.250).

Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the founding president of the united republic of Tanzania (Tanganyika and Zanzibar), wrote a number of articles in education that touched greatly on self-reliance. These articles include: *Education Never Ends* (1969), *Adult Education and Development* (1978), *Education for Self-Reliance* (1967) and *Our education Must be for Liberation* (1974). Nyerere believed that education serves a numbers of philosophical ideals that are usually captured as a country's educational aims, goals and

objectives. He argues that education ought to develop the subjective self, unique to each person and this rejects any submergence of any person in the crowd (Nyerere, 1967). Education according to him is forever a struggle to remove any obstacles that may prevent the development of the 'self'. This struggle for Nyerere is a liberation process towards individual and societal independence (Wamocha, 1997).

We can therefore generally deduce that the term self-reliance connotes in its meaning ideals of self-help, self-sustainability, self-sufficiency and self-support (Ruwa, 2002). It aims at having individuals who are able to utilize efficiently, effectively and sustainably resources whether personal or collective to uplift one's own life first and the lives of others too. This will require creativity (Ruwa, 2002, p.11). Self is a concept that is against dependency and fosters independency. Deliberate efforts must be made toward this end.

Self-reliance has three main meanings that this study has focused on:

- i. ability for a person to squarely depend on oneself for his or her physiological needs of food, shelter and clothing
- ii. ability for one to develop the power to get useful information by oneself and,
- iii. ability to rule oneself meaning to put under one's control his senses and thoughts (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.31).

External influence is likely to enslave a person. Person ought to acquire knowledge relevant to enable him earn a living to avoid slavery of the stomach, be able to think independently and control his emotions.

Individuals who have developed in all the above aspects of the human person are liberated from dependence and spring forward to independence. This is the concept of self-reliance. The ability to depend squarely on oneself in an independent society will be one that takes

care of its affairs, a society where each person works and exploited by none (Hingen & Hundesdorfer, 1979, p.20). In all its dimensions, education must at all costs strive to create independent individuals in all foreseeable spheres of life.

These individuals have an enquiring mind, able to discern from among things, are economically efficient, and are socially and politically competent. This will be self-reliant individuals; that will produce a self-reliant society (Hingen & Hundesdorfer, 1979, p.21).

Thus accordingly, for one to be said to be self-reliant, this individual should possess skills as well as to contribute to the societies' well-being. Such a fellow should be socially and politically competent. This implies that they should be having the ability to participate in decision making in society. Such a fellow must be one that shows respect in character and who will strive to lie in harmony with others in the society, not one who is crude. This fellow must be intellectually endowed, one who can logically and intellectually participate in social activities. Therefore the need to have self-reliant individual in any community should be the main concern.

Self-reliance is therefore a relevant concept that contributes positively towards this research in the following ways. Firstly, it puts humans at the helm. This philosophy gives humans a true descriptive approach to human life and challenges. Each individual is encouraged to pursue their goals and find inherent meaning in their life. Secondly, this philosophy encourages realism in dealing with human problems. It critically exposes humans to their current condition. Thirdly in education, it encourages the development of a curriculum that caters for the subjective needs of each learner at all levels.

Having discussed in detail what the concept of self-reliance is, it is prudent to turn now and explain albeit briefly the importance of self-reliance as an educational philosophy in Kenya.

Self-reliance leads to economically stable individuals and communities. This is achieved through intellectual development, which means growth of knowledge, understanding and growth of human reasoning. Education will aim to educate the human mind, since the human mind is the essence of the human person. This is called psychological growth. Thus the mind will acquire necessary skills and knowledge to enable the individual to earn a living. Thus the skills that need to be produced are skills that help the individual to secure a living. In an agricultural economy, for example, the skill should make individuals work for themselves and society in rural and not a people trained towards white collar jobs. People, who think for themselves, make judgment in all issues affecting them and interpret their decisions. The need for a critical mind and not a Robot mind, a people always willing to have an inquisitive mind. The philosophy of self-reliance leads to individuals that are socially and politically competent. Individual of this kind have the capacity to participate in the decision making in their community to achieve goals of living together and sharing good and bad fortunes as a group. This inculcates a sense of commitment to the community. Thus an education that divorces its participants (teachers and learners) from the society is not an education that aims for self-reliance (Hingen & Hundsdorfer, 1979, p. 22).

Moral development is equally a benefit that is likely to be achieved with this philosophy of self-reliance. For individuals that are self-reliant; their refinement of character is one of the main areas of concern. Such fellows lie in harmony with their fellow men in society. Thus accordingly, the educated person is discovered by their point of view, by the temper of their mind, by their attitude towards and their fair way of thinking, they have insight and comprehension.

Self- reliance leads to individuals that are able to logically and intellectually participate in social activities of their community. Self-reliance in education ought to, at all levels foster creativity and innovative thinking among school leavers at whatever level so that they

become self-reliant. This way, education is to be an education for ‘creators’ not ‘creatures’(Hingen & Hundsdorfer, 1979, p.44). This is a liberating process in education, as opposed to individuals who leave school expecting society or government to help them secure employment. Education has to be a liberating process, a process of freedom (Njoroge & Bennaars.1986, p.210). Nyerere thus argues that education must create individuals that are:

- i. not necessarily employable but able to employ others,
- ii. agents of change, and
- iii. able to exploit their human potentials irrespective of their academic challenges.

This will kill the ‘diploma disease’ that categorises people as failures only because of their academic inability (Hingen & Hundsdorfer, 1979, p.46-48).

### **2.3 Biblical determinism**

This theory holds that, “*any state of affairs at a given moment is in principal completely explainable by the appropriate set of antecedent causes*” (Philips, 1961, p.260). The view holds that everything in the world is governed by rigid laws. It asserts that causal processes make all events inevitable; hence the future is unalterable as the past. Nothing occurs accidentally and everything that happens is by necessity. In biblical terms all happenings in the world are fixed entities by God according to some preconceived plan. The happenings in the world are part of a divine arrangement which humans have no power to alter. Thus one cannot escape from frustration, heartbreak and despair, in trying to change the course of events that have been ordained to take place.

Thus according to deterministic philosophy; it is practically impossible to alter anything even the fact that I am writing now and you are reading this work. Perhaps our work is to fulfil what has already been predetermined. One could say that all of you who are reading this work were preconceived to read it today and now. “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning*

*and the ending, said The Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, The Almighty'' (Rev 1:8). It is Christ that holds keys to hell and to death. According to this theory of determinism "whoever is meant to be captured will be captured; whichever is meant to be killed by sword will be truly killed by sword..." (Rev 13:10).*

Thus accordingly, life is all predetermined and no human effort can change anything whatsoever regarding human condition. The story of Job in the Bible – the servant of God explains this theory vividly; that God controls everything there is in the world. But unless He permits the bad things to occur, as He did to Job, they should truly never have occurred (Job 1:9-12).

This treatise shall not dwell on these issues, but rather look at the generally accepted culture that there is God, amongst the Christian theists and that the same God determines the destiny of every person. Education deals primarily with the communication of true knowledge. In this case, knowledge depends upon truth and truth is dependent upon God. To Christians, God is real and determines human events.

Attempts have been made to prove that there is such a supernatural being called God (by theists and theologians) whose attributes include being perceived and understood as being good and beneficial, omniscient, transcendent, immanent, omnipotent, eternal, incorporeal, intelligent, orderly and purposeful. These theories include the ontological argument, cosmological argument, the teleological argument, argument from religious experience and the moral argument. These theories and attributes have had a share of their reproaches making them unreliable.

It is worth noting that the existence of God is on based on an absurdity called blind faith or faith without reason. Blind faith is an obligation on the path of the believer. From the



aforesaid testimonies, any biblical religious wit/deterministic member will never escape the philosophical determinism as postulated by Christian faith.

Christians, live in this social world that is mysterious and under the control of some power. The same power manifests itself in the product of nature, in life and death, in the raging storm, in the vast ocean, in the deadly flash of lightening, in the beneficent life – giving sunshine in the timely rain. This same power to Christians is God who is fearful yet friendly. He made the world and made us. He demands righteousness and justice; yet ultimately He has a kindly attitude towards humans, responding to their prayer. It is no doubt due to our efforts to give expression to these ideal excellences that it has been customary to theists to give God such attributes as absolute, eternal, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

This determinism puts us bare before the world and with nothing than the absurd. It requires ideals of *faith, hope and belief*. These three are required of every person who believes in the Bible to have. Amid our confusion, we need faith. Upon our injustices, we need hope and belief in the redeemer! Where is our redeemer? Then shall we ever stand as individuals? Where is our freedom? Where are our choices?

Accordingly, Christians are required to have such purity of character if they have to please the same power. This converts them to be gods, and yet they are humans. Our very existence is threatened. The essence of our existence is negated. Thus this negates freedom and human nature. This Christian truth makes us to lose our humanity for God requires Perfection. These are the tenets upon which the philosophy of biblical determinism stands.

How has this philosophy affected our concepts of education theory and practice and its effects on our educational goals of self-reliance are the concern of this study. There are advantageous attributes that are obtained by those that belief in this deterministic philosophy

from the Christian religious perspective. Studies have shown that religious students do better in their academics (Mooney, 2005). 'Religiosity' which is a measure of religious commitment and participation at a personal level helps reduce drug and drug abuse and other irresponsible behaviour associated with peer pressure amongst learner (Regnerus, 2000). This may be attributed toward the social networks that sectarian Christian religious organizations develop, that discourage negative social behaviour and militate against addicts (Regnerus, 2000; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999).

Studies have shown serious negative effects on educational attainment attributed to sectarian religious groups and biblical fundamentalism (beliefs in the infallible truth of religious texts) especially educational attainment on women (Darnell & Sherkat, 1997; Sherkat & Danell, 1999 and Glass & Jacobs, 2005). This fundamentalist groups expect their women to marry early, have many children and the responsibility of care of the young ones is left to women (Roof & Mckinney, 1987 and Sherkat, 2007).

Catholics have fervently rejected the use of condoms as a family planning method, citing Gen.1:28 as the basis of their argument. It is against this background that studies have shown high fertility rates and lower marriage ages among sectarian Protestants and Catholics (Sherkat, 2007). The adherents of Catholicism are likely to have the effects of having many children such as foregoing educational advancements (which will accrue future benefits) for the sake of immediate employment (Keister, 2003). Sectarian Christians are also most likely unable to afford college education for their many children.

Fundamentalist Christians are more likely to choose schools and colleges that have their religious orientation to pursue their study. These usually sponsored colleges are very costly and have fewer subjects of study (or disciplines for that matter). This therefore becomes a

limiting factor to educational accessibility, attainment and success. The long run effect is a high level of dependency, even in adulthood.

There is a 'war' between fundamentalist Christianity and secular institution (secular education). Fundamentalists consider secular education as an antithesis of the centrality of the 'God' thesis. They consider the theories of secular education as dethroning God and enthroning humans (White, 1903, p.426). As such, higher education attainment is always seen as a defection from fundamentalism (Sherkat, 1998 and Sherkat & Wilson, 1995). Religious colleges are viewed as being inferior in quality and less prestigious whether or not they truly are (Mixon, Lyon, & Beaty, 2004). The certificates and degrees obtained from these colleges are 'less' valuable for advanced study and employment. In Kenya for example, Kenya Methodist University (KeMU) has had issues related with quality of degrees offered in this institution. This has put her graduates at risk since degrees from this University are regarded as 'inferior' (Wikipedia, 2014).

Fundamentalists from high school who end up securing a vacancy in secular Universities do have difficulties. Their view that the Bible is sufficient to explain all phenomena (White, 1913, p.422) is brought to challenge by standards of secular education (Hood et al., 2005). Their limiting of themselves to the Bible and other religious texts limits the cognitive complexity of thought (Hunsberger et al., 1994, 1996). This is likely to lead to poor performance and conflict with Lecturers and the obvious multiplier effects might be disastrous.

Finally, the young Christians who get admitted to secular Universities are likely to find themselves in conflict with their immediate environment associated with secular diversity of life. These young sectarian Christians believe they know the 'Truth' and never entertain divergent views which they consider satanic, falsehood and heretical (Ecklund & Scheitle,

2005). Such fundamentalist philosophies are probably the reasons behind the inability to fully achieve self-reliance.

## **2.4 The concept of free will**

This section deals with philosophical analyses of the concept of free will. We have explained in the preceding sections the philosophies of existentialism, self-reliance and biblical determinism and analysed their contribution in education in the light of self-reliance as an educational aim in Kenya. The analysis looks at the contribution of free will in the attainment of self-reliance.

Different philosophers hold different views on the meaning of the term free will. For purposes of this treatise, we shall hold the view of compatibilists who think that free will is a contradictory to determinism. To discuss this concept better, attempts have been made to answer such questions as what does it mean to be 'free'? What is the meaning of the term freedom? Is there any relationship between liberty and freedom? And if there is, what is its nature? When do we say that our actions are free?

Free will may be defined as our ability to act or not to act to our own desires, wishes, thoughts, emotions or any other psychological states. It may refer to not being constrained or compelled to do anything or being in full control of oneself. It means indeterminism or not being under any threat or manhandling. Free will proponents argue that there is always more than one action possible for any person at any given circumstance (Kane, 2002).

Free will works under the assumptions that: free will exists, free will is incompatible with biblical determinism and determinism is an illusion (is false). These are the boundaries under which this study analyses the contribution of free will and achievement of self-reliance.

A belief in free will has shown in research to predict better attitudes and actual job performance (Tyler, F.S., Roy, F.B, Kathleen, D.V., Nathaniel, M. L., Frank, D.F., & Lauren, E.B., 2010). This means that students who are made to believe that they are free to choose their destiny, they are more likely to perform better in class in both their academic and non-academic endeavours and therefore able to achieve self-reliance.

Honest is a good virtue in dealing to one's own situation in reality and in confronting one's problems. As such, learners who believe in free will are more likely to be honest in their dealings and cases of cheating in examinations are unlikely. These learners are more likely to achieve personal self-reliance since they are honest in dealing with their situation in the world. Those who believe in determinism (absence of free will) are more likely to cheat in examination and are likely to fail in achieving individual goals, and this is likely to lead to dependency (Vohs & Schooler, 2008).

The free will philosophy is able to explain the reason why self-reliance has not been fully achieved. For self-reliance to be achieved, decisions must be made and options must be taken towards that end. Decision making requires the expenditure of energy (Baumeister, Vohs & Tice, 2007; Gailloit, et al., 2007 and Vohs, et al., 2008). Work is usually done for either intrinsic or extrinsic rewards in response to either internal or external demands and work too requires expenditure of energy. Work is a key factor to achieving self-reliance. But for work to be done, self-control is important. Self-control means ability to control one's sexual drives, negative impulses such as selfishness, laziness and hostility. Self-control requires more energy than laziness, selfish impulses and other temptations (Baumeister, Vohs & Tice, 2007; Gailloit, et al., 2007 and Vohs, et al., 2008).

Work thus requires a willingness to exert free will. Those who believe in this free will have a positive impact on job performance and show intrinsic motivation and industriousness in their duties (McClelland, 1961 and Furnham, 1990).

With such intrinsic motivation and industriousness in one's duties, then such individuals are more likely to be self-reliant and hence contribute to a self-reliant society.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PERSPECTIVE

Before we discuss what Christian education means, it will be noble to give a descriptive approach to the meaning of the terms education and Christianity. Thereafter it will be prudent to descriptively discuss a short history of Christianity before we focus on what education means in the Christian sense. Finally we analyse critically the Christian perspective of education and its educational implications.

#### 3.1 Meaning of the term education

The term education originates from two Latin words *educare* and *educere* (Craft, 1984). The term *educare* means to train, mould, and rear or bring up. The youth are the ones to be trained or be brought up in approved patterns of conduct. The theory of knowledge given supports certain skills and patterns of conduct. On the other hand, *educere* means to bring out of latency or nurture or to lead. This leading means exposing the novices out to a continuously evolving world, and not a conventionally accepted trend as *educare* tends to do (Craft, 1984 & Ingold, 2013). Education is partly the transmission of the accumulated knowledge of society. That knowledge must entail a ‘justified true belief’. According to Aristotle children are born without culture, they grow up in one, moulding their behaviour and belief towards their eventual role in their society. It is the subjective process of learning to be self-reliant, as noted by K’Odhiambo (2010, p. 114). Self-reliance in this definition and study refers to the ability of individuals to be creative enough to solve their own and societal problems.

Conservatively, education is a life-long process that is as old as mankind. The role of educating was traditionally assigned to old societal members so as to produce individuals who could support and render service to various aspects of society (social, political, economic and religious), just as in old Egypt (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). In these primitive

cultures, education often involves little formal education and perhaps no school as such. Sparta on her part emphasized militaristic education, meant to serve the state (Redden & Ryan, 1956). For early Christians, education was for salvation of souls and moral regeneration. Conservatively, therefore education is that process that aim at protecting, defending and perpetuating the societal status quo (Nyirenda & Ishumi, 2002).

Modern theories of education are founded on the philosophy of naturalism as discussed early in this study. Key scholars behind this conception include: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Friedrich Froebel and John Dewey. They advocate education as a process of learning from nature (Boyd, 1956).

Education from these two conceptions therefore is a form of learning in which knowledge; skills, attitudes, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training, or research (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986, p.123-126). Education frequently takes place under the guidance of teachers (Byrne, 1961, p.87) but may also be autodidactic i.e. any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels or acts may be considered educational. The product of education, (the educated person) is supposed to be one who is self-controlled when provoked, dignified under sorrow, one with a fair way of thinking and one who is restrained in success. In more complex societies such as the modern Kenya, the sheer quantity of accumulated knowledge can be many years of formal education even if broken up into specialized areas of study. Education itself in such advanced cultures becomes a matter of study since efficient and integrated means of transmission of knowledge becomes more and more critical. The concept of self-reliance as an educational aim in Kenya must have originated from the modern 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophies of naturalism.

### **3.2 A brief History on Christianity**

Christianity is a religion that was founded by Jesus called the Christ, assumed to be the son of God born of Virgin Mary about 5 B.C. He preached focusing on the impending Kingdom of God. He asked the people to prepare for God's reign through repentance and baptism for salvation (Byrne, 1961, p 20). He exalted humility, gentleness, pity, meekness, mercifulness, peace and poverty (Matt 5:3-11). He taught with simplicity by using vivid imagery, direct speech, parables and sharp sarcasm.

The history of Christianity during the first two centuries following the crucifixion of Jesus is obscure and lacks systematic account apart from revealing trials and tribulations of the Church in antiquity. The foundation of Christianity in Western Europe was realized through the work of St. Peter and St. Paul. For a long period, Christianity grew slowly and remained a minority dissenting sect within Judaism. The new religion was regarded by most people as another fanatical Jewish sect associated with a "deadly superstition". The decision by Christians, during its emergence to welcome followers from members of the lower class and non-Jews (Gentiles), who were highly looked down upon by others (Jews) on the promise of a hoped happier life that was to come invited ridicule upon the early Christians.

Christianity had a powerful appeal for the poor who had abandoned any hope of bettering their lot in this world and who were drawn irresistibly to a promise of a happier life yet to come. Christians allowed women to embrace the faith in opposition to the practice of exclusion by other competing sects (Judaism). It gave its members confidence for the future, expecting the return of Christ and the founding of a heavenly Kingdom on earth.

### **3.3 Education in early Christianity**

On education, the Christians at first did not have schools of their own. Their energies were mostly directed towards the more immediate task of establishing a system of canonical

discipline, liturgy and ethics. Education meant moral training and learning dogmas for salvation through communal and family worship. In addition, they also felt that there was no need to engage in this laborious activity because of their anticipation of the end of the world. Hence to them, instruction in language, rhetoric, grammar, logic and dialectic was important for secular life and not vital for salvation or eternal life (Redden & Ryan, 1956). Actually, education aimed at developing the faculties of a human person in line with the Christian conception of humanity.

Tertullian together with Cyprian, two leading Church fathers took a hard-line stand against pagan education by emphasizing the sufficiency of the Bible and Christian writers in pursuing the Christian way. “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” Tertullian exclaimed. “What concord is there between the Academy and the Church?” He held a conviction that secular literature should be recognized as “folly with God”. To him, the Christian only needed their faith. Yet Tertullian himself could not forbid Christian children from attending these schools in spite of the dangers they would be exposed to. The Apostolic constitution, a third century document firmly instructed the laity and the clergy against pagan wisdom advising them to read the Bible instead, arguing that “the Bible provided all the wisdom and knowledge one required” (Redden & Ryan, 1956).

There was no intellectual education at first since early Christianity was based on feeling rather than reason. Intellectual education, especially in the West was considered unnecessary even to the clergy. Later, in the East where Christianity made converts from among the intellectuals and educated classes, intellectual education was introduced for no other reason than to fight heresy. Therefore moral and religious training always took precedence over intellectual training.

The curriculum of early Christian education was limited as a result of the suspicion and contempt with which the Christians viewed learning of the intellectual and worldly type. The Christians were bitterly opposed to the subjects taught in pagan schools and blamed pagan culture for the vices and corruption of pagan society. To them its literature was full of impurities; its art depicted immoralities and was associated with immoral religions; its philosophy undermined and destroyed Christian faith because it led to trusting one's own wisdom. Accordingly, pagan school was the enemy of the Church and its curriculum was to be despised by all true believers. Physical training, literature, art, science rhetoric, philosophy were all eliminated from early Christian education and replaced with moral and religious training, subjects that were quite foreign to the later pagan schools (Redden & Ryan,1956).

From the foregoing, early Christian education aimed at supernatural attributes in humans and was conservative. The Christian instructors assumed a teacher centred approach and the possibility of rote learning, perpetuation of propaganda and lecture method of delivery. This discouraged independence, hard work and creativity. Self-reliance in this approach was therefore impossible. Punishment, coercion, threats and fear were common in early Christian education in Kenya (Johnson, 1963).Conceptions about God and spiritual beings remained in the secular school system. There is not so much change in Christian ideas in education today. Christianity embraces biblical truths and recognizes faith as a core attribute required of all its faithful. As such, critical self-examination to face secular problems is rare among the Christians. Self-reliance is likely to be a myth for theirs is a reliance of God's providences.

### **3.6 Christianity and education today (special emphasis to Kenya)**

Christianity has triumphed in its spread in the world. As mentioned early, in Kenya for example, eighty percent (80%) of Kenyans are Christians (Wikipedia, 2014). We have many educational institutions sponsored by given sectarian churches right from pre-school to universities. The Catholics have towered the rest of other Christian sects especially in



providing education. Therefore, their contribution to education can only be ignored at our own peril. Examples of Christian centred educational institutions in Kenya are: the Catholic University of East Africa, the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton (sponsored by the SDA Church), the Presbyterian University, the Kenya Methodist University, amongst many in higher education. The number of secondary and primary schools are innumerable. But the big question is: What does Christian education stand for, and what are the educational implications for their educational aims and objectives?

The aim of Christian education is to transform an individual into a Christian who acknowledges the Lordship of Jesus. That Christian is then transformed into a perfect person who lives a supernatural life in Christ (Connel, Debus & Nibett, 1966, p. 8). In this sense education has to alienate human beings from the world. It is somewhat like transforming humans into a god. All the human activities in the world whether spiritual, social, political, moral, intellectual, educational, academic, domestic or any other nature they may take, should have the sole purpose of glorifying God in accordance to the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ (Connel, Debus & Nibett, 1966, p. 8).

From the foregoing, Christian education aims at creating a superhuman, the person who chooses actions and judgements guided principally by the right reason coupled with faith. That reason is in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ. True knowledge and education is only obtained through earnest and diligent study of the scriptures (White, 1913 p.11). The Bible is put forward as the highest of all the books, having a complete system of theology and education and gives crucial knowledge essential for life (White, 1913, p.422)

Christian education while acknowledging the use of secular books in the study of secular disciplines, the same knowledge is put to a stringent test of the Bible to see whether they are worthy of instruction and in harmony with the Bible (White, 1913, p.426). Thus for

Christianity, the centrality of education is in the lordship Jesus Christ. As such, those who do not study the scriptures are accordingly mentally retarded, weak and inefficient and the education that such a mind receives is false education (White, 1913, p.441).

Education in the Christian sense has to give humans knowledge about God who is their creator. This knowledge is *revealed* by God Himself through the scripture. This knowledge is the *truth* of Christianity (Byrne, 1961, p.33). The philosophy and practice of education in the Christian sense is built on the basis of faith in Jesus. All other areas of study, be they be in psychology (study of consciousness and behaviour), sociology (study of human behaviour in society), scientific (study of the laws of nature) or philosophy (the study of great cosmic problems), are all studied under the guidance of *revealed knowledge* from God through the Bible (Byrne, 1961, p.40-42).

For one to get true knowledge, one requires a true heart that acknowledges that Jesus is Lord and that the existence of God is true and real. Anyone who chooses to apostate (those who oppose Christ), can only receive falsity for human gratification and edification from their father, the devil. This true knowledge is obtained by believers who accept that the world as it is in reality is supernatural and is an act of God's work of creation; God reveals Himself to humans through nature, and God speaks to humans through the Bible and Jesus Christ ,His son (Byrne, 1961, p.44).

To believe and accept the aforementioned requires faith and reason. To Christianity true knowledge can be received through faith and reason that work in tandem. But one wonders whether true rationality requires faith.

In developing the curriculum to give Christian education, the foundation should be in the Bible and all other disciplines should be subordinate to it (Byrne, 1961, p.66-67). Thus the Christian philosophy of education requires and in fact demands the centrality of God in all

human endeavours in academics and curricular. It is the Bible that is a yardstick to measure every truth taught in other subjects. The following diagram shows how education ought and indeed is organised in the Christian sense

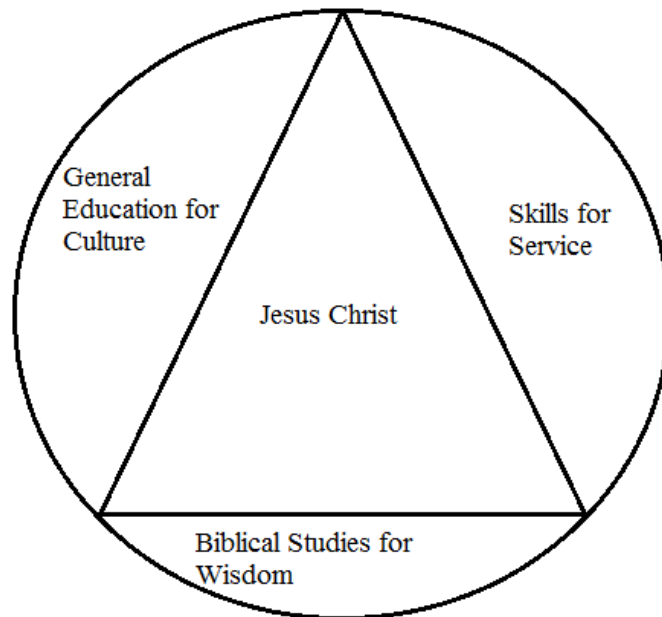


Fig.2a from (Byrne, 1961, p.76)

From fig.2a, general education for culture implies liberal arts education and we can call discipline related education covering areas such as social sciences ( psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, economics, history, law and education); natural sciences (anatomy, astronomy, botany, chemistry, geology, physics, physiology, zoology and mathematics), and humanities (philosophy, literature, architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry and drama).

In all the above spheres of liberal arts education, the Christian demands that the theoretical and philosophical aspects be added to each body of knowledge to arrive at a meaningful

education that aims at interpretation, meaning, purposes and values whose main objective is to glorify God (Byrne,1961, p.285). The aim of this kind of education is therefore not for *vocational competence* but rather to develop one's capacity for responsible living in society under the armpits of God (Byrne, 1961, p.79).

To summarize the notion of Christianity towards secular education, one would say that secular education is based on natural interpretation, and is blunt denial of the centrality of our God. It is the 'image' disowning his 'original'. Secular instruction is according to Christianity a rebellion against the Most High in the field of education. Not only has the creator been banished from his creation but He has also been dethroned and humans have been enthroned.

For Christianity, education must necessarily follow the process of teaching where facts lead to principles and principles lead to a Christian viewpoint of the issues under consideration.

Fact → Principles → Christian point of view (Byrne, 1961, p.81).

For this reason, the Christian teacher is a worker and labourer with God, aiming at bringing the learner into Godlikeness and kinship (1Cor.3:9; 2 Cor.6:1).

From the education process, the education out comes is an individual who has the ability to maintain good health, to think rationally with faith, a person with willingness to advance learning, live rightly, efficiently and harmoniously, willingness to witness for Jesus and able to lead (Byrne, 1961, p.113). Great learning occurs through the observation of nature (White 1903, p.21) and true knowledge is only gained through revelation in Jesus Christ who is the light of the world (Jn1:9). True education in the Christian sense is meant for character development (White, 1903, p. 29f). And for proper character development, as maintained by White, one requires total surrender to God.

The Christian theories and views about education are important to this study. They ought to be viewed and interpreted subjectively if self-reliance is to be attained. To start with, God is put at the centrality of everything in human affairs including education. As such the aspects of human existence are merely negated since all must be done for the glory of God. On the same note, this Christian view of education is not balanced. The spiritual aspect of humans is over-emphasized at the expense of other aspects of growth, such as physical, mental and social.

Literal biblical interpretation ought to be discouraged if self-reliance aims of education have to be attained in Kenya. Christians are called upon to recognize the imperfectability of human nature as a pathway to attainment of self-reliance. As such, the biblical requirement that humans work towards perfectionism is unrealistic and unachievable.

Education as early mentioned is to address human or societal problems across all spheres. In Kenya, self-reliance is and remains an educational aim yet to be fully achieved. Christianity ought to recognize this aspect of education if Kenya has to attain this elusive goal.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### THEORIES OF TRUTH

A theory is a set of proposition which provide for tenets of analysis of a subject matter (Mautner, 1996, p., 616). It provides a view, a speculation or contemplation over an issue.

Theories of truth are thus given standpoints regarding the view of what the term truth means.

For one to understand what the term truth means, such questions as what is truth? What does the word truth mean? What do we mean when we say that a proposition is true or false? When we say that the University of Nairobi is in Arusha, the statement is said to be false but when one says that it is in Nairobi- Kenya, the statement is said to be true.

Education is studied in philosophy under the branch of knowledge or epistemology. It is in this field where attempts are made to answer such questions as, what is knowledge. How does one obtain knowledge? How do you know that you know? What is the meaning of the word education? And many more questions of this kind.

Knowledge is said to be ‘justified true belief’. From this definition, knowledge must be justifiable; it must be true so that it can be believed (Huemer, 2002, p. 539). Justification and truthfulness are necessary conditions of knowledge. Knowledge ought to be factual, and absolute in order to be true and be believed (Huemer, 2002, p. 539). This chapter analyses the meaning of the term ‘truth’ and explain the various philosophical ideas regarding this term. Education will be meaningless unless it is believed to perpetuate truthfulness and not falsity. Since education deals fundamentally on transmission of knowledge, the definition of knowledge of truth becomes therefore of necessity.



The study thus analyses four main theories of truth: correspondence, pragmatism, and coherence and Christian theory of truth. The analysis will entail the explanations of truth upon which the aim of self-reliance is guided.

#### **4.1 The correspondence theory of truth**

This theory is sometimes called the view of the common person who distinguishes the fact from the statement of the fact and when the statement corresponds with the fact then it is said to be true. The theory holds that the truth is that which conforms with the facts or that which agrees with reality or that which corresponds to the actual situation (Patrick, 2001, p.373).

One would put a statement like this; Mombasa is at the shore of the Indian Ocean. This statement is said to be true because a good map will show Mombasa situated on the shore of the Indian Ocean. On the same note the statement that Maseno University is in Kisii County is said to be false since this does not correspond to the actual situation.

Thus one can, argue that in this theory facts that confirm to statement are true otherwise if facts confute a statement, then they are false. Any explanation is acceptable as true *if and only if* it is compatible with established empirical facts. This is the scientific approach of truth according to such logical positivists as Moritz Schlick, H. Hans, Rudolf Carnap and J.A Ayer. To these men, the task of philosophy is to clarify meaning of statements showing others as scientific, others mathematical while others nonsensical (Popkin & Stroll, 1995, p. 280).

Accordingly for this theory, verification is a key to establishing the truth or falsity of any proposition. As such the person involved must know how to verify i.e. know the observation that will lead him to accept the proposition as true or reject it as false (Ayer, 1936; Popkin & Stroll, 1993, p. 280).

According to Ayer, other theories are meaningless since an empirical statement can only be counted as meaningful if some kind of observation has been made. Statement such as '*God exists*' are meaningless since no observation can be made regarding them. All manner of objections may be made for this definition of truth. It is, for example, impossible to compare a statement with external reality. It is possible to lay your yardstick alongside a board and observe whether they correspond but you can't lay a statement beside a fact (Patrick, 2001, p.273). Do statements copy external reality? Not the case.

To verify any statement, it would involve subjective experiences as to observations. This too requires interpretations. The subjectivity of observation and interpretation brings ridicule to this theory since standardization of truth is made impossible.

Claims are made about either very large things like Galaxies or very small things such as neutrons. It is difficult or impossible to observe them and verification is therefore impossible. This theory is a mere repetition or tautology, since truth and fact are the same things in different words, it is therefore useless to say that truth confirms to fact (Patrick, 2001, p. 273).

Despite the difficulties associated with this theory, it is widely accepted and held by philosophers and sociologists who are empirical in nature. This theory of truth is relevant to this study. To achieve self-reliance, there must be empirical evidence to show that this has been achieved. The strong foundation of this theory on scientific kind of knowledge puts this theory at the helm of our educational system. It helps us analyse, using observable and testable data, the parameters upon which our educational goals of self-reliance are to be measured.

## 4.2 The coherence theory and truth

Due to the problems of the correspondence, the theory has been proposed to the effect that truth is consistency (Patrick, 2001, p. 374). Here we mean for example that a law is true if it is consistent with other laws. We can deduce that a bright student is one who is consistent in his or her scores. If we start with premises that are true and if our conclusions are logically drawn, we call our conclusions true. The ideas of correspondence here does not arise rather we mean that a theory fits into a certain system of other theorems, definitions, axioms or propositions.

Truth is conceivability or systematic coherence (Joachim, 1906). Truth is that which can be conceived. Conceivability here means to think logically and clearly, to connect many things together necessitated by reality. A proposition is said to be true if it coheres with a set of propositions. The term cohere means to be consistent with or to be entailed in giving propositions (Donald, 1986, p.307-319). Here, a proposition ought to cohere with a set of propositions that are true, that are believed by our community to be consistent at the end of an inquiry, and finally a set of beliefs that would be believed by an omniscient being. All objections may be raised to this theory of truth. For example, it is possible to have a whole coherent or consistent system and falsehood. In the Bible (1<sup>st</sup> Kings 21:1-20), a story is told of Ahab the king and Naboth his subject. A whole false testimony was given coherently by false witnesses that made Naboth get killed for blasphemy. The coherency theory used a chain of falsehoods as evidence to support the theory of blasphemy against Naboth, but these lies were coherent and make it seem consistent with truth.

If we go back and say that 'several parts are coherent with the original act', then we backslide to the correspondence theory. As a matter of fact, the correspondence theory and the coherency theory therefore supplement each other. We may say that 'truth is fidelity to reality' (Patrick, 2001, p.375).

However this theory is a realistic philosophy of truth and over the years has been at the core of the common humans' view of reality and truth. Concerning self-reliance and Christian theories of truth, this theory assists in addressing educational issues from a logical and rational point. It helps us to analyse self-reliance from accepted points of view.

#### **4.3 The pragmatic theory of truth**

This theory of truth has several fashions. One brand holds that truth is what is 'useful'. A problem may arise in defining the term useful. Another fashion holds that truth is what works. Still the meaning of the word works brings out unsolved issues. Another fashion holds that truth is a solution to a problem, and that the solution ought to be scientific in nature. This last fashion is the view that shall be held in this study. Truth is that known in reality by its usefulness or its fruits or its practical consequences (Patrick, 2001, p.376). The fruits herein assumed are good or desirable practical consequences that are infallible.

Etymologically speaking, the word pragmatism is derived from a Greek word, *pragmata* meaning 'acts' or 'businesses'. The term was first coined by American logician Charles Sanders Pierce to refer to a way of making our ideas clear. Other individual behind this idea of pragmatism are F.S. Schiller, John Dewey and William James. Pragmatism accordingly is a *'method of evaluating or solving intellectual problems, and a theory about the kind of knowledge we are capable of acquiring'* (Popkin & Stroll, 1993, p.265).

Charles Sanders Pierce thought that pragmatism is a method of logic used in determining the meaning of facts that are intellectual in nature (Pierce, 1905). As for Charles, one ought to look at the effects of any one given theory and or proposition. Critically examined, this theory is a *'means-end theory'*, and this is to say the end is as good as the means or the end justifies the means (Pierce, James, Baldwin, & Seth, 1902).

Pierce's fashion of pragmatism is based on concrete habits or tendencies to action to which their acceptance leads. What a thing means involves tendencies and this depends on when and how it leads us to act. For this reason, truth is therefore that which yields some reasonable and practical results. Assume, for example, a young man who is interested in a young lady in church and the young man is not a church goer. The girl puts a condition that for them to be married, the young man must be a church member. According to pragmatism, the young man may pretend, go to church, gets baptized and becomes a church member. Thereafter, he may marry the girl and later return to his wayward ways having succeeded in his plans.

The criteria for testing for truthfulness of a premise are basically like that of science and follows the following three steps:

- i. *Occurrence of a problem:* Pierce's pragmatism starts when one realizes that there is a problem of some sort that requires attention and solving. For example, if one is driving and the car suddenly stops, then it could be that the fuel is out, or some wires are short circuited or the engine has knocked or any other foreseeable mechanical problem.
- ii. *Observation:* This *step* involves analysing the situation very carefully and collecting all facts bearing on the problem to be solved. It requires fairness, impartiality, no prejudice, and lack of biasness on observing the fact. It is very objective and there is no subjectivity in this scientific inquiry.
- iii. *Hypothesis:* This involves proposing a tentative solution so called hypothesis or provisional theory. The hypothesis is then tested vigorously by attempting to falsify it. The theory may be accepted or modified or rejected at the end of the process.

The end justifies the means theory or pragmatism may be objected on the basis of ethics. The use of citizens by say politicians and abandoning them after elections has not been acceptable in society. Therefore, if this theory is accepted wholesale, it can lead to vices and the trampling upon the weak and the poor in society by the mighty.

The benefits of pragmatism however cannot be underestimated in this study. Pragmatism helps us to be real and practical in dealing with self-reliance and Christian theories on education. This theory helps us to transform our theoretically gathered knowledge to useful knowledge for ourselves and our fellow human beings, for the good of society.

#### **4.4 The Christian theory of truth**

Christianity is one of the major religions of the world today. It's therefore worthy investigating what the word truth means to Christians. To Christians, truth means what can be trusted, what is reliable or what is trustworthy. This involves a whole array of things or propositions; be they actions, speeches, reports or judgments (Douglas, 2000).

To Christians, truth is eternal since it has neither starting (*alpha*) nor ending (*omega*). This is similar to the ideal of St. Anselm. The term truth and Jesus are synonymous. Jesus claimed to be the source of all truth (Jn 1:51, 14:12). During most of his teachings, he always proclaimed *'I tell you the truth...'* This is elaborately stated in many verses in the Gospel books (Matt.5:18-26, 6:2, 6:5, 6:16, 8:10, 10:15, 10:42, 11:11, 16:28, 17:20 ,Mk 8:12, 9:1, 9:41,10:29,11:23 etc.)

As for Christianity, truth is the word of God founded in Jesus Christ and falsehood is devilish, *'You belong to your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires...when he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of all lies'* (Jn 8:44). Similarly the Holy Spirit is assumed to be the spirit of truth (Jn 14:17, 15:26, 16:7).

Christian truth is orderly and unified and that order originates from the creation story in Genesis chapters one, two and three. For Christianity, the biblical description of creation, fall of mankind, the story of redemption through Jesus is truth. Truth is goodness and power. It means seeing reality as it is. As such, Christian truth is *realism*. To Christianity, truth is absolute and truth precedes reality (Middleton & Walsh, 1995)

Accordingly, truth is fairly accurate, it is prior to our knowing of it and it does not depend on human perceptions or beliefs (Middleton & Walsh, 1995). To Christianity, *truth is revealed* knowledge from God, through the scripture and incarnation of Jesus called the Christ and in the *revelation* of nature.

As already mentioned, *truth precedes reality* and this means that truth precedes knowing it. It does not depend upon our perceptions or beliefs. Truth is simply absolute. Relativism is totally rejected by Christianity. Truth is not a creation of the knower but exists prior to knowing it. A good example to illustrate this is the mathematical sum  $2+2=4$ . The truth of this mathematical statement is not a creation of humans but is discovered as a fact in reality. Christian truth is realism and is like the correspondence theory of truth (Middleton & Walsh, 1995).

Christians view truth as objectivity. It is not changeable, it is not subjective. Truth is thus devoid of biases, prejudices, tastes, preferences or any such thing. It is based on fact and reality. Truth is immutable but tastes, preferences, values and style differ but truth does not. Whether truth is comfortable with anyone or any group of people is not the point. Truth stands. Truth is universal and not parochial. This universality of truth is embodied in the Church; usually in its doctrines. This truth is narrow and specific not broad and pluralistic (Rushdoony, 1978, p.16). Rushdoony, (1978) says:

*'Truth is exact and precise, and the slightest departure from the truth is the substitute of falsity for truth'*

Just as the laws of logic would say, a statement cannot mean two opposite things. Thus truth can never be falsity .e.g. to burn and not to burn are not identical. Scripture is the sole Christian truth and its interpretation is guided by the Holy Spirit through faith (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Christian truth is that which is knowable and not that which is mysterious. For one to acquire this truth, one must acquire epistemological virtues. However poetic unrighteousness is capable of suppressing this truth (Rom.1:18-20, 2:13-16, 2 Peter 3:16, Isa 18:15). Accordingly, truth is revealed only to those who seek it rightly from the correct sources (2 Cor.1:12, Prov.1:7,22-23,28-29, 2:6, 3: 5-6, Ecc.2:28, Jn 18:37). This correct source is Jesus who came to the world so that he can *reveal the truth to humanity*.

Christians believe that truth precedes language. This means that truth is reality and reality is independent of language. Language only shapes our perceptions but does not alter truth, *'facts don't need statements in order to exist, but statements need facts in order to be true'* (Searle, 1995, p.218).

Truth has some degree of it being personal and proportional. This only means that truth has the personification of Jesus who is truth. Truth has to confirm to facts so that confidence may be placed in it, only a faithful person can be careful enough to make statements that are true and one can only acquire this kind of faithfulness in and through Jesus Christ (Nicole, 1992, p.290).

Each person can acquire this truth by confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord at a personal level for salvation to be granted (Acts 16:31, Rom.10:9-10, 1 Cor.12:3).



Truth is fruitful and generally works better than error. As such, pragmatic effects of truth are real. Truth based on this arguments is built on a firm foundation, it is sure, it is confident and self-evident and the Lord Jesus is such a foundation (Isa28:16, 1 Cor.3:11, 2 Sam.2:2-3, 32, 37, Ps.18:2, 31, 46, Ps 62:2, 6-7).

In education, Christians define knowledge as a clear perception of truth. Knowledge is dependent upon truth and truth is dependent upon God. All avenue of this kind of knowledge have their origin in God. God is truth and reveals Himself through natural and special revelation. Since truth is defined as God, then knowledge is God and all truth is God's truth. The ultimate criterion of this truth is found in the Bible, which Christians assume is the revealed word.

All educational theories and practices including those of self-reliance ought to have a clear and distinct relation with God. The educational objectives, aims and goals that are finally articulated in the curriculum, must have the centrality of God. All other theories and claims about truth must be tested by these philosophical and theological truths of God's word.

All manner of objections may be raised concerning this theory. Christian theory of truth explains truth from a metaphysical point of view and not from our physical world. It is therefore difficult to comprehend and draw any meaningful facts about truth that will be relevant in addressing issues that affect our world. Defining truth for example as Jesus is mere metaphysical and a nonsensical statement. The over-reliance of supernatural forces in education such as the Holy Ghost in education takes Christian education beyond its programmes, methodology and techniques. This is therefore not helpful in dealing with our daily human problems that are indicators of lack of self-reliance.

Truth is assumed by this theory as a treasure hidden in scripture and can only be obtained by virtuous people and those who confess that Jesus is Lord. This way Christian truth is for a

selected few. This theory assumes erroneously that atheist will never know any truth. I know for sure that I am Monanda, a Kenyan, isn't this truth? Won't my national identity card and passport verify these facts?

Now that the same Jesus denied being good and claimed that only God is good, (Lk 18:19), it then could be concluded erroneously that all the people in the world live in falsehood since only virtuous people are able to know the truth.

This theory of truth negates the subjectivity aspect of truth and reality. It is a fact in life that truth is subjective and some aspects of it may be objective and universal.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### EXISTENTIALISM AS A THEORY FOR SELF-RELIANCE

The themes so far expressed in this study are merged to argue that the philosophy of truth and determinism in the Christian perspective are hindrances to attainment of our elusive goal of self-reliance. We have also argued in support of existentialism as a theory necessary for self-reliance.

Existentialism cherishes the treatment of each person as a unique individual with their freedom, choices and responsibilities. We have argued and established that existentialism is against giving general connotations to people and emphasizes the need for treating each person as 'I', that is unique. Each person or individual learner has his or her unique, concrete experience that can never be equalled to anybody's experience. Stakeholders in the education system in Kenya who understand this concept will look at people as living 'here' and 'now' not in an abstract world and the experiences are built from the natural world, a world of reality (Akinpelu, 1981, p.154).

The theories of metaphysics and theodicy in an individual's physical world we contend contribute but zero to their attainment of self-reliance. Christianity and its theories address issues that are spiritual in nature (religious aspects of humanity). They may not address self-reliance adequately. When people are left free and as self-determining agents, they are bound to draw meaning to their lives. They are bound to understand that human problems that may be seen as human faults are not in their 'star' or a God but in 'themselves' (Akinpelu, 1981, p.155). Though there are obstacles in our society, in the form of financial, political, physical and any other constraints, we existentialists have argued that there are avenues of becoming what we want and none of these hindrances have sufficient power than the individual will, and therefore we have sufficient energy to overcome whatever power comes our way Vinoba

(1956/1964, p.198). A good example is the life and history of Nelson Mandela. Irrespective of all challenges and obstacles that he had to go through, including a prison term of 27 years, his individual strong will never died until he crushed apartheid and became the first black president of South Africa.

It is our weighed opinion that in any given situation, there are choices, be they ultimate or fundamental, and for every choice that we make there are consequences and responsibilities that must be borne by the individual making that choice. Plato in his dialogue, *Zeno*, talks of a servant who stole from his master's and upon inquiry why he stole; he argued that he was destined to do so. In his judgement, the master also argued that the servant was predestined to be flogged. For this reason, freedom is always thought as dreadful that results in *anguish, anxiety and fear*. Since one must necessarily make a choice, and suffer the consequences of their choice, making a choice is too painful. Since one must necessarily make a choice, this theory of existentialism if adopted will help stake holders in education to rise up and make bold steps to address self-reliance aims of education. A poor person has for example several options at his disposal. They can remain poor and succumb to misery waiting for help from worlds yonder, they can decide to get help from others to get out of it, they can work hard and improve their lot, they can turn to be a street beggar, the list is endless, but the choice is subjective. Teachers who understand their obstacles, abilities and freedoms are more likely to be effective teachers in content delivery for they will have no illusion of who may accomplish their tasks apart from themselves. The message for existentialism is in action and not quietism and despair.

## **5.1 The School and the teacher as actors toward realisation of self-reliance (the existentialist's view)**

We have no doubt in our mind that self-reliance may remain an educational aim now and the days to come. It's our deliberate purpose therefore as existentialists to explain clearly what efforts we need to put in our schools in an attempt of attaining this elusive goal, today and for generations to come.

Schools organise knowledge in packages that are 'presentment' to an individual learner, not a group of learners. It is the individual learner that integrates the knowledge subjectively. This must be critically reasoned out. The values that we attach to knowledge are subjective. Schools should try and eliminate blind conformity to society that is, following the crowd. It is not always the case that the majority are right. A person lives in society, and hence the social factor must enter into their calculation of what good and right to do, but if it becomes necessary to decide against the norms of society, or against society; it would be right for them to 'stand up and be counted' (Akinpelu, 1981, p.158). Heroes take their stand and in most cases courageously against the crowd.

With existentialistic philosophy, schools are likely to give learners an education that aims at not only adjusting them to the environment of the society but also an education that addresses the daily challenges of society at all costs. As Vinoba (1956/1964) notes, governments have grasped the education sector and have prescribed the kind of knowledge that learners must receive. Amid this difficulty, teachers must find the need to encourage own consciousness and judgement among their learners (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p. 196). The integration should be done at individual levels so that learners make authentic decisions depending on the individual's vigour, their accumulated experience and the cultural resources available. It is not what is taught per se but how it is taught and how helpful it is to the learner individually in addressing their unique problems.

An existentialistic teacher incorporates the Socratic method of teaching that is nourished by dialogue. In this regard, the teacher is a parent who accepts the child in the way they are, with the child's unique personality. The teacher aims at making the learner a self-reliant individual who makes authentic choices and accepts responsibility for the choices made. The students have full independence of their minds and may disagree with other people's opinions including the opinions of their teachers to perpetuate their own (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.195).

In the process of assessment and evaluation, rash condemnation of the learner is unexpected. The teacher guides the learner through the evaluation process. Harsh words such as low achiever, poor, incompetent, inefficient, nonentity, dullard, are to be avoided completely. The teacher must aim at cultivating optimism in the learner and any labelling must be discouraged.

An existentialist teacher is likely to be happy and encouraged and therefore encourages freedom of opinion and discussion in their class. The teacher guides learners and never dictate their opinion but guide them through reason. Good attitudes of care, concern and commitment are therefore required in part of the teacher (Akinpelu, 1981, p.163). Such teachers are likely to raise the passions and feelings of learners making them feel worthwhile. There is no single life-style that is true necessarily. Therefore recognising existentialism frame of ideals is to recognise individual differences and variations (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.252).

Learners need to be trained the value of self-control in independence and freedom, for we think real strength is strength to govern one self. From this perspective, decisions to address a myriad of world problems must be made subjectively (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.198). For self-reliance to be realised in Kenya, each person (learner) must devote themselves to address their problems subjectively. Knowledge obtained in classrooms must be put to service, for

knowledge without service is no knowledge (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.198). Learners need to be trained to be alert to what happens around them with open minds. They ought to be aloof from Christian and other religious ideas and study them with open minded (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.200).

Teachers ought to show their learners possible pathways to alleviate the ever nagging problems of ignorance, hunger and disease that have been indicators of lack of self-reliance for many years now in Kenya (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.200).

In summary, education in this regard has to foster individual development, self-realization, the subjectivity of knowledge and truth, individuality of methodology of teaching and a stress in an all-round curriculum.

## **5.2 The curriculum from an existential perspective**

Good life accordingly is a life lived according to one's authentic choices and whose responsibilities for the choices are readily embraced, isolated from social traditions, culture and social reform that are indicators of lack of freedom (Sarte, 2007, p.48). What sought of curriculum ought we to have as existentialist?

An existential curriculum will focus on solving salient human problems in Kenya, chiefly, unemployment, corruption, moral decadency, poverty, hunger and disease that were highlighted in the background information. All these problems are addressed under self-reliance. The curriculum is likely to be a solution oriented one, and these solutions will originate subjectively upon each learner so that the individual bears the responsibilities for their choices and actions (Sarte, 2007, p.50). The theoretical knowledge we give our learners in the form of lectures and teacher's notes has not and will never solve our problems and we will never become self-reliant if we proceed in this direction.



We suppose that our curriculum will be practical oriented towards solving our daily problems of poverty, hunger and disease amongst many other problems in Kenya. At each educational level or stage (primary, secondary, colleges and university), the curriculum will inculcate the practical aspects of agricultural practice, arts and crafts, training in basic skills of carpentry, masonry, wiring, plumbing, weaving, and any other crafts required in our daily living in their curriculum. No one may dispute that we require food and clothing in our daily lives. This involves bodily labour. And we are required to set time within our educational system to solve these problems daily. If this is not done, self-reliance, we suppose, will be a myth in Kenya for many more years to come (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p.75).

The existential curriculum must have self-reliance as a key component of its objectives. Thus in addressing any human problem, each learner must be encouraged to make choices of their own without external guidelines of conduct or values. It is a shame that schools should purchase basic things that can be produced locally by teachers and their students. Is there a reason why for example universities and colleges that have large tracks of land tender for basic foodstuffs like maize, beans, milk, and many agricultural produce? Poultry and pig keeping require a small space and their basic foods include wastes from our dining tables. Why do our school fail to feed our learners and staff with their produce (Vinoba, 1956/1964, p. 75)? Why should schools hire masons to build their lecture halls instead of training students and use them to provide this service?

Existential curriculum aim would be to have a curriculum that is both objective and subjective in the teaching learning process, since human problems are perceived differently and are subjective. Academic oriented curriculum that does not harness talent is discouraged (Kibor, 2014). Thus to develop unique abilities of learners is key to an existential curriculum, not a standardized and authoritarian curriculum as the one we have in Kenya today.

### **5.3 Teaching using the existential pedagogical approach**

The existential pedagogy is a life-long process, since teaching and learning is not learning to live or living to learn but it is living itself. Teaching by an existential teacher means helping learners to overcome their subjective issues related with self- actualisation, confusion, and self-identity and this pedagogy is always enjoyed by learners (Leif, 2010). The existential pedagogy emphasises honest and clear assessment or reality. The ideas of ‘leap of faith’ do not apply to this pedagogy in teaching. This method applies to available evidence and deduces careful and meaningful conclusion.

This pedagogy treats humanity with respect and is an adherent ‘respector’ of human freedom subjectively for the benefit of all. The respect of humanity is emphasizing in the self-worth of individuals. Self-worth means accepting individuality as a unique entity in humanity. The student teacher relationship in this pedagogy is mutual and shows respect of opinion and ideas without preconceived scheme upon which judgement is based (David, 2005).

This pedagogy encourages play as a way of pedagogy, for in play, personal liberation is achieved. The desire for play is a desire to express uniqueness of every person. In play, creativity and fidelity is manifested.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### SELF-RELIANCE EDUCATION

We have so far argued in our previous sections in support of existentialism as a theory necessary for (*condition sine quo non*) self-reliance. We have elucidated the fact that self-reliance has not been achieved fully in Kenya. We contend that existentialism may not be the only sufficient condition to this end but it may form a paradigm shift on addressing the elusive goals of self-reliance in Kenya. We have equally addressed in equal measure the necessity to be critical of Christian religious knowledge and truth and their negative effects to self-reliance. In this section we argue and give our contribution towards this research.

This research was guided by three objectives namely; to investigate how biblical truth makes learners critical, to assess the implication of using the Bible as the basis of teaching self-reliant aims of education, and to evaluate human problems that persist in society whether people get good education coupled with good Christian upbringing. It is from these objectives that the research questions were derived. These research questions were: does biblical truth contribute to critical thinking of learners? What are the educational implications of using the Bible as a basis of teaching learners for self-reliance? And what is Christian view of the human problems that persist in society?

Existentialism has stressed the need for development of individuality for the sake of personal growth and development. Reflective thinking characterised by reasoned inspection of beliefs, practises, actions and problems with the aim of giving judgement, solutions and explanations based on rationality and evidence is what one will call critical thinking (Namwamba, 2005, p. 37 & Wambari, 1992, p. iv). Once the individual person is developed subjectively, then the community may be assured. A community made up of impoverished individuals is itself impoverished.

Human beings by their very nature exist. Existence precedes essence. Learners too exist since they are human beings. In that existence, they try to investigate rationally what it means to exist and try to find inherent meaning to their lives. In so doing, they argue consciously or otherwise, they reason, adduce evidence, make judgements and choices. While they reason, they put everything to serious questioning to verify its validity from evidence to the satisfaction of reason. Learners do this basically to make decisions and choices aiming at making their lives better. This betterment may be said to mean making their lives self-reliant. Each learner in any school system aims at bettering their lives subjectively. Schools will be meaningless if the end products are hopeless learners who are dependants.

In their encounter with the world, learners encounter biblical literature and evaluate its meaning. This literature is found in the Bible and other authoritative manuscripts acknowledged and written by religious patriarchs. These literatures try to postulate what the meaning of good life and the purpose of humanity. Learners who subscribe to Christian religious teachings therefore cannot escape from this aspect of humanity.

As early mentioned, existentialism is nourished with the Socratic imperative 'know thyself'. The stress for individuality cannot be overemphasized here since no person duplicates another. Independency of thought and action is a key ingredient to individuality and self-reliance. Though self-reliance is an aspiration of everyone embedded in the human mind, not many people may use this technical term in their ordinary discourses. But even the poorest of the poor if asked may respond to the affirmative that they do not admire their lives of dependency (or lack of self-reliance). Once learners encounter biblical writings regarding humanity, they are bound to critically and subjectively analyse what meaning they will draw from them.

For positive individual development to be achieved by learners, existentialism negates biblical paternalism (where the Bible is seen as a basic and fatherly guiding principle to humans against external intrusion or aggression). Biblical paternalism seems to claim that individuals by their nature are incapable of knowing what is good for them, and therefore gives a guide to humanity. We contend that this removes humanity from each person. Each learner as a human being has the ability to make choices on what is good for them, and this is the basis of autonomy and self-reliance.

Biblical truth is manifested in our schools in many varied forms. Young Christian learners form religious organizations in our school system. We have witnessed some of these religious groupings in our school, for example, the Christians union groups (CU) for most Protestants and the young Christian society (YCS) in catholic learning institutions. These groups may imitate the literal Christian lifestyles advocated in biblical literature. Unless reason is applied by learners in these groups, they are bound to fall into the absurdity of rejecting their individuality for the sake of their God.

Religious indoctrination has been a basic character of most religions in the world, Christianity included. We note therefore the possibility of learners falling prey into this dangerous Christian religious indoctrination associated with determinism. The blind adherence to dogma by learners is likely to make them uncritical about life. Indoctrination is anti-individual and encourages deterministic thinking associated with Christian dogmatism. Learners that fall into this absurdity are likely to be no better than radicalised extremists who see no sense of being in this 'evil' world. Such desperation has been seen in Kenya in a few religious sects that refuse conventional medicine, squander their property with the hope of ascending to heaven soon. What follows is a tragedy of misery and dependency.

Learners who are aware of the danger of literal biblical interpretation are likely to avoid fallacious arguments that contribute negatively to education for self-reliance. They are able to recognize that human obstacles are not insurmountable. *Argumentum ad Baculum* (appeal to force) is a popular fallacy that is used in religious organization to subdue people to accept erroneous drawn conclusions (Copi, 1978, p.88 and Namwamba, 2005, p. 134). The threat of a reward (heaven) and punishment (hell) is a good example of this fallacy (Copi, 1978, p. 105 and Rev. 22:18-19).

Learners that recognize the inherent liberties of their humanity, which is the liberty of consciousness and of free-will, are more likely to be self-determining individuals as opposed to those whose humanity has been stolen by religious dogmatism and unreasonable societal demands in the name of culture. Biblical interpretations require critical inquiry. Such scriptural verses as Matt: 6:33-35 that advocate humanity to first seek the kingdom of God may negate humanity if taken literally. Those learners who seek to fulfil their human aspiration may be construed to be 'evil', for anything in this world in 'ungodly'.

We have established in our previous sections of this research that human problems that persist are clear indicators of lack of self-reliance. Good education, we have contended, is education that must attempt to address human problems, particularly the self-reliant aims of education. Young people go to school so that they may improve their lot, and become self-reliant individuals in their lives. No one may go to school if they knew that their future is going to be a life of dependence.

Self-reliance requires a rational human interpretation of religion. A negation of 'Christian self-denial' and a reform towards individuality is essential. Humanity is to be edified first before any edification of the Christian God. If individuality is diminished, as Christianity proposes, the human capacity of creativity necessary for self-reliance is diminished too. Each

person is more valuable to oneself first before being valuable to other persons including being valuable to the Christian God. One who lives a life of self-denial loses their humanity (Wambari, 1992).

Human creativity is founded in originality of thought and action, necessary ingredients of self-reliance. Learners left alone with their creative faculties are more likely to 'create' themselves.

We have noted that Kenya remains a very corrupt country as per corruption indexes and transparency international reports. We also noted that 80% of Kenyans are Christians. Drawing a parallel and concluding that majority of Christians in Kenya are corrupt since most Kenyans are Christians will not be far-fetched. Against this background, Christians virtues perpetuated in Christianity have done very little to alleviate corruption. Is there need then to bring aspects of Christianity to our school system? How much more will we not remain dependants unless corruption is reduced to extremely low levels? But can Christianity boast of anything if all these evils thrive amongst its disciples? We answer to the negative.

The level of immorality in all its dimensions in Kenya cannot be overemphasized. Sexual immorality, land grapping, acts of violence associated with hooliganism and terrorism are witnessed almost daily. Now that majority of Kenyans are Christians, who does these immoral acts if not 'they' who profess that Christ is Lord. Virtues are better taught in the absence of the God hypothesis, we contend.

The overemphasis of the reward (heaven) and punishment (hell) by our Christian folks might be the ultimate cause that has made our country remain struggling with self-reliance. Christians (who are a majority) have left their core business of humanity and have over indulged in futile acts of perfection required of their God. They have 'abandoned' the world in their mind and struggles within it. Their focus has shifted to the 'beautiful world' yet to



come (heaven). As such, their commitment has been limited to physiological needs at the expense of hard work and creativity required of self-reliance. We advocate for a negation of this kind of thinking if we have to obtain self-reliance in Kenya.

Daily struggles are to be embraced and overcome. But Christians, unfortunately, when faced with difficulties reject the world and alienate themselves from it. There is a common Christian carol that goes, ‘ *this world is not my home, I am just passing by, if heaven is not my home, what then shall I do, the angels beckons me from the heaven’s open doors and I can’t feel at home in this world any home*’. As explained early, this kind of Christian truth as expressed in such carols apparently lulls the minds of learners in educational institutions, especially in Kenya, and as a result they may fail to critically examine their lives for self-reliant aims of education. This world is our home, learners need to know and accept so. In that way they are able to face the challenges that might come their way as opposed to thinking of a world elsewhere where there are no challenges.

We contend that Christianity is a religion that suppresses strength and encourages weakness. It has made virtues vices and turned vices into virtue. Pity for example has been acknowledged as a virtue and has been at the cornerstone of its establishment. But keenly looking at pity, one recognises that it is a depressant that makes a person lose their power and strength making suffering get multiplied a thousand fold. Pity leads to nihilism and a persuasion to extinction.

Christianity is ideal and not real. It brings forth imaginary causes such as God, spirit, soul, determinism and imaginary effects such as sin, salvation, grace, forgiveness and punishment. All these imaginary things in the name of Kingdom of God (heaven), repentance are purely fiction and are utter nonsense. The concepts of God, the true Christian living, salvation, blessedness are only religious ethical balderdash.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATION

This chapter summarises and concludes what has been so far discussed in the research. In the summary we explain our philosophical stand in regard to the theory of existentialism as a necessary paradigm for self-reliance. In the conclusion we suggest that any negative aspects of religion ought to be removed from our secular schools. We note that metaphysical ideas about God are of no help in solving salient physical changes of the world. We suggest that in our country, we have freedom and are responsible for our choices. We categorically reject any determinism and ideals of ‘worlds’ beyond us. We also suggested some few recommendations that require consideration by educational institutions and the government.

#### 6.1 Summary

This section reviews the salient issues that were discussed in the study. The title of the study ‘A critique of Christian education for self-reliance in Kenya in the light of Existentialism’ implies that the study attempted to analyse Christian education using philosophical analysis and descriptive methods of philosophy in an attempt to unravel the implication of Christian concepts on education in Kenya. It is suggested that from these analyses a sound educational thought and practice for self-reliance in Kenya can be developed.

We noted in the introduction, every education system including ours has educational aims that need to be accomplished. We also noted that self-reliance is a fundamental aim in Kenyan education system. We noted that several education reports, acts of parliament and the constitution have vividly stated this educational aim.

We examined in detail the philosophies of existentialism, self-reliance, biblical determinism and the concept of free will. With the exception of biblical determinism, these theories agree that human persons are authentic individuals and therefore our education ought to cater for

subjective development of all her citizenry. It was also noted that respect for human dignity and freedom were noted to be important in attainment of self-reliance.

The statement of the problem, the purpose of study and research objectives all sought to clarify the extent to which Christianity contributes to attainment of self-reliance in education, ability to make learners critical in approaching their subjective problems and in clarifying the biblical interpretation of human problems. The study noted that self-reliance has not been fully achieved in Kenya. Corruptions, moral decadency, terrorism, unemployment, among others were all noted to be true indicators of lack of achievement of self-reliance.

We noted that educational issues are philosophical in nature and therefore used philosophical ways to address the problem of self-reliance. The philosophy of realism, progressivism, and naturalism were identified as key philosophies that address this issue of self-reliance. Special creation theory was discussed with a view to exposing its weakness and inability to address the Kenyan problem of self-reliance.

We discussed in detail the biblical theories regarding education and their implication to self-reliance in chapter three. To further analyse this Christian perspective, we examined the Christian views on God and noted that they are non-scientific in nature and may negatively impact on attainment of self-reliance unless critically analysed.

In chapter four, we examined the bases of 'truth' as a condition for knowledge. The theories correspondence, coherence, pragmatism, and Christian theories of truth were examined. We noted that these theories complement each other in attainment of self-reliance. We equally noted that the Christian theory of truth needs a careful re-examination and analysis to prevent one from falling into the feeling of hopelessness that is associated with biblical determinism.

Finally, we analysed the importance of existentialism in education in chapter five. We agreed with renowned philosophers and authorities that *existence precedes essence*. We have accepted the view that truth is subjective and that the individual is important in facing the challenges of the material world. We have agreed that self-reliance is attainable if efforts are made towards that end, using an existentialist approach in the teaching-learning process.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

This study was guided by three objectives. The first objective was to analyse how biblical truth makes learners critical. The second was to assess the implication of using the Bible as a basis of teaching self-reliant aims of education and the third and last objective was to evaluate human problems that persist in society whether people get good education which is combined with good Christian upbringing.

In regard to the first objective, we recognise that religion today has influenced the lives of many Kenyans. Christian theism continues to influence many more. The study noted that literal biblical interpretation negates critical thinking and subjects learners to deterministic thinking. We note that self-reliance can only be attained if critical examination is done on our lives individually. We particularly recognise the need for a critical re-interpretation of biblical scriptures that negate self-actualisation. It is realised that Christianity may be used as a tool to weaken human beings and their natural evolutionary attributes and prevent them from attaining the goal of self-reliance.

On the second objective, we recognized that the Bible still plays a critical role in many lives of Kenyans. As such the study accepts the view of the need to take extra care and caution when using the Bible to teach self-reliance aims of education. The fact that Christian theology put God at the centre of human activities constrains to a great degree the centrality

of humanity (existentialism). For that reason, the Bible may not be helpful in teaching of self-reliance aims of education in Kenya.

Finally, on the last objective, the study disagreed with biblical teachings of persistence of human problems as a curse from God. The study took the view that human problems are solvable if enough energy is put towards addressing them realistically, pragmatically and individually.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

In view of the concluded research, three recommendations are offered: 1) Philosophy forms a part of the content in teacher education curriculum in colleges and universities with special emphasis on the philosophy of existentialism and self-reliance. 2) The ministry of education should detach religion from education. 3) There need to be continual in-service courses for practising teachers so that they are updated on current issues on self-reliance.

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