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The Preconditioning Factors to a Child's Creative Mind in a Family Set-Up

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact that the personal and socio-economic issues of families have on boy and girl child in their development of talents in creative activities such as painting and drawing. The study targeted 120 pupils aged 9 to 14 years, of class 4 to 7, in 12 primary schools, 60 parents of the selected children and 24 teachers of arts and craft in the selected schools in Eldoret Municipality. The schools selected were categorised into classes: A (high cost), B (middle class), and C (lower class). The data was collected by the use of questionnaires and analysed by the use of frequencies, percentages and Kruskal-Wallis. The findings showed there are a lot of "hidden" potential talents in the area of arts and craft among the children. The, however, revealed that some cultural factors inhibit the development of creative talents in painting and drawing especially among girls. Finally the study also showed that socio-economic status has no strong influence on the creative talents of a child. The study recommended that the government should have strong policy on parenting where by curriculum should be set for teaching parenting as a subject on its own. The study contributes resourceful knowledge on the role the family plays in influencing the creative abilities of children in art, specifically painting and drawing.

Keywords: influence, preconditioning, socio-economic factors, child's creative mind, family set-up

INTRODUCTION

Creativity is a familiar, yet oddly elusive concept. Fontana (1988), Weisberg (1986), Freeman (1964) and Hanseysenck (1995) all define creativity as the ability to generate fluent and novel ways of tackling problems and of organizational material. For the purpose of this paper, creativity is taken to mean the way a child can produce an extraordinary work such as in painting that is quite attractive and appealing to other people around him. Winzer (1989) notes that society has always been interested in those who achieve very highly. She asserts further that such people are labelled as geniuses. In 1920, the term 'talented' came into use in educational circles. It is only recently that the words talented and creativity came into use.

Callan et al. (all cited in Winzer, 1989) observe that throughout history, geniuses, and talented children had always been termed madmen and mischievous. This is possibly true and could still be happening within our midst. Children with certain divergent behaviours tend to behave differently. They depart from the accepted norms of the society. The moment one thinks critically from the accepted norms of the society, he would look odd. This is

what happens with these talented children with creative abilities. It is the view of this paper that such children have first of all divergent thinking about issues, from the accepted norms of the society. These children are curious; they ask very many questions and are outspoken. They do not conform; they look radical, are persistent, attempt what people think impossible; they do not compromise on certain issues, and are brave and always baffled by what is around them. These and many other characteristics tend to look odd, which people, especially families, may not comprehend.

No nation can develop without trying and mapping out which knowledge and skills are necessary for her development. Most nations spend billions of money and a lot of time in the development of particular skills and knowledge that are highly needed for economic and social development. Kenya spends nearly 38% of her total budget on education. Much of the money goes to the salary of its teachers and little is spent on other highly needed skills especially talents displayed by children very early in their growth in areas like arts and craft. People are the natural resource that any country can be proud of.

What is always important is the way a nation sets its objectives on how to develop various talents possessed by its people in various fields such as arts and craft.

Howe (1990) notes that those exceptional abilities in areas like arts and craft provide one of the most valuable of all mankind's resources. He further contends that only few nations have developed and articulated systematic policies that are designed to help children with exceptional abilities in such areas of arts and craft. South Africa is one of those few countries in Africa that has developed a policy for talented children in areas like painting and drawing and even established a department of talented children in the Ministry of Education. A degree programme at undergraduate level for talented children in creative talents is also offered in University of South Africa. Such policy has not yet been established in Kenya. Although there are many organizations dealing with education of children, most people still tend to think that it is the sole responsibility of the government to develop individual talents. The colonial system tended to make people think that it was the prerogative of the government to develop human manpower.

Countries like Russia, Israel, Sweden and some other advanced nations place high hopes on individual families for the upbringing of children. Where they notice those families may not do well in helping such talents, institutions are built specifically to nurture these talents to come out. Bronfenbrenner (1970) observes that Soviet books on upbringing of children are widely read and taken seriously by parents and teachers. This is where the government comes in with parenting policies which look at the way children are reared to develop their creative talents in such areas like arts and craft. Do we have any literature in Kenya on child upbringing? If so how widely is it read? How much time do families spend on reading such type of literature if it is there? These issues point to family interest in areas of talents of their children.

Precocious Artists

Evidence from developed countries has shown that most of the child prodigies show their talents in such areas like painting and drawing as early as at the age

of two years. It is possible that we have a lot of these talents amongst our children but we have not realized this. Radford (1990) observes that in any of the arts, talents can and perhaps most often do show themselves early. He further lists the most prominent classical composers who began composing at the age of four years. He singles out Mallais who began composing at the age four, fascinated by the military music at the barracks in his own village and the folk songs of the local people. Guldestein had played public concert in Odessa at the age of five. The most famous of the musical prodigies was no doubt Mozart.

Nadia at the age of three and a half years displayed extraordinary ability in drawing. Sir Alfred Mannings, the former president of the Royal Academy is said by his biographer to have made his first sales of drawings at the age of six years. The ability of Mallais was noticed at the age of six years and entered the Royal Academy School at the age of eleven years. Another prodigy was Wang Yani who, when in London at the age of eleven, had a portfolio of more than 4,000 paintings in water colour and toured China, Japan and West Germany, having started painting at the age of 2 years (Radford, 1990). It is pointed out that Picasso started painting before he started walking (Radford, 1990).

In Nairobi, the Times Magazine (1977, December 4), it is noted that Charles Bwire at the age of four years in his Budalan'gi Village was able to draw using his fingers in the dusty ground which attracted people in the whole village to come and admire his drawings. The magazine also singles out Senkooto who at the age of ten won the first and second prize at the ESSO Paintings competition in Kampala. In the East African Standard (2000, October 27), it was reported that Gamar Omar of Burhanja Nursery School emerged a winner in the five to seven years category of the Kenya arts competition. Gamar was only five years. The Daily Nation (2000, September 7) reports that a master Kevin Omondi aged thirteen years from Jack and Jill school won 150 pounds (Ksh 16,950) in an International competition in arts. Others are Asike Oguta, Stephen Matei and Paul Odeya all from Budala Primary school, aged between five to eight years, won various prizes in national Kiwi Arts and

Craft competition of 2001. Also, Edwin Akombe, Justus Ogombo and Reuben Onyango aged nine-twelve years won various prizes in Kiwi National competition of arts and craft. Another person was Onyango Ndalo from Siaya who began painting in his home area around Ukwala at the age of five years. He had become a renowned personality in painting and drawing. These are the examples of the early talents in painting and drawing. Although these reports show that these talents could emerge as early as possible, they do not illustrate the role that family socio-economic factors play in helping these talents to emerge.

Critical Factors that Influence a Child's Creativity

There are various studies that had been carried out on creative talents of children in this country, but none focuses on the family, as a strong agent that can influence creativity in children yet the role the family plays is very important in nurturing children's creativity. Most of the studies have tended to focus on other factors such as being handicapped, mentally retarded, child abuse, child neglect, child rejection, sexual abuse, rather than creativity. Yet the issue of 'identifying creative talents is so current that on the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Mbotela (2001) has been very emphatic that the country does not appreciate, recognise, identify and develop creative talents that exist in the country.

Majority of the families still look at academics as much superior and valuable to natural talents that a child has. Some people argue that formal schooling as found in most countries may be the only best type of education to bring about rapid economic growth. Therefore, this has tended to make both families and policy makers invest heavily in academic work rather than artistic areas. By concentrating on academics and ignoring creative talents in areas such as painting and drawing, the country has continued wasting what would have been creative and talented citizens to serve it in areas different from the traditional professions, such as teaching, medicine, clerical, administrative work and many others. The Jua Kali industry has shown that people have various creative talents that can be used given favourable environment and early training. Most of the industrial countries have had their fame through few people who are talented in areas like painting and drawing. Developing countries have tended not to

invest in policies that encourage exploitations of creative talents.

Socio-Economic Status

In Kenya, it is widely thought that the homes in which parents hold high social status; the children from such homes would go to school without being coerced. It is also thought that parents from such high socio-economic status would easily influence their children's education. To some extent, this is true, yet there are cases from highly educated families and those rich families where children have refused to go to school. Some of the children from high socio-economic status have been put in high-class boarding schools as early as nursery to form four. Wolf (1964), as cited by Bloom (1981), observes that the effects of home environment on intelligence and school development of talents in Arts and Craft is as a result of what parents "do" at home rather than what they "are" that accounts for the child's successful development in creativity in arts and craft in the early years.

No nation can succeed without looking at its children. Developed countries have placed their priorities on children (Daily Nation, 1996, August 31). Bill Clinton in his presidential campaign in his last term promised the Americans that his first priority in White House was going to be children. Kenya has tried its best by setting up various educational commissions to recommend the diversification of its educational curriculum to take care of the school going children. These educational commissions always recommend various skills and knowledge yet one still finds that these do not solve immediate dreams of the school leavers. This is an indication that other ways need to be sought to help children solve some of their problems. Blustein (1982) observes that children should be equipped with skills that enable them to earn a minimum level of income without stress.

The study explored how the home, and especially the family set-up, plays a role as an important factor in equipping children with such skills using their creative talents in arts and craft. It does not matter if the home is in upper class, middle class or lower class. What matters is the roles parents play; not the status

they hold in the society. Birger (1979) notes that:

Apparently the value placed on education and academic achievement in the middle class home is demonstrated among mothers who interact differently with their children in a teaching problem. Parents' behavioural choices are guided in part by his social class value system (p. 37).

Cultural Factors

Cultures play very important role in any given society for a child's socialization. Today, most of the Third World countries, especially in Africa, are at crossroads about the type of cultures they are supposed to follow. There are two groups in Kenya which would like to follow both western and traditional cultures. Then there is another group which would like entirely to follow Western cultures. The biggest problem that faces a working Kenyan mother today is following of her career, and doing it well or doing her career poorly and spares her time for her children or alternatively resigns from her career completely and takes up child rearing as a career. The working mother is found in a great dilemma.

Clark (1988) observes that every culture and ethnic group instils both advantages and limiting attitudes to the children before they enter school. He further notes that talented-ness at the highest level can be formed in every sub-cultural level, racial or ethnic group. However, he argues that the incidences of talented-ness do differ from one cultural, racial, ethnic group to the other. The main reason given is to monitor how a child grows and develops his creative talents in such areas as arts and craft. This, they argue, can be done well when the parents are fully at home, especially the mothers. In Kenya, boys are encouraged to go to schools more than girls. The basic reason given is that boys are the would-be breadwinners and heads of homes.

Fogelman and Vallender (1987) observe that because of some cultural influence, women have shied away from taking up lucrative career. This is because when they develop their careers, the society puts a lot of pressure on them to be housewives and not join men's traditional professions. But when they decide to be full time mothers, the society does not appreciate and

recognize what they do as a profession and their contribution is very much undervalued. One can become a full time mother but her role in the home may not be effective. It is what is done at home that will make the society appreciate the role that a mother plays.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to Eldoret Municipality only, to biological parents only, and to primary school children aged between nine to fourteen years. There is need to carry out a more far-reaching study of, say, Kenya, extend the influence on children's creativity to that by guardians and step-parents as well as analyse creative development in higher stations of learning and age. Nevertheless, the study provides a framework for analyzing the role of the family unit in a child's mental growth and makes a useful reference for governments to come up with relevant policies on child-upbringing.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Eldoret Municipality in Uasin Gishu County, located at the North Rift Valley region of Kenya. There are 17 Secondary schools, 48 Primary Schools and 186 Nursery schools in this region. There are about 21,853 pupils in these primary schools. These primary schools are also categorized according to the Educational Act of (GoK, 1968) into three classes: the high cost, middle and low cost. It is from the 48 primary schools that twelve schools were purposively selected in the Municipality because of unique positions in their various categories. The study used purposive sampling, based on the previous knowledge that the teachers had on the pupils performance in such areas as painting pictures and, drawings of pictures to select a sample. Certificates achieved at various levels of competition such as school levels, district, and provincial, national as well as school records of the targeted population were also utilised. This also assisted in arriving at suitability of pupils to the sample.

Teachers of Arts and Crafts were selected according to their interests and experience in the subjects. All teachers from Kenyan Teacher Training Colleges (TTC) are trained to handle Arts and Crafts but not all have strong interests and experience to guide such creative talents. This was why the study selected those with strong

interests using purposive sampling. Therefore, out of the twelve schools selected with strong interest in Arts and Craft, two teachers were selected in each school purposively to form part of the sample. Sixty parents were also selected randomly to represent the parents of the selected 120 pupils. The main research instruments for data collection in this study were questionnaires. This study involved three categories of respondents, namely selected pupils who are creatively talented in painting and drawing, parents of the selected pupils and the teachers who teach Arts/Crafts in the sampled schools. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education Level and Occupation of the Parents

From the findings of the study, it was shown that majority of the parents were educated people with minimum of primary education and above. The percentage of the parents educated at 'O' level and above was 82%. Only a small percentage (18%) had primary education. This in essence shows that majority of parents were enlightened people who ought to know what is expected of them when it comes to helping a child develop his/her talents. These findings of the study agree with what Durojaiye notes in Terman's (1976) study of the creatively talented children that, at least nearly one third of the children he studied came from professional parents, even though professional groups constituted less than 3% of the population. In the findings of this study, the creative children who participated in the study mostly came from professional parents who formed 59%. Children will take parents as role models and copy what they see around. Activities that are performed by parents motivate children to aspire higher in their creative abilities in such areas as arts and craft. Pressey (1964) notes that the most striking thing in talent development in arts and craft is the very active role the family plays in encouraging a child. This was also shown by the findings of the study where 92% of the respondents from pupils' questionnaire showed that their parents liked the activities they did at home such as painting/drawing. Those who came from peasants' families formed a small percentage (10% only). This shows that education plays an important part in

guiding a child's creativity in potential areas like painting and drawing.

Conditions related to Gender of Children

This was one interesting area where the study found that only 39(33%) of the sample population were female who were talented in painting and drawing. Various reasons come into play here. This could be because most people in the society tend to look at boys' education as superior to girls' education. Winzer (1989) argues that men achieve high status and recognition more frequently than women of the same age. She goes on to point that females have not been encouraged to enter those academic disciplines and careers historically dominated by males. Girls can perform just as well as boys, yet due to this strong cultural influence, boys are given preference by the society in creativity more than girls. Ademola (1989) and Kenyatta (1984) note that boys are given skills meant to develop their creative talents in leading and also earning a living for the family. It is assumed that girls will in future depend on boys as wives. In this case, there would be no need of developing girls' creative talents.

Cultural influence is still strong in many parts of Kenya such as Turkana, Samburu, Masai and Gabra. A girl's education is seen as a mere waste of time since she will leave the home and go to another family. Ademola (1989) notes that among the Sisala tribe in Ghana, girls are given powerful skills on being good housewives and advised not to take any masculine responsibilities in arts and craft. In such ways, girls become docile and develop dependence attitudes. By so doing, society tends to kill golden talents like painting and drawing skills that girls had.

While writing in the East African Standard (1997, July 21), Kihumba notes that in Lesotho, girls who would otherwise remain at home to be well fed and learn duties of good housewives are taken to schools rather than boys who go into the mountains to look after cattle. This is totally a different trend compared to what happens in some cultures in Africa where girls are left behind to take care of children as maids, as boys are sent to school. In some of the Kenyan cultures like Turkana, Samburu and some of the MijiKenda tribes, it is believed that it is the boy's skills that should be developed since he is going to

be the head of the family. Time has come when girls should be given equal opportunity with boys to develop their talents in such areas as painting and drawing. This is meant to help them develop such skills that will be useful to them in future.

Vallender (1987), on the other hand, argues that feminine values are quite essential not only for the survival of the race but equally for the quality of compassion and care, which the society should be willing to accept. Therefore, it is quite necessary that the society should change its attitudes towards creativity in girls' areas such as painting and drawing. The sex of a child should not be a fundamental issue when looking at the talent of the child. Reis (1987) notes that "such creatively talented women of painting and drawing would like to excel also as wives, perfect parents and a principled workers". This is something that the society has to realise and take into account in a family set-up. In a study carried out by Winzer (1989), it has been found that girls have not been encouraged to enter those academic disciplines that were historically dominated by male. Winzer argues that even when they are within a career, they are often rewarded inappropriately for their performance and assessed by irrelevant criteria. They are rewarded with their performance by affection rather than for their performance in their duties. These are some of the factors that kill creative talents in areas of Arts/Crafts among the female.

Other factors that tend to kill creativity among girls are the way the society views them as wives and not contributors to the society. Vallender (1987) says that because of the current social expectations, women have the worst of all worlds. If they decide to have a career and not children, they have to stand powerful against social and family pressures. These are but a few cultural dilemmas that kill girls' creativity in areas of hidden potentials such as arts/craft. It has been realised that given a chance in creative activities and given strong support, girls would excel in such areas of painting/drawing. This was shown by the findings of the study from the responses of 39(32.77%) girls who took part. This is an indication that given opportunity and strong support girls can do as well as boys.

The same realization has also been shown by girls who engage their psychomotor skills such as athletics and drama. They have shown their creative talents. But this kind of encouragement should start at the family level. It should not wait up to school level. A creatively talented child in areas like painting/drawing could be a status symbol in the home. Some children like Nadia, Picasso, Wang' Yani, Bwire, Gamar, Omondi, Asike, Matei, Odeya and Onyango were household in their families as well as the society because of their creative talents in painting and drawing. Bloom (1982) notes that most human beings are born with enormous potential talents, but the growth and development depends on early socialisation by the parents who are keen to give a lot of freedom to the child's curiosity to emerge and develop. Clark (1988) further supports the findings of the current study when he says that it is the values and the interest of parents that will determine which traits will be given great encouragement. The moment parents have a strong belief in what a child does; this is able to encourage him/her.

Age-related Conditions and Creativity

The recommended age for starting school in Kenya at primary level is six years. This is according to the Educational Act (GoK, 1968). But there are some children who can start primary education at the age of 4^{1/2} years and still do well. Of course, in some parts of Kenya, especially the rural areas, children start school even at the age of ten. In the study, 68.07% were between the bracket age of (9-13) years, which is a good age when their capacity and propensity to be puzzled and curiosity is high. This is also a good age for greater height of discovery from the environment.

The finding of this study agree with Willings (1980) and Omari's (1982) that during this age, parents should share learning experiences with children. But in most cases parents do not share these experiences with children. Victor (1990) notes that most of the questions asked are either answered or left pending with the words "I will answer them tomorrow". This was supported by the findings of the study, where only 20(41%) stayed with the children always, while 27(55%) stayed with the children occasionally and 2(4%) never stayed with children. Therefore, some of the questions may be answered

when the parents spend most of his time with the child. Anderson (1959) notes that this is the age that a child wants to know many things in the environment. The child has the propensity to ask many questions that need immediate answers. But at times, a parent will tell the child to seek help from the subject teacher.

Willings (1980) is of the opinion that a school has got its own limit of what it can offer on certain creative activities. Fromm (1957), as cited by Anderson (1959), notes that during this time when the capacity to be surprised/puzzled is high, is the time that parents can quickly move in and use the age for encouraging creativity in such areas like painting drawing. Omari (1982) observes that in Tanzanian society, instead of using this stage by encouraging industry, parents spend it on disciplinary indoctrination, which create fear and scare children from developing their talents. In fact, parents at times are surprised and amused, and sometimes shocked by the child's ability to arrive at their own unique conclusions as they grow up. Korne et al. (1984) believe that parents of the creatively talented children in areas like painting/drawing encourage them through various ways, such as reading to them, taking them for site seeing, holding free discussions and so on for the development of their creative talent in areas of arts/craft.

Most of the prodigies started their creative activities within this age bracket of 2-14. Picasso is said to have started painting before walking. The same observation agrees with the findings of this study where parents showed that 5(10%) of their children were exceptional in painting/drawing, 14(28%) had very high capability in painting and drawing, 20(41%) had a high ability of painting and drawing, and 10(20%) with fairly high ability in painting and drawing. More evidence of age appropriateness for talent development is found in the Sunday Nation (2001, June 24) where it is noted that Asike Oguta, Stephen Matei and Paul Odeya all aged between 5 to 8 years from Budala Primary school won various prizes in Kiwi National competition. Others noted in the Sunday Nation include Robert Wamamba and Edwin Akombe aged 9 to 12 years also from Budala Primary school won various prizes in Kiwi 2nd National competition in arts and craft. These were young children who developed this

creative talent in painting/drawing on their own. Omari (1982) notes that in Soviet Union, they have developed elaborate ways of introducing children to the world of work at the age of two years so that they could be familiar with work ethics. This is one thing that has not been taken seriously in the Kenyan society. The modern society in Kenya still looks at children as people who cannot contribute anything. The society needs to encourage these talents of painting/drawing. Introduction to work in creative activities like arts/craft can start from the family whereby children can be introduced to various activities of their interests like painting/drawing, woodcarving as well as stone carving. Other work activities would be household and home chores that can train them to develop their creativity.

The identification of talents and subsequent development do not need to wait until a child goes to school. Painter (1984) points out that the parents have intuitive knowledge that can do this very well. We have entrusted this responsibility to the teachers, yet Painter (1984) insists that parents are the right people to do it by virtue of being close to the children. Clark (1988) notes that teachers are not specialised in identifying creative children. If the society used ages of 3-14 years to capture creativity of children in discovery of new ideas, we would be having a lot of talents. This study found out that there exist potential talents in children as shown by teachers' response that 5% were exceptionally creative while 35% were very creative and about 60% creative. The study found out that 20(41%) parents spend weekends with their children. This is a very high percentage and shows the concern some parents have for their children. This is also supported by Janchandra (1988) who notes that parents should spend between 50-80% of their in the evening with the children. However, the concern of the findings of this study is with the other 43% who spend less or no time at all in the evening with their children.

It is, indeed, very difficult to follow up these stages closely and be with children all the time. But this requires sacrifice and commitment on the part of parents. While parents assume that teachers are best placed to identify and develop these creative talents, Torrance (1962) notes that

creative children fare on well with creative teachers. Handling these children should be done by teachers who had been trained in primary methods at degree level. Though the report of this Commission has not been tabled in parliament for discussion and adapted as a legal document, its observation is in line with what this study tries to emphasize.

The Family's Socio-Economic Status and a Child's Creativity

From the findings of this study, parents, teachers and pupils indicated that socio-economic status has very little influence on the creativity of a child in areas of painting/drawing. This is in agreement with Dave (1963) and Wolf's (1964), as cited by Bloom (1981), observation that it is not "what we are" in the home that stimulates learning but "What we do" in the home that stimulates creativity of the child in the home. Therefore, when at home, parents should not stick to official status but ought to become parents who have to respond to all sorts of creative activities of their children.

From the findings, when the respondents were asked to rank the factors that stimulate creativity, socio-economic status was placed sixth position by children and parents. In addition, teachers placed socio-economic status as 7th. These findings show a clear indication that the family's socio-economic status has minimal influence in helping a child develop his talents in areas like painting/drawing. Mutero (2000) and Omari (1982) both note that there is nothing that makes children more proud than to see parents getting involved in their creative activities. They also feel happy when parents give positive comments about their creative activities to encourage them. The findings of this study are in agreement with what Janchadra (1988) suggests, that time must be spared for these creative activities. The findings of this study are supported by Shallcross (1981) who opines that necessity is the mother of invention. This means that at times creativity is necessitated by certain circumstances and not the family's socio-economic status that one finds himself in. This is also in agreement when 49% of the parents responded that creativity does not affect their children's performance in school.

CONCLUSION

It has emerged that socio-economic status has no strong influence on the creativity of the child. However, cultural factors, lack of role models in the society in areas of creative talents inhibit creativity among children especially girls in areas of arts/craft. This was shown by the small percentage of girls who participated in the study. There are no role models for painting/drawing that can stimulate children to develop their creativity. Children rely on their own curiosity and reading in our modern society to develop their interest in painting/drawing. It has also been shown that birth order has nothing to do with the development of creativity of talents among children. The study has shown that middle born children are more creative than the first and the last-born children. Lastly, it has been revealed that parents are eager that creativity should be encouraged in schools instead of saying that they should play an active role in identifying these talents. In a way, parents are accepting that they would like to play a bigger role in developing potential talents in their children but lack some guidance on how to do it.

The findings in the study indicate that there are talents to be developed, but it is only lack of direction to follow that is rather lacking. Therefore, girls should also be encouraged to be creative. A child is a child, and it does not matter which sex he/she is. Parents should look at girls as children whose talents can be exploited fully. In addition, parenting should be recognized and appreciated like any other profession. The government should have a fund for encouraging those ladies who are professionals and opt out of civil service to go and take child rearing as full time job. A parenting policy can be instituted for this. Furthermore, those identified in such creative activities should be encouraged to pursue such areas up to degree level without being burdened with vigorous examinations, which tend to block their upward mobility and discourage them from developing their talents. In this case Teacher Training Colleges should train specialised teachers for creatively talented children rather than using merely general knowledge. Malawi has set up a school of talented children. This can also be done in Kenya. Lastly, this paper recommends that the government

should have strong policy on parenting whereby a curriculum should be set for teaching parenting as a subject on its own.

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