EDUCATING MODERN KENYANS: DR. GEOFFREY WILLIAM GRIFFIN AND
STAREHE BOYS CENTRE AND SCHOOL

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This dissertation titled
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STAREHE BOYS CENTRE AND SCHOOL

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Abstract

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EDUCATING MODERN KENYANS: DR. GEOFFREY WILLIAM GRIFFIN AND STAREHE BOYS CENTRE AND SCHOOL (508 pp.)

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The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the person of Geoffrey William Griffin, identify and examine forces that accounted for his involvement in Kenyan youth education, interpret how the establishment of Starehe Boys Centre and School reflects Kenya’s educational historical context of the time and to obtain an understanding of Griffin’s insights on the Kenyan youth education.

The study took the design of an interpretive educational biography. The research participants were those individuals with whom Griffin had interacted with in various youth educational programs that he was involved. These included alumni, administrators, colleagues, staff, and friends. Thirty-six participants took part in the study.

Data were collected from both secondary and primary sources using a qualitative inquiry approach. The methods used in collecting data from the primary sources were life histories, open-ended interviews, participant observation, document, archival, and audiovisual analysis. Analysis of the data was done through biographical techniques of: consolidation, description, reduction, and interpretation.

Among the major findings, the study revealed that the forces that propelled Griffin to be involved in the development of Kenyan education were: his early childhood experiences, early encounters with Africans in his work as a Survey Cadet, effects of the
Mau Mau War, his experiences as an intelligence and rehabilitation officer at both Manyani and Wamumu, his activities as a youth colony organizer, and his leadership at the National Youth Service and Starehe Boys Centre and School. The findings also revealed that Griffin’s establishment of Starehe Boys Centre and School reflects Kenya’s educational historical contexts in both colonial and postcolonial periods in terms of its accessibility, equity, and quality. In addition, it illustrates aims and objectives of Kenya’s educational reviews during this period and its future prospects in both secondary and tertiary education. With regard to Griffin’s insights on Kenya’s youth education, the findings revealed that Griffin advocated for an education system that was international, pragmatic, democratic, character and benefit-based, attitude-changing, relational, wholistic, collaborative, and service-centered.

From the findings of the study, the policy implications drawn were: The Kenyan Ministry of Education is required to formulate policies that allow: continuous reinvigoration and reviews of its educational programs, school administrators to use innovative leadership approaches that are collaborative and yield success. There is need for the Kenyan government to invest more in tertiary youth education.

The study recommended further research in the following areas: historiographic significance of various African educators and their contributions to the growth of African education; quality of African education and its ability to address societal needs; partnering in educational leadership; and the place of relationality in education.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

Najee’ E. Muhammad
Associate Professor of Educational Studies
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to:

My sister Cammy Abby Otiato and my brother, the late Steve Harmas Ojiambo who from my early childhood introduced me to the dance of academics and relentlessly provided all that I required with abundant love without complaining and encouraged me to stay on course even in situations where we all felt as a family we had reached a cul-de-sac.

AND

To all Stareheans who- like those early Christians in the book of Acts –look at who they are now and who they’ll never be, and what they can do now and what they’ll never be able to do and still ask God for the world.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These acknowledgments must perform double duty. In writing this dissertation, I have depended upon countless acts of support, generosity, and guidance. But perhaps more important, in engaging with the challenges of educational thought, theory, pedagogy, and praxis in a deeply polarized educational process, I have depended upon steadfast colleagues, educators, leaders, mentors, friends, and family. This is an important opportunity for me to thank them for a lifetime of collegiality and support.

I naturally begin with my family, Allie, Cammy, Connie, Goretti, Steve, Claire, and Hilda without whom none of this would have been possible. This has been a family effort, through many years of labor, support, love, encouragement and sacrifice, all of us coming together to mourn in our family tragedies and at the same time rejoicing in the presence and company of each other. Their understanding, unreserved veneration over the years and wonder of what an academic inquiry can do to both an individual and society has been my inspiration on this academic pilgrimage. Cammy has been my guide, inspiration, and educator of differential diagnosis and partner in educational issues. In her good hands we all thrived despite the early tragic death of my father at a central stage of our lives. Cammy held us together and ensured we were fed, clothed, and educated. Connie, I am proud to say, has been with me in all my academic experiences and took up both my financial and logistical planning, balancing between her family and, profession and my academic pursuits. In this family effort, the wisdom of my late brother, Steve Ojiambo; the good, quiet, and prayerful sense of my mother, Hellena Ojiambo; and avid interest of my brother Allie Ojiambo, all played a tremendous role in keeping me on the right track. I have also had the enduring moral compass of my late father, Silvanus
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To all those who contributed to the success of this work in one way or another, whom I cannot individually thank, I say “May the good Lord full of grace bless you all
the days of your lives and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

When Kenya’s Vice-President Moddy Awori was asked to comment on the person of Geoffrey William Griffin after his death, his answer contained the following reflection on Griffin’s contributions to the development of modern Kenyan education: “The story of Geoffrey Griffin, I hope people can write it. It is a story of a giant. The person who made a lasting impact on this country” (M. Awori, documentary interview, 2005). During his lifetime and in the years after his death “the story” and “the lasting impact” of Griffin on Kenyan education by educational scholars has not been forthcoming. Griffin is usually remembered because he is the eponym of youth education through his involvement in youth education in both the colonial and postcolonial periods and especially through his activities as director of Starehe Boys Centre and School (SBC) and the National Youth Service (NYS). He is usually mentioned briefly in Kenyan history survey texts. Otherwise, his place in Kenyan history has been largely unexamined.

Should one simply accept at face value Awori’s assessment of Griffin’s impact on Kenyan education? Of course not. Why then, do we need an educational biography of Griffin? For one thing, he is an important figure to students of Kenyan education. Griffin’s role as an architect of Kenyan youth education, its evolution, growth, and future insights, is the central focus of this work. Although he is best known as the founder of SBC, his contributions to Kenyan youth education went well beyond his work with SBC.
He was, for instance, instrumental in shaping Kenyan youth education in the colonial period, through the juvenile rehabilitation programs of the Manyani and Wamumu camps and the formation of youth centers that later laid the foundation for modern Kenyan secondary education. Griffin’s educational activities were wide-ranging and included both practical and theoretical aspects of the teaching and management of the education process.

This educational biography is intended to fill an important gap in the historiography of the evolution and growth of Kenyan education both in the colonial and postcolonial periods. A complete understanding of educational policies and politics during these periods cannot be attained without an examination of Griffin’s life and work. No educational biography of him exists and the secondary sources that are available about him, his career, and educational insights are mostly dated and of limited scope. Scholars of Kenyan education too often have treated Griffin’s role in Kenyan education in a shallow way, focusing narrowly on his work at SBC to the exclusion of other roles that he played in the growth of Kenyan education. Scholars of SBC, such as Roger Martin (1978) and Kennedy Hongo and Jesse Mugambi (2000), do not explore Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education in depth. Martin’s (1978) *Anthem of Bugles: The Story of Starehe Boys Centre and School* and Hongo and Mugambi’s (2000) *Starehe Boys Centre: School and Institute: The First Forty years 1959-1999* provide a helpful frame on Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education but they do not delve further into his work in the development of Kenyan education. They focus more on SBC’s growth and programs.
Much of my approach is modeled on King’ala’s (2005) work, *The Autobiography of Geoffrey William Griffin: Kenya’s Champion Beggar*. One of King’ala’s objectives in his text is to present a wholistic picture of who Griffin was, in his own words. Another objective is to analyze and interpret his persona in terms of his educational philosophy and administrative principles. Although King’ala’s work does not concentrate on Griffin’s involvement and contributions to Kenyan education and is not a scholarly work, it is upon some of his discussions and the earlier cited works that this study is framed.

Anyone who wants to understand Kenyan youth education today, in both its challenges and future possibilities, should realize that Griffin helped to shape the terms of its debates that continue to this day, and the existence of NYS and SBC are his everlasting memorials. I hope that this study will call attention to the historical roots of the current Kenyan educational challenges and offer some possible solutions for alleviating them. It is instructive for Kenyan education scholars, policymakers and the public to see how Griffin and his contemporaries in the late 1950s until 2005, addressed Kenyan educational challenges, whose essence--the struggle to make Kenyan education relevant to its developmental goals, was essentially the same as it is today. Students of Kenyan education will find that Griffin was a tireless educator concerned with youth education, his life and career should be of interest to anyone seeking to understand the evolution and growth of Kenyan education both in the colonial and postcolonial periods.

In order to comprehensively understand the involvement of Griffin in the evolution and growth of modern Kenyan education it is important to examine historical foundations of Kenyan educational system. The evolution of modern Kenyan education
has had a long historical base. In order to understand its development it is vital to examine three main phases that have shaped its growth, namely, the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods. The three phase’s present varied historical, social, political, and economic contexts that form the contemporary Kenyan education system. The precolonial phase was characterized by the African indigenous education whose main goal was to train individuals to fit into their respective societies as useful members. It provided skills, knowledge and values that were relevant to society and socialized individuals to fit into and participate adequately in the development of the society. The objectives, scope, and methods of teaching reflected these roles. Events of colonialism caused fundamental destruction to precolonial Kenya and to a larger extent destroyed much of the core tenets of its educational system.

The colonial phase marked the introduction of the Western form of schooling in Kenya. This form, in which teaching and learning activities were formalized into a classroom setting, was introduced in Kenya by missionaries in the 19th century. Missionary education was linked to Christianity and at the beginning its major aim was to produce African “priests” who would assist in spreading the word of God and Western civilization to fellow Africans. Missionaries controlled education in Kenya up to 1911, when the colonial government stepped in. The introduction of formal education according to Eshiwani (1993), Bogonko (1992), and Otieno and Sifuna (1992) presented Africans with many difficulties, some of which remain unresolved today. Key among these, according to Eshiwani (1993) was the creation of an education system that never met the needs of the Africans. The missionary and colonial government made no efforts to link
African education to African problems and cultural heritage. At the initial stages, missionaries were only interested in making converts. They viewed African culture as an obstacle to their spread of Christianity and Western civilization. The colonial administration wanted Kenya to become self-sufficient in the quickest time possible and worked hand in hand with settlers with an agreement that this could be achieved if Africans were educated to form a largely laboring and clerical class. Apart from developing the colony’s economy, the colonial administration also wanted an education that could provide chiefs and headmen capable of participating in their indirect rule system of governance.

Colonial education was segregative and exploitative. After realizing that the colonial government was not ready to change and develop an educational system that would benefit all people, the Africans begun questioning its relevance. They demanded an education that could help them develop socially, economically, and politically and were opposed to an education that laid emphasis on technical and vocational skills at the expense of the academic component. They viewed this as a way of keeping them in an inferior position. The demand for an appropriate academic education and recognition of African cultural values and participation in nation building became serious grievances after the Second World War. Upon their return, war veterans put up more pressure on the colonial government to change educational policies.

In order to reap the benefits of a formal education, Africans set up their own independent schools, which were managed by Africans themselves. These schools offered academic education to Africans and incorporated African culture into
Christianity. Independent schools had a lot of impact on Africans and forced the colonial government to evaluate its educational policies in order to meet the increasing demands of Africans. This is clearly evidenced in the activities of the various commissions that were set up by the colonial government to review education such as, the Phelps Stokes Commission of 1924, the Beecher report of 1949, and the Binns Commission of 1952. A critical examination of these commissions indicates that the colonial educational policies were racial and continued to favor Europeans and Asians, a factor that made Africans continue to press for better education.

In the postcolonial phase, Kenya’s struggle for political independence served as a major impetus for her current educational development and change. The colonial legacy comprised of a racial system of education, one that exploited African labor and resources, one that did not address the broader needs of the nation. During the struggle for Independence, the nationalists, aim was to establish a decolonizing education process that sought to produce an educational philosophy that would help in shaping the educational practices that were best suited to serve the immediate needs of the country with their newly determined values, ideals and aspirations. Immediately after independence, Kenya was confronted with a major shortage of skilled personnel to run its economy. During this period, there was an increase in the demand for the expansion of education at both secondary and primary levels. To alleviate this, the Kenyan government took a quick action in 1963 to develop a comprehensive educational policy and strategy to satisfy its individual and national needs. New policy and legal framework was required to define the educational and ideological needs of the new state. The new government embarked on
a plan to provide universal free education that would address the economic needs of the nation. According to Eshiwani (1993), the government endeavored to prepare youth in the building of an independent, self-reliant and truly African nation. It is in this frame of thought that the ruling party, Kenya African Union (KANU), placed high premium on education as an essential tool in its election manifesto in the period preceding Independence.

It is against this backdrop that the modern Kenyan education system was built. The current educational system has been built on five commissions of inquiries and several sessional papers. The commissions include the Kenya Education Commission (1964)-Ominde Commission; the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policy (1976)-Gacathi Report; the Presidential Working Party on the Second University (1981)-Mackay Report and the Presidential Working Party on Education and Man-Power (1988)-Kamunge Report and Koech Commission (2000). A critical analysis of these commissions and sessional papers illustrate the government’s commitment to the improvement of education and its determination to offer high-quality education that can address its challenges politically, socially, culturally, and economically.

Kenyan education, in both the colonial and postcolonial phases, has experienced numerous challenges, namely, increased student enrollments, increased levels of student unrests, and administrative and financial problems (Bogonko, 1992; Eshiwani, 1993; Otiende & Sifuna, 1992; Wamahiu & Karugu, 1992). In order to fully understand the growth, challenges and future prospects of modern Kenyan education it is imperative to look at some of the educators who have been instrumental in shaping its course.
Commenting on the role of studying individuals in biographical studies and their power in influencing social change, Kridel (1998) writes:

They have the capacity to reveal the ideological, economic, political, social and cultural crucibles within which a person develops ways of knowing, thinking, acting and being. Through the revelation of individual lives and circumstances, biographers can probe the sources of creativity, the origin of new sensibilities, the forming of original thoughts. (p. 48)

By reading biographies, written and lived stories, people are able to connect and they come to the realization that they are not alone, they can relate to the experiences of another human being in another age. Further, they can identify with his or her journey through the vicissitudes of life. Historically, beyond their capacity to reveal the origins of ideas and the existence of social possibilities and alternatives, biographies can also provide a window through which to observe the nature of social change. In addition, the study of individuals in history making also reveals the origins of ideas, evolution of alternative possibilities to societal possibilities. They provide a documentary context in which to measure the relative power of both material and ideological circumstances. They help us to understand in depth how and why events occurred, they illuminate action and reveal meaning, as well as provide a reformation compass for society. And above all, they inspire.

Carr (1961) sees the historical individual as a product and agent of the historical process, at once the representative and creator of social forces which change the shape of their world and thought of their societies. The individual thus is a representative of a
survey and scrutiny of the past and compromises of observations and instructions for the future in terms of societal changes. The study of men and women who have left significant footprints on human life, therefore has led to in depth understanding of the complex and dialectical social, political, and economic contexts in which they functioned. Examining roles of individuals in history serves, therefore, as a focal device, especially in situations where an individual who might be of relatively little importance can be cited as a type or as a useful lead into issues and developments of wider historical importance.

It is in light of recognition of the role of the individual in history that this study seeks to examine Geoffrey William Griffin, one of the longest serving educators in Kenya in both colonial and postcolonial periods, from 1959 to 2005. Griffin was involved in the development of Kenyan youth education for 46 years. This study examines him as a person and in reference to his contributions to the growth of Kenyan youth education.

Statement of the Problem

The more we know the role of individuals in developing a nation the more we understand the historical, social, political, and economic happenings of that nation. To effectively understand the historical forces that have shaped the growth of modern Kenyan education, an examination of individual educators who have contributed to it is essential. An in-depth study of such individuals illuminates specific contexts and events that have been significant to the process. By exploring their lives we explore experiences and abilities of the Kenyan people in history and their efforts to shape their educational system.
For 46 years Dr. Geoffrey William Griffin played an active role in Kenya’s educational process, especially in his works with SBC (1959 to 2005) and the NYS (1963 to 1988). Commenting on his involvement in Kenyan education through the SBC, Griffin (1996) observed that under his management, Starehe Boys’ Centre grew in terms of physical, academic, and affective programs. The growth of the school was experienced both at the national and international level, the latter was evidenced through the admission of Starehe Boys Centre and School into the prestigious Round Square Group of Schools and Global Connections Conference. Starehe is among the few schools from the continent of Africa that are members of these associations and the only one whose students are from deprived backgrounds. Besides Starehe, Griffin’s involvement in youth education also included the rescue of two thousand youngsters from Manyani detention camp during the 1952 Emergency period, and with two colleagues, running a rehabilitation and education program for them at Wamumu, as well as the pre-Independence planning and coordination of youth centers throughout the country, many of which later evolved into village polytechnics or “harambee” (pull together) secondary schools. In the independence period in 1963, at the request of President Kenyatta, he founded the NYS and directed it for 24 years, becoming the longest service commander in Kenya’s history.

It is this unique involvement of Griffin in the growth of Kenyan youth education that this study seeks to explore. His educational activities in colonial and postcolonial Kenya are expected to shed light on the historical, social, and political forces that have influenced and shaped Kenyan education, and the future prospects of the system.
Griffin’s involvement in youth education is expected to provide insights on Kenyan educational system in terms of educational change in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya and a frame of its future development.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to:

- Gain an understanding of the person of Griffin, his involvement in Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial period; his representation of the Kenyan historical, social, cultural, political, and economic events that have been pertinent to the evolution of its educational system; and his overall insights on Kenyan youth education.

- Understand efforts that have and are being made by Kenyan educators to decolonize their educational system; challenges the education process has been experiencing in the last four decades; remedies that can be used to alleviate them; and the future prospects of the system in terms of constructing strong social, political, and economic structures that are vital for its developmental process.

**Research Questions**

- What forces caused Griffin to be involved in the development of education in late colonial Kenya? Why and in what ways did he become involved in the development of Kenyan education?

- How did Griffin’s establishment of Starehe Boys Centre and School reflect Kenya’s educational context at the time?
• What insights into the Kenyan education system does Griffin’s involvement in youth education provide in terms of educational change in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya?

Significance of the Study

Educational administrators who are charged with overall management of schools and youth educational programs are expected to gain ideas and skills on essential strategies that are vital for effective management of educational institutions. Insights on these areas are expected from an analysis of Griffin’s educational experiences in youth education both at SBC and the NYS.

Findings from this study are expected to be of use to the Kenyan Ministry of Education, which is charged with policy making, curriculum formulation, inspection, and funding. Griffin’s approaches to the practical aspects of educational policies, such as how to effectively monitor and evaluate school curriculum using student-learning outcomes, financial strategies that can sustain school programs, and other approaches to increasing school funding, are expected to be useful and capable of replication in other learning environments with regard to creating effective educational structures. The Ministry of Education is expected to be exposed to reliable, tested, and effective ideas that can be coalesced so as to improve the management of schools.

The study is expected to be of use to educational policymakers whose purpose is to formulate educational legislative policies that govern education process with regard to pedagogy, curriculum, funding, teaching methods, administration, and evaluation
Griffin’s approaches to administration, management, and funding are expected to provide insights about approaches and strategies that can be used in formulating sound educational reform policies that relate to effective school administration, management, and financing.

The study is also expected to provide information that could improve the function of classroom educators. Classroom educators’ roles mainly center on the implementation process of the school curriculum through the teaching and learning process. They are the central players in the implementation of the educational policies. Griffin’s strategies of handling personnel in the school are expected to provide insights on how to improve personnel management, staff retention, collaboration, and team work, the forging of an educational community, procedures and ways of motivating and building a strong teaching faculty. In addition, educators are also expected to gain teaching and learning strategies that can allow meaningful and wholistic education to take place. Further, findings from the study are expected to enable educators gain insights on how to create space for the fusion of educational theory and practice while at the same time seed excellence.

Students are the key recipients and the central axis upon which any educational system is built. From their learning outcomes, the success or failure of an education system is measured. Educational activities both academic and affective at SBC are diverse, and students are drawn from varied socio-economic backgrounds. Discipline and excellence in national examinations at the school, as built by Griffin are educational models that are expected to provide students with viable approaches to
creating and enhancing school discipline, career choices, and nurturing of academic excellence. In addition, students are expected to gain beneficial academic and affective orientation skills that pertain to wholistic education that are necessary for societal development. Further, the student leadership system at SBC is expected to provide learners with opportunities to nurture effective student leadership capable of fostering dialogue and care relations in schools. In addition, Griffin’s involvement in youth education through his activities at the NYS are expected to shed light on the best strategies to be used to improve youth education in terms of creating more training opportunities and approaches to addressing challenges that emanate from the same.

This study will add to the already existing body of literature on educational biographies, especially from an African setting, that address the role of individual educators in the process of education and change. Most biographical studies that have been done in this regard are mostly from outside Africa and are largely quantitative. There is need, therefore, for a qualitative study to examine the role of individual educators in the growth of African education. This study attempts to fill this void and expects to shed more light on educators’ roles in the evolution and growth of education; the historical, political, and economic forces that have shaped their involvement in education; challenges they have experienced; and their insights in terms of educational change. The study is also expected to stimulate further research in the still-evolving field of educational biographies.
**Delimitations of the Study**

The study was limited to the remaining one cofounder of SBC, its current and former administrators, teaching faculty, support staff, and students who were available at the time the field research was conducted. In total, 36 participants took part in the study. This was due to the limited time frame and finances that were available for the study.

**Definition of Terms**

In this study, the operational definitions of terms are as follows:

**Academic programs** are those learning activities such as classroom teaching and learning that take place in schools. These activities are included in the standard syllabus provided by the Ministry of Education. They follow well-defined rules and regulations.

**Affective orientations** are not structural activities; hence, they refer to informal activities that contribute indirectly to the learning process of students. These activities take place outside the normal classroom activities and are not included in the standard syllabus provided by the Ministry of Education. These include sports, clubs, societies, and volunteer service schemes.

**“Baraza” system** is the student parliament or forum where school administrative issues, governance, and other informative matters are discussed. Its aim is to enhance dialogue, relations, partnership, and overall growth of the school.

**Biography** is a portrait of an individual (Creswell, 1998).

**Brotherhood** is the family bond forged by Starehe boys both current and past by virtue of their shared school experiences, traditions, and customs.
Care relations embody relations that pertain to the nurturing of both human and non-human entities.

Colonial period is the period when Kenya was under colonial rule.

Educational biographies are portraits of individuals who have made contributions in the educational field.

Global Connections Foundation is the association of schools that seeks to collaborate on enhancing international education through partnerships that seek to create forums for discussing the impact of global developments and their effects on global educational systems (http://www.globalconnetion.org/gpie.html).

Juvenile pipeline was a repatriation process that African youth who were detained during the war, went through before their eventual integration into their respective societies.

Juvenile reception centers were temporary repatriation centers where African youth detainees were kept pending their transition to their communities.

Leadership style is the way(s) of leading or governing.

Old Starehean Society (OSS) is the official umbrella that is composed of both former and current students of Starehe. Membership is open to members of SBC who might not be old boys of the school but are on the Starehe teaching faculty.

Postcolonial period refers to the period after independence when Kenya was under self-rule or governance. This includes the current period or the neocolonial era.

Precolonial period is the period prior to colonial rule in Kenya.
**Prefectorial force** is the students’ governing body that is responsible for student leadership activities in the school. It is basically in charge of running school activities that take place outside the classroom.

**Relationality** refers to the individual or human connections that are established and the reciprocal nature they produce as a result of the established bonds or the activities in which they partipate.

**Round Square Group of Schools** is a worldwide association of more than 50 schools on five continents sharing unique and ambitious educational goals. Students attending Round Square schools make a strong commitment, beyond academic excellence, to personal development and responsibility. This is attained through their participation in community service, work projects, and exchange programs. Round Square is based on theories of experiential educational philosopher Kurt Hahn ([http://www.roundsquare.org/whoweare.htm](http://www.roundsquare.org/whoweare.htm)).

**School learning outcomes** include both academic and informal effects that emanate from an educational program.

**School leadership** refers to various modes of school governance or administration.

**School management systems** are Structures that have been put in school that are responsible for its functional process.

**Transactional leadership** takes place when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. The exchange could be economic, political, or psychological in nature (Burns, 1979).
**Transformational leadership** is the type of leadership in which one or more persons engages with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. This type of leadership is characterized by charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration by the leader. The governance is based on mutual trust of both the leader and the led (Burns, 1979).

**Youth centers** were “illegal” schools where the youth received training in various trades that would enable them participate in societal development.

**Youth clubs** were recreational centers that were formed to provide leisure facilities for idle youth who did not have access to the limited colonial schooling.

**Youth education** is the education that is offered to the youth, both male and female, from the ages of 13 to 18 years of age in Kenya.

**Youth vagrancy** refers to any criminal activities such as petty theft, fighting, and vandalism that were carried out by youth.

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**Organization of the Study**

The biographical nature of the present study precipitated its organization. The study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 serves the dual purpose of setting the tone for the dissertation by outlining the major considerations that were influential to my thinking prior to the study and were instrumental in shaping it. The chapter is comprised of investigative parameters of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and delimitations, definition of terms, and organization of the study.
Chapter 2 focuses on the review of the relevant literature, and presents an overview of the theoretical basis of the study. It also discusses educational biographies, major components that characterize them, and the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which they arise. Further, it contains discussions and studies on the evolution and growth of the Kenyan educational system in terms of educational commissions and sessional papers that have been instrumental in its growth. Accessory to this, it examines the challenges that Kenyan education has faced in both the colonial and postcolonial periods and its future prospects in societal development.

Chapter 3 deals with the methodology of data collection, presentation, and analysis. The chapter includes: sources of data, nature of data collected, methods of data collection, data presentation, and analysis procedures. The chapter is written in a narrative form and describes the participants’ views on who Geoffrey William Griffin was; his involvement in youth education in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya; his representation of Kenya’s historical, social, political, and economic events that have been pertinent to its evolution; and his insights on Kenyan youth education. It covers three phases of Kenya’s history (pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial). Its main purpose is to outline the individual’s biography as it pertains to the investigative parameters of the study.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 consist of the discussions and interpretation of the data that was collected. The chapters outline particular patterns and tendencies that emerged in the previous three chapters based on the forces that compelled Griffin to become involved in Kenyan educational development in late colonial Kenya; his establishment of Starehe
Boys Centre and School and its representation of Kenya’s historical, social, and political
history of education; and his insights on Kenyan education in terms of educational
change in both colonial and postcolonial periods.

Chapter 7 summarizes the interplay and implications of the findings put forth in
chapters 4, 5, and 6 and examines their relevance to the theoretical tenets of the study,
provided in chapter 2 and offers some suggestions for further research and policy
implications.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter on the review of related literature is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on related literature pertaining to biographies and development of education in Kenya in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods. Section 2 focuses on the theoretical framework of the study.

Specifically, the chapter is organized in the following manner:

- Development of education in Kenya in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods.
- Educational biography.
- Theoretical framework:
  - Theories of relationality: Jane Roland’s theory of care, concern, and commitment.
  - Theories of leadership: contingency theory of leadership.

Development of Education in Kenya

In order to understand Griffin’s involvement in the development of Kenyan youth education, it is vital to examine the state of education in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods and their embedded structures for training youth. The aim of examining these phases is to understand the historical contextual framework on which
this study is framed. It is within the premise of educational fluidity in these phases that Griffin came to build his youth educational programmes.

**Precolonial Period**

Like any other African society, Kenyan communities had an effective education system within various social and political institutions before the coming of the European missionaries and the colonial administration. This assertion is evidenced in the works of Watkins (1943), Scalon (1967), Mbiti (1969), Ocitti (1973), Boateng (1983), Rodney (1982), and Bassey (1999), who have extensively researched indigenous African education prior to the coming of Europeans. These scholars observe that when the Christian missionaries came with their new faith, they did not find an educational void in African societies. There were indigenous patterns of education which met the needs of the people. These premissionary forms of education concern the first part of this section.

Traditional African education is as old as the history of the African people. Bassey (1999) observes:

> In the social sphere, even in the feudal societies of pre-colonial Black Africa, education was considered far more valuable than even high birth or fortune, to the point where the title “man” was inseparable from a certain number of traits linked to education. (p. 16)

> Although without formal schools, African societies had developed the means to create and transmit their cultural principles from one generation to another. The aim of education, according to Nyerere (1967) and Marah (1989), was to produce men and women who could fit into their respective societies as useful members. It sought to
prepare a person for his or her responsibilities as an adult in his or her home, village, and tribe. It provided many skills—knowledge, customs, lores, and values that were necessary for survival and the continuity of the community. African education was directed toward goals that could be perceived by considering what was done in each community. African indigenous education varied from simple instruction to the complex educational system of well-organized societies that incorporated a myriad of ceremonies. Bassey (1999) claims that there was no special body that was charged with the responsibility of education; everybody was involved in the process. He notes that this concept is vividly summed up in the African proverb, “It takes a whole village to raise a child” (p. 16). Explaining the value of community involvement in African education, Fajana (1978) writes:

The whole community was involved, each component part acting as an agent of policy at one time or the other. Every component part of the society knows exactly what good education should accomplish, each understood clearly what duties it should perform and how to go about them, each was aware of the consequences. (p. 14)

The study of precolonial education is a study of the upbringing of the child as well as the study of the means adopted to achieve the goal. The central aim of this education was culture transmission. Adeoti (1997) argues that “since culture is itself dynamic and every generation has its own imprint on what it transmits, the processes were not as simple as the superficial observer would suppose” (p. 3). It is these cultural complexities that made most African societies use a variety of means to transmit their
culture from one generation to another. The process of transmission began from infancy and went on until death. The interpretation of the cosmic was the bedrock of African indigenous education. Thus, such concepts as “affirmation of life,” “creation,” “community,” “person,” and “work” were focal points in the shaping of education. Learning was conceived as boundless fused with all aspects of life. Due to this integrative thinking, Africans did not perceive education as a separate process or institution from everything else in life. No distinction was made between formal and informal education. The process of African indigenous education was intimately integrated with the social, cultural, artistic, religious, and recreational life of the tribal or ethnic group. This means that “schooling” and “education,” or the learning of skills as well as social and cultural values and norms, were not separated from other realms of life. The education provided youth to fit into their respective gender groups and stipulated the roles they were supposed to play in the construction of society.

Due to the absence of permanent schools many Europeans who came to Africa in the 19th century, frequently blinded by their own cultural paradigms, viewed indigenous African education as mainly informal and used various negative terms to describe it. According to Ocitti (1973), “Africa was seen as savage, a pagan with no history and culture to pass on or perpetuate, he was primitive and knew nothing” (p. 104). This view contributed greatly to the false belief among early Western scholars that Africans never taught their young. Such scholars argued that “all the young were left in total ignorance, if there was any learning at all before our arrival in Africa, it was by the young imitating the old” (Ocitti, 1973, p. 105). Other scholars assumed that since Africans did not read or
write, they had no systems of education and thus lacked contents and methods to pass on to their young. To such scholars education meant Western civilization, and without civilization there was no education. It is based on these assumptions that the Europeans sought to explore Africa with the aim of bringing education to the “uneducated Africans.” This academic tradition of putting Europe at the pinnacle of civilization has now been largely addressed and refuted by both Western and non-Western scholars as evidenced in the works of Sifuna and Otiende (1992), Davidson (1969), Labouret (1962), Rodney (1982), Ben-Jochannan (1988), and Medonsa (2001). Sifuna and Otiende (1992) argue that to define education in terms of school or of reading and writing is to mistake “part” for the “whole” or the “wood” for the “tree.” Schooling and education are not synonymous terms. If education is defined as the:

Whole process by which one generation transmits its culture to succeeding generations or as a process by which people are prepared to live effectively and efficiently in their environment then it can be concluded that before the advent of the European, there was an effective education system in African clan, chiefdom, or kingdom. (Sifuna & Otiende, 1992, p. 15)

This assertion is affirmed by Watkins (1943), Scanlon (1967), Mbiti (1969), Nyerere (1967), and Boateng (1983). Marah (1989) notes that “the education of the African before the coming of the Europeans was an education that prepared him (sic) for his responsibilities as an adult in his home, village, and his tribe” (p. 24). These views are also supported by Nyerere (1967) who notes that youth learned by living and doing. In
homes and on farms they were taught the skills and the behavior required. The education that was offered was elaborate, effective, tangible, definite and intelligible.

Before the advent of Europeans to Kenya, African indigenous education was relatively adequate with regard to meeting the needs of the community at that time. Adults were clear on the purpose of education. Education enabled children to acquire a set of values and an ethical system that guided their behavior. It enhanced a spirit of appreciation and the maintenance of the customs, traditions and cultural heritage of the clan. It trained and prepared children to acquire responsibilities that were gender appropriate. The education process had clear objectives, contents, and methods as any other system of education.

Any system of education is based on some philosophical foundation and one way to understand an educational system of a particular society is to examine its philosophical threshold. This assumption is based on the premise that what people do depends on what they are and what they are largely depends on their beliefs about themselves and of the universe they inhabit. Occiti (1973) gives the following as key philosophical components of the indigenous African education: communalism, preparationism, functionalism, perennialism, and wholisticism.

Communalism: Although Kenya had many cultures, they all emphasized what Bassey (1999) refers to as “a summum bonum,” a social sensitivity that made one willing to lose himself or herself in the group. It was the goal of education to inculcate this sense of belonging, which was the highest cultural system. The young were educated in and for the community’s way of life. Bassey notes that educated people in African society were
required to conduct themselves in such a manner as to bring honor, and not disgrace, to the family and society. Education was therefore, the whole fusing of the community. The child was brought up within a complex social structure comprised of family, lineage, the clan, and the chiefdom. The child was a member of all these groups. Each community member had a role to play in the education of a child.

In a nutshell, parents sought to bring up their children within the community where each member perceived his or her well-being as part of the welfare of the group as a whole. Commenting on this, Mbiti (1975) writes that the African people operated under the maxim: “I am because we are, and because we are so I am” (p. 16). Through traditional learning, African people understood the bondedness of life. According to Tedla (1995), affirmation of life was impossible without a community, because community also meant community life. She observes that African education aimed at changing one’s orientation from “I” centeredness (individualism) to “WE”- centredness (communalism).

Preparationism. The type of education that was given fitted the children into their respective groups and roles they were expected to play in society. Children were prepared to become useful members of their household, village, clan, and society. They were both prepared for their various future tasks based on gender. In their training, they were exposed directly or indirectly to all forms of societal living.

Functionalism. This was closely related to the principle of preparationism. Education was meant for an immediate induction in society. African education was not compartmentalized and was not separated from the daily experiences of the learner.
School and life were the same. Education was regarded as a means to an end and not an end in itself. It emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, and spiritual and moral values. According to this principle, children learned by being trained in adult skills that were useful to societal growth. They did this through participating in productive work, performing various chores and being involved in other roles. All these were meant to prepare them for their adult roles. Emphasis was laid on spiritual and moral ways of living, social, economic, and communal participation; and job orientation. Children learned what was of utility to them. Much of what they learned was practical and enabled them to live productively in the present. This type of education is what was referred to as “apprenticeship.”

**Perennialism.** In line with this principle children were brought up under rigid patterns that stipulated appropriate childrearing practices. Ocitti (1973) notes that the main function of each generation was not to change or modify the indigenous education, whose goodness had withstood the test of time, but to maintain its status quo and transmit it to subsequent generations. The practice could only be changed by the elders who were believed to be experts and repositories on issues of successful living and knowledge.

**Wholisticism.** This was based on the principle of multiple learning. In the traditional African society there was no specialization. Erny (1981) observes that indigenous learning was applied to all aspects of a person’s life with the aim of developing all that person’s aptitudes and thus education was life itself. The wholistic nature of the African indigenous education is evident in the interdisciplinarity of the
subjects it offered and the numerous methods it employed in the teaching and learning process.

The curriculum of the African indigenous education was wide and was characterized by practical, social, spiritual, and physical experiences. The aims of the African indigenous education were fourfold. First, it was to understand, appreciate, and promote cultural heritage of the community. Second, it aimed at preparing and equipping children with the required knowledge, skills, behavior, and beliefs necessary for taking on adult roles. Expounding on this point, Busia (1967) notes that education’s major concern was with the sort of persons the children would evolve into and their future contributions to the community. Third, education aimed at creating a sense of belonging, which was regarded by the society as a very important value of the cultural system. The child was taught how to live in his or her group on how to maintain, defend, and propagate its ideals. Education was to enable a child to understand his or her place and role in the family, community and creation. Finally, African indigenous education aimed at disciplining the child, shaping his or her character and inculcating into that child desirable moral qualities, that is sociability, solidarity, courage, honesty, endurance, sense of responsibility, ethics, humility, and obedience. In summing up the aims of African indigenous education, Callaway (1966) uses the Yoruba’s term “eko” which means education in the widest sense, whose aims were to develop one’s spirituality, intellect, character, wisdom, and oral literature as well as skills in varied crafts. It was an education that was concerned with the discipline of all faculties.
African indigenous education had a number of cardinal characteristics, namely, it was community oriented, concrete, pragmatic, comprehensive, democratic, and egalitarian. It allowed the transmission of relevant skills, knowledge, values and attitudes for the development of the individual and society. Occiti (1973) observes that the content of indigenous education emanated from its immediate physical, economic, religious and social environment, both real and imagined. It was an integrated experience, combining physical education, character, manual and intellectual training. The curriculum was liberal and enabled one to become a jack-of-all-trades for life. It laid emphasis on acceptable behavior for every situation. African education was about life and children learned what they lived. The methods of learning in the traditional African society were largely informal although there was formal training. Teaching was not systematic and there were no specialized teachers trained to teach. Everybody was a teacher and experience was the best teacher of all. In traditional African society, while it was mandatory for the family, both immediate and extended, to educate offspring, education was the responsibility of the entire community. Even though a child had his or her family names, he or she was considered “prima facie” a child of the clan. Every activity that a child engaged in, was his or her school. Through play, worship, and daily chores a child learned something; learning was through: memorization, imitation, observation, participation, work, play, oral literature, social ceremonies, and deterrence. There were also formal methods used that inculcated both theoretical and practical skills.

One of the major avenues through which the African youth received their education was and is still today through initiation rites and grade ceremonies. The most
prominent rite of passage from childhood to manhood was circumcision. The process was accompanied with numerous teachings. Most indigenous African education systems had four main phases in its process, namely, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and eldership.

By and large, African indigenous education entailed character building as well as physical attitudes. The achievement of moral qualities was part of adulthood and the gaining of the knowledge and techniques needed to enable a person to play an active part in social life. The African indigenous education was quite effective because it dealt with people’s relationships with regard to life. Children learnt everywhere all the time. In terms of methodology, African indigenous education revealed profound knowledge of the child psychology. The different age groups corresponded to the different stages of mental and behavioral development of the child.

The Kenyan indigenous educational system was interrupted by two foreign forces from about A.D. 700. These forces included the coming of Islam and Christianity to East Africa that saw the introduction of Quranic education and Western education. It is the latter that this study examines more in this study due to it relevance to the study subject.

Contrary to the belief among colonial officials, education in traditional African society before the intrusion of the colonial systems was quite complete and comprehensive. This reality was recognized even by some of the colonial officials. Using Zimbabwe as a case study, Mungazi (1993) notes that in 1965, F. G. Loveridge, who was a senior education officer in colonial Zimbabwe with special responsibility for
developing the curriculum for African schools, recognized the comprehensive nature of traditional African education. Addressing the Rotary Club, Loveridge observed:

In his (sic) traditional society the African was given all the education that he needed to function in his culture. That education was quite complete and the subject matter was quite comprehensive and inclusive. Today, the African student has fallen away because Western education does not prepare him to function in Western cultural settings which control his life. At the same time it does not prepare him to function in his own culture because the White man tells him that it is primitive. The African who goes to school in Western cultural settings is in a socioeconomic limbo. (p. 89)

It is this frame of education that the missionaries and the colonial government fought so hard to eradicate. According to Mungazi (1993), the European powers based their colonial adventure in Africa on the assumption that theirs was a mission to save the Africans from the degradation of their culture because they thought that it had nothing to contribute to their own development. They ignored Margaret Mead’s later conclusion that cultures have a horizontal relationship and that, while they are different, the difference does not imply superiority or inferiority of either of the cultures. From Mead’s perspective, one can deduce that the colonial conquest of Africa implied what Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), the Indian philosopher and poet, saw as cultural arrogance and irrationality which created problems in the quest for human understanding. In a letter dated September 16, 1934, addressed to Albert Murray, Tagore (cited in Mungazi, 1993) observed:
We have seen Europe spread slavery over the face of the earth. Exploitation became easier when it was based on denying educational creativity and so generated a callous attitude toward those who were its victims. The colonization of Africa thus implied much more than a physical subjection of a people to oppressive conditions, it also meant psychological, emotional conquest and subjection. (p. 3)

During the colonization period, Africans were stripped of many aspects of their cultural identity, pride, and everything that made them a people with unique human attributes richly embedded in their cultural traditions and values. Once the colonial powers accomplished this task, they set out to convince Africans that they were indeed inferior to Whites in every way. This view presented Kenyan youth with a myriad of learning difficulties, they did not have, for instance, accesss to elaborate tenets and practices of African traditional education which were being castigated constantly by missionaries and the colonial government. Affirming this, Mungazi (1993) notes that during the struggle for political independence, most African leaders complained about the introduction of Western education to Africa and how it disrupted the essential features of African culture. They argued that what was taught in schools was not based on objectives intended to serve the developmental needs of Africans but, rather, was aimed at meeting the economic demands of the colonial government and the promotion of its culture. They lamented:

Before the coming of the White man to our country, no aspect of life, no boy or girl was ever neglected by our educational system. Today, we are told that only so
many can go to school. Why so many only and not all? Besides, why is it that what is taught in White schools is different from what is taught in African schools? We thought that because education is universal what is taught in White schools must be the same as what is taught in African schools. Besides, if education is universal, there is no need to practice racial discrimination in it. Do you fail to see the intent of the colonial government in the education? (Mungazi, 1993, p. 90)

Further, youth also did not have much access to Western education for it was offered along racial lines and Africans had minimal educational institutions. In addition, much of the education that was offered was rudimentary. This state of historical events left many African youth out of both formal and informal education an occurrence that with time led to an increase in youth vagrancy, a process that was heightened further during the struggle for independence where most community and family social networks were severed. It is mired in this fragile social, political and economic quagmire that Griffin found the African youth.

**Colonial Period**

The conclusion of the Berlin Conference on the partition of Africa by European nations in February 1885 ushered in the colonization of the continent. The social, cultural, and educational systems that had operated in Africa for many years were replaced by those of European origin so as to serve the goals of the colonial governments. The history of African education in many African countries is inextricably interwoven with the history of Christian missions. In Kenya, the establishment of schools and,
indeed, formal education was basically monopolized by Christian missions in the 19th century. James Coleman (cited in Bassey, 1999) writes:

Until 1898 all education was under the direct control of missionaries. As late as 1942 they controlled 99 percent of the schools, and more than 97 percent of the students in Africa were enrolled in mission schools. By 1945 there were comparatively few literate (Africans) who had not received all or part of their education in mission schools. (p. 28)

Mungazi (1993) notes that the reason the colonial government favored missionary dominance in education as opposed to the straightline plunge into the process was because they endeavored to diffuse any form of resistance to their agenda. Colonial government officials believed that Africans would have better relationships with the missionaries than with them. It is a sobering reality that by the very nature of colonialism the effect of Western education on the Africans was to condition them to accept colonial government as a new order of things and any resistance was regarded as uncivilized behavior. The colonial education had three main features: the educational programs were operated by missionaries to reduce the likelihood of Africans rejecting the kind of education they were receiving; the educational process was intended to convert Africans to Christianity, which was considered essential to African acceptance of Western culture; and the educational process was practical in content because the Africans were considered incapable of engaging in any form of academic education.

In Kenya an important educational phase was started by John Krapf in 1844. The first mission school was established in 1846. Missionary education was linked to
Christianity. Sifuna and Otiende (1992) observe that beyond the main objective of persuading Africans to accept Christianity as the first step of accepting Western culture and colonialism itself as a civilizing act, the main aim of missionary education was to raise a new generation of Africans that would accept the new civilization and were capable of training leaders of their own communities. This view, however, was not shared by the colonial governments in many African colonies. Mungazi (1993), citing the case of Zimbabwe, notes that many colonial officials agreed with Ethel Tawse Jollie, who as late as 1927, during a debate on the question of African advancement through education, argued:

We do not intend to admit the natives to the same social or political position that we ourselves enjoy. Let us therefore make no pretense of educating them in the same way we educate Whites (p. 25). We do not intend to hand over this country to the natives or to admit them to the same social and political position that we ourselves enjoy. (p. 50)

In addition, in 1912, one British colonial official argued: “I do not consider it right that we should educate the native in any way that will unfit him for service. The native is and should always be the hewer of wood and the drawer of water for his White master” (Mungazi, 1993, p. 27). Sifuna and Otiende (1992) note, that the position of the colonial officials was that “it is cheap labor that we need out of the natives, and it has yet to be proved that the native who can read and write turns out to be a good laborer” (p. 28). From these quotations it is evident that colonial education objectives were based on Victorian applications of Social Darwinism which claimed that “the brain of an adult
African looks very much like the brain of a European in its infant stage. At puberty all development in the brain of the African stops and becomes more ape-like as he grows older” (p. 29). What came out of this perception of the intellectual capability of the Africans is the thinking that, because they were less intelligent than Whites, their major function was to serve Whites in every respect. It is this kind of theory that the colonial governments used to design an educational system for Africans.

The process of subjecting Africans to colonial domination was as relentless as it was absolute. Nothing was left to chance. The energies of the colonial governments were evident in a rigorous education program of discrimination and segregation, as well as laws which were designed to reduce African material life to the level of bare existence. In this grand scheme of action, the colonial governments were motivated by a belief arising out of Social Darwinism that, once they succeeded in controlling the mind of Africans, they would no longer worry about their actions. The challenge of psychological survival was presented to African peoples. Having established this superior-inferior relationship with Africans, colonial governments then turned their attention to the task of training them to serve Whites as their masters. In the process, the colonial governments subjected Africans to conditions similar to those of slavery. Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965), the famous German missionary to 20th-century Africa, describing the extent of suffering that the Africans endured at the hands of their colonial conquerors, writes:

Who can describe the misery, the injustice, and the cruelties that the Africans have suffered at the hands of Europeans? If a record could be compiled, it would
make a book containing pages that the reader would have to turn over unread because their contents would be too horrible. (Mungazi, 1993, pp. 155-156)

Elaborating on this argument, James Oldham (cited in Mungazi, 1993) concludes in his study in 1930 that the colonial governments operated under the theoretical assumption that the most natural and obvious way of civilizing natives was to give them employment. This was their best school. The gospel of labor was the most salutary gospel for them because the Negroid people had shown little capacity to establish a fully developed civilization of their own. This approach to education reduced the quality of education that was being offered to Africans to the extent that it was nothing more than meaningless drill on manual labor. To ensure that education did what it was designed to do, the colonial governments instituted it on racial basis. This was seen as essential if they were expected to keep their position of influence in society, that is, preventing the creation of a poor White class. Expounding on this design, Mungazi (1993) notes that “in all native education the prime importance of manual labor should be stressed to prepare them to serve the White man” (p. 156).

It was strange that by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, colonial officials were still thinking in outmoded Victorian views of education. These differences of opinion between the colonial officials and the missionaries about the purpose of education for Africans later became major sources of conflicts between them. However, while their cooperation lasted, both the missionaries and the colonial governments made use of educational precepts to achieve their own position and took maximum advantage of it. Scanlon (1967) observes that although the central thrust for African education was
administered by the missionaries, the colonial government made sure that the education that was offered was per the policy they designed. It is this underlying education policy that Africans questioned.

The introduction of formal schooling and its influence presented Africans with many difficulties, some of which remain unresolved today. Key among these was the creation of an educational system that never met the needs of Africans. The missionaries and colonial government made no efforts to link African education to African problems and cultural heritage. At the initial stages, missionaries were only interested in making converts and spreading Western civilization. They viewed African culture as an obstacle to their work. The advent of the industrial revolution compelled even the most ardent missionaries to adjust their policy from the pursuit of religious ideals as a viable basis of African development to the pursuit of European commercial goals and entrepreneurial adventure in Africa. An address by David Livingstone (cited in Mungazi, 1993) at Oxford University clearly explicates this assertion. He argued:

Sending the Gospel to the heathens of Africa must include much more than is implied in the usual practice of a missionary, namely, a man going about with a bible under his arm. The promotion of commerce ought to be specially attended to as this, more than anything else, makes the heathens of Africa depend on the commercial intercourse among civilized nations. I go back to open a new path to commerce in Africa, do you carry on the work I have started? (Mungazi, 1993, p. 26)
The colonial administration wanted Kenya to become self-sufficient and worked hand in hand with settlers with an agreement that this could be achieved if Africans were educated to form a largely laboring and clerical class. The government’s policy of “trusteeship” and “indirect” rule seemed to be in accord with settlers’ paternalistic attitude toward Africans, and both settlers and officials were in agreement with the policy of rapid advance for the European and gradual advance for African education.

Before 1846, no foreign education systems had been established in the inland part of Kenya. It was not until the end of the century, with the building of the Uganda Railway, that the mission stations were able to extend their mission work. The first quarter of the 20th century saw a great increase in the number of mission schools, hospitals, and churches in Kenya, several of which often shared the same building. This symbiotic coexistence vividly illustrates the symbolic view of the mission that linked Christianity to Western civilization. Missionaries controlled education in Kenya until 1911, when the colonial government took over its control. The first missionary settlement in Kenya is linked to the Portuguese. Roman Catholic missionaries from Portugal were at work, on the East African coast for a short while in the 16th and 17th centuries. The second group of Christian missionaries was that of John Krapf, which arrived in 1844 and settled at Rabai.

The strong driving force in the missionary enterprise in Africa was the scramble and partition of Africa and the eventual establishment of colonial administration. Whether by design or coincidence, missionary activities in Africa coincided with the era in which European powers attempted to establish their rule abroad. Following the
partition of the mainland, Christian groups did not only expand inland from the coast but were also joined by other groups. Eshiwani (1993) observes that the period between 1900 and 1910 witnessed a “scramble” among the missionary bodies for supreme influence in different parts of Kenya. Africans soon begun to appreciate Western education, although not for reasons intended by their educators. To them education was seen as an avenue to eradicate poverty and a path for social advancement. Accessory to this, Western education allowed Africans to move from rural areas to the new urban world, which gave them an opportunity to learn the secrets of the success of Whites.

A Department of Education was established by the colonial administration in 1911 and the first government school for Africans was established. Schools for Africans during this period were few and offered mainly low-level vocational training. The majority of Africans did not have access to schooling. During this period, the missionaries claimed the right to educate the African in their own way. They resisted any interference with the running of their schools and sometimes tried to close schools run by outside bodies. The missions agreed to halt their rivalry in 1910 because of the effects it was causing to the Africans and the enormous cost that was involved. They lacked money and as a result of the recommendations of the Education Commission of 1918, they received some financial help from the government. The missions entered into partnership with the government because of this arrangement. The government’s responsibility was to supply funds and sometimes land, while the missions supplied staff, buildings and sometimes money.
It is this situation that made many African nationalists demand both quality and quantity education for African youth who were roaming all over the place and engaging in all types of vices. As already observed in the introductory section of this study, colonial education was not only segregative but was also exploitative and void in terms of content. The colonial government aimed at structuring a society that was based on a more vertical, rather than a horizontal, system. This then meant that Africans were always to occupy an inferior position in society. The supremacy of the Whites was sustained by the inferior position of Africans. The fact that Africans noticed this difference later became an important determinant in their struggle for self-government. On realizing that colonial government under the influence of White settlers was not ready to change and develop an education that could significantly benefit all races, Africans begun questioning its rationale and demanded that it should be overhauled. Eshiwani (1993) notes that they wanted an academic education that could help them develop socially, economically, and politically. They were opposed to an education whose central emphasis was on technical and vocational skills. Africans interpreted this type of education as having a hidden mission of maintaining them in their inferior positions.

In addition to resenting the stratification of colonial education, Africans were also opposed to constant missionary assaults on their traditional way of life, assaults that pervaded their entire educational system. Commenting on stratification and the low access of Africans to education during this period, Bogonko (1992) observes that it was not until 1940 that the first Alliance and Kabaa school candidates attempted to take the “O” level examinations locally. The efforts of these two schools at secondary education
were not augmented until 1938 and 1939 when the Church Missionary Society (CMS) Maseno School and St. Mary’s School Yala began junior secondary education courses, respectively. In 1939, there were 227 African children in secondary schools run by their government, and the Goans, also a small minority, ran four aided secondary schools. Most of these schools prepared their pupils up to school certificate level, an indication of the extent to which racial segregation could go. Intellectual education for the (rulers) and industrial education for the workers (the ruled) was assured. This is the situation from which Africans wanted to free themselves and hence their vehement campaign for an academic education.

The demand for appropriate academic education for Africans and the ill feelings toward imposed cultural values became more serious after the end of the Second World War. The war veterans who returned from the war saw education “as an essential tool of gaining a foothold in a competitive civilized world” (Mungazi, 1993, p. 13). Although the war had been tragic, it had transformed their thinking from accepting colonial education as inevitable into questioning its assumed values. They now begun to see the colonial system not as something that they had to accept in order to ensure their survival but as an institution with negative features designed to define their existence and which they felt had to be eliminated at all costs. This new level of awakening marked the beginning of the rise of African nationalism. Indeed the world of 1945 was poised for an unprecedented quest for new meaning through educational endeavors. After the war Africans recognized their conditions as emanating from colonialism which they felt had
to be eliminated to create room for their own advancement. Robert July (cited in Mungazi, 1993) notes:

Colonialism contained the germ of its own destruction. By conquering the Africans it aroused in them a desire to be free. By exploiting them, it produced a rising resistance to tyranny. By introducing Africa to the modern world, it generated visions of a better life consummated in liberty. By educating the Africans to function as cheap labor, the colonial governments taught them skills of self-directed activity and purpose. By the end of the World War II, it was evident to the Africans that the colonial governments were using their theory of education to deny them equal educational opportunity purely for political reasons. (p. 50)

This accounts precisely for why the Africans launched a campaign for political independence at the conclusion of the war. Their demand for better educational opportunity as a means of bettering both their political and social lives ushered in a period of intense struggle for independence. The motto then, according to Mungazi (1993), was “seek first the political kingdom and everything else shall be added unto you” (p. 61). It is vital to note that Africans did not begin by demanding political independence; they began, instead, by demanding improvement of oppressive conditions within the colonial system. It was only after they realized that the colonial government was unwilling to consider their demands that they altered their strategy from seeking improvement within the colonial setting to demanding political independence. The victory that Africans eventually scored in their struggle for political independence
prepared them for a more grueling struggle for national development through education. By seeking an end to colonialism, the Africans came face-to-face with the formidable problems of national development, which they had not envisaged.

In order to ensure that they reaped maximum benefits from formal education, which both the colonial government and mission churches were not providing, Africans established independent schools, which were for Africans and were run by Africans. These schools offered academic education to Africans and incorporated African culture into the curriculum. Such movements started as early as 1910 in Nyanza through the works of John Owalo, under the auspices of Nomiya Luo Mission and Chief Odera Akango in Alego in 1914. These schools became more active in the Central Province of Kenya from the 1920s on. The apex of these African educational initiatives were realized in 1939, when the Kenyan African Teacher’s College (KATC) at Githunguri was established to train teachers for the independent schools and all African schools in the country. This was a national training college. It drew its students from all parts of Kenya. Although it was closed in 1952 by the colonial government at the height of the Mau Mau War when the State of Emergency was declared, the African schools movement had become a formidable force in the growth of African education. By the time of the State of Emergency, there were about 400 independent schools. The schools in Central Province were managed by two educational associations, namely, the Karing’a Educational Association (KKEA) and the Kikuyu Independent School Association (KISA). KKEA was affiliated with the African Orthodox Church and KISA with the African Independent Pentecostal Church. Eshiwani (1993) observes that the impact of the independent schools
was enormous. The existence of the schools illustrated Africans’ disillusionment with the colonial education and their quest for “proper” education. The schools also reflected the ability of Africans to organize themselves to attain their socioeconomic and political independence. More significantly, they forced the colonial government to review their educational policies to address the growing demands of education by Africans.

*Educational Reforms undertaken during the Colonial Period*

During the colonial era there were a number of educational reforms that were undertaken to improve education, although most of the policies still continued to favor Europeans and Asians. The aftermath of the First World War saw a number of government measures in regard to education given to Africans. During this period, the colonial government ended it’s hitherto spectator status. The government initiated a system of grants-in-aid immediately after establishing the Department of Education in 1911, thereafter reviewed from time to time, to help in the development of education provided by Christian missions. It also appointed the East Africa Protectorate Education Commission in 1919 to review education provided in the colony for all races. According to Achola and Pillai (2000), it was mandated:

> To look into the unsatisfactory status of education for all races in the protectorate.

The commission made a vague recommendation to the effect that while the provision of education would remain a major responsibility of the missionaries, the government should increase its role in the provision of education. (p. 6)

The Phelps-Stokes Education Commission of 1912-1925 also visited the colony. The reports of these two commissions formed the backbone on which education in Kenya
was cemented during this phase. Equally important was the passing of the education ordinances in 1924 and 1931 and the establishment of schools run directly by the government. Some of the key commissions that were undertaken to review education during this period included a Ten Year Plan for Development of African Education, the Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1924, the Beecher report of 1949, and the Binns Commission of 1952.

Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1924. Achola and Pillai (2000) note:

It addressed African concerns about education more directly by calling for quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of African education in the colony. One objective of this qualitative improvement was to give Africans academic type of education similar to that available to Europeans and Asian children. (p. 6)

The Commission recommended a practically oriented education for African communities. This was reinforced further by the advisory committees for education in Tropical Africa by the British colonial office. Its purpose was to develop rural areas. The Europeans and the Asians had a different type of education that laid more emphasis on academics and it was meant to prepare them for white-collar jobs. The Africans saw this as a strategy to bar them from other important goals of education. It did not meet the personal goals for the community and thus faced a lot of resistance. Many opted to set up their own independent schools that could address their personal, social, and cultural goals. It is important to note that due to shortages of qualified teachers, academic standards in most of the Independent schools were relatively lower compared with
European and mission schools. The schools had numerous shortages in terms of finances, reading materials, and buildings.

**A Ten Year Plan for the Development of African Education, 1948.** It aimed at providing 50% of the school age children with education lasting six years. It was designed to meet the demands of each district throughout the colony and the protectorate of Kenya. The central aim of the plan was to provide within ten years a full primary course for underqualified teachers to ensure that there was an adequate supply of trained teachers and that a satisfactory number of pupils of both sexes would receive education up to and including certificate level. This objective was to be attained by the payment of grants-in-aid in respect to qualified teachers rather than by increasing the number of in the grants-in-aid list. In order to ensure an adequate supply of trained teachers, provision was made for the establishment of 24 elementary teacher training centers. The plan, however, was not implemented for the whole cost of primary education was to be borne by local government authorities. The financial burden was beyond the capacity of the local authorities to bear and thus it failed.

**Beecher Report of 1949.** The report looked into scope, content, methods, administration, and financing of the African educational system. It reinforced the argument of the previous commission. It criticized the declining moral standards of African society and expressed concern that the schools did not live up to their expectations. Its three major recommendations, according to Stabler (1969), were:

Primary school educational facilities are provided in areas of Kenya in which such facilities were lacking; attention is paid not only to quantitative expansion of
primary education, but to its qualitative improvement as well; in view of some negative aspects of the industrial and agricultural oriented curriculum for African children was to be improved and that about 5% of the African pupils who completed primary school were to continue with secondary education. (p. 8)

It further recommended the continued cooperation with voluntary organizations and the teaching of Christian principles in all schools. The report reinforced the argument of the previous two commissions that laid emphasis on the provision of practical education to Africans. The recommendations of the committee formed the basis of the government policy on African education until the last year of colonial rule. It too failed to meet the utilitarian, cultural and personal goals of Africans. It faced resistance with regard to the administration of the educational process, educational developmental levels, and staffing of teacher training institutions. The general African view of the Beecher report was that it was to lead to Europeanization rather than Africanization of education. Its proposals were rejected by most Africans and were not implemented.

**Binns Commission of 1952.** This was sponsored by the secretary of state for the colonies and the Nuffield Foundation. It examined educational policy and practice in British tropical African territories and formed the basis of a conference on African education held by the colonial office in King’s College, Cambridge, in 1952. Its recommendations opposed the development of many small and scattered teacher training colleges and instead advocated for their amalgamation. In addition, it recommended that teacher training colleges should be coordinated to improve the quality of teacher education. It also proposed the establishment of an institute of education. In 1957, the
government established Western Teacher Delegacy at Siriba and Eastern Teacher Delegacy at Kagumo. Further, it recommended the maintenance of a religious basis for education and called for the need to include practical work in the school curriculum. It advocated for the abolishment of the existing system and recommended that education should improve agriculture. It was mesmerized by the high level of wastage that was evident in the education sector. These recommendations were not implemented until after independence. The Binns Commission was a landmark commission in the development of Kenya’s education during this period. It addressed critical concerns regarding the internal efficiency of African education and its ability to address African social goals. However, it paid little attention to socialization in African schools. It ignored cultural goals and completely failed to emphasize the teaching of local history so that students could appreciate their values. Like other reports, it met fierce criticism from Africans because it endorsed a bias in the curriculum in terms of race and aimed at keeping Africans in rural areas.

**Education Ordinances.** In addition to several commissions that were undertaken to reform education during this period, the colonial government also passed three major education ordinances in 1921, 1931, and 1934. Further, the government set up several committees, councils, and boards that were aimed at improving the quality of African education in the colony, namely, Local Native Councils (LNCs), School Area Committees (SACs), Central Advisory Committees (CACAEs), and District Education Boards (DEBs). These ordinances according to Achola and Pillai (2000), were formed as a reaction of the government based on the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes
Commission. They stuck to its philosophy of separate education curricula for the three races but sought to placate African concerns by establishing, in 1925, a permanent Advisory Committee on Education with a network of area school committees on which LNCs, the main administrative organs for Africans, were represented. These LNCs collected funds from Africans to be spent on establishing schools outside missionary control. Giving a critical evaluation of these efforts by the colonial government to improve Kenyan education in this period, Bogonko (1992) notes that “all these underlined the importance of industrial education curriculum for Africans and distinction between the education of the masses (Africans) and the education of the rulers (Europeans)” (p.39).

In late 1952, there was a State of Emergency and this rendered the implementation process of both the Beecher and Binns reports difficult. In the mid-1950s, the colonial office realized it needed a new policy of education, which led to the educational development plan. It advocated for the speeding up of output of the high-level African workforce by expanding secondary and higher education. In the late 1950s, a developmental plan was drawn up emphasizing the maintenance of European standards, raising those of Asians and creating African standards. Within five years, the pace of education was enormously increased for there was anticipation of African rule, and this meant more training of Africans for the eventual government needs.

The colonial educational policies, even after the 1950s, continued to favor the European population in terms of finance, curricula, and structure. At Independence, the colonial education was still segregative, with Europeans getting top priority, followed by
Asians, and lastly, Africans. Most Africans were still lacking adequate access to education. (see Tables 1 and 2). Affirming this, Bogonko (1992) writes:

Throughout the 1950s European children and Asian boys of ages 7 to 15 had compulsory education. The Africans did not. Although they sat for separate preliminary examinations, European and Asian children had continuous primary education up to Standard 7. African children, on the other hand, were pruned by Standard 4 Common Entrance Examinations and had to do four or three more years at the intermediate school before sitting for their preliminary examinations. While the Kenyan European Preliminary Examination and the Kenyan Asian Preliminary Examination acted as qualifying examinations for secondary education, for Africans KAPE was a school-leaving examination. Almost all the European and Asian pupils who finished primary education were admitted to secondary schools, but the successful African candidates were issued with a certificate which was considered a qualification for secondary education. (p. 71)

This minimal access of Africans to education made them to demand for more and better education. It was within this historical context, which was characterized with segregative and racial education, few and inadequate schools for Africans, low and lack of advanced education for Africans, and erosion of traditional childrearing networks that Griffin was born, grew, and worked. The social, cultural, political, and economic conditions of this period ignited his interest in Kenyan youth education. He viewed education as a ladder to societal development and a way of getting the youth out of their abject conditions.
Table 1  
*Number of Primary Students in Kenya by 1963*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Group</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>School-Age Population</th>
<th>Pupils as % of School-Age Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>840,677</td>
<td>2,421,300</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>3,222</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>40,915</td>
<td>52,800</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>6,639</td>
<td>8,900</td>
<td>74.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2  
*Number of Secondary Students in Kenya by 1963*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Group</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>School-Age Population</th>
<th>Pupils as % of School-Age Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>10,593</td>
<td>829,700</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>13,921</td>
<td>17,200</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>3,265</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postcolonial Period

Kenya’s struggle for political independence served as a major impetus for her educational development and change. During the struggle for independence, nationalists aim, with regard to education, was to produce an educational philosophy that would help in shaping the educational practices that were best suited to serve the immediate needs of the country. In 1961, when independence was imminent in most African countries, a conference on the development of education in Africa was held in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and Tananarive in Madagascar in 1962 under the aegis of UNESCO and the United Nation’s Economic Commission for Africa. In these conferences, representatives from all over Africa were determined to set educational priorities aimed at promoting economic and social development in Africa. One immediate need recommended in these conferences was the restructuring of education in independent Africa to serve the interests of the individual African countries. Following the Addis Ababa Conference, most African countries called for extensive education reforms. It is upon this educational framework that various African governments formulated their educational programs.

Since attaining its Independence in 1963, Kenya has been constantly involved in the task of reconstructing its educational policies. It has done this through the formulation of various commissions and reviews. At Independence, Kenya was confronted with a
high shortage of skilled personnel to run its economy. The great evils of society--
poverty, ignorance and disease-- were yet to be eradicated. In order to solve these
problems and shape its national character, education was seen as a vital vehicle. It was on
this basis that the new government appointed a commission to survey the existing
educational resources and advise the government on the way forward. Based on this
historical base, in order to shape its educational process, the Kenyan government created
various legal policies that were essential in enabling it meet its immediate goals. The
government took a quick action in 1963 to develop a comprehensive educational policy
and strategy to satisfy its individual and national goals.

The first undertaking by the government in this regard was the drafting of
Sessional Paper Number 10 of 1965 on “African Socialism and Its Application in
Kenya.” This served as an important document for examining the immediate needs and
goals of post-Independence education. The paper attempted to define Kenya’s
educational needs from an ideological angle that varied from the colonial approach. It
saw education much more of an economic than a social service, a key means of
alleviating the shortage of a skilled domestic workforce and of creating equal economic
opportunities for all citizens. This was followed by the publication of the Ominde
Commission report of 1964-1965, providing a road map of what Kenyan education was
and had to be after Independence. This commission was the blueprint that laid the
foundation of the post-Independence Kenyan educationa system.

In 1971, the Ndegwa Commission was appointed to look into the working
conditions of civil servants and assess how educational goals could be integrated to
accelerate the rate of national development. It affirmed the same goals advocated by the Ominde report, underlining three important aspects in the educational goals: unity, cultural, and social equality. The implication of this commission was that between 1964 and 1970, the performance of the Kenyan educational system in these areas had not been significant. In the light of this, the Ministry of Education restated the national goals of education in terms of the commission’s utilitarian, social, cultural and personal categories. According to this commission, education was to provide opportunities for the fullest development of individual talents and personality.

From 1964 to 1975, the education structure and development was based on the educational goals and objectives outlined in the Ominde Commission of 1964, where the central emphasis was on the expansion of education to provide the required personnel, economic development, and Kenyanization of all government sectors. The first and second development plans of 1964-1970 and 1970-1974, respectively reiterated these educational objectives. This was a “transitional” period and the government was committed to expanding educational opportunities to meet the new emerging public needs. From 1975, the government realized that education was not doing much to attain its stated objectives, it looked too academic. The third development plan (1974-1978) broke new ground with regard to educational policy. It emphasized constraints imposed on development by the underutilization of human resources and lack of appropriate skills at all levels. The education system was required to provide, among other things, the high-level skills needed for economic and industrial growth; the vocational/technical training for employment; and the promotion of attitudes favorable for development. In addition,
during this period the government also enacted several educational acts to aid the process, namely, the enya Education Act (1968), Teachers Service Commission Act of (1967), University Act (1970), the Kenya National Examinations Act (1980), the Kenya Literature Bureau Act (1980), and the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) Act (1985).

A critical examination of the enactment of various educational acts during this period illustrate the government’s commitment to the improvement of education and the emphasis it placed on its ability to develop the nation. Over the same period, the government established four inquiries to examine the development of education; namely: The Kenya Education Commission (1964) – Ominde Commission; the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policy (1976)-Gacathi Report; The Presidential Working Party on the Second University (1981)-Mackay Report; and The Presidential Working Party on Education and Man-power (1988)-Kamunge Report. The Kenya Education Commission (1964-1965)-Ominde Commission. At Independence Kenya found itself with a need for a higher percentage of skilled workers to run its economy. In order to solve this, the Ominde Commission was mandated to survey the existing educational resources and to advise the government on the formation and implementation of the required national policies for education. The recommendations of this commission were that education should foster nationhood; promote unity; serve the needs of the people; respect cultural traditions; be an instrument for conscious change; foster respect for the human personality; serve needs of national development; promote social equality; remove divisions of race; tribe, and religion; and pay attention to training
in social obligation and responsibility. It viewed education as a productive element, not only to the individual but also to the society. The Ominde Commission influenced the decisions that were made in the educational sector for the following several years, especially the notion of education as an instrument for development. The organization of education was closely linked to the management of human resources and the requirements of the labor market. This human capital link led to the growth of enrollments, especially in secondary schools, a growth that continued to be experienced even in the 1980s (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Primary and Secondary School Enrollments in Kenya, 1963-1983*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment in Primary Education</th>
<th>Enrollment in Secondary Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>890,000</td>
<td>30,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1420,000</td>
<td>126,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2880,000</td>
<td>226,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>4320,000</td>
<td>493,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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From Table 3, it is clear that secondary education enrollments grew tremendously within the first two decades of Independence. The fact that secondary school dropouts
and university graduates were getting jobs acted as a catalyst for the tremendous growth in student enrollments. Through education, there was a chance for individual mobility. However, these were shortlived heydays that not any other products of secondary school dropouts were ever to enjoy in Kenya. Although formal education was expanding during this period, it was not directly accompanied by economic growth. Thus, most school dropouts were soon left out with neither jobs nor training. By 1970, secondary school dropouts began to experience an unemployment crisis (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Activities of Former Secondary school Pupils the Year After Leaving School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Year of Leaving School and year of activities recorded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Further Education or Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>45</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>49</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others and Untraced</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All activities</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Ominde Commission was the masterpiece upon which the Kenyan educational system was built. It influenced decisions that were made in the education sector for the following several years. It encompassed a wholistic education that addressed the utilitarian, social, cultural, and personal goals of education. It examined the development of a workforce for nation building at all levels. With regard to fostering social goals, the commission noted that unless the education system served the people of Kenya without discrimination and promoted national unity, regardless of color, race, or creed, it would be impossible for it to provide a united Kenya. It emphasized the importance of cultural goals through respect of the religious convictions as well as cultural traditions of all people. It stressed the attainment of personal goals through the
recognition of what part each person plays in national development and the training in social obligations and responsibilities.

The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policy (1976) –

Gacathi Report: It sought to enhance the education goals by attempting to restructure the education system to enable it to meet the demands of the country. In relating education to employment provision it was opposed to the then-existing education system. It opined:


Schools as they are today do not have the capability, time, even motivation to teach the values of society. This is because schools are geared entirely to the passing of formal examinations. The question now, therefore, is how the education system is to build into an organized system of teaching the values of society to the youth. (Eshiwani, 1993, p. 28)

The report reiterated its educational objectives of being able to foster national unity, cooperative effort and responsibility, social values, promote cultural values, inculcate economic values to the youth, and to eradicate negative attitude towards work, especially manual labor. It built upon Ominde Commission observations and sought to enhance use of the Kenyan educational goals to shape its national character. It emphasized the provision of free primary education. It also noted that there was need to integrate secondary education with the nonformal sector in order to take care of increasing numbers of school dropouts. It recommended prevocational, technical, and practical education for Kenyans. The last grade in higher secondary education (Form 6) was to be a major recruiting stage, since only a few students could be absorbed by Kenya’s only university.
In the 1980s, the Kenyan government changed its policy on education. This was because of difficulties which were being experienced by the graduates of its education system, especially at the primary and secondary levels. Most of the graduates who were matriculating from these levels could not be absorbed in employment. This made the government reconsider changing its education system. This necessitated the setting of yet another commission, the Mackay Commission (Presidential Working Party on the Second University) in 1981.

Mackay Commission (The Presidential Working Party on the Second University (1981). The report was necessitated by the problems of employment, which were being experienced by graduates of the then-existing education system, especially those from primary and secondary levels. Most school leavers could not be absorbed in employment and there was also increasing marginalization of groups historically excluded from mainstream education in Kenya. In its report, education “aimed at enabling the youth to play a more effective role in the life of the nation by imparting in them necessary skills, knowledge and inculcating the right attitude” (MOE, 1984, p. 29). In practice, however, formal education tended to concentrate on imparting knowledge for the sake of passing examinations. The commission was required to investigate and report to the government on the feasibility of establishing a second university that was to be geared toward meeting the needs of the country with emphasis on vocational courses. It underscored the need for education to address wider national developmental needs and offer a more relevant curriculum that would cater for the needs of most of the pupils enrolled. There was need for a more practical-oriented curriculum that would offer a wide range of employment
opportunities; ensuring equitable distribution of educational resources so that all students had a chance to excel irrespective of their origin, creed, or race. Lastly, the system was to ensure that students graduating at every level had some scientific and practical knowledge that could be utilized for self-employment, salaried employment, and further training (Eshiwani, 1993; Sifuna & Otiende, 1994).

Like the Ominde Commission, it laid emphasis on utility. It observed that education is an investment by the state and that the rates of return vary with the amount received. It gave rise to the current Kenyan educational system (the 8-4-4). Its educational objectives were based on the previous post-Independence educational commissions. Placing emphasis on the practical and technical aspects of education, the Commission summarized its national objective as follows: to prepare and equip youth to be happy and useful members of their society. To attain this youth were expected to work towards the maintenance and development of society. Education under this commission was designed to provide lifelong skills and make individuals self-sufficient and productive in agriculture, industries, and commerce. It is within these varied postcolonial educational struggles to create a viable educational system that Griffin shaped and fashioned his educational programs at SBC and at the NYS.

Summary

From the above discussion it is evident that the development of Kenyan education has had a checkered history, and numerous reforms have been undertaken to better the process. In order to comprehensively decipher its evolution, growth, challenges, and prospects it is imperative to examine individual educators who have been instrumental in
the process. Their study provides the voice of education change, experiences, and insights on how to establish insight and enhance a strong citizenry. The literature in both the colonial and postcolonial periods indicate the efforts of Kenya trying to negotiate its developmental wheel through education. Colonial education presented Kenyan youth with a myriad of learning difficulties: lack of access to elaborate tenets and practice of African traditional education, which was constantly being castigated by the missionaries and the colonial government; education offered that did not meet the demands of Africans; missionaries and colonial governments that made no effort to link African education to African problems and cultural heritage. Further, youth did not have much access to Western education due to limited schooling opportunities.

This state of historical events during this period left many African youth out of both formal and informal education an occurrence that led to an increase in youth vagrancy, a process that was heightened further during the struggle for independence when most community, family and social networks were severed. These circumstances ignited Griffin’s interest and involvement in Kenyan youth education. He viewed education as a ladder to societal progress and a way of getting African youth out of the abject economic, social, cultural and political abyss of the time.

In the postcolonial period, Kenya’s struggle for political independence served as a major impetus for her educational development and change. The aim was to produce an educational policy that would help shape the educational practices that were best suited to serve the immediate needs of the country and the individual. To attain this, the government formed various commissions and educational reviews: namely: Sessional
Paper Number 10 of 1965; Ominde Commission Report of 1964-1965; Gacathi Report, 1976; Mackay Report, 1981 and Kamunge Report, 1988. A critical examination of the commissions and reviews undertaken during this period illustrate the Kenyan government’s commitment to the improvement of its education and its view of it as a vehicle for achieving self-reliance, stable self-rule, national identity, technical growth, economic progress, social justice, and global citizenship. It is through these educational negotiations that Griffin strived to build SBC to enable it address the wider Kenyan needs. An examination of how he created systems and structures to tackle these educational challenges and his future prospects on the same provide insights on the role of Kenyan education in its developmental process. In order to comprehensively examine Griffin’s individual contributions to the development of modern education, this study draws from the literature on educational biographies that explicate the role of individuals in the educational change process.

**Educational Biographies**

Educational biographies are becoming increasingly popular dimensions of qualitative research to both researchers and the larger public (Denzin, 2000; Kridel, 1998). A number of educational theorists such as Denzin (1989), Kridel (1998), Creswell (1998), Denzin and Yvonna (2000), and Patton (2002), have explored in depth the role of educational biographies in fostering educational research. Their works provide various dimensions, scope, and shape that well-structured educational biographies ought to take. Literature on African biographies also indicates that the field is gaining ground in recent
Biographies and life histories are slowly emerging in importance as significant developments in the field of qualitative educational research and many academics are increasingly participating in research in these fields. In addition, there is also a surge in literature on qualitative books in this area; and a number of journals, collected essays, conferences, and societies for educational biography are now in existence. The last decade has witnessed enormous growth and renaissance of interest in life writing with various allusions and references to biography. Kridel (1998) observes that this development has the potential to bridge critical relationships among the balkanized research realms that epitomize the study of education in the postmodern world. He opines that “good biographies deal with the way people faced living—tell how they met problems, how they coped with big and little crises, how they loved, competed, did the things we all do daily—and hence these studies touch familiar chords in readers” (p. 3). Expounding further on this argument, Bullough (cited in Kridel, 1998) notes that “they help in understanding how and why something transpired; they illuminate action and reveal meaning” (p. 19).

Biographies are seen as vital in expanding human relations. Oates (cited in Kridel, 1998) argues that they encourage the crossing of boundaries. She states that “by reading “biographies, written and lived stories often we connect and we realize we are not alone, we can live with another human being in another age, we can identify with his journey through the vicissitudes of life” (p. 25). Beyond their capacity to reveal the origin of
ideas and the existence of social possibilities and alternatives, biographies are also seen as providing space for observing the nature of societal change.

Much of the contemporary writing in the field of education draws their findings from vital fields of social sciences and concentrates mainly on issues of narrative, life-history, storytelling, voice, and autobiography. Psychology, feminist studies, critical theory, anthropology, and sociology are all adequately represented with minimal reference to the humanities. The insights that have emerged from all these varied areas, and from the current postmodern sensibilities, have impacted a lot and expanded peoples’ conceptualization of educational research and inquiry.

Although dimensions of narrative and life-history writing presently pervade qualitative research, a significant body of literature in terms of writings that form a well-stipulated and growing field of biographical theory seem to have penetrated fully into the educational discourse. Much of this work is overlooked or ignored or not given attention. Commenting on this, Kridel (1998) notes that “this does not suggest that education writers must pepper their essays with references from the works of distinguished biographers” (p. 4). Although distinctions and definitions among various types of life-writing at many times seem intricate, complex, and sometimes confusing, a distinct tradition of biography exists and can be critically examined. This body of thought calls for further inquiry in the field of education as a way of re-examining educational research methods prompted by postmodernism. It is in this respect that biographical research presents new prospects, possibilities and dimensions required for educational inquiry. It provides new ways of examining the effects of pedagogical process on
students and educators. In addition, it helps in explaining how education policy manifests itself in the lives of individuals.

Although there are various collections of biographical studies and they do connote growing interest in educational biography, they do not provide a discourse and exploration of how effectively the approach can be utilized in educational research. This therefore, calls for more research in the education field that can decipher various facets of biography in the context of educational research. Looking at individual educators and their role in the development of education thus becomes an excellent entry of trying to annul these complexities that are entailed in biography and provides a possibility of their sound utilization in the educational field—hence, the aim of this study.

**Biography Defined**

Creswell (1998) defines the term “biography” as a portrait of an individual. According to him, biographies deal with an individual’s entire life. He writes that the interpretive biographical form of study “has elements that focus on a single individual, it constructs a study of the individual under study out of stories, and epiphanies of especial events, situating them within a broader context, and evoking the presence of the author in the study” (p. 31). Kridel (1998) notes that it is difficult to build a comprehensive, all-inclusive definition of biography especially if positioned with various areas of life-history writing, lifewriting, psychobiography, and narratology. He defines it as “the record of life” (p. 8). He observes however, that this definition does not cater for the complexity of issues, traditions, concerns and problems that characterize biographer’s experience. These are complexities that form the main discourse on biographical methods.
In discussing educational biography, Kridel (1998) observes that the term is complex and is used mostly to denote works of biographical subjects that are drawn from the field of education. Broadly viewed, these are individuals who worked or work in the field of education or have made significant marks in it. Educational biographies draw their writing structures from all disciplines and thus are complex research approaches looking at the wide subject structures they examine in varied disciplines.

Future of Educational Biography

Kridel (1998) writes that in the current postmodern age it is vital to “recognize the importance of personal narrative, the power of stories and the significance of whose perspective is being expressed and whose is being heard” (p. 10). In this vein, authoritative knowledge is associated with the evolution of multifaceted research methodologies exemplifying interpretive and naturalistic inquiry. As interest in biographical research develops within the academic community, methodology is increasingly becoming complex. Because of these complexities, biographical studies are becoming vital tools in the field of education and handy in the exploration of various forms of qualitative research, that is, ethnographies, case studies, life histories, interpretive practice, participative inquiry, narratives and “narrative reasoning,” and educators’ voices.

Biography can also help in the understanding of the role of researchers and the academy in a postmodern society. As long as postmodern inquiry underscores the plurality, fragmentation, and “fractured totality of everyday experience,” the call for community is seen as essential. Supporting this view, Denzin and Yvonna (2000) note
that biographers while maintaining allegiance to the concepts of “intended, shared meaning,” “facts and recognized truths,” “common humanity,” and “interpretation of human character,” provide one way of establishing discourse among the varied, often polarized communities of modern times. These efforts go beyond collecting facts and preserving information; but, rather, they allow biography to “inspire comparison,” and according to Kridel (1998), address questions such as “Have I lived that way? Do I want to live that way? Could I make myself live that way if I wanted to?” (p. 31). This enables biography to transcend realms of qualitative research and unites various constituencies in education that help researchers to recognize the universality of people in a single human life. It is on this premise that a biographer, the force of narrative, enters the field of education with great promise. It is in this frame of thinking that Kridel (1998) writes:

Biographical studies are more than simply individual chronicles--ornamental, illustrative or exemplary of larger processes but rather they reveal the origins of ideas, the evolution of alternative social possibilities and the role of individuals in history making. They provide a documentary context within which to judge the relative power of material and ideological circumstances, meaning of educational policy, utility of schooling, definition of literacy and the relationship between teaching, learning, policy and practice. (p. 58)

From the literature on biographies, it can be deduced that biography is a rapidly growing qualitative form of study that requires further inquiry. This study thus becomes important in contributing further to this rapidly evolving area and hopes to contribute to understanding why Griffin became involved in youth education and the circumstances
that necessitated his involvement. The study is expected to illuminate the meaning of actions he undertook in addressing youth education, challenges faced in colonial and postcolonial periods, and his insights on the the vision and growth of Kenyan youth education. This is the central aim of biographies “they help us to understand how and why something transpired, they illuminate action and reveal meaning” (Bullough cited in Kridel, 1998, p. 19). This is the significant and challenging power of studying iographies and engaging in their respective researches. It is this significance that Pachter (cited in Kridel, 1998) alludes to when he writes that “if certain lives have the power to touch or transform our own…, to exalt or terrify us, then we have the right to make sense of those lives, of their innermost nature” (p. 37).

**Biographies Critiqued**

Since this work falls within the range of educational biographies, and fuses in contemporary history aspects, it is cognizant of the general criticisms of biographical works by straightline historians who view it as an insignificant and unworthy branch of scholarship irrespective of which discipline uses the approach as a process of inquiry. Commenting on this, Smith (1966) notes that “biography constitutes merely an adjunct to history” (p. 5). Observing the inferior nature of biography, Marwick (1989) notes that “the biographer could, without necessarily observing the critical standards of the scholar editor, simply serve up the information contained in the private papers of the subject while relying on the secondary sources for background” (p. 203). Supporting this claim Middleton (cited in Clifford, 1962) writes that “biographers are apt to be partial and to give us panegyrics, instead of a history. They work up their characters as painters do to
their portraits” (p. 38). Dismissing the relevance of biographies, Channing (cited in Browns, 1961) argues that “most biographies are of little worth, they are panegyrics, not lives. The object is not to let down the hero…” (p. 61). From a general perspective, these scholars view biography as having a tendency of promoting the cult of the individual in the historical process and of making heroes of relatively historically insignificant individuals. Biographies are thus seen as attempting to enhance the idea of “big man” theory at the expense of a well-balanced understanding of a people’s political, historical, cultural, and economic life.

Contemporary biographies can be more problematic, complex, and intricate. Adenoyin (1974) notes that in a contemporary biography “a writer has observed in a telling sentence that the biography of a living statesman can never be entirely satisfactory” (p. 65). This is because in writing the critical challenge a biographer faces is the dilemma of passing premature judgment on the person being written about. According to Adeoti (1997), “the subject of the researcher is seen as still being on the stage and until the curtain falls, any judgment one may pass can only be tentative” (p. xvii). This is attributed to the existence of some records that are still not within reach of the researcher. In situations in which the subject is still alive, Mba (1990) notes that it is difficult to deal with the subject; the tendency to conceal or misconstrue, whether deliberate or unconscious, is harder to suppress. He argues that around any live subject buzzes passions and prejudices which a researcher has to contend with, particularly when the biographical subject is an active agent of change. Discussing the lacuna that a biographical researcher faces in his research work, Ajayi (1990) observes, “When the
biographer tries to write with detachment he faces the danger of being victimized. If he
tries to write frankly he might offend his subject and his admirers who may feel their
“idol” libeled by his opinions or interpretations” (p. 2).

Despite its condemnation, biography has not been totally rejected as a reputable
branch of qualitative inquiry, and a number of authors view it as an effective form of
research if effectively utilized. According to Mann (cited in Browns, 1961), biographies
are empowering and have many benefits to society. He writes, “Biography, especially of
the great and good who have risen by their own exertions to eminence and usefulness, is
an inspiring and ennobling study” (p. 60). Supporting this view, Plutarch (cited in
Browns, 1961) notes that “to be ignorant of the lives of the most celebrated men is to
continue in a state of childhood in all our days” (p. 61).

Carr (1961) sees the historical individual as a product and agent of the historical
process, at once the representative and the creator of social forces which change the
shape of the world and thought in society. Biography is very important in historical study.
Every biography according to Coker (1975), adds to the sociological resources of
mankind. It is seen as representing a survey and scrutiny of the past, compromises,
observations, and instructions for the future in terms of societal changes, that is, political,
social, cultural, and economic. In addition, it also has a dual purpose; for instance, it
serves particular and general purposes. It informs us about the specific and unique aspects
of the subject and the context in which he or she functioned.

Adeoti (1997) observes that throughout human history there has been recognition of
men and women who have left significant footprints on human life. Their study has led to
in-depth understanding of the complex and fluid historical, social, political and economic, contexts under which they functioned. This implies that a biography serves as a focal device when individuals who might be of relatively little importance can be cited as a type or as a useful lead into issues and developments of wider historical importance.

Griffin, the main subject of this study, is a man of relatively humble backgrounds, but he distinguished himself and succeeded in making an indelible mark on the sand of his time, especially in the field of Kenyan education. But he was not an abstract individual standing aloof from his society. He was a leader operating in a larger Kenyan society.

This study does not seek to eulogize Griffin but to examine critically all facets of his career and assess how each facet reinforces the other and helped him as an agent of change in Kenya’s educational historical process. This study hopes to debunk the often-cited notion, according to Carr (1964) that “good biographies at best make bad history” (p. 47) or “constitute merely an adjunct to history”, (Smith, 1966, p. 5). This study hopes to ascertain Ajayi (1980) arguments that some biographies can rise above the level of providing source material and become important essays in interpretation and analysis of complex societal events and have the capability of shaping development in society.

There are numerous works on the development of education in Kenya but few of them address the role of specific individuals in the growth of education in great depth. In some of these works, one finds casual mention of some individuals who have played major roles in Kenya’s educational development in both the colonial and postcolonial periods. In the colonial period this is evidenced in the formation of African independent schools while in the postcolonial period many individual contributions are seen in various
educational commissions and reports. Again, this is not covered in any significant depth. In some of the works on youth programs in colonial and postcolonial Kenya, one finds some casual remarks on Griffin scattered in various footnotes. Apart from three works which mention him in some significant detail, with regard to the SBC, limited attempts have been made so far to study his educational contributions to Kenya, and by extension, to the process of social change. This void becomes significant and worthy of study when it is realized that Griffin, more than any other single Kenyan contributed greatly to the growth of Kenya’s education yet did not produce memoirs or an autobiography. The works of Hongo and Mugambi (2000), Martin (1978), King’ala (2005), and others only provide a frame of his involvement in Kenyan education that requires further exploration to put him into perspective with regard to the evolution and growth of Kenya’s education.

It is important to note that this is not to deny that some of these works do provide rich testimonies of events, epiphanies, and the people with whom Griffin worked and interacted. For instance, Hongo and Mugambi’s work concentrates mainly on the story of SBC’s growth for 40 years, from 1959 to 1999. It is basically the story of SBC and positions Griffin as being part and parcel of its birth and growth. Although it mentions the history of the school and the fact that Griffin’s name is synomous with its growth, it does not focus on him and his role in Kenyan education. The book is silent on his wider involvement in Kenya’s educational growth. It is a good introductory text to understanding the educational story of SBC and its growth over the years. Roger Martin’s book can be regarded as a classic piece on the story of SBC from its formative years (1959 to 1978). Unlike Hongo and Mugambi’s work, it is in depth, insightful and it
illustrates all stages of Starehe’s growth in this period. It covers all the phases of the school and all that a reader needs to know about SBC’s beginnings and growth. It is the story of SBC, its rise from two tiny tin huts to a complex institution, its challenges and future prospects. Although it’s a rich text it is not a biography of Griffin. The work views Griffin as being synonymous with Starehe and whose development and growth it credits. The entire volume has only one brief chapter that discusses Griffin, but again in the context of SBC. The book does not provide much information on Griffin’s life and his significant contributions to Kenya’s education. Neither does it present the growth of SBC as a microcosm of Kenya’s educational growth. King’ala’s piece which can be considered the most recent and comprehensive work so far written on Griffin, presents a wholistic picture of who Griffin was in his own words. In addition, it analyzes and interprets his persona. It also provides significant episodes that can be used to critically examine Griffin’s role in the growth of Kenyan education. Although King’ala’s work is in depth and rich in its presentation of Griffin, it does not concentrate on his involvement and contributions to Kenyan education; rather, it is more concerned with presenting who he was from a critical view of the author who knew him, schooled under him, worked and closely interacted with him. Griffin’s educational works are mixed up in his functions at SBC; only one chapter significantly attempts to singularly discuss his educational thoughts. It is this void that this study strives to address. Despite these drawbacks, it is an insightful and classic autobiography on the life and times of Griffin. It is upon this work, and the earlier cited ones, that this study draws and builds for its examination of the role of Griffin in the growth of Kenyan education.
This study focuses on Griffin’s contributions to the growth of youth education in Kenya. It is not a biography as such but an analytical interpretation of his involvement and contributions to youth education in Kenya in both colonial and postcolonial periods within the framework of the factors that accounted for his involvement, why he got involved, his process of involvement, the challenges he faced and the insights he provides in terms of education and change in these periods.

**Summary**

Various issues have been addressed in this discussion. Significant points are:

- Educational biographies are becoming increasingly popular dimensions of qualitative research to both researchers and the general public.
- Available literature on African biographies indicate that the field is gaining ground in recent years.
- The growth of educational biographies has the potential to bridge critical relationships among the balkanized research realms that epitomize the study of education in the postmodern world. They help in understanding how and why something transpired; they illuminate action and reveal meaning. They are vital in expanding human relations and provide space for observing and explicating the nature of societal change.
- Despite the rapid growth of biographical theory and its penetration into the educational discourse, much of its work is overlooked, ignored or given little attention. This calls for further inquiry in the field of education as a way of re-examining educational research methods prompted by postmodernism. In this
regard, research presents new prospects, possibilities, and dimensions required for education. It provides new ways of examining the effects of pedagogical process on students and educators. In addition, it helps in explaining how educational policy manifests itself in the lives of individuals.

• Although, there are various collections of biographical studies, and they do connote growing interest in educational biography, they do not provide a discourse and exploration of the approach. This calls for more research in the field in order to decipher its various facets. Examining individual educators and their role in educational development thus becomes a good entry of trying to annul the complexities that are entailed in biography.

• Straight-line historians view biographical works as insignificant and unworthy scholarship. Despite its condemnations biography has not been totally rejected as a reputable branch of qualitative inquiry. It is still seen as empowering with many practical benefits to society.

• Although there are numerous works on the development of education in Kenya, few of them address the role specific educators have played in its growth in great depth. Apart from the three works which mention Griffin in some meaningful way with regard to SBC, limited attempts have been made so far to write or study his educational contributions to Kenya, and, by extension the process of social change. The mentioned works only provide a frame of his involvement in Kenyan education, a limitation that calls for further exploration in order to effectively understand his role in the evolution and growth of Kenya’s education and
contributions to the process of social change. This study thus focuses on Griffin’s contributions to the growth of youth education in Kenya. It is an analytical interpretation of his involvement and contributions to Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial period. In order to adequately explicate Griffin’s contributions to the development of modern Kenyan education, this study uses theories of leadership and relationality.

**Theoretical Framework**

Theories of leadership and relationality are numerous, but this study only discusses a few. Among the theories of leadership this study focuses on are contingency, transactional, and transformational theories postulated by Fiedler (1967) and Burns (1979). The study uses contingency theory to explicate the research. In addition, it also critically assesses Griffin’s leadership approaches using some of the key frames of transformational leadership. Relationality theories discussed include works of Jane Ronald Martin’s Care, Concern and Commitment. Other theoretical areas covered on pedagogy of relations include the works of Sidorkin, Noddings, Gilligan, Buber, Bakhtin, Dewey, Gadamer, and Heidegger. The relevance of these theories to the study are highlighted.

**Relationality Theories**

**Pedagogy of Relations**

Pedagogy of relations is one of the main intellectual trends in current American educational philosophy and a shift from the pedagogy of behavior. Although not widely used as a term, pedagogy of relations espouses shared views of a group of writers. As a
new emerging approach in educational theory the proponents of it do not agree on how to define it but describe a variety of interpretations, phases, and questions that pertain to it. Romano (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) observes:

The notion of relation in education has come to refer to a wide range of educational philosophies and curriculum interactions and it does not stand for one unitary approach. However, it does refer to a coalition of educational interests committed to engaging with modes of social change and educational reform for teachers and students. Although various authors share a number of assumptions, such as the primacy of social relations in education, how they all look at pedagogies of relations cannot be coalesced in a particular philosophy or approach. (p. 153)

Educational theorists are not alone in exploring and analyzing relational thoughts and their growing significance in academe. There have been similar growing trends in law, medicine, social work, nursing, religion, psychology, feminist studies, peace studies, and even physics. Exploration of relational pedagogy ranges from highly theoretical ontological discussions to the critical practical concerns of learning and teaching processes. Relational theory is an attempt to address many challenges of educational thought being experienced currently in the 20th century. Sidorkin (2004) suggests that if this concept is properly developed and utilized it can be a handy tool in addressing various human particularities because of the central emphasis it places on relations.

Like numerous “new” approaches, the pedagogy of relations is not a new creation. Sidorkin (2004) succinctly argues that although the original use of the term may be traced
to the works of Frank Margonis, there is sufficient evidence of the use of the term by earlier educational scholars. He notes that the historical tradition of placing emphasis on relations dates back to the times of Aristotle. Pedagogy of relations is chiefly associated although not exclusively, with feminist thinkers such as Noddings (2005), Martin (1992), and Gilligan (1988).

As a foundation of this pedagogy, the feminist theories offer a remarkable premise of positioning relations at the center of educational analysis. It is important to note that feminist scholars who laid the foundation for this theory were not responding to failures that were emanating from educational reforming, however, during their time but rather they endeavored to resolve gender biases of educational theory, practice, and universal social life. Over the years they have created an important tradition of concentrating on relational analysis. Nodding’s examination of care, Martin’s idea of the Schoolhome and its three C’s of care, concern, and connection, and Gilligan’s ethics of care are examples of theoretical constructs that take human relationships to be the primary building blocks of reality and central foundations of societal progress that any educational process worthy of its name is expected to embrace and nurture. These authors argue that observable human behaviors and cognitive schemata that accompany them ought to be interpreted against more primary facts that undergird human relations. It is these works that have placed relational thinking in the mainstream functions of ethics and educational theory and practice. Among nonfeminists whose works have addressed relations are included a group of philosophers who support one or another form of proceduralism. A number of them have been enthused by works of Habermas and Biesta’s communicative pedagogy.
Recent scholarship that has attempted to explore this pedagogy further include works of Sidorkin, Buber, Bakhtin, Dewey and Gadamer.

A common thread of relational theory is an assumption that education is a function of specific human relations and not certain behaviors. This is evidenced from most of the epic events of educational reforms in the 20th century, which affirm that educational systems cannot be reconstructed by promoting any specific teaching or administrative practice. Teacher behavior is seen as a practice that cannot be relocated. This latter issue has not been adequately addressed by educational theorists, and this has made educational theory experience certain paradigmatic crises and shifts because it is difficult to provide advice to educational practitioners on the best way of constructing an effective educational system because of the emphasis that education puts on doing instead of being or cobeing.

Sidorkin (2004) notes that critical relational pedagogy explores the interplay between socially determined and interhuman relations, especially as espoused by Paulo Freire in many of his works on the importance of enhancing discourse in education. Educational scholars who focus on communicative approaches have also tried to use this pedagogy in their studies. The main argument in most of their works is that interhuman relations affect and define teaching, and learning and meaningful education can only take place when relations are comprehensibly defined, understood, nurtured, and developed. This argument is espoused in the works of Biesta who views education as an interaction between the activities of the educator and the educated. In his works, he argues that education is not located in the activities of the learner, but in the mutual interaction
between the learner and the educator. Biesta conceptualizes the education process as the “relationality” of relationships. He sees education as existing and functioning in relations. Pijanowski (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) calls this process a relation in “relation.” He writes that “education is possible only through and with human relations. In this lush terrain and operations, therefore, the purpose of education, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes is one and the same: to form relations” (p. 104).

In discussing the importance of relations to the learning process, Dewey (1938) notes that it is fundamental in the constitution of an intelligent theory or theory of experience and is a key criterion for measuring it. He argues that citizenship education of the child must put emphasis on relations. Dewey warns against the isolation of formal citizenship from “the whole system of relations with which it is actually interwoven” (p. 59). He remarks that the child must be educated so that “he (sic) may take charge of himself; may not only adapt himself to the changes which are going on, but have power to shape and direct those changes” (p. 60).

Noddings (2005) discusses relational theory in terms of care theory. She observes that “it is relation-centered rather than agent-centered, and it is more concerned with the caring relation than with caring as virtue” (p. 2). Noddings suggests that relations should be taken as ontologically basic. She views an ethic of caring as having four key components: modeling, dialogue, practice and confirmation. To explicate her arguments she prefers to develop the theory of specific type of relations (care) rather than address more general implications of relational ontology. According to Noddings, it is care for both the living and nonliving things that defines and shapes the wider web of relations.
Margonis (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) draws the link between the ontology and the relational pedagogy. He advocates for “adopting” (p. 41) of an ontological attitude in the fostering of educational relationships. He argues that educators need to be cognizant of the fact that relationships in education sprout from the realization that relationships determine human existence. This connection is important because it changes the most fundamental assumptions about the process of education and salient features that characterize it.

Sidorkin (2002) argues that relationships ontologically precede the intrinsic motivation for learning and should be placed at the center of educational theory and practice. The child’s interest in the learning process is seen as essential in the nurturing of relational pedagogy, because it addresses the individuals’ unique innate characteristics of the child which is borne from interaction. Quoting Mike Rose, he writes:

Teaching, as I was coming to understand, was a kind of romance. You didn’t just work with words or a chronicle of dates or facts about the suspension of protein in milk. You wooed kids with these things, invited a relationship of sorts, the terms of connection being the narrative, the historical event, the balance of case in and water. Knowledge gained its meaning, at least initially, through a touch on the shoulder, through conversation. (pp. 86-87)

Sidorkin (2004) further notes that good educators do acknowledge the central importance of relations in teaching. A relational pedagogy in his view opens a way to an intellectual, moral and admirable way of existence. He argues that the recognition of the relational nature of teaching should enhance experiences of both students and teachers in
the teaching and learning process. He emphasizes that the reactions of students invited into a caring relation often leads to increase in understanding of the subject matter. The philosophy of relational pedagogy is expected to enhance educator’s pedagogical choices. Such educators, according to Sidorkin (2004), are likely to accept an internal theory of motivation, one that locates motivational energy within the student and his or her interests and, purposes, not in external rewards and punishments. These educators are also likely to vary teaching methods and resist accepting one “best” way of teaching as the supreme way of teaching. The recognition of relation, as a dialectical process, steers, fosters and increases the teacher’s choice of methods and has the potential to influence students’ learning outcomes. He asserts:

When we take time to establish relations of care and trust, we learn that some students will probably never acquire a real understanding of our subject. At the same time we learn that these students have talents and skills that we will not acquire. This situation does not imply a failure of either student or teacher but an opportunity for mutual respect and social interdependence. (Sidorkin, 2004, p.viii)

Expounding further on the importance of the pedagogy of relations in an educational process, Sidorkin notes that “thinking of education in terms of doing is unproductive and makes one to lose the sense of reality, because everything seems so relative” (p.viii). He underscores the fact that underlying reality of human relations constitutes the crucial context of education and is the foundation upon which teaching and learning process is cemented. According to him, what educators, administrators, and students do and say can only have meaning and be understood against the invisible but very real matrix of
intersecting the various relations they create. His thoughts are an attempt at a theoretical reconstruction of the relational reality in education. Discussing the significance of relations in the education field, Sidorkin states:

Learning is a function of relations; therefore, educators should pay close attention to it. Relations shape everything teachers do and say to such an extent that very “wrong” actions and words would be okay or even beneficial if the relationship is good. At the same time, the best practices and the most effective words would become meaningless or harmful against the background of an unhealthy relationship. Therefore educators should really concentrate on establishing effective educational relations and only then worry about what to do. (Sidorkin, 2004, p. 2)

He sees teaching and learning as being closely linked to specific behaviors or activities. Sidorkin observes that teaching today can only succeed if it is grounded on the solid foundation of interhuman relations. Teaching and learning within a school setting depends on specific mutual transformations of relations that are in existence. In order to create effective educational relations it is important to use varied activities and situations beyond what a normal school provides. Affirming this, he succinctly argues that “schools would be more viable as hybrid institutions that combine functions of school proper with those of a volunteer youth association and a neighborhood club” (p. 2).

Bacon (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) observes that a caring relationship is built on treating others with respect and dignity, so that a trusting relationship can be developed and nurtured among those involved. In a caring relationship, educators are expected to focus
their energy on valuing and appreciating students’ needs and purpose to learn their efforts and desires. A relational approach to knowing requires that the relationships that people experience with others should be both personal and social. Bacon writes:

We are first of all social beings who are greatly affected by others, but we also greatly affect others right from the start through our actions. We are social beings who exist in relation to others at an intimate level as well as a generalized level. We are selves-in-relation with-others. There is a direct link between our individual subjectivity and our general sociability. (p. 172)

In the 20th century, the roots of relational ontology can be traced to Buber. Who argues that “All real living is meeting.” His basic structure is defined in his initial claim: “To man the world is twofold- I-Thou and I-It” (Buber, 2002, p. 17). He sees these as two pairs of primary words that separate two distinct modes of existence. I-Thou or just Thou refers to the realm of the dialogical relation, while “I–It” or “It” refers to the realm of subject-object experiences. Buber discusses in depth these two types of relations to demonstrate how human existence depends on relations that are in existence. Buber has been instrumental in establishing the primacy of relation. However, he relies more on a sharp opposition between the two types of the mentioned relations to ascertain that relations are essential in any human existence and more so in an educational process. Although Buber’s theory has a lot of relevance to the theory of relationality, to some extent it lacks fine distinction for it is “I-Thou” or “I-It,” all or nothing. It has no middle ground in relationality endeavors. In his later works, Buber tried to expound these thoughts through his binary model through the notion of the interhuman. The latter
consists of elements of everyday life that may lead to a genuine dialogue, what he refers to as “I-Thou” relation.

Buber (2002) makes a distinction between two different dimensions of human life, the social and the interhuman. He states that social phenomena occurs, “whenever the life of a number of men, lived with one another, bound up together, brings in its train shared experiences and reactions” (p. 63). In the interhuman, the only thing that matters is that those involved must become aware of each other and be related in such a way that they do not regard and use each other as objects but, rather, function as partners in a living experience. Another important characteristic of the interhuman is that it does not include psychological and social structures. By the sphere of the interhuman he denotes mainly the actual happenings between men, whether wholly mutual or leading to the growth of mutual relations. The interhuman consists of elements of everyday life that may lead to a genuine dialogue. Buber emphasizes that the interhuman is not an I-Thou relation; it just creates way to that direction.

Although Buber tried to overcome the extreme duality of relational taxonomy, he seems to have replaced it with another extreme, binary opposition. It can be inferred that Buber’s bipolar logic led to his in depth pessimism with regard to the attainment of dialogue, what he refers to as the real I-Thou relations within educational settings. He asserts that complete mutuality is impossible between an educator and a student due to the existence of a power asymmetry that is difficult to eschew in the educational process. It is at this point that Buber’s version of relational ontology loses its significance for the educational theory. This thus calls for a more comprehensive taxonomy of relations to
illuminate the theory and can create a balance between his scale of “I-Thou” and “I-It.” This requires taking into consideration how much and what kind of mutuality is within the existing relation. In addition, it calls for viewing student-teacher relations as a series of stages, each having specific characteristics and measures that influence it. According to Buber what is key in an effective teaching and learning process is to get teachers to focus on the relations instead of behaviors. These relations are expected to be stereotypical, exploratory, cooperational, respectful, and mutual and should recognize those involved.

Although viewed as a good tool for enhancing learning some scholars have pointed out difficulties that the theory of relationality presents. The ontological specificity of relations is seen as creating certain epistemological difficulties. Margonis (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) notes that our knowledge of relationships always remains partial and limited. It is in this regard that Thayer-Bacon’s views (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) on relational epistemology emphasize that epistemology should be expanded to include qualities of knowing that have historically been viewed as hindering the acquisition of knowledge. Knowing thus should be synchronized with relationality that is vital in the understanding of relations. This proposal, however, also presents difficulties especially when relations are taken as the main objects of knowing and treated as independent entities in themselves. In addition, it also does not prescribe special mechanisms of understanding and nurturing relations. Relational understanding is not the same as understanding relations. This is the central thesis of Bakhtin’s theory of Polyphony and Polyphonic. Bakhtin argues that the multitude of individual consciousness has some
epistemological meaning. He asserts that what could be known by means of dialogue cannot be known by any other means. Although this may not apply to all kinds of knowledge, it is relevant to relations and gives it a wider sphere of influence in the teaching and learning process.

As earlier mentioned although the aforementioned scholars have advanced varied thoughts on the pedagogy of relations, they all underscore its importance in the education process. In order to critically analyze the relevance of this pedagogy to the teaching and learning process, this study focuses more on the postulations of Jane Roland Martin, one of its earliest modern thinkers.

Jane Roland Martin’s Theory of Relationality: Care, Concern, and Connection

In discussing the theory of relationality with regard to care, concern, and connection, Martin (1994) examines the concept from a wide spectrum of components that define it, what they entail and vital mechanisms for utilizing them to enable them to thrive in an educational setting. To begin with, she reckons that it is important for society to train children for life. The education they receive should enable them to confront life challenges. This can be attained through team work. She writes:

The function our culture assigns school is that of preparing the nation’s young to carry out the economic and political tasks and activities located in the public world. Given this clear objective and the fact that children begin their lives in the private world of the home, school sees its mission as that of transforming inhabitants of the world into denizens of the other. (p. 76)
According to Martin, education that is offered to the young should be wholistic and should enable young people to live in the world, beyond just having the knowledge of it. She underscores the need to educate children about their heritage. They need to learn to live in this world, not just know about it. This, according to her is similar to Dewey’s views on educating “the whole child.” She notes, however, that it is all too easy to instruct children about their heritage without ever teaching them to be active and constructive participants in the world, let alone learn how to make it a better place for themselves and their offspring.

She proposes that in order for schools to enhance relational components of care, concern, and connection, it is important for them to educate youth on issues of the mind, body, thought, action, reason, and emotion. This means that studies that children pursue should enable them to integrate elements that are essential in life to enable them to engage effectively in the decision making process of their societies. On the concept of wholistic education, Martin concurs with Dewey’s views on how to raise young people. She advocates for offering of an all round interactive education that entails ontology, axiology, and epistemology. She sees this as the education for life. She writes that:

Dewey told school pupils not to separate mind from body, thought from action, or reason from feeling and emotion. Whatever a teacher does, life will happen to students. The question is what kind? It is one thing for school to provide integrative activities that unite mind and body, thought and action, reason and emotion. It is quite another for it to teach each child to interact with every child
and every adult too as one full human being to another. But an education for living can do no less. (Martin, 1994, p. 104)

In defining the key characteristics of care, concern and connection, she notes that caring entails warmth and indulgence on the other hand. Concern entails self-sacrifice, and connection strives to nurture lack of separation or neglect. Martin (1994) notes:

The virtue of caring can be viewed as the midpoint between the deficiency of coldness or lack of warmth, on the other hand, and the excess of indulgence on the other. The virtue of concern falls, in turn, between disinterest and self-sacrifice, connection to others, between total separation and a loss of all sense of self, nurturance between separation or neglect and smothering. (p. 110)

Martin (1994) notes that John Dewey spent his life trying to combat the tendency of educators to separate reason from emotion, thought from action, education from life. She sees these three areas as central forms of liberal education that seem to resurrect dualisms that Dewey thought he was laying to rest. She notes:

The theory relies on a conception of liberal education that divorces mind from the body. It thus makes education of the body non-liberal, thereby denying it value. Since most action involves bodily movement, education of and for action is denied value also” (p. 179).

Martin’s views are similar to Chodorow’s (1978) discussions on “nurturing capacities” and Gilligan’s (1982) calls for an “ethics of care.” They all emphasize that the fate of the earth depends on all human beings possessing the qualities of care, concern and connection. Martin argues that true “education” should foster relations; failure to do
so will necessitate its redefinition in terms of addressing societal challenges. She notes that although these qualities are associated in our minds with the reproductive processes of society, they have the broadest moral, social, and political significance. She opines that “care, concern, connectedness, nurturance are as important for carrying on society’s economic, political, and social processes as its reproductive ones. If education is to help us acquire them, it must be redefined” (Martin, 1994, p. 206).

The school from Martin’s arguments, therefore, should seek more importantly, to teach its students a new form of citizenship. She suggests that it should do this by ensuring that there is domestic serenity in society at large. This calls for being cognizant of the fact that school as a moral equivalent to home is expected to align its with those of larger society.

In contrast to the notion of education as necessarily discomforting, Martin (1994) argues that education might be made more socially responsible (more worldly) by making it more homelike. She raises educationists thinking on “the kind of home we want our nation to be and the kind of family we want its inhabitants to be” (p. 47). It is under this guidance that an education system should be designed.

*Application of the Theory to the Study*

Relationality theory is relevant to the study because the study seeks to examine Griffin’s involvement in youth education in Kenya, a process that was essentially relational. In order to understand the factors that led to his involvement in youth education, programs that he established, and his insights on Kenyan youth education it is imperative to examine his relational networks. The theory of relations is vital in
understanding and interpreting various relationships that Griffin established among the faculty, students, support staff, administrators, government and funding bodies, and the effect these relations had on his educational activities, management, and performance.

The theory’s assertions on the relationships between care, concern and connection are important in dissecting their effects on Starehe’s performance both in its academic and affective programs and the nurturing of family, brotherhood, networks and relationships among its former and current students, faculty, administrators, teachers, and support staff. Commenting on the importance of relations to Griffin’s educational work and his establishment of SBC as a “school within a home,” Martin (1978) gives the following poem that was written by a pupil of Starehe:

When I came to Starehe, I couldn’t read or write,
I had no food, no clothes, nor anywhere to rest.
Before I came to Starehe, I was hungry and afraid,
Sleeping in a hole as a rat hides from a cat.
People beat me and spat on me-
I cried, I wept, but all was in vain.
One man, a stranger, shouted to them:
“Leave the boy, he is innocent.” Mr. Griffin,
Interested in my life, helping boys who suffer,
Taking unfortunates, creating a family,
Giving food, education and all that we need
We who had nothing are safe in his hands,
He has brought us a future. (p. 201)

This poem illustrates the concept of education that Griffin strived to build at Starehe that basically was the essence and secret of its success. He endeavored to make SBC, “a school within a home”, with so many attributes of a family. It is this relationality bonds according to Martin (1978) that bonded all Starehean together with their school for they shared a common destiny that allowed the boys to see Griffin as a father, with an equal mixture of affection and respect. He observes:

Even now, an Old Starehian can obtain help and advice from the Centre as readily as if he were still at school. From Griffin himself there is always a welcome. Letters reach him from young men in distant places, from those celebrating success and from those in trouble--even from those in prison. All are answered, fully, affectionately and helpfully. One recent leaver expressed a wish to correspond regularly with the Director, but only on condition that they addressed each other as “Godfather” and Godson”. His condition was accepted. “Others may be lost to sight for years on end, but nearly always, in time, the magnet of Starehe draws them back to share their triumphs and their sorrows. (p. 199)

It is this essence that the relationality theories embodies that this study seeks to utilize. By and large, the study also draws further application from the general literature on relationality and its significance in the teaching and learning process illustrated by various scholars earlier discussed.
Theories of Leadership

According to T’Shaka (1990), the art of leadership is one of the most observed, enigmatic, least understood and sought phenomena on earth. Despite numerous researches in this field, leadership according to Burns (1979) and Rost (1991), leadership has and is still an elusive concept. Bennis and Nanus (1995) note that despite years of research and much literature on the subject, there is no consensus to what distinguishes leaders from nonleaders, effective organizations from ineffective organizations. Commenting on this lacuna, Burns (1979) notes that “one of the most universal cravings of our time is a hunger for compelling and creative leadership” (p. 1). There is thus a crisis and disillusionment in contemporary leadership, according to Al-Mansour (1993), Bass (1985), Burns (1979), Carruthers (1994), Foster (1986, 1989), J. Gardner (1990), H. Gardner 1995), Haskins (1988), Lusane (1994), Marable (1990), and West (1993). This has made scholars and theorists of leadership revisit, research, and examine the philosophy and mind of leadership of those who are deemed leaders and the characteristics that they demonstrate.

Most segments of society are in dearth need of effective leaders. One of the sectors that has received significant attention in recent times is education. Many governments and schools want to know those characteristics of administrators who really are making a difference. Many theorists, for instance, Foster (1986, 1989); Getzels, Lipham, and Campbell (1968), Kempner (1989); Saunders, Phillips, and Johnson (1966); Giroux (1992), Leithwood (1992); Sergiovanni (1994), and Sheive and Schoenheit (1987), have addressed the notion of leadership with a focus on educational administration and
management. Although work done on leadership in general and the education field is enormous, literature on the role of individual educators in school administration; the influence of political, social, cultural, and economic determinants governing their involvement in educational development, and their insights on the future progress of education process is limited.

Although educational challenges are considerable and the route to reform is complex, the potential for leadership to influence pupil and school performance remains unequivocal. Affirming this, Northouse (1997) argues that the quality of headship matters in determining the motivation of educators and quality of teaching that takes place in the classroom. He observes that it helps to establish a clear and consistent vision for the school, which lays emphasis on prime purposes of the school as teaching and learning and is highly visible to both staff and students.

Within and outside the education field, the authors concur that the basis of modern leadership thought and practice rests on perceptions of what is entailed in it. To them it has to reflect interpersonal processes among people. Various scholars, such as Bass (1985, 1989), Bennis (1985, 1989), Bennis and Nanus (1985), Fiedler (1967), Gardner (1990), Rost (1991), Leithwood (1992, 1994), Paige (1977), Sheive and Schoenheit (1987), and Burns (1979), have raised various questions on what it entails. They have examined its character, activity, behavior, and traits. Kellerman (1984) notes that although there is a small body of literature that addresses what leadership ought and ought not to be, there is surprisingly little on what leadership is. This is the central concern that dominates Rost’s (1991) work on the type of leadership that is needed in the
21st century. He laments that most of the scholars who have attempted to write on leadership have failed to define the concept and have concentrated more on leaders. He argues that they have not adequately examined the “role of followership in a dynamic interplay of leader-- follower activism” (Rost, 1991, p. xii). The emphasis in most works has been on peripheral elements and content rather than the core aspects of leadership—the relationship aspect that the whole process entails. Most works that exist in this area tend to be more prescriptive than descriptive. Burns (1979) gives an in depth analysis on the concept of leadership. In a nutshell, he groups leadership in two broad categories: transactional and transformational.

Burns (1979) views transactional leadership as “an exchange interaction between leaders and one or more of their constituency for the benefit of and gratification in the “political marketplace” (p. 258). According to him this type of leadership occurs when one person takes the initiative to make contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. For instance, political leaders exchange jobs, subsidies, and lucrative government contracts for votes and campaign contributions. Corporate leaders exchange pay and status for work effort. Transactional leadership may involve values, but their values are relevant to the exchange process, such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and reciprocity. Their purposes are related, at least to the extent that the purposes stand within the bargaining process and can be advanced by maintaining that process. But beyond this, the relationship does not hold. Burns notes that this type of leadership is based on iconoclastic idolatry as the substance of ethical character. The transaction is based on both tangible and intangible material rewards only. This type of leadership does not
engage the constituency because it is mainly governed wholistically in terms of relationship based on shared reality, vision, empowerment, critical consciousness, and or emancipation for social change.

Burns (1979) views transactional leaders as people who subscribe to the capitalistic ideals of individualism and reformation. Commenting on this, Rost (1991) notes that these type of leaders seek to empower themselves at the expense of, and inspite of, their constituency while seeking to have their constituency serve them; they are deductive; that is, they mandate from “top down”. Burns (1979) and Rost (1991) both observe that a transactional leader is keen to check on the benefits that accrue to the leadership, the exchange process, self-interest. The leader is guided by the cost-benefit analysis syndrome through a crafted system of compensated social gatekeepers.

According to Burns (1979) and Rost (1991), transformational leadership is the embodiment of the superlative type of leadership. Rost (1991) writes that transformation leadership should be the “cornerstone of the postindustrial school of leadership” (p. 122). Affirming this, Burns (1979) observes that transformational leadership entails new social conditions and expresses them to their constituencies. This type of leadership is seen as inspiring and moves society to a greater developmental level, both locally and globally. Transformational leadership, according to Burns (1979) occurs:

When one or more persons engage with others in such away that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Their purposes are usually fused and power bases are linked not as counterweights but as mutual support for common purpose. Transforming leadership becomes moral
in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led and thus has a transforming effect. (Burns, 1979, p. 20)

Expounding on Burn’s views, Rost (1991), Bass (1985), and Tucker (1981) present leadership as a multidisciplinary global phenomenon. Tucker argues that transformational leadership functions in three central ways: it represents the expansion of specific needs and wants of the constituency; it is dialectical in nature (it has the potential of being developmentally brutal and revolutionary in nature); it has the power to exert energy. Foster (1986) notes that transformational leaders recognize that their power is derived from the critical mass, and thus they do not wield power over their constituencies but share with them. Leadership is grounded in the common culture that is shared and does not emanate from one’s position, authority, or power. Accessory to this, Bass (1985) observes that transformational leaders possess varied transformational and transactional patterns. Leaders use both modes in varied amounts depending on the historical context in which they function. Supporting this notion, Foster (1986) argues that “leaders and followers are not categories with exclusive membership, followers will be leaders and leaders will be followers” (p.182). In this dichotomy, transaction is used as a means to provide service that will benefit all members of society; and both the leader and the led are interrelated, interdependent; and play their respective roles interchangeably, depending on the given historical context.

Burns (1979) notes that it is important for transformational leaders to critically engage and assist their constituents in defining and redefining the nature of their realities, through four significant manifestations: charisma, inspiration, individualized
consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Expounding further on these concepts, Bass (1985, 1990) and Gardner (1995) suggest that these cognitive manifestations are the central qualities of transformational leaders. The philosophical foundation of transformational leadership is rooted in social interaction and critical consciousness. Foster (1986, 1989) gives four main characteristics that comprise the praxis of transformational leadership. According to him leadership should be: critical, transformative, educative, and ethical. Emphasizing the latter, Foster (1989) notes that “critical leadership leads naturally to the concept of transformation. Leadership is seen as a vehicle for social change… which is transformative in degree” (p. 69). This implies that transformational leaders critically challenge social conditions and create both social and societal change.

Yukl (2002) observes that transforming leadership appeals to the moral values of followers in an attempt to raise their consciousness about ethical issues and to mobilize their energy and resources to reform institutions. Transacting leaders are viewed as motivating followers by appealing to their self-interest. He notes further that with transformational leadership, the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward the leader; and they are motivated to do more than they are originally expected to do. Bass (1990) writes that:

The leader transforms and motivates followers by: making them more aware of the importance of task outcomes; inducing them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organization or team and; activating their higher-order needs. In contrast, transactional leadership involves an exchange process that may
result in follower compliance with leader requests but is not likely to generate enthusiasm and commitment to task objectives. (p. 253)

Both transactional and transformational theories describe leadership as a process of influencing commitment to shared objectives and empowering followers to attain them. According to Bass (1985), transformational and transactional leadership are distinct but not mutually exclusive processes. Transformational leadership increases follower motivation and performance more than transactional leadership does, but effective leaders use a combination of both types of leadership.

According to Burns (1985), historically, discourses on leadership have been multidisciplinary in nature and have had limited specialization. In recent years, leadership theory and research has gained considerable interest in sociopolitical organizations that are constantly in search of effective and efficient outcomes. Several authors have made notable contributions in this regard: Bennis (1985), Burns (1978), Hughes (1994), Senge (1990), Lewis (1996), Northouse (1997), Davies (1997), and Nanus and Bennis (1997). Nanus and Bennis (1997) underscore the fact that organizations cannot be successful without effective leadership. Supporting this view, Gardner (1995) writes:

Leadership remains crucially important to institutions ranging from schools to nations. Much of what is beneficent in the world has been inspired by farsighted leaders, even as many of the horrors in the world have been wrought by leaders who, while perhaps equally gifted have used their powers destructively. (p. xiv)
Theories of leadership

Historically there have been numerous theories of leadership, namely, the great man theory, trait theory, behavior theory, excellence theory and contingency/situational theory. Most of these theories have aimed at maintaining the status quo and majorly focus on the leader. The majority of them have drawn their leadership paradigms primarily from business and corporate fields. Affirming the latter, Foster (1986) writes that these theories are:

Structural-functionalist; management-oriented personalistic in focusing only on the leader; goal achievement-dominated; self-interested and individualistic in outlook; male-oriented; utilitarian and materialistic in ethical perspective, rationalistic, technocratic, linear, quantitative and scientific language and methodology. (p. 27)

The theories of leadership are many, but the present study only discusses one-- the contingency theory and uses it to analyze the research problem. This theory cannot fully account for problem under study because of the complexities of the leadership concept. This study discusses the main features of this theory, how it measures to leadership, strengths, shortcomings, and its relevance to the present study.

Contingency Theory of Leadership

Although several approaches to leadership could be called contingency theories, the most widely recognized is Fielder’s (1967) theory. It is called “contingency” because it suggests that a leader’s effectiveness depends on how well his or her leadership style fits the context. Fielder’s theory was developed after very extensive series of studies covering
15 years. In his theory Fielder argued that leadership style alone was not adequate in explaining leader effectiveness. He thus set out to devise a model that integrated situational parameters into the leadership equation debate. Fielder argued that the most important dimension of the situation in a given leadership paradigm is the degree of certainty, predictability and control that the leader has. According to this theory, in order to understand performance of leaders, it is important to understand the situations in which they lead. In this theory, effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader’s style to the right setting. Leadership is seen as a product of three key components: the leader, the led, and the situation. The theory purports that group performance can be improved either by modifying the leader’s style or by modifying the given group task.

Fielder’s contingency theory (1967) states that, first leader effectiveness results when leadership style is matched with the leader-follower situation and with the individuals involved. Second, leadership styles promote effective results, namely, in terms of the task and relationship motivation. Here, three factors determine leadership style: the degree to which the leader is accepted by the follower (the degree of confidence, trust); the respect the follower has for the leader; and the extent to which the leader possesses the ability to influence the follower.

In a nutshell, contingency theory is concerned with styles and situations. It provides the framework for effectively matching the leader to the situation. It thus represents a shift in leadership research from focusing not only on the leader but looking at the leader in conjunction with the situation in which he or she functions. The theory suggests that situations can be analyzed by assessing three key factors: the leader relations, task
structure, and position power. These three situational factors, according to Northouse (1997), determine “favorableness” of various situations within the organization.

Situations that are rated “most favorable” are those having good leader-follower relations, defined tasks, and strong leader position power. Situations that are “least favorable” have poor leader-follower relations, unstructured tasks, and weak leader position power. In his research, Fiedler underscored that neither of the three factors is effective in all situations.

To measure leadership style, Fiedler developed the Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) scale. Leaders who score high on the scale are seen as relationship-motivated and those who score low on the scale are identified as task-motivated. On the whole, contingency theory opines that low LPC’s are effective in extremes, and that high LPC’s are effective in moderately favorable situations. Although contingency approaches to leadership do provide a stable platform from which to step into the next set of issues, these issues are quite complex and do require a more integrated, multifaceted, and systematic view of the leadership process.

Northouse (1997) notes that contingency theories have a number of strengths and disadvantages. Kellerman (1984) observes that, despite numerous advantages accruing to contingency theory, the model has been the subject of considerable controversy. The arguments against this theory have included the meaning of the LPC scale, relevance of situational variables, and general predictive validity. Despite their weakness, the theories have made significant contributions to the understanding of leadership process and have been strongly supported by data from both laboratory and organizational studies. They
have demonstrated that different leader behaviors may be appropriate in different situations.

This study utilizes some of the core tenets of leadership entailed in this theory to understand who Griffin was and the leadership style(s) he devised to be able to function in varied situational contexts during the colonial and postcolonial periods in order to effectively develop youth education. The study examines him in relation to his leadership activities mainly at SBC, which entails its foundation, growth, and future vision. Brief analysis is also undertaken on his activities at the NYS to attain some insight into the way he developed and acquired varied leadership styles over the years and how he used these experiences to build SBC. It is this interplay that this study examines through the person of Griffin and his contributions to the evolution and growth of Kenyan education.

Application of the Literature

Some aspects of leadership literature, especially components on transformational leadership, are utilized to examine further the research subject. The employed areas in the study include:

- Examining the mode of leadership prism or style that Griffin demonstrated in his involvement in youth education both in colonial and postcolonial Kenya.
- Griffin’s leadership approaches to confront the social, political, and economic challenges of the time and his attempts to create social change both at the individual and societal level.
- Key characteristics of Griffin’s leadership style (in this case if transformational) namely: critical, transformative, educative, and ethical, and
how he used them to create social interactions and critical consciousness in his engagements in youth education in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya.

- Key manifestations of transformational leadership, namely, charisma, inspiration, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation and how they were depicted in the person of Griffin and in his administration especially at SBC.

*Application of the Theory to the Study*

The contingency theory was relevant to the study because the study sought to examine Griffin not only as an educator in his leadership position of SBC but also his leadership style(s) and how he functioned in varied contexts in which he worked both in the colonial and postcolonial period. Both eras had varied contextual spheres in terms of the social, cultural, and political, economic structures; and Griffin’s educational journey in these phases was varied as were the approaches he used to shape his educational endeavors.

The study recognizes that leadership is complex and interpersonal, and leaders cannot be seen in isolation from followers. The linkage between the two embraces the dynamics of wants, needs and required motivation. The interaction of the leaders and led is seen as standing at the center of human actions. These are the components that the contingency theory espouses in its discussions of the contextual functions of leaders.
Summary of the Theories of Relationality and Leadership

In summary, theoretical constructs take human relations to be the primary building blocks of reality. The theory of relationality views education as a function of specific human relations, and not specific behaviors, and educators are required to pay close attention to it. The purpose of education, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes are the same: to form relations. A relational pedagogy thus opens way to an intellectual, moral, and admirable way of life. The recognition and the relational nature of teaching should enhance the experiences of both students and educators in the teaching and learning process. It should also address various human needs that emanate from the same.

Interhuman relations affect and define teaching and learning; and meaningful education can only take place when relations are defined, understood, nurtured, and developed. Education systems cannot be improved or reconstructed by providing any specific teachings and administrative practice. Care, concern, connectedness, and nurturance are seen as important for carrying on society’s processes as its reproductive ones. A relevant education system is required to create conditions that can nurture and foster their growth.

The contingency theory of leadership suggests that a leader’s effectiveness depends on how well his or her leadership style fits in a given context. Thus, in order to understand the performance of leaders, it is important to understand the situations in which they lead. Leadership is seen as a product of three key components: the leader, the led and the situation. The theory provides a framework for effectively matching the
leader to the situations. Three factors determine leadership style, according to this theory: the degree to which the leader is accepted by the follower (the degree of confidence, trust); the respect the follower has for the leader; and the extent to which the leader possesses the ability to influence the follower. Within this framework, those who lead educational institutions are expected to build sound relationships with those they lead. It is these relations that make the leader to be accepted by the follower(s).

**Emerging Gaps from the Reviewed Literature**

The following gaps emerge from the reviewed literature in this section:

- There is limited research on relations in educational settings and their effects on the teaching, learning, and educational change process.
- There is limited research on educational biographies, especially African centered biographies both on the continent and in the diaspora.
- There is limited research on how educational biographies illuminate the historical, social, political, and economic contexts of their given societies and their effects on the educational process.

These cited gaps call for research on African educational biographies. Gaps in the discussed literature necessitate the need to investigate the role of individual educators in the growth of education; historical, cultural, political, and economic conditions in which they arise; and insights they provide in the education change process. This study, therefore, explores these gaps through the lenses of the educational experiences of Griffin. It seeks to investigate other emerging factors beyond the cited ones in the
reviewed literature that elucidate ways of enhancing youth education. The study seeks to examine future strategies that can be used to effect educational change.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on research methodology. The chapter discusses the research design, sources and nature of data collected, study population and sampling, research participants, refinement of the research instrument, and data analysis and interpretation procedures.

The Research Design

The study used a qualitative research approach, which, according to Denzin (1989) “is a situated activity that…consists of a set of interpretive, material practices…a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations.” It is an attempt “to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). In other words, qualitative research is concerned with interpreting and bringing meanings to what human beings are doing or saying in the world at certain times and places.

The study is a biographical case study, which according to Creswell (2000) “ is the study of an individual and her or his experiences as told to the researcher or found in documents and archival material” (p. 47). Denzin (1989) defines the biographical method as the “studied use and collection of life documents that describe turning point moments in an individual’s life” (p. 69). These accounts, according to Heibrun (cited in Kridel, 1998), seem to explore lesser lives, great lives, thwarted lives, lives cut short, or lives miraculous in their unapplauded achievement.
Biographical writing has its foundations in varied disciplines and has found more replenished interest in the recent past. The intellectual branches of this tradition are found in various fields, for instance, literary, historical, anthropological, psychological, sociological and interdisciplinary views that emanate from feminist and cultural thinking. Biographical studies are gaining ground in recent educational researches especially in the growing field of life writing. Exploring the lives of others through biographical inquiry are in a sense, explorations into our own lives. Biographical studies allow for personal reflection “through” the perspectives of others. They simply imply a greater sharing of lives, experiences, interests, and abilities. They negate the argument that literary works stand on their own, without reference to their authors, sources, backgrounds, or contexts in which they are written or arise.

In recent times there has been growing public interest in biographies. The growing public interest in biography has coincided with the surge in academic studies of the genre. Many scholars from varied disciplines view biography as a method capable of reaching a larger audience and being able to address a wide spectrum of social, political, cultural, and psychological issues than most other forms of inquiry. The approach is slowly developing as a significant research design in the field of educational research. According to Kridel (1998), good biographical studies are expected to describe the way people faced living, how they met problems, how they coped with their varied crises, how they loved, competed, performed things that all human beings do on daily basis. They are conceptualized as touching familiar chords in readers for they encompass daily
human occurrences. Because of their ability to cover wider spectrums of societal events, biography and life-history are viewed as being fundamental in qualitative research.

In the modern age, educators are increasingly recognizing the importance of personal narratives, the power of stories, and the significance of whose perspective is being expressed and who is being heard. Kridel (1998) says that “authoritative knowledge is becoming antiquated with the emergence of multifaceted research methodologies embodying interpretative, naturalistic inquiry” (p. 10). As interest in biographical studies grows in the academia, methodology is becoming increasingly complex. Commenting on this, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) note that the “means for interpretive, ethnographic practices is still not clear and things are likely not to be the same in the near future in biographical works” (p. 9). Despite these complexities, and dynamism that biographical work presents to qualitative research, biographical studies have a lot to offer to researchers as they strive to decipher various educational phenomena. Kridel (1998) observes that “they go beyond mere collection of facts and preserving of information; rather, they ‘inspire’ comparison.” For instance, they raise questions such as “Have I lived that way? Could I make myself live that way? Do I want to live that way?” (p. 11). Biographical studies transcend boundaries of qualitative research and unite varied communities in education so that the universal understanding of societal events is created through a critical examination of a single human life.

**Rationale for the Narrative Approach to Interpreting Experience**

The assumption of using narrative approach to this biographical study is because it enables the participant not only to tell about his or her experiences with the main
research subject and his impact on the Kenyan youth education but also provides an opportunity for explaining how he or she understood these interactions and applied meaning to them and their significance to the development of education in Kenya. The biographical study using a narrative approach allowed me to:

- Investigate who Griffin was,
- Look at the social, cultural, political, and economic forces that accounted for his involvement in Kenyan education and why,
- Look at his establishment of Starehe Boys Centre and School and its reflection of Kenya’s historical context,
- Look at his insights on Kenyan education both in the colonial and postcolonial periods.

**Rationale for Research Subject**

The research subject for this study was Dr. Geoffrey William Griffin, founder and director of SBC from 1959 to 2005. He lived and worked in Nairobi, Kenya. A number of factors contributed to my choice of the main research subject.

- First, he occupies a long and unique historical educational experience of the Kenyan educational system in both colonial and postcolonial eras.
- Second, he is considered to have been the longest serving founder and head of a school in Kenya’s educational history and thus possessed wide educational experiences that could illuminate varied school management complexities and possible approaches of addressing them.
• Third, the performance of SBC during his 46 years of tenure as the founder and head was exemplary in a field where many schools were experiencing inconsistent performance. There was thus need to investigate factors that were accounting for this steady lead and stability of performance.

• Fourth, he was a government consultant on various educational reviews and commissions that were undertaken to shape Kenya’s educational process from 1963 to 2005. This made him well suited to provide insights on the growth, challenges, and future prospects of Kenya’s educational system.

• Fifth, he had been recognized nationally and internationally for his contributions to the education of the disenfranchised in society and had received numerous awards in this regard.

• Sixth, today, Starehe is believed to be the only institution of its kind in Africa, and probably world over, that exclusively admits underprivileged students who are offered free education and care at both secondary and tertiary level. In a continent beset by atrocities, and ravaged by poverty and other life-threatening diseases, such as HIV/AIDS that inhibit many students’ from accessing education, Griffin’s educational, philanthropic engagements at SBC become vital in terms of exploring ways of addressing issues of poverty and educational funding in Africa and other developing countries.

• Seventh, Griffin’s administrative style and student population was unique. For instance, the school has one of the highest numbers of secondary school students in Kenya, of which about 73% are from low socioeconomic backgrounds and
receive free education, 17% are from the middle-income group, and 10% come from the high income group. How Griffin managed to solicit funds and create a steady financial future for his students from low social-economic backgrounds, and at the same time maintaining a sound academic performance, were unique educational funding models that this study was interested in investigating.

- Eighth, Griffin’s innovative leadership models of involving students in school administration, establishing care relations, and maintaining “family” bonds among his students were leadership styles that this study was interested in exploring in terms of deciphering ways that educational institutions can adequately be restructured to enable them forge an effective educative community.

Rationale for Research Participants

The choice of the 36 research participants was based on several factors. First, they provided a varied sample with regard to age, class, and association with the main research subject (Griffin) and the school (SBC) as well as position in the school and the years (duration) of being in Starehe. Second, they were people with whom Griffin had established a degree of trust and confidence that facilitated the disclosure of personal information on various components that were being investigated. Third, most of the chosen research subjects exhibited the ability to dialogue, converse, and narrate stories, with attention to detail, in response to the open-ended and unstructured questions about their personal involvement with Griffin, interpretations, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings. Lastly, many of them knew and had interacted with Griffin for many years and had the ability to provide in depth data on him.
Rationale for Methods of Study

This study implemented a variety of methods that characterize qualitative research namely, life histories, open-ended interviews, participant observation, document and archival material and audiovisual analysis. Other minor methods used included subject journaling and casual chatting. The first two played a central role in the formulation and analysis of participants’ interactions with Griffin and their experiences on various issues under investigation. The third method played a complementary role and assisted in the contextualization of Griffin’s life history and his involvement in Kenyan education. The fourth and fifth method helped to reinforce Griffin’s educational experiences on various issues under investigation. Subject journaling and casual chatting were used to illicit more indepth information on various themes that were being examined.

Life Histories

Life histories were employed to examine how Griffin’s experiences in youth educational programs over the years had an impact on various issues under study. His early experiences were helpful in examining their influences on his latter career. It is a method that provided room for the participants to explain in depth Griffin’s early experiences before undertaking his career in education; his school leadership and educational experiences; challenges that he faced in his educational activities; and his future insights on Kenyan youth education. This method centrally provided an avenue for addressing Griffin’s biography. The solution to acquiring his personal biography was obtained in the field through open-ended interviews. This focused specifically on his life-history. Interviews for the purposes of life-history were structured in two ways. In the
first interview the participants were asked general and open-ended questions about Griffin’s background. In the second interview, the participants were required to proceed on with his life history to the time of his death in 2005, but indicate his involvement in the educational process based on his leadership role at SBC. This was important in the acquisition of a more focused life history by examining how Griffin’s past experiences were linked to his interests and decision to get involved in Kenyan educational process. The purpose of this general and focused life history was to establish a contextual foundation for the participant’s subsequent reflections and interpretations on Griffin’s daily experiences in his involvement in Kenyan youth education.

The interview sessions were intensive, and some of them occurred in the late evening or early morning hours either before or after the school’s planned activities, especially those that involved members of the school community. A few of the interviews were conducted on weekends as that was the only available time for some school administrators and students. The intensity of the school program, the exhaustion and fatigue of some of the participants and the irregularity and sometimes discontinuity of the interviews are certainly noteworthy disadvantages that had an impact on the interview process. Despite these obstructions, all the participants in the study exhibited great flexibility and willingness to conduct the interviews, as well as follow-up in situations where interviews were interrupted due to time or schedule constraints. For the greater part, most interviews were conducted in a quiet atmosphere that was relevant to the individualized interpersonal communication.
Open-Ended Interviews

The second part of the study necessitated gathering descriptive data in the participants’ own words on their interactions with Griffin; reflections, interpretations and reactions to his involvement in Kenyan education in colonial and postcolonial eras; his challenges and insights on its future development. The approach was to use open-ended questions that were tied to Griffin’s involvement in the evolution and growth of Kenyan education through SBC and listen with minimal interruptions. In these interviews, the questions related directly to the participants’ interpretations of Griffin’s involvement in the evolution and growth of Kenyan education; their reactions to forces that accounted for his involvement in it; his establishment of SBC and its reflections of Kenya’s educational historical context; and his insights on educational change of youth education in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya. Listening with a minimum of interruptions encouraged participants to narrate their experiences through accounts or stories of their daily encounters with Griffin. These open interview questions encouraged participants to narrate their general area of interest but always with the liberty to shape the content of the interview process. This granted me considerable flexibility in pursuing and probing more deeply specific topics or issues of significance that arose in the conversations. The purpose of these open-ended interviews was to gain access, through the narratives, to Griffin’s educational experiences through youth education and their effects on the earlier mentioned areas.

With each of the 36 participants, I conducted between one- and two-hour interviews that mainly focused on each participant’s interpretations of Griffin’s
involvement in the evolution and growth of Kenyan education. Feelings, dilemmas, and emotional reactions were investigated with interest as they arose. In some instances, participants described connections between their previous narrated life histories on Griffin and their consequent interpretations of their experiences with him. In these cases, optimum care was given to permit the participants to explain the connections in their own words, with a minimum of interruptions on my part, so as not to “lead” or “mar or taint” the narrative of the informant. The purpose of these open-ended interviews was to gain access, through narratives, of their primary interpretations, and reactions of Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education. The interviews covered Griffin with respect to his family, education, training, involvement, challenges, and future insights on Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial period. Interviewees involved in the study were Griffin’s former and present students, friends, teaching faculty, administrators, support staff, and a co-founder.

Participant Observation

The third level of this study required descriptive data on the educational context in which Griffin functioned: the atmosphere, activities, events, and people he interacted with. The study required an in-depth understanding of the person of Griffin; his educational experiences; challenges; effects on youth education; and representation of historical, social, and political conditions of both colonial and postcolonial Kenya. My approach to understanding this was through participant-observation in the daily activities of SBC in order to reconstruct the contextual interactions that Griffin had with the objects, people, and events and their significance to the educational growth in Kenya. In
addition, it also provided room to understand who Griffin was, his involvement in Kenyan youth education, and the relations he created that were pertinent to the issues under study. In this method I observed various aspects of SBC. This was done in order to obtain information that may have been relevant to the nature of the data that was required.

This method required gaining of firsthand experience in terms of seeing, hearing, and participating in various issues under study that were occurring among the research participants at certain times and in certain places during the research, especially within the school. This method enabled me to connect the planned activities between my research subjects and other members of the school community, and permitted formal reflection and discussion sessions through participating in them, while at the same time interrogating and interpreting them in line with the research questions and theories of study. This was vital for it gave me the opportunity to understand the educational environment that Griffin had established at SBC, the context in which he functioned, ongoing interactions and their effects on broader Kenyan education. This method formed the greater part of interpersonal interactions between my research subjects and me.

Maintaining a balance between participation and observation was a difficult undertaking in the intensely filled itinerary of the various school activities at SBC, which I had to check on in order to understand the educational events that were being conducted within the school, especially with regard to several reflections and dialogue sessions in which I participated. My participation enabled me to establish rapport with the other members of the school but relegated my observational fieldnotes to recollection.
afterwards. On the other hand, the formal classroom observations allowed me to distance myself and focus on the interactions between members of the class and the teacher, rather than the lesson itself. The choice of what to observe and what to leave out presented considerable dilemmas for me during my two months of research. Thus, the majority of my observations focused mainly on the formally planned activities within the classrooms and school events, leaving the rest of the time for me to recall observations, conduct interviews, socialize and establish rapport with other members of the school community. During my two months of interviews, I observed teaching sessions, administrative activities, and social events between some of my research subjects, various students, school administrators, and support staff. In addition, I participated in one-to-two hour informal group dialogues that included attending: Old Starehean Society meetings, Old Starehean “mbuzi” (goat eating) meetings, and a one-day stay with a group of 80 Starehe boys on their Mombasa holiday camp. Reflection sessions aimed at “sharing” and “processing” some of the experiences gained. Although my taking part in these sessions dispelled my role as a “distance” observer, I was able to get, through recorded tapes, my subjects’ input, comments, and dialogue. I played the role during the entire period as a “known” observer. Being forthright from the beginning of these observations about my research interests facilitated my ability, as well as the participants’ acceptance, to move between the roles of a distance observer and an active participant.

The participant observation method functioned to compliment the open-ended interviews by contextually putting participants’ expressed interpretations, reactions, and feelings in descriptive accounts of the times, places, and circumstances in which they
occurred. Some of the information that was obtained through participant observation was not provided for either in the interview schedules but serendipitously emerged in the field.

**Document, Archival, and Audiovisual Analysis**

This necessitated examining of Griffin’s letters, memos, school records, pictures, audiovisual materials, school artifacts, and school videos and interpreting them in line with the main research questions. This required careful examination of various items and piecing together of information to create their interpretation with regard to the study.

**Subject Journaling and Casual Chatting**

This was used to get further insights into various relevant issues of study that had not been addressed in the main questionnaire.

**Sources of Data Collected**

The data for this study were collected from two main sources. They were the primary and secondary sources of data:

- **Primary sources:** These were the actual data collected from the field. Data were collected using five varied methods: life histories, open-ended interviews, participant observation, document and archival material, and audiovisual analysis. The main method of collecting primary data was through the use of open-ended interviews.

- **Secondary sources:** These data formed the foundation of the study. They were extracted from books, journals, magazines, newspapers and past researches. All these formed the literature reviews and research studies
related to the topic under study. The strengths and weaknesses of these data were critically discussed and examined.

**Supporting Data**

Supporting data were drawn from the following sources:

- **The School Mastery**: “Straight talk about Boarding School Management” written by Griffin. It is a summary of Griffin’s views on effective management of boarding schools, 1996.


- **Speeches**: Specifically, “The Practice of Education” delivered at the Kenyatta University, graduation ceremony, October, 19,1997; and “Effective management of Boarding Secondary Schools in Kenya,” delivered at Kenyatta University, 1999.


- **Other Accessory Primary and Secondary Sources**: SBC, Documents of Historical Importance Files, 1959 to 2005; Letter from Griffin to Ministry of Education on Ways of Enhancing Discipline in Schools,
Nairobi, 1986; Letters from Griffin to the Daily Nation newspaper on Discipline, Management and Ways of Enhancing Academic Excellence in Kenyan Schools.

- **Informal discussions:** With Mr. Joseph Gikubu, who had worked with Griffin for over 46 years dating from the colonial period as one of the 2,000 Wamumu youth detained during the colonial era and whose rehabilitation program Griffin supervised, worked as the school captain of the Wamumu detention Camp under the leadership of Griffin. For many years Mr. Gikubu served as Griffin’s deputy director in charge of boarding and was the only surviving member of the first three cofounders of the school. Mr. Gikubu is currently the acting director of the school.

Other informal discussions were held with the late Mr. Yusuf King’ala, the then the deputy director in charge of academics, and one of the old luminaries of the school who had worked with Griffin for 27 years; Mrs. Edith Karaimu the current director, Starehe Girls Centre and School, and an old teacher of SBC for over 25 years and Griffin’s personal assistant for over 10 years; and Kennedy Hongo, then-assistant director and personal assistant to Griffin and also an old school luminary.

**Nature of Data Collected**

The primary sources of data collected comprised of the personal and demographic information of the subjects: the research subjects understanding of the social, cultural, economic, and political forces that made Griffin become involved in the development of
education in late colonial Kenya and why; how Griffin’s establishment of Starehe Boys Centre and School reflects Kenya’s educational historical context of the time and its legacy; and Griffin’s insights on Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial period.

**Selection of Research Participants**

The research participants in this study were people who had worked and interacted with Griffin. They included past and present cofounder of SBC, administrators, educators, students and support staff. Due to financial and time constrains, not all members in the mentioned categories were covered. For this study, only 36 participants were selected to participate in the study across these categories. The justification for choosing 36 participants was based on financial and other constraints such as the time frame that was available for undertaking the study. The main criterion that was used in the selection of the research subjects was their significance to the research, ability to provide in-depth and thick data, position in the school, and length of association with Griffin.

Purposeful sampling or purposive judgment was used in the selection process of the 36 participants that took part in the study. Patton (2002) describes purposeful sampling as “information-rich cases from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of inquiry” (p. 230). He notes that studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations. It focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study. Bernard (2000) observes that in judgment sampling, “you decide the purpose
you want informant or communities to serve and you go out and find them” (p. 176). I listed all the people in each of the selected five categories who knew and had worked with Griffin. From each category, I selected participant(s) who knew Griffin well and were capable of providing rich, in-depth and thick data based on the research questions of the study.

The following research participants were selected to participate in the study:

**Cofounder of Starehe Boys Center and School**

- Joseph Kamiru Gikubu

**Administrators**

- Kennedy O.A. Hongo
- Edwin Otieno
- Fredrick Okono
- Yusuf Mutuku King’ala

**Educators**

- Elizabeth Sanya Pamba
- Eliud Wasonga
- Ciciliama Josep Puttanickal
- Edith Karaimu

**Students**

- Joshua Odhiambo Abaki
- Paul Jisas Lemasagharai
- Eric Saroni
• Savio Joe Puttanickal
• Beneah Kombe Wekesa
• Francis Ng’ang’a Wang’endo
• Peter Wangai
• Kwamtchesi Makokha
• Joseph Odindo
• Edwin Radindo
• Bugei Nyaosi
• Eugene Wetangula
• Henry Nyongesa
• Philip Jacob Okoth
• Patrick Kinyori
• Kinuthia N. Murugu
• Victor Odhiambo
• Lawrence Murage
• Wilson Ciira
• Charles Kimathi
• Eric Amiani Kiruhura
• David Okwemba
• Philip Musyoki
• Antony Kimani
Support staff

- Fredrick Makokha kwa nusu
- Peter Kivayi
- John Mwambaka
- Richard Kisoi

Refinement of the Research Instrument

Before administration, the research instrument was discussed with some members of the dissertation committee who made constructive criticisms and gave useful suggestions for improving some of the items. In order to provide flexibility in the responses, provision was made for several open-ended response items in different categories of the instrument.

Administration of the Research Instrument

The permission to conduct the research study was sought from the Permanent Secretary Office of the President in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 2005. After the permission to conduct the research was granted, communication was made in writing to most of the research participants two months before the actual field visit. This was done to enable the research participants to make appropriate schedules for the interview sessions.

Each of the research participants was interviewed personally over a period of two months. Each interview ran between one and two hours. Most interviews were completed on the first day. This was because many of the participants were cooperative and responded to all the interview questions within the specified time. The administrators’ interviews, depending on their office engagements were continued on the second day.
because of the increased levels of administrative duties that allowed them less free time. The following general observations were noted about the main study site, the Starehe Boys Centre and School.

**Research Setting: Starehe Boys Centre and School**

The greater part of the study was conducted at Starehe Boys Centre and School. Starehe Boys Centre and School has several unique characteristics. It is a charitable boarding institution, established in 1959. It provides education and care to destitute boys from all over Kenya. Of the more than 1,000 students, 70% rely upon the school for their food, accommodation, health, and educational needs.

Apart from the government staffing assistance, Starehe relies mainly on donated money for all costs, including the feeding and clothing of its enormous “family.” Contributions are received from individuals, groups, and firms in many parts of the world, the two greatest single donors having been Save the Children Fund (UK), internationally, and Bp/Shell Kenya, locally. Over the years, the bulk of their recurrent financing has depended upon individual child sponsorships, particularly from Bp/Shell Kenya, Sheikh Fazal Hahi Noordin Charitable Trust; Kindernothilfe E.V, in Germany; Save the Children Fund UK (now virtually phased out); Austrian Rettet das Kind; the Canadian Save the Children Fund; Oxfam, Child Care International; Danish Red Barnet; and private individuals and group sponsors. In recent years their own Starehe United Kingdom Association has taken on an increasingly generous role, particularly in pioneering endowments to keep some Starehe places free forever (as opposed to sponsorships requiring annual renewal). For years the school has repeatedly received
splendid aid from the Dulverton Trust in England, the Musgrave Charitable Trust in Ireland, the T.C Fooks Charitable Trusts in England and Jersey, and the Moore Foundation in the United States. In addition there have been local sponsors from private firms, government, churches, charities, student fees and endowment funds. It is these beneficence that have made Starehe to keep its doors open to the needy boys across the many years, while also enabling the school to improve the quality of its care and education.

In the years of its existence Starehe has come to be recognized internationally for its methods and success. These have earned the school membership in two international educational organizations, the Global Connections Foundation, an association of heads of the world’s leading schools, based in the United States, and the Round Square, an association of top schools from all over the world which share a philosophy of wholistic education.

Over the years the school has become national and admits students both from the rural and urban poor areas in Kenya. Recognizing that disadvantaged boys should not be raised in isolation from the rest of society, but should live and learn, work and play with the sons of other families, it was decided that fee-paying pupils could occupy one third of the places while the other two-thirds remain free and be strictly reserved for the poor and disadvantaged. While the fees charged to this minority are variable according to the means of each boy’s family, they are always fully economic and sometimes very high. These places, too, are heavily overscribed.
Admission is decided on by an exhaustive inquiry in the year preceding actual entry and it has to be balanced between need and ability. However, among the thousands of applications received each year, there are a great number who, in spite of real, often formidable, difficulties have done well in their work, but have no means of affording a state secondary school; and it is these boys, chosen from all over Kenya, whom the school particularly tries to aid.

Starehe’s motto “Natulenge juu” (Let Us Aim High) was bestowed on the school by Kenya’s (first) President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, and it reflects the spirit that permeates the Center. The founder(s) set out, not merely to provide food, clothing and protection to boys in need, but also to restore to them, self-confidence and self-respect so often injured by earlier misfortunes in their lives, and, finally, to provide them with an education wide and sound enough to serve them well in today’s competitive world.

Over the years the school has developed an international reputation and has been honored by visits from many persons. Among these have been Kenya’s own presidents, the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, Mr. Daniel Arap Moi, and Mwai Kibaki; Her Royal Highness (HRH), the Princess Royal, Anne; the late Mrs. Indira Gandhi; Sonia Gandhi; Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands (when Crown Princess); His Majesty King Constantine of Greece; the late US Senator Robert Kennedy; T.R.H. Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex, the Duke of Gloucester; Lady Alexandra Metcalfe; President Yakubu Gowan of Nigeria; athletes such as Pele and Muhammed Ali; African Musicians such as Miriam Makeba; and religious persons such as Nobel Peace Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu.
Starehe follows a local Kenyan school curriculum. Currently it has two schools: secondary and the institute, having phased out the primary section in early 2000. At the secondary level, it has over 1,000 boys who take an intensive four-year “O” level course. The institute has about 200 boys who take courses in professional accountancy, national diploma in computing. Starehe’s own two-year computing or accountancy courses provide marketable qualifications for the students in their latter careers. Both schools are in session for 39 weeks a year.

During the holidays, 90 boys enjoy a seaside break at the school’s permanent camp at Likoni, Mombasa (aka, “Whitehouse”). Others may go home, even if the conditions there preclude them from lasting out the whole holiday and they come back to the school after a week or two. The school has an elaborate voluntary holiday service program where students give up part of their holiday in a year to offer free service to Kenyan society. Many boys are occupied by the program, while those in the examination year do private study, making use of the school’s huge library. The program is a special way of preparing boys for the world. Every holiday, about 200 boys spend three weeks working mainly in understaffed hospitals, clinics, and health centers, rural primary schools, libraries, public works projects, factories, airlines, broadcasting stations, bus companies, and government offices across the country rendering free services. This program has created an enormous goodwill between Starehe and employers, while at the same time training boys for adult employment and service to the nation.

The school has a leavers hostel which functions as an after-school concern program that Starehe engages in for its students who have completed school and are waiting to go
to the university in the next two years but have no accommodation and cannot be able to meet other additional costs of housing in Nairobi. Because of unemployment difficulties, Starehe offers them free accommodation and food. The leavers’ hostel helps to bridge the gap between school and working life. The leaver’s hostel also links the students to the Old Starehian Society (OSS) which promotes unity and brotherhood among past and present members of the school.

The school sits on a 50-acre piece of land, in the Ziwani area of Starehe constituency, within the city of Nairobi. The school has two campuses separated by an overpass. The right side of the campus houses the secondary wing of the school and has forms 1 and 2 sections of the school; the assembly hall; all the boardinghouses; main administration block; some staff quarters; the clinic; and a host of other offices for various activities. It is the central nerve of the main administrative activities of the school and is the original site of the “old Starehe.” The left side of the school, sometimes referred to as the “new’ school, houses forms 3 and 4 classrooms; the technical institute of the school; forms 5 and 6; computer and science laboratories; leavers’ hostel; swimming pool; all games fields with the exception of the badminton court and; the director of the institute’s office and several living quarters of the staff. In addition, it also houses the Kenya Computers for Schools Project (UK) program. It is the central area for most of the senior and technical school activities. It is also the old home for the now-defunct primary section of the school.

The school’s “headmaster” is the honorary director, and until his demise in June, 2005, was Dr. G. W. Griffin, who was assisted by two deputy directors, Mr. Joseph
Kamiru Gikubu (Cofounder and the current acting director) in charge of boarding and at the time of research, the late Yusuf M. King’ala, who was in-charge of academics. The entire staff of the Center, including educators, medical personnel, caseworkers, nonteaching housemasters and housemothers, technicians, office staff, drivers, cooks, and groundkeepers, numbers about 180.

The school is boys’ boarding school. The ages of the students in the school range from 14 to 19 years. The student teacher ratio is one to two. Much individual attention is given to each student. The atmosphere in general is friendly, trusting, and cooperative and team based. The school grounds are exceptionally neat, with well-trimmed hedges, flowerbeds, and swept highways.

Starehe possesses fine facilities for athletics (soccer, hockey, swimming, lawn tennis, basketball, volleyball, handball and badminton). The school boasts of over 30 clubs, societies, and activity groups, including scouting, the President’s Award Scheme (with over 500 participants at any one time), St. John’s Ambulance, a school newspaper, “SCAN”, which has been in continuous production for over 35 years, computing, debating, aviation, law, chess, drama, public speaking, wildlife, environment among others. Music is very strong and its standards are very high, with many awards being won in the Kenya National Music Festival each year. Starehe’s marching band is well known in Kenya. A good deal of liberty is allowed in the use of leisure time, permission is freely granted for boys to leave the Center on weekends and visits are made to theaters and other cultural amenities in Nairobi. Regular camps and expeditions take place during the term and holidays alike.
Apart from the classroom activities that involve teaching and learning, Starehe is run by students under the auspices of a prefectorial force that oversees the maintenance of law and order in the school, cleanliness, catering services among others. The prefects largely maintain discipline in the Center throughout the day and they make an invaluable contribution to the orderly routine of life in the Center. Every boarder has a housemaster who is responsible for his welfare and good progress.

**Limitations of the Study**

The study had several limitations, namely:

- There was limited time and finances available to exhaustively examine the study subject especially bearing in mind the significant amount of work he had done in the development of Kenyan education.

- There was death of the main research subject, Geoffrey William Griffin, a week before the beginning of the field research. This necessitated increasing the study population that was previously planned in order to gain in-depth understanding of Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education.

- Given the study time frame and the nature of “friends” that Griffin had, most of who happened to have been his colleagues at Starehe it was difficult to get respondents who could fit in this category and could give an intimate account of him beyond his formal engagements. Some of his close friends and family were already deceased and there were no indications of existing close relational links. To triangulate this, I
increased the number of research participants and used more secondary data to fill in some of the missing details.

- Biographical studies done on African educators and the works of Griffin were limited. Most of the related biographical research studies were drawn from other parts of the world.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

As earlier observed, I define this study as a multidimensional approach, with particular interests in the context of more general ones but all with a combined purpose. Commenting on this approach Bogden and Biklen (1998) note that “different theoretical perspectives that researchers hold shape how they approach, consider, and make sense out of data” (p. 117).

This research was guided by varied theories of education and change that were relevant to my way of thinking and perspectives of the feasibility of the study and the relevant perspectives pertaining to it before the data were collected. This study was designed in the light of these views; it engages in various aspects of relationality and leadership theories at different moments both at the descriptive and conceptual level. This was done to complement the relationship between the various interests of the investigation and the more generalized contexts under which they occurred.

My approach toward interpreting and analyzing data aimed at generating participant’s autobiography in the field and using a biographical approach through narratives to interpret it. This entailed examining the characteristics of a biography; my interpretation of it in terms of movement through time concerning the participants’
narratives; explaining how they felt, acted, or believed who the main research subject was; Griffin’s involvement and contributions to youth education, challenges and insights on Kenyan youth education and the historical, social, cultural, political and economic spheres in which he functioned.

The collective data that were acquired through interviews, observational field notes, and questionnaires were analyzed using techniques of biographical research—namely, description, reduction, and interpretation. In the descriptive phase, I isolated narrative themes based on the major research questions. The narrative themes covered life histories based on the participants interactions with Griffin and their views on who he was; participants’ reactions and interpretations of their experience with Griffin; and narratives constituting participants’ interpretations and reflections of him and his involvement in Kenyan education both in the colonial and postcolonial period. In the reduction phase, I categorized generative themes in the narratives from each of the aforementioned periods. The generative themes I selected included participants’ beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and actions pertaining to Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education. I then sought to understand how meaning was interpreted by reducing the generative themes into subthemes emerging in the narratives that included forces that accounted for Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education, why and how he got involved; establishment of the SBC and its reflection of Kenya’s educational historical context of the time and legacy; and insights on Kenyan education provided by Griffin through his involvement in youth education; awareness of contexts, critical reflection, and action. In the interpretation phase, I first reconstructed participants’ narratives through the creation of a
biography, in which the subthemes served to guide and direct the plot of each participant’s views on the key themes of research. These three stages of description, reduction, and interpretation were implemented to create a structure for understanding Griffin’s involvement and contributions to modern Kenyan education.

**Summary**

In this chapter, the research methodology has been discussed and various aspects of the methodology examined, namely, the design, sources and nature of data collection, population, sampling, research instruments, and procedures of data presentation and analysis.
CHAPTER FOUR

BEGINNINGS OF GEOFFREY WILLIAM GRIFFIN’S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF KENYAN EDUCATION

The life and times of the late Dr. Geoffrey William Griffin is a story of the Kenyan society from the colonial era to the present. It is also one of the selfless and singular dedication to his calling—promoting the development and education of poor children.

(“A journey through the life of a grand warrior,” 2005)

Introduction

This chapter examines forces that caused Griffin to be involved in the development of Kenyan education, why and in what ways he became involved. It looks at his life prior to his involvement in youth education (his environment, his upbringing, early experiences, schooling, work as a survey cadet and military intelligence officer) in order to shed light on his later life and career. In addition, it examines his involvement in Kenyan youth education, specifically, discussing his work as a rehabilitation officer at the Manyani and Wamumu detention camps: a youth colony organizer; and director, of the National Youth Service and Starehe Boys Centre and School.

Early childhood experiences

The Griffin Family

Geoffrey William Griffin was born first among the two children of James William Griffin and Dorothy Alice Maria on June 13th, 1933, at Eldoret in Kenya’s highland. Donald Griffin, was the other child. He died in an electric accident as he was making boats in the late 1950s and was buried in Mombasa.
James William Griffin was a policeman who found his way to Kenya from England in 1919 after fighting in the First World War where he was seriously injured and returned to England to recover. Upon his recovery, the interpid senior Griffin declined to settle in the United Kingdom, largely due to his interests to explore the African continent, then written off as the “Dark Continent,” and like many of his contemporaries, he felt so unsettled after the war that he needed a complete hiatus from the dreary life in England. At that time, the British government had just advertised positions for police officers in West Africa and his spirited attitude enthused him into giving it a trial. When he went for the interview, the wound he had sustained during the war made him flunk as much as the spirit was ready to deal with Africans, his dodderly health could not withstand the West African climate. He was thus advised to join other forces in East Africa in Kenya where the general climate (and as he later realized, the people) were more temperate and favorable for his health.

He landed in Kenya in 1919 to take up his position as a police officer in the colonial government. Griffin’s father was “a man of great honesty and fairness who detested violence and flouted custom by refusing to carry a weapon” (King’ala, 2005, p. 6). It is this character that he presented throughout the years of his living in Kenya, a posture that had a major influence on the junior Griffin in his later life.

His mother, Dorothy Alice Maria, was the daughter of a British soldier attached to India’s capital city of Mumbai. At that time, India was a British colony and all the soldiers were, as in the other colonies, from England. Thus Dorothy was born in India but ended up spending quite a lot of her lonely childhood in boarding schools both in India
and England because of her mother’s early death. She developed an aversion to the Indian climate and when her father married a second time, she distated the idea and her dislike for India only grew stronger. During this time, one of her friends suggested that Dorothy accompany her to Kenya where she was to get married. Dorothy landed at Mombasa in 1923, and her friend eventually married a man who later became the Meru district commissioner. She liked Kenya immeasurably and decided to stay for a while.

After the friend’s wedding at Meru, Dorothy moved to Nairobi and at that time James Griffin senior had been transferred to Kiambu where he was the police officer in charge. The two met for the first time in a railway station where they were smitten instantly. They continued dating for a long time. However, James was not quick to propose marriage to Dorothy. Later, Dorothy had to go back to the United Kingdom but before her departure, they exchanged addresses and promised to keep in touch. Within a few months after Dorothy’s departure, James did more than he had promised. He wrote to her proposing marriage and she wrote back quickly accepting it. In 1932, she landed in Kenya for the marriage which took place later in the year and soon after, the senior Griffin was transferred to Nandi.

At the time of Griffin’s birth, his father was in charge of Nandi District. They lived in the town of Eldoret, the only place with a hospital where delivery could take place. Now known as the Eldoret Teaching and Referral Hospital and situated along the junction of Uganda Avenue and Kapsabet Road, it was the colonial hospital that served officials of the colonial government. At that time Eldoret was mapped under the White highlands, an area that was reputedly Kenya’s home of agricultural opulence. James was
later transferred to Nairobi where Griffin spent part of his early childhood. Griffin was only a few months old when his family moved to Nairobi. He spent his infancy years in a little house of “mabati” (corrugated iron) roof and wooden wall near the Norfolk Hotel, adjacent to the University of Nairobi and opposite the Kenya National Theatre where the Kingsway Police Post was situated. From there, their family later moved to Westlands, an upmarket Nairobi suburb where they lived in the comfort of a stone-built home. Griffin received his kindergarten education at St. Helen’s kindergarten, now, Westlands Primary School. At this time, Nairobi was still very wild.

At the age of six, the excitement of a new life in up-country, far way from the hustle and bustle of Nairobi, filled Griffin’s mind when his father got a transfer letter to be in charge of Tran-Nzoia District. The family was required to move to Kitale in Western Kenya. Kitale where he spent most of his youth was a lovely place by Griffin’s estimation; the land was beautiful and the people were amicable. He recalled that “there was a small population of European community, Asian families and large African populations, it was a sheltered life, talks were dominated with farming activities, family holidays” (King’ala, 2006, p. 8). In Griffin’s view, racial discrimination during that time was intense. When it was necessary to talk to an African, the pidgin Kiswahili known as “Kisettler” was the accepted form of language for conversation. Africans were not permitted to speak in English which was considered “the masters language!” (King’ala, 2005, p. 8).
Early School Years

Griffin received his early education at Kitale Primary School. In the latter part of 1944, he sat for the Kenya Preliminary Examination (KPE) and attained a third position in the national results. His genius was apparent even among the other students at school. Under the country’s educational system at that time, one had to spend seven years in primary school but standard 5 was the highest level one would go. During this period, the national examinations were taken in standard 5 and when Griffin reached the examination class in 1944, he was accorded a rare opportunity by his headmaster, Mr. John Woods, to take the examinations despite being two years below the average class age. The excellent performance of Griffin earned him an admission to the prestigious Prince of Wales (now the Nairobi School) which was the principal European school for boys at that time. Situated at what was still regarded as the heartland of the capital city, down in the western slopes, the Nairobi School was endowed with fine grounds, cool weather, and a beautiful environment of thick Kiambu forest to boot. It was a conscientious imitation of an English public school and had even inherited Tom Brown’s rugby.

At the beginning of his secondary education, Griffin’s extreme youth and fragile build made him prey to frequent mistreatment from the senior boys and prefects who bullied with impunity the tiny fresh faced boys code-named “rabbles.” The prefects had arrogated themselves the powers to use canes on fellow students and could smoke in their common rooms without reprisals. These conditions were changed however, when Mr. Phillip Fletcher, nicknamed “Pinky Percy” became the new headmaster. He overturned the powers of the prefects and confined punishment of civilian students to the
housemasters. The blatant smoking by prefects was outlawed. Such moves became typical of Mr. Fletcher’s headship at the school. In describing Fletcher’s character, Griffin notes “He was eccentric, ill-dressed, spluttering with laughter like a neighing horse. He earned enough respect and sometimes fear from the students and his colleagues” (King’ala, 2005, p. 10). It was during this period, which despite the early difficulties that he had faced at the school Griffin found his feet as a prefect, editor of the school newspaper, “Commentator,” and founder of the restored Prince of Wales Scout Troop. As the leader of the latter, he also took the lead in becoming the first Kings Scout in Kenya.

Griffin’s age was always a drawback: he was the youngest member of his class and dreaded the compulsory games that placed him at such a disadvantage. He was considered somehow undisciplined and individualistic by the staff. He utterly rejected woodwork, physical training and Latin and during afternoon preparation periods for these subjects, he would frequently slip away into Nairobi to read in Macmillan Library. On the whole, his academic prospects were excellent, he did well in his “O” level examinations, passed with straight distinctions in English and a laudable assortment of credits in other subjects, which secured him a science position in form 5 but in the middle of his sixth form year, in 1948, a new passion entered his life and distracted him from his peaceful academic pursuits. The longing for life in the wilds bred in him since his early childhood began to divert his attention from Higher Certificate studies. This combined with heavy duties of scouting, writing, and classwork exerted immense pressure on him. Much as he was fully qualified for a university position in the United Kingdom at that
time, he had set his sight elsewhere. He wanted to explore, to hunt and to pursue adventure. When his close friend, John Beecham, left the school, this dealt him a fatal body blow. Awakened to the fact that his father could not afford to send him to study in the United Kingdom owing to his financial constraints, he began to think about securing gainful employment. In 1950, without taking the examination, he left to become a cadet officer in the Survey of Kenya.

While growing up, Griffin claimed that his teachers and parents always thought he was a dreamer. In his interview with Slingerland, he observed that “my teachers and parents have always said that I was a dreamer. Yes, I always had ideals, I always had wishes, ventures, and I was extremely keen on hunting in my early life. I liked the wild open spaces in Kenya” (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 1999).

Griffin’s early childhood experiences were instrumental to his involvement in the development of Kenyan education. His father was a passionate and realistic man and he learned a lot from him at the early stages of life. Despite the racial discriminations that existed between Blacks and Whites at that time, Griffin’s father had a unique way of relating with the Blacks. As a police officer, he believed that his calling was to serve everybody, irrespective of their color. He did not segregate people on the basis of color. Commenting on these early experiences and how they shaped his later educational thought processes, Griffin stated:

I was lucky to have very understanding parents who never stood on my way even when they didn’t agree with me. As young men growing up in Kenya, we were made to believe that Kenya was a White man’s country. We were obliged to
defend our privileged position by all means. But unlike most of the other young
White men, I was lucky to have had a father who saw things beyond the horizon.
He cautioned me early in life that Kenya wouldn’t be a Whiteman’s country.
When one day, a Black man talked to me in English, an act in those days viewed
as a serious insult-- he was supposed to use *Kisettler*, a pidgin form of Kiswahili--
I was terribly offended and I ran to my father for redress. But rightly, my father
supported the African to my utter disappointment! Such early seeds of humanity
were awakened in me as I carried out my duties as an Intelligence Officer.
(King’ala, 2005, p. 39)

Other early childhood experiences that seem to have influenced Griffin’s later
involvement in youth education were his school experiences. He recalls the effect of the
words of school Headmaster, Fletcher and the mayor of Nairobi in his early secondary
days. Fletcher advised students on the need to behave well and to respect all humanity
equally, stating that “this isn’t always going to be a White man’s country” (King’ala,
2005, p. 13). Affirming Fletcher’s words the Nairobi mayor told them to:

> Always remember that if you are going to spend your life in Africa, the Africans
> will be watching you. If you hope to earn respect, you have to be at your best
> behavior. Your white face will not give you that respect, only your spirit (p. 14).

These childhood experiences inculcated in Griffin integrity, honesty, fairness,
compassion, sacrifice, and living for others, virtues that governed his entire life. When he
got involved in youth education they greatly influenced his educational philosophical
thoughts. He aspired to raise students who would live up to these ideals.
Divine calling

Griffin’s introduction to religion at an early stage of his life seems to have also influenced his involvement in youth education. Early, he and his brother were exposed to Christinianity and attended Sunday services and Bible study in a Protestant church in Kitale where they got plenty of teachings that strengthened his faith. This early exposure to Christianity made him develop the practice of prayer that he carried on to his adult life. Under his characteristics, moderate and sober styles at this age, Griffin started thinking seriously about his future. He would often go down on his knees and pray to God. It was during one of these sessions that he received a divine revelation that seems to have cemented his future career and later involvement in youth education. Narrating this divine encounter, he observed:

During my last year in Kitale Primary school where I was a boarder, I used to pray while kneeling on the top decker, which was my bed. One day, as I prayed, I felt a very strong feeling of excitement. It was almost like a vision and I was very much convinced that God the Almighty was there and that he had heard my prayer. It has the basis of my life, vision and future endeavors. I experienced a very strong wave, which electrified my whole body. At that point, I was sure God was speaking to me. When I woke up, my whole body was trembling with fear and anxiety. Tears were flowing down my cheeks and I was sweating profusely. Oh! Oh! Oh! I had never experienced anything like this… my prayer was answered. I am very grateful to God because the prayer formed the basis of my
life. It gave me hope and courage and I was sure whatever I was to undertake, would end in success. (King’ala, 2005, p. 9)

Griffin did not elaborate on the nature and contents of his vision; however, he was convinced that he felt he had direct communication with God and his prayers had been answered. He believed this experience had to do with what he lived for and was the basis upon which his future career was built. All he had to do was to translate it on the ground using mortar and stone. Throughout his career Griffin always believed in the power of prayer. In King’ala (2005), he observes that “since childhood, I have always believed in the power of prayer. If you sincerely ask for God’s help, you will always get it, although not necessarily in the same form as you ask!” (p. 135). He felt that he owed all his success to God and that most of the successes in his educational activities were divinely provided. He believed that faith is a kind of capital, that prayer is answered, and the existence of Starehe was a proof of God’s divine presence and involvement in the activities of his people. He writes:

Boys sometimes ask me how we can prove the existence of God, and my invariable answer to this is that their own Centre provides all the evidence that any reasonable man can desire. I have been struck time and again with the manner in which one door opens as another closes. We reach the end of one phase of development, and have no idea at all how anything further can be attempted. Yet, after no more than a breathing space, a chance meeting or casual contact sets us off again, and a whole new field opens up ahead. One or two such happenings might be dismissed as coincidence, but not when they occur over and over again.
Even disappointments, looked at in retrospect, turn out to be for the best. As to how it all happened, my personal belief is that any scheme for the needy receives something special by way of divine intervention for just as long (and not one moment longer) as the people concerned work to the limits of their own human ability. (Griffin, 1996, p. 70)

Griffin saw the existence of Starehe as a miracle. Addressing the congregation on the school’s 40th anniversary, he noted how the success of Starehe bore witness to God’s existence and his power in the activities of men. To him the existence of the school was a testimony of an endless series of God’s blessings. He observed:

It is the Almighty who has led us from one step to the next ….People say that the age of miracles has passed, but it has often seemed to me that I have been granted the undeserved privilege of spending my life in the midst of something very wonderful and very like a miracle. (G. W. Griffin, given speech, 2005)

There is much use of religious literature in the school that indicates Griffin’s belief in the power of God and God’s role in Starehe’s work. These include prayer clips that contained unique religious messages and writings on the assembly hall, church, and mosque. The latter two are never closed during the day. Griffin encouraged teachers, students, and other members of the school community to visit them on their free time for quiet meditation. He himself was a frequent visitor to the chapel. It was thus not surprising that he chose it as his burial site. He saw it as an integral part of the school, and by being interned in it, his spirit was destined forever to abide with the Starehe community.
Because of his deep religious convictions, Griffin allowed all different faiths to flourish in the school. The school caters to all religious faiths that is, traditional Protestant groups (Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists), together with Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists and the Roman Catholics. Muslims make up a sizeable minority, about 15% percent of the total student population. The students are encouraged to develop and excel in their chosen religious paths. The school does its best to develop, advance, and strengthen the faith of each student. The existence of a magnificent chapel and a beautiful mosque in the school are viewed as physical reminders of God’s presence and enables dignity to be given to worship. On each day at the school’s afternoon assembly, there is a brief moment of prayer.

Students are encouraged to be creative and to show initiative in such groups as the Christian Union, the Young Catholic Students, and the Young Muslim Association. Each student is trained to show respect and tolerance. Griffin believed in the oneness and goodness of God and respect for all religions. At Starehe, in the spirit of Ecumenism, all students join together in a number of major chapel services such as Ash Wednesday, and Leaving Service on each closing day of the term. Griffin saw religion as a strong basis of shaping students’ characters, service, and kindness. It was the foundation of knowledge and a fountain from which all academic prowess flowed. For this to be realized in each student, he gave priority and respect to religion above character and intellectual ability.

Although Griffin had a deep faith in God, he had liberal religious views. He believed in all religions and was happy to go to any of them and pray. In his interview with Imbira he argued “God isn’t anyone. These are different ways of approaching God
but is the same God” (G.W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005). All paths according to him led to God. He did not believe that God was confined in a building. It is because of this religious worldview that he allowed all religious faiths to flourish within the school. Explaining Griffin’s religious liberal views, Kiruhura observes that “even though he strongly encouraged spirituality in the school, I think it was more of moderate spirituality….he didn’t support ‘extreme spirituality’…. So even though he was receptive, there were boundaries…." (E. Kiruhura, personal communication, July 14, 2005).

It was not clear where Griffin’s liberal views on worship emanated from. It was claimed that his father was a Freemason but it is not evident if this was the source of his liberal views on religious matters. However, his religious liberalism might have been due to the fine upbringing he received from his parents, especially, his father who constantly cautioned him against indulging in extremes of any nature. He advised him that “the middle line is the correct path to follow” (King’ala, 2005, p. 139). But it is also possible that Griffin espoused this view as a shield against people who might have been tempted to blackmail him. Griffin’s faith grew more deeply with time as Starehe’s religious activities metamorphosed over the years. As Griffin grew older, Karaimu observed that “he spent much more time going to the chapel to say morning prayers even when it was a normal working day….” (E. Karaimu, personal communication, September 3, 2005).

Summarizing Starehe’s religious growth over the years, Martin (1978) writes:

Before the Assembly Hall was built, there was little overt religious activity in the “Land of Bugles” [Starehe]. Frequent discussions at the “Baraza”, centering on
the identity of Adam and Eve, a modest Sunday morning service for the boarders, and a period of religious instruction on Fridays, given on a denominational basis but often suffering from the lack of visiting teachers; Public opinion held that Starehe was “not interested” in religion. But in November 1969, when we[Starehe] agreed to celebrate the Centre’s tenth anniversary with a parade through the city leading to a thanksgiving service in All Saints’ Cathedral, immense interest and unsuspected depth of religious feeling was aroused….(p. 195)

Over the years Starehe’s spiritual life has grown in an atmosphere of unity enriched, not hampered by diversity of visions and dogmas. Griffin watched all this with real joy, and gratitude. Through it, the growth of intellectual and increase of genuine faith brought greater unity to the school. Griffin constantly prayed to God to bless the work of the school: “Have in thy keeping, O Lord, this school; that its work may be through and its life joyful; that from it may go out, strong in body and mind and character, men who will give faithful service to Kenya and to the world (King’ala, 2005, p. 196).

Survey Cadet

Early Encounters with Africans

The early encounters between Griffin and Africans during his work as a Survey Cadet further ignited his involvement in Kenyan youth education. In 1950, without taking the higher certificate examinations, Griffin terminated his studies to become a cadet officer in the Survey of Kenya at Railway School in Nairobi. During his 6th form, academics became a burden for he wanted to explore, to hunt, and seek adventure. When
his friend John Beecher left the Prince of Wales School, it was a big blow that finally made him to leave school. In addition, he knew that his father could not afford to pay for his studies in Britain because of the entailed financial costs. He knew he was definitely going to work. Since he had done his “O” level examinations when he was only fifteen, he had to remain in school until he was old enough to work. He chose to join the Survey due to lack of working alternatives and the promise it held for adventure. He noted that “I didn’t chose surveying because I was keen on it. It just chanced to be available when I was old enough to work. Also, it was a career which would give me the chance to hunt and explore the countryside” (King’ala, 2005, p. 18). It all begun when he saw an advertisement in the papers asking those interested in becoming Survey Cadets to apply for on-the-job training. Griffin saw the work as an adventure into the world and a move that would free him from the confines of his parental care and restrictive school life.

During that time the colonial government had decided to do the original cadastral mapping of Kenya and the East African region which at that time was under British sphere of influence. It was upon this survey that all other colonial activities, such as boundaries and land allocation, were to be based. Due to its significance to colonial administration, the government hired many experts from overseas, mainly from the United States, who were required to carry out the exercise with expertise and precision. In order for them to carry out their functions effectively they needed the local people who would look after them on the safari, interpret for them into Kiswahili, and act as security. Griffin was privileged to get one of these jobs.
The surveyors were divided into various groups during the mapping exercise. Each group had an expert and one local European guide to facilitate and ease things. Griffin was allocated to Bill Carter, an American, and he was in charge of 60 local men and a fleet of vehicles. His work was to translate to and from Kiswahili, organize the expedition under Carter’s guidance and to ensure there was security. A topographical expert, out on Marshall Aid, Carter was highly rated. Doing the work, Griffin spent a whole year traveling to various parts of Kenya and Tanzania. The safari was successfully completed in October 1951. In his interview with Imbira, he observed, “It was great fun seeing the country, meeting the people…. learning how to look after people on the safari” (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005).

Through working with the group of Survey of Kenya cadets, Griffin learned a lot about the outside world. These encounters affected his perception of the racial segregation in Kenya. In Martin (1978), Griffin observed that “he was exposed for the first time to genuine personal encounters with Africans, of whose very existence as individuals he had grown up so blithely unaware” (p. 12). He saw what he had never seen before and had a chance to interact with Africans who were the people they relied on as drivers, cooks, guides, and general workforce. Having grown up in a segregated town, this was a real eye-opener. For the first time he began making friends with Africans in the caravan. He realized that there was more to Kenya than just a few White settlers. These early encounters enabled Griffin to learn a lot about his motherland; he also learned about love, warmth, and “African socialism” (Martin, 1978, p. 201). The survey work affirmed further his beliefs that Africans, if given the opportunity, had a great deal of potential to
excel. It is this belief that saw him later venture into education which he saw as a vital tool of unlocking these potentials.

The State of Emergency and Military Training

Effects of the Mau Mau War

Griffin’s greater involvement in Kenyan youth education was shaped by events of the Mau Mau War and its aftermath in terms of the colonial programs that were instituted to address the plight of youth. After a memorable 12-month safari, Griffin was back at his desk in the Survey Training School in Ruaraka when the State of Emergency was declared in Kenya on October 20th, 1952. This was after the nationalist movement in Kenya and the Mau Mau had shown its hand with the killing of Senior Chief Waruhiu, who was well known for his loyalty to the colonial government. Waruhiu had stood out firmly against the nationalist movement and had tried to convince the Kikuyu that an oath taken in secret and under duress had no binding power. After attending his funeral the following day, then-Kenyan Governor Evelyn Baring decided to cable a request to London for Emergency powers. By doing this, he managed to prevent all the final preparations for a revolt and arrested all suspected leaders of the nationalist movement. The following morning he declared a State of Emergency; the stage was set for the final, conclusive struggle which was to lead to Kenya’s Independence. This approach was borrowed by Baring from Malaya. Elkins (2005) observes:

During the late 1940s and 1950s nationalists in Malaya, for instance, were demanding their independence, and the British responded by declaring a State of Emergency as a way of fighting for their colonial subjects’ hearts and
minds….The Federation of Malaya, under the leadership of its governor, General Sir Gerald Templer, had already provided Baring and his ministers with a blueprint for emergency regulations. Malaya had been under a State of Emergency since 1948, and its British colonial officials had exported to Kenya much of their legal work in drafting all-empowering Emergency legislation. (p. 101)

These antecedents would have great influence on the shape and direction of the Mau Mau rehabilitation program that was evolving in Kenya in 1953, which Griffin became involved with in later years. When the Emergency broke out, all young Europeans, regardless of what they were doing, were ordered to join the army as volunteers. All those who were in the Survey Training School were hurriedly taken to town. Once this was over, they had to take an oath of allegiance. European youth were placed in various groups and their initial mission was to provide security to the European population in Nairobi. During this period, the colonial government feared that if the situation persisted, Africans were likely to put up heavy resistance that could destabilize the colonial rule. Nobody knew what was likely to happen. There were numerous rumors and anxiety among both the Africans and Whites. Some claimed “it was going to be like the Zulu war, others felt a civil war was looming” (King’ala, 2005, p. 34). But none of these took place. After a while, the colonial government discovered that it was dealing with a guerrilla type of war and there were signs that the war would escalate. When things started settling down, the colonial government decided to take all its young European recruits for formal training in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). This was meant to
prepare them for any eventuality in case the situation was to develop into a countrywide resistance. What begun as a small group of disgruntled Kikuyus grew in size and might and as the numbers increased, so was the resultant fear, destruction of property and loss of human life. Narrating how it begun in an interview with Tuju, Griffin recalled:

It begun very slowly…it was noticeable that guns were disappearing from homes, hotel rooms, under very strange circumstances and nobody seemed very much bothered till the sheer number of guns disappearing rose. Then some murders begun. Murders from the viewpoint of Whites who were being killed….The one that sticks in mind is the Ruck murders, where they attacked a homestead up on the other side of the Kinangop and murdered the man, his wife and a little boy. These things were beginning to escalate and it was obvious something big was just about to burst and the government of course woke up to it and declared a State of Emergency…. (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005)

European settlers complained bitterly, but the colonial government took its time. It had underrated the Kikuyus. According to Hongo and Mugambi (2000), government officials asked “How could the Kikuyus fight? They are just miserable whining house servants! Now if they had been the Maasai, so the talk ran in the drawing-rooms of Muthaiga and Kabete” (p. 38). With this mind-set, young European men prowled about with their guns at the ready, trigger-happy in the extreme, dreaming vainly of the pitched battles with legions of spear-hurling warriors and confident that in a show of strength on their part would quickly douse the immature political aspirations of their cooks and shamba-boys. There was a general feeling by the colonial government that the Mau Mau
fighters would be overrun and neutralized within a very short time but with time the government realized that it was dealing with a smart, determined people. They had underestimated the resolve and the ingenuity of the Kikuyu; they seemed to have forgotten how many of them had acquitted themselves on active service in the two world wars, and they had no conception of the guerrilla warfare which was to be waged in their midst during the coming years. The war dragged on for years and in the end things worsened and the government was forced to declare a State of Emergency that allowed European settlers to protect themselves without being bound by laws, that is, without being accused of violating human rights. Although the State of Emergency was meant to restore order, it did not.

Due to the heinous atrocities and the scale of the war, was moving on, the colonial government decided to mobilize a great military force to handle the Mau Mau fighters. As part of this mobilization to deal with the Mau Mau guerrilla, young European men were sent for military training in Southern Rhodesia. Griffin was part of this team. The basic training took six months at the end of which the young trainees were made non-commissioned officers. After passing out, Griffin applied for officer cadet training in the United Kingdom. He was put through what was commonly called the War Office Selection Board (WASBE). They were thoroughly screened by the board to ascertain if they were of officers’ caliber. Out of many applicants, only five were selected. Failure to successfully complete the training meant serving as a private soldier for three years in the United Kingdom. It was the intensity of the war and the course it was likely to take that made Griffin to apply for the commission. He felt that the war was likely to take a long
time and there was need for him to get proper training. In his interview with Slingerland, Griffin remarked that “from the reports that were coming in, letters people were writing to me, newspapers I was reading, it was obvious that the Mau Mau War would take a long time…. And I felt that if I am going to be a soldier, I might as well do it properly” (G. W. Griffin, television interview, 1999).

Griffin was elated to leave for officers training, at Eaton Hall Officer Cadet College in the United Kingdom, this being his first trip to Britain. Eaton Hall was a large military training camp with different training units that were spread across the campus. Unlike the Southern Rhodesia training school, it was of a higher class as a reflection of the importance of those who were being trained there, Griffin recalled that “everything was neatly arranged giving the aura of order and discipline. Once one entered the camp, he sensed power and authority….there was strict time observance. Every minute of the hour was programmed…” (King’ala, 2005, p. 38). The Rhodesian training had been a good preparation for Griffin’s training at Eaton. Unlike the European boys who found the training hard, he found the training easy. An officer was required to be polished in all areas of his life, including basic acts such as eating. He was expected to be a subject of emulation to the junior soldiers under his jurisdiction.

From the training Griffin and his five other colleagues emerged as the best soldiers and became leaders of their respective squads. After the training, Roger Owles was made the senior underofficer and Griffin became the junior underofficer. These were prefect-equivalent positions within the training camps and they were permitted to give orders to their fellow cadets. They were also given the privilege of choosing which
regiment of the British army they wished to join upon completion of their training. The training at Eaton provided Griffin with leadership skills on how to manage human resources and enabled him to enhance his earlier administrative skills. He found that he had a gift for leadership, a tool he greatly utilized in his later educational work.

**Service with Kings African Rifles (K.A.R).**

After the training, Griffin was commissioned as second lieutenant in the King’s Royal Rifle Corps on October 10th, 1953 and he joined the 60th African Rifles, mainly because it was affiliated with the Kings African Rifles (KAR) and he wanted to return to Kenya. He came to Kenya in the middle of the Emergency. Back in Kenya, he was seconded to the KAR and was attached to the 3rd Battalion. He was appointed intelligence officer of the battalion. This necessitated his relocation to Forthall (Muranga) where his battalion was stationed but kept its operations around Embu, Mukurueni, Othaya, Kerugoya and Nyeri. His main assignment was to analyze the information that came in and to interrogate the Mau Mau suspects and prisoners.

The war experiences gave Griffin a wide view of what was going on among the African people with regard to their quest for independence. He saw and heard a lot more than an ordinary second lieutenant would. He saw the worst from both sides. Naturally, he came into close contact with the freedom fighters during the screening process of people who had taken the Mau Mau oath. He also had the occasion to read some of their diaries. At first the situation he found in the villages tended to confirm his prejudices and beliefs about the savagery of the Mau Mau and was particularly upset by the senseless cruelty of the freedom fighters. Among these were the burning of schools and the
apparent wanton killing of infants. He could not understand why the heinous activities were being committed. Although a man who is involved in war does not usually stop to ponder the rights and wrongs of the enemy’s case, Griffin was struck by the sheer brutality of what was happening all around him, all of which conflicted with his upbringing and ideals. His increasing dislike of the bungling cruelty of his own superiors was matched by a growing awareness of the courage and dignity of the African freedom fighters. From the captured documents and from his own interrogations, he slowly began to respect and understand the African ideals and eventually to accept the basic justice of their role in the war. Hongo and Mugambi (2000) note:

One day, as he was studying a passage from a Mau Mau log book, impressed by a simple seriousness of its author’s faith, he begun developing uneasiness over the part he was playing against men who wrote like this, and fought only because they longed to be free in their own land (p. 39)

From the documents and interrogations, he learned that many Africans were striving for noble ideals and began to get the insight into their cause. Besides being objective, he looked at the actions of his own side and found them wanting. He was disgusted by the torture the colonial forces were inflicting on its prisoners. It was while serving with the KAR as an intelligence officer that he witnessed at firsthand the human suffering, bitterness, death and the waste brought about by the State of the Emergency. It was becoming increasingly clear to him that circumstances had placed him on the side of the forces of unjustified oppression, something he saw more and more as negative. He felt called upon to act to rectify the situation but as yet he had no clear vision of what role
he could play to alleviate the situation. This caused him profound disquiet. As the war progressed, he became emotional, sympathetic, and gloomy about the entire situation.

Describing the situation during this period, Elkins (2005) notes:

The relative calm in the forests was shattered by a series of gruesome, high-profile murders. In late October (1952), on the farming plateau above Naivasha the disemboweled corpse of Eric Bowker, a settler and veteran of both world wars, was found in his home— the brutal nature of his murder a sure sign of a Mau Mau attack, according to the local Whites. Less than a month later, an elderly couple living at the edge of the Aberdares forest, near Thompson Falls, were sitting down for their coffee after dinner when they were attacked with machetes by Mau Mau guerrillas. The husband, retired naval commander Ian “Jock” Meiklejohn, collapsed while loading his shot-gun and died two days later. His wife, a retired doctor, survived despite extensive mutilation of her torso and breasts. Four days later Tom Mbotela’s body was found in a muddy pool of water near Burma Market in Nairobi. An outspoken critic of Mau Mau and an African-appointed member of the City Council, Mbotela was reviled by many Africans and had already escaped an assassination attempt…. that evening the Burma Market was burned to the ground by the local police who torched the stalls, infuriated by Mbotela’s death and the defiant indifference, if not complicity, of the locals …on a farm not far from where Eric Bowker had been murdered, the Ruck family--Roger, Esme, and their small boy—were hacked to death by their trusted servants…. (pp. 38-39)
Because of these atrocities, the settler community demanded summary justice and the elimination of the Mau Mau movement by any means necessary. In their memoranda to Michael Blundell, a leading settler politician and member of the Kenya Legislative Council, they urged him to put troops into the Kikuyu villages and shoot 50,000 villagers—men, women, and children. Local Europeans chastised the colonial government and Baring, in particular, for being too hesitant to eliminate Mau Mau and, “many called for a wholesale extermination of the Kikuyu population” (Elkins, 2005, p. 43). It was this state of affairs that gradually drove Griffin towards identification with Kenya as a whole, realizing that it was not and would never be the country of Whites. He believed that people were equal and this was central in his refusal to sign up another contract with the KAR, as he was determined to pursue something else. He came out with a personal pledge to engage in a positive pursuit, not to destroy, but to build a better society. This pledge and his subsequent decision to search for new employment marked the beginning of his long-term involvement in youth education. He felt the urge to do something for youth who were caught up in these upheavals and were engaging in all sorts of vices.

Among many of the Mau Mau fighters in both the forests of Central Province and alleys of Nairobi were youth under the age of sixteen. The early Emergency period and state efforts to suppress Mau Mau halted colonial juvenile policy reforms that were being considered in the late 1940s. In the long term, however, the Emergency period, invigorated changing perceptions toward African youth and methods to control them within the colonial administration. In order to understand Griffin’s involvement in youth
education during this period, it is imperative to understand the colonial youth policies that were in place during this period. In the initial years of the Emergency, government policy regarding African youth was hostile, and youth were associated with the Mau Mau freedom fighters. It was a connection that led to arrests, removals, and repatriations of African juveniles on an unprecedented scale.

Colonial Government Policies of Handling Youth Vagrancy

Due to the Mau Mau War, and the subsequent declaration of the State of Emergency in 1952, African family social networks, which had begun being destroyed with the onset of colonization, were adversely weakened. The battle between the Mau Mau and the colonial state, according to Ocobock (2005), was played out in the forests of Central Province as well as the streets of Nairobi. The military campaign in the forest resulted in a mass influx of Kikuyu into Nairobi to escape the conflict. Officials realized later that Nairobi was an integral part of the Mau Mau effort. To meet the challenge in the capital city, Governor Baring’s government relied on a series of regulations that enveloped the people of Central Province, and, most significantly Nairobi. The emergency movement of the Kikuyu and control of Kikuyu labor regulations gazetted in 1952 provided the state with the power to forcibly remove suspected Mau Mau and their sympathizers from Nairobi. Armed with these powers, police and military forces began encircling African townships and rounding up suspected sympathizers and repatriating them to their reserves. Many of those arrested were unemployed Africans, of the sort normally arrested for vagrancy and pass law offenses. The government repatriated most of the Kikuyu population living outside the reserves on to African land holdings and
confined tens of thousands of suspected Mau Mau operatives in a series of detention camps. Through a network of transit camps, the state was able to filter through the Kikuyu who were captured and returned to the reserves. In this way it could separate the hard-line fighters from the passive sympathizers. The ineffective policy of repatriation, the primary vehicle to remove vagrants from Nairobi, became the key to rooting out Mau Mau.

Operation Anvil took removal and repatriation to an unparalleled level. On April 23, 1954, Nairobi was surrounded by military and police forces, and over the course of the next three weeks, 50,000 Africans were interrogated. Ocobock (2005) observes that by the end of Operation Anvil, some 4,000 children had been repatriated back to their homes and areas; and, in 1956, another 3,000 were removed to Kiambu. Operation Anvil had the effect of cutting off Mau Mau operating in the forest from the supplies obtained in Nairobi and severely damaged their ability to sustain conflict. The operation and intensification of the state’s repatriation and screening processes had devastating and profound effects on the youth. Any young person rounded up by the police, whether a vagrant, suspected criminal, or someone simply in the wrong place at the wrong time, could be sent through the repatriation program. No rules outlawed the presence of African juveniles in the detention camps. However, it was illegal for them to be sentenced to detention camps for Mau Mau related offenses. Despite this legal clause, the administration was incarcerating youth under the age of sixteen in detention facilities for being suspected Mau Mau operatives. According to the Kenya National Archives KNA AB/16/19 1957 Report:
Youth of fifteen years of age and upwards were enrolled in forest gangs. Many took part in actions, and some rose to hold rank in spite of their youth. By August 1955, there were some 1,200 youth in detention for Emergency offences, and, that many went free for every one arrested. Children under the age of fourteen were being charged with Mau Mau offences, and those as young as four years old were found in the detention camps without any noticeable parent or guardian. (Kenya National Archives [KNA], 1957)

The youth who escaped detention or returned home, particularly in the year following Operation Anvil, found the rural areas they knew radically altered. While Operation Anvil had cut off the Mau Mau from their supplies in Nairobi, the process of villagization served a similar function in the rural areas. By October 1955, according to Elkins (2005), the government had constructed 854 villages in Central Province and forcibly moved 1,077,500 Kikuyus and Embus into them. Within the villages, the state hoped to exercise greater control over the Kikuyu. Armed guards posted around the perimeter wall kept Mau Mau rebels out and sympathizers in. Shannon (1955) observes that life in the villages for the youth was far from ideal. With most of the men being detained while their loyalties were investigated, the new villages were primarily run by women who were left to manage the domestic households. Visitors to the villages bemoaned that the places were occupied solely by children most of who complained of various illnesses. Visitors to these villages were witnessing firsthand the gutting of Kikuyu society. According to Ocobock (2005), it was no wonder that as late as 1959 officials complained that villagization had merely exacerbated the rural-to-urban
migration of the youth and had “produced its own problems of gangs of hunting children, petty thieves and hen fishers” (p. 8). The condition of both state-constructed villages and those on the African reserves exacerbated the rural to urban migration of the youth.

Emergency regulations, Operation Anvil, and villagization failed to keep the Kikuyu and other youth of Nairobi out of the city for even the reminder of 1956. A massive repatriation scheme, it suffered the same ineffective fate as its more modest predecessors. In respect to juveniles, it simply repatriated them out of the city, and they returned within a year. Operation Anvil and villagization offered little respite for European urbanites in Nairobi; juvenile vagrancy continued to plague Nairobi administrators, and soon crime began to rise in the city. Gangs included children who had been separated from their parents as a result of the Emergency.

Operation Anvil successfully cut off Mau Mau fighters in the forests of Central Province from their supply lines in Nairobi, and for the first time in the city’s history removed and repatriated nearly all homeless and jobless vagrants, albeit temporarily. Although a turning point in the war on the Mau Mau, Operation Anvil and the Movement of Kikuyu Regulations did little to prevent the return of Africans, particularly the youth, to Nairobi. The state failed to provide a permanent solution to the urban migration of the youth: improved housing, education and employment. Instead, the colonial administration quickly discovered that its massive repatriation and detention policy had created a population of parentless and rootless juveniles. As the social and economic processes that resulted in urban migrancy continued unchecked, the state was confronted with two separate populations of African youth between which the lines of distinction were
extremely slim. On one hand, administrators held a small number of youth suspected of Mau Mau support or criminal activity in Nairobi, and on the other, there was a much greater number of youth whose parents were detained or dead and who had no home to which they could return.

By 1955, with the levels of juvenile crime and vagrancy on the increase, new measures were required to effectively manage the youth during the emergency. In an improvised fashion characteristic of juvenile vagrancy policy of the 1940s, the state constructed a separate system to manage the children of the Mau Mau, the Emergency (Welfare of Children) Regulation enacted in 1955. It provided district commissioners with the authority to round-up any African youth whose parents were prevented from looking after their children because they were imprisoned, detained, or “incapacitated” due to the emergency. These youth were subsequently placed in “Approved institutions.” For those accused of vagrancy, criminal acts, or participation in the Mau Mau war, there was no longer any room for them in the Approved schools and remand homes within the Nairobi penal system. As a result, officials incarcerated them in specialized youth camps which intended to cleanse them of their Mau Mau ideology. For others, juvenile reception centers and youth clubs were established to bring order to repatriation and stymie movements of youth back to the urban centers. By the late 1955, this system pieced together refurbished, pre-existing mechanisms such as Approved schools and repatriation with new institutions that would detain juveniles, prevent their return to urban life, and reintroduce them to Western society. Although the early years of conflict had stifled developments in juvenile policies of the late 1940s, the later years of the Emergency
rejuvenated them. Notions of citizenship, modernity, and the transformation of counterproductive youth into disciplined and hardworking members of society came back into operation. Within the barbed wire fences of the juvenile pipeline, a new relationship between state and youth took place, one that served to camouflage the continued state failure to address the root causes of juvenile vagrancy.

The colonial government’s lack of comprehensive policy on handling youth vagrancy had tremendous effects on the youth who lacked adequate social safety valves that could address their problems. During this period, there were thousands of young people who were engaging in vagrant activities, and there were no adequate government programs that were in place to address their plight. Commenting on the precarious situation of the youth during this period, Martin (1978) writes:

Until the Starehe and Kariokor clubs opened their doors, there was almost no attempt made to care positively for the hordes of children living on the streets of Nairobi. A church Club at Karen met one evening a week, another in Pumwani on two evenings. The Christian Industrial Training Centre in Pumwani offered a full-time training course, but only for those who had reached Standard Seven in primary school, and furthermore on a fee-paying basis. The excellent Save the Children Fund home for helpless children at Ujana Park had closed early in 1958. There was virtually nothing else. All that a boy could look forward to was periodic arrest and judicial beating, perhaps “repatriation” to his home area, where he would be unwelcome and from which he would promptly return to
Nairobi; and, eventually, an Approved School or prison. The city authorities showed little enthusiasm for clubs or training centers…. (p. 6)

The effects of the Mau Mau War aggravated further the desolate state of youth during this period, teenagers took to roaming the countryside in gangs; they indulged in petty thefts, malicious damages to farms, and, in some cases, smoked bhang. During the war, thousands of men, most of them heads of families, were arrested and held in detention camps; others lost their lives through their refusal to support the nationalist cause. In the Kikuyu reserves, countless families lost their identities when forced to move into temporary fortified villages. Traditional customs and loyalties, sorely beset by colonial rule, disintegrated still further under the intolerable pressures of the time; and more and more children, especially boys, found themselves without the support of parents and family. There was no refuge in the country for these homeless ones. Even the youngest were caught up in the inevitable trek to Nairobi, the distant, glamorous city where they hoped for a better life. The realities of youth life in Nairobi for the destitute child were bitterly different and agonizing. The anxious parents, administrative systems, and police offers could do very little to address the problem of youth vagrancy. To worsen the situation, the school could not provide an answer for young delinquents.

Describing the education debacle of the youth during this period Griffin observes that:

In February 1962, the Ministry of Education reported a primary school enrollment of 653,000 children, aged between 7 to 10 years. It was estimated that 119,000 children in this age bracket were out of school. In the intermediate range between the ages 11 to 14 years, 228,000 children were in school and about 438,000 were
not! Of the estimated 600,000 children between 15 to 18 years, only a small percentage was in secondary schools! (King’ala, 2005, p. 58)

The colonial approaches to solving youth vagrancy were adapted from British models to suit the needs of Nairobi’s demographics. The presence of an economic and socially insecure population of White expatriates proved irksome to many colonial officials. Although colonial Nairobi differed from London in many ways, vagrancy still operated at the epicenter where labor crisis and urban order converged. It was this core continuity that ultimately governed the development of vagrancy in Kenya. However, colonial ideas of gender, age, and race, as well the economic constraints of the colonial system and settler anxieties were but some of the factors that gave Kenyan vagrancy an identity unique to its British antecedent.

The inadequacies of early colonial youth policies accelerated the number of vagrants found within Nairobi. The colonial state lacked the resources to enforce firmer social control or enhance social provisions. Instead, it vacillated between sentences of imprisonment, corporal punishment, repatriation, or discharge. The colonial government’s good intentions inevitably and invariably confronted the parsimony of government expenditure. Ordinances, legislative debates and committee deliberations expressed concern and determination to tackle the problem of urban youth; but the colonial state lacked the necessary capacity to act effectively. Roundups and repatriation were seen as less costly than social programs and urban reforms. Despite the lofty designs of colonial legislation, vagrancy laws were merely a narrow-minded strategy to provide a semblance of order so as to quell the fears of European and Asian urbanites.
Indeed, the vagrant was not alone when trapped between the economic and political inadequacies of the rural and the urban. The state, too, was circumscribed by similar forces, incapable of managing the complexities it had created. It were these increased levels of youth vagrancy that compelled Griffin to venture into the formation of youth clubs that eventually gave birth to the SBC as a way of addressing the menace. His aim was to offer education that went beyond basic provisions of food, shelter, and clothings. These were war orphans who had been hurt, and they needed the best they could get, particularly for their future. It was pointless to give them food and clothing without a sound education. Like all those who were involved in the Emergency, Griffin had witnessed brutality and atrocity, committed by all parties to the conflict. He longed to provide change.

Superficially, Griffin’s change of heart during the Emergency period seems inexplicable. He was born into an arrogant White generation, confident of its inalienable title to rule the adopted land, scornful of the aspirations of the race whose land it had been for centuries past. When he joined the army it was with the clear intention of using all his talents to help suppress Mau Mau freedom fighters and to restore the former uneasy peace. In addition, he was not a man to change sides in order to back the winning horse. But what forces acted on his sudden change of heart, deciding to work with the very people he had been trained to suppress? During this time, social conventions were designed to restrict contact between different races living side by side; it was also impossible for an African to take the initiative in helping his own people, especially during the period when the indigenous population was clamped under the military
regulations of the Emergency. The conditions of the time, however, threw into inevitable prominence a small number of Europeans who were forced to act on their own. Their humanitarian aspirations were shared by many Africans who were unable to play their rightful part because they labored under heavy restrictions in terms of their freedom of movement, speech and action.

Griffin’s premium on human ideals made him distaste atrocities that were being committed by the colonial government to the African people during the Mau Mau War. He longed to build. But how could he do this? While still serving out his commission, he thought first of becoming a professional hunter, with the opportunity to travel and explore. The administration also offered attractive prospects, and he was tempted by the offer of a two-year contract as a district officer. Best of all, he thought, he would be able to write and make a living by his pen. But there was another idea at the back of his mind, insubstantial as yet, impossible to formulate even in the privacy of his personal journal. According to Hongo and Mugambi (2000), the idea remained obscure when on March 31st, 1955, his Commission expired, and like Roger Owles he refused the offer of a captaincy if he would stay on. Although at this time he did not have any future plans and didn’t quite know what to do with his life, he felt it was “more comfortable to be jobless than watching and giving people instructions to butcher and kill each other” (King’ala, 2006, p. 42). He went home, a soldier no more, and read the newspaper and looked for a job. He answered an advertisement from the new Government Ministry for Community Development and Rehabilitation. His father had taught him the virtues of honesty, fairness and sobriety thus providing the impetus for his decision to resign from the army
and seek a community development post that could give him a chance to build human lives, the lives of young African people doomed by colonial policies to live as laborers and servants. This zeal and journey took him to Manyani and Wamumu, to the formation of youth clubs, to the SBC and the NYS. In all these engagements he saw education as the anchor for the growth of the youth and for Kenya’s development.

**Manyani and Wamumu Camp Experiences**

**Manyani Experiences**

Griffin’s first direct involvement in youth education can be traced to his activities at Manyani and Wamumu rehabilitation camps. To be able to understand his educational involvement in these two camps it is important to understand the historical happenings of the time- the Mau Mau war and the colonial policies that were enacted to fight it and the state of the youth during this period. Operation Anvil netted thousands of African youth whom officials felt were hard-line Mau Mau fighters. The majority of these individuals, while described as young men, were in fact over the age of eighteen. The minority under the age of sixteen were placed in detention camps such as Manyani, outside Nairobi, where they were interrogated about their involvement in the Mau Mau War. Questioning and detaining the youth was, however, no solution in defeating the Mau Mau fighters. Many liberal colonial officials, such as Thomas Askwith felt, that true victory over the Mau Mau could only be gained through rehabilitating Kikuyu fighters and winning the “hearts and minds” of the general population. These were the recommendations of Hugh Fraser’s Committee that had been set up in September 1953 to evaluate the situation and assess what could be done to defuse charges of British misrule. Fraser was a conservative
Member of Parliament and a parliamentary undersecretary to Oliver Lyttelton, in the colonial office in United Kingdom. In his report he advocated for rehabilitation, whose role was to civilize the Kikuyus. Elkins (2005) notes that through rehabilitation:

The civilizing mission, Britain’s raison d’etre for colonizing the Kikuyu people, could be introduced to the masses of Mau Mau adherents…. This strategy would offer social and economic change to those Kikuyu who confessed their oaths and then cooperated with colonial authorities in the detention camps, and eventually in the Emergency villages in the Kikuyu reserves. Rehabilitation would be the inducement needed to lure the Kikuyu away from Mau Mau savagery and toward the enlightenment of Western civilization. It would offer Mau Mau adherents opportunities far more alluring than those offered by their own movement. (p. 168)

Rehabilitation was to become the colonial government’s campaign for winning the “hearts and minds” of the Kikuyu. This would not be the first time the British government undertook a “hearts-and-minds” campaign to reorient detainees toward a more Western and civilized way of thinking. During and after the Second World War the British attempted to de-Nazify German prisoners of war in order to cleanse them of their fascist and anti-semitic beliefs. At the same time the British undertook similar psychological campaigns throughout the empire as part of a larger effort to repress postwar and anticolonial uprisings. These were experiments in disciplinary power aimed at forcing individuals to reject their own ideas and adopt the purported superior beliefs of their captors. Of all the British “hearts-and-minds” precedents, the one undertaken in
colonial Malaya ultimately most influenced Kenyan policy. In addition, Evelyn Baring also looked to the Asian colony, believing Templer, the governor there, was offering sound civic and social improvements in order to lure communist insurgents and their supporters back to the capitalist and “civilized” ways of the British colonizers. Baring telegraphed him several times, asking to borrow a Malayan civil servant with experience in designing and mounting a “hearts-and-minds” campaign. Templer refused but did agree to host one of Kenya’s colonial officers in Malaya and tutor him in the ways of rehabilitation. By the summer of 1953, Baring needed to dispatch someone to Malaya immediately. He selected Thomas Askwith, who was by all accounts the logical choice, based on his position and previous experience in development work.

Rehabilitation presumed, of course, Britain’s inherent moral superiority over the Kikuyu, something Askwith never questioned. The colonial government assumption here was that out of the ashes of Mau Mau, a reconstructed Kikuyu society would arise and with it the threat of any future uprising stymied. When the colonial government thought of introducing a “hearts-and-minds” campaign, Baring and Lyttelton viewed it as the antithesis of physical violence and summary justice. British colonial violence, however, could and did take many forms; and rehabilitation was no less coercive than some of the brutal tactics employed in screening operations by Britain’s colonial agents. Governor Baring understood that detention alone could not solve Mau Mau problem in the long term. He thus directed Askwith to develop a rehabilitation system that would ultimately eliminate Mau Mau influence from Kikuyu minds. Elkins (2005) observes that in Askwith’s views:
Mau Mau adherents had tortured minds and any re-education program could not begin until their demented psyche had somehow been reached. The European community in Kenya was in complete agreement with Askwith that Mau Mau was a kind of disease or filth that affected the bodies and minds of those who took the oath, it was a type of contagion or mind-destroying disease. Mass detention provided a form of quarantine where those afflicted with the Mau Mau infection could be diagnosed and treated. (p. 106)

The process of rehabilitation developed by the Ministry of Community Development was founded on four basic principles: the inculcation of discipline and work ethic, education in employable skills to prepare for future employment and settlement, and finally, the relearning as well as restoration of moral values. Although not a particular step in the process of citizenship construction, religion provided the glue that bound these stages together. Through Christian work ethic, spiritual cleansing, and moral guidance the Kikuyu would be cleansed from Mau Mau influence.

In the adult Mau Mau pipeline, rehabilitation began within the detention camps. According to Elkins (2005), the prerequisite to the rehabilitation course was complete confession and a reversing of the Mau Mau oath. Before being detained screening teams placed Kikuyu into three main categories which would determine the level of their reeducation. For the ‘Whites’, simple repatriation back to their home reserves was sufficient. Those more suspect Kikuyu men and women were labeled “grey” and sentenced to work camps where, once they confessed, they received paid labor on government projects while attending rehabilitation courses in the evenings. Using a
“recipe” of paid labor, craft training, recreation, civic and moral re-education, colonial officials would pacify the Mau Mau threat and produce a generation of governable men and women. The more governable the “greys” became, the closer to home they were moved until ultimately they were released by their district commissioner. For the ‘Blacks’, the recalcitrant Mau Mau fighters, they were incarcerated in “permanent exile settlements,” where they could be isolated from a society which was in the process of reconstruction.

According to Ocobock (2005) there were thousands of youth being rounded-up throughout Central Province, and while many were processed through the adult pipeline, most entered the juvenile pipeline. For the young Kikuyu captured during the fighting, rounded-up in the rural areas or removed by Anvil from Nairobi, special youth camps were developed for their re-education. The youth camp system was a government response to the Emergency as per the welfare regulations of children of 1954. As few nongovernmental organizations would take suspected Mau Mau youth, the colonial regime needed to construct its own approved institutions to house the thousands of the youth being detained. Askwith, and the Department of Community Development, came across the idea for the youth camps four years earlier when an industrious officer from Machakos decided to solve the youth vagrancy problem in his area. He converted an abandoned labor center into a youth centre where a local artisan volunteered to provide courses in woodwork for former vagrant youth. The course was operated like an apprenticeship and the boys had to indenture themselves for two years to the program.
The success of the pilot program led to more courses in blanksmithing, and mechanics and much later provided the backbone of the youth camp system.

Drawing on the program in Machakos, Askwith and his department developed the youth camps along the steps of the rehabilitation program earlier discussed. The first youth camp was established in 1954 at Gituyaini in Nyeri and it was deemed so successful that nine more were constructed in Fort Hall, Embu, and Meru Districts. The camps originally served as holding sites for surrendered or suspect young terrorists, and they were not dismantled even after Mau Mau confrontations with the British forces had subsided. The camps were transformed by the state from detention camps into rehabilitation camps. The youth camps of Central Province, particularly one of the largest located in Wamumu, provides a fruitful demonstration of colonial rehabilitation and citizen making at its most sincere and disturbing level.

In the early years of the Emergency the colonial government had not yet developed a coherent strategy to manage young people involved in or affected by the Mau Mau conflict. Prior to the Emergency, the colonial government did very little in response to its own internally generated recommendations regarding the need for juvenile delinquency facilities throughout the colony. With the notable exception of the Approved schools for boys at Kabete and Dagoretti, nothing was being done to address the mounting problem of juvenile crime. With the outbreak of the Mau Mau War, there was simply nowhere to put juveniles either convicted or detained without trial for Emergency-related offenses. According to Elkins (2005), “there were officially some sixteen hundred juveniles in Manyani Camp and at least two thousand being held throughout the pipeline”
Voicing his outrage on the state of the youth during this time, Beniah Ohanga (cited in Elkins, 2005), observed:

> No single party within the government wanted to, or could, assume the fiscal or administrative responsibility for these unclaimed children and instead looked to voluntary associations and the missionaries to take care of them…The lack of remand homes (i.e. facilities for juveniles) is nothing short of a scandal, and the judiciary has on many occasions expressed its grave disquiet at the failure of Government to fulfill its statutory obligation to provide remand homes. Simply put, the situation was hell for the children, and no one wanted to deal with it.

Rather than improving, the situation worsened when camps like Langata were condemned, and youngsters either were released with nowhere to go or were sent to worse conditions in places like Manyani. Most colonial officials refused to accept responsibility for the juvenile crisis and, instead blamed Kikuyu parents for not looking after their children in the traditional manner. As the number of children and young people began filling transit and detention camps, colonial administrators dealt with young people in contradictory ways, alternating between a series of extreme actions from detention, or death to co-optation. However, after 1954, according to Ocobock (2005), the state began to articulate a strategy and series of institutions designed specifically for the management of youth caught up in the Emergency: youth camps, juvenile reception centers, and youth clubs. This “juvenile pipeline,” as it was commonly called by the colonial administrators, was the primary expression of state control over African youth during the Emergency.
period. Through the process, the state sought to rehabilitate young Mau Mau adherents and win over their “hearts and minds,” halt juvenile migration in Central Province, and seek solutions to the frustrations of young people who had once sought empowerment by participating in the Mau Mau. The Juvenile pipeline drew much of its workings from a reservoir of past experiences and policies.

According to Ocobock (2005), the pipeline was the apotheosis of colonial youth control in Kenya: a merging of past juvenile policy procedures, recently concocted notions of juvenile development, and new government capacities granted under the Emergency Act. The lending of these new apparatuses together did not take place directly after the deployment of the Welfare of Children regulations but piecemeal throughout the 1950s as the state adapted to its failed realizations. The development of the pipeline was divided into phases. First, it removed young potential Mau Mau from uncontrolled settings such as the Aberdare forests and urban centers and placed them back into reserves or state controlled villages. Second, the population of juveniles the state considered hardcore Mau Mau activists, a particular subsection of the pipeline known as youth camp migration, vagrancy and crime that had been aggravated by the Emergency regulations, the pipeline was refitted to manage them.

Despite the increased resources and motivation, the state operated in much the same way as it had throughout the past three decades. The management of the youth during the Emergency, particularly of vagrants and delinquents who were potential Mau Mau activists, continued to use oscillating forms of extreme punishment. The state engaged suspect Mau Mau youth with armed force, indefinite incarceration, and other
forms of inhumane treatment. However, the state also pursued a more rehabilitative course with young people during the Emergency. Even within this framework there were varying extremes. In one set of institutions, known as youth camps, the state sought to re-educate juveniles rounded-up during Mau Mau operations. In another set of institutions, a renewed repatriation scheme, youth were held in reception centers where a variety of programs were offered, from literacy courses, to labor on government projects to “short, shock treatments.” Between both extremes, African juveniles were still simply being removed from home only to seek their fortunes in Nairobi once again. Regardless of the re-education in camps, literacy and labor in reception centers and the Emergency regulations themselves, the colonial state could not prevent youth migration to Nairobi. Throughout the late 1950s, the state struggled with the escalating complexity around it and this is clearly evidenced in the juvenile pipeline. (see Table 5 and 6)

**Table 5 J**uvenile Pipeline, 1960

![Juvenile Pipeline Diagram](source: KNA OP/1/1022)
Table 6

The Operating Pipeline Circa January 1956, Main Camps


The juvenile pipeline welded together during the Emergency illuminates new perspectives on the state’s struggle against and solution to the Mau Mau uprising. By 1953, enough juveniles were being rounded up to warrant official deliberation as to detention. During this period, Commissioner of Prisons D.G.W. Malone recommended the construction of a separate camp system for Juveniles’ and his assistant, S. H. la Fontaine explored ways that the young Mau Mau were to be reintegrated back into Kikuyu reserves. While the colonial officials had quickly realized they had no coherent
strategy to manage Mau Mau’s juvenile ranks, many were firmly behind a separate system of institutionalization for Mau Mau youth. Yet the administration was well over a year away from acting on these ideas, and in the meantime, Mau Mau youth found themselves in a variety of institutions. Some Mau Mau juveniles were being incarcerated in Approved schools, alongside juvenile delinquents.

Early responses to Mau Mau youth were varied, ad hoc, and contradictory. For instance, in 1954, the Nairobi Juvenile Court was trying to reunite Mau Mau youth with their families, probation was placing them in missions, Nakuru screeners were refusing to transfer them to adult detention, and district commissioners were applying corporal punishment and locking them up alongside adults. Despite a state of confusion in which even young loyalists could be mistaken for Mau Mau, most young people rounded up in the first two or three years of the Emergency, some as young as four years, were placed in transit or detention camps alongside adults. Three facilities to which the bulk of suspected Mau Mau juveniles were transferred were Manyani, Kamiti and Langata. The youth held at each facility were brought in from a variety of areas, but the majority came from Kiambu and Nairobi Districts. After Operation Anvil, Manyani added 1,200 youth detained during the Nairobi round-up to their pre-existing juvenile population. Although hundreds of youth were incarcerated at Kamiti, there was an attempt at Manyani and Langata to return some juveniles to their homes. It is evident that colonial strategy in solving youth problems was confusing, particularly in the phase of resistance.

The detention of children was not the result of a lack of official policy. The state’s first concrete steps toward a more structured Emergency policy for youth came in 1953
with the establishment of the Committee on Young Persons and Children chaired by Humphrey Slade. The committee’s mission was to draft measures to be used to protect African youth during the Emergency. Out of Slade’s committee came the 1954 Welfare of Children Regulations Act. The new procedures became the legal foundation upon which the state would control African youth during the Emergency period. They provided district commissioners with the authority to round up any African youth whose parents were imprisoned, detained, or “incapacitated” due to the conflict. Once taken, these youth were to be placed in approved institutions such as missions and nongovernmental organizations, and if they were unavailable, then in places of safety, such as police offices, hospitals, or any place willing to take them. While organizations like the Consolata Mission, Red Cross, and Salvation Army took in hundreds of young people affected by the Emergency, few approved institutions were willing to care for more. Many of them, the Dagoretti Children’s Centre, Ujana Park Centre, and Quarry Road Centre did not have adequate supplies. In response, the state was forced to expand the definition of Approved institution to include government-run programs, shifting the burden of care and protection on to itself.

The committee’s findings were hardly surprising; they reflected the commonly held beliefs regarding young people within the colonial administration. The notion that modernity and capitalist individualism had broken down traditional African authority and social norms had entered colonial rhetoric as early as the 1920s. Solutions were few and far between, but in the 1940s and early 1950s moves were made to provide better alternatives to the problem. By the time of the Emergency, many officials and settlers
believed the state had a responsibility to protect African children from the supposed primordial psychosis afflicting their traditional African societies and introduce them to civilization. This was in line with the British Empires “civilizing mission” or Victorian aspirations. Commenting on this, Elkins (2005) writes:

Though disparate, Britain’s’ far-flung empire was united by a single imperial ethos, the civilizing mission. For the British, imperialism was not solely about exploitation, in fact, if one believed the official rhetoric of the time… in motivating Britain’s global conquests. With their superior race, Christian values, and economic know-how, the British instead had a duty, a moral obligation, to redeem the “backward heathens” of the world…. (p. 6)

In Africa, therefore, the British felt they had an obligation to bring light to the “Dark Continent” by transforming the so-called natives into progressive citizens, ready to take their place in the modern world. This was the “White man’s burden.” According to their own line of reasoning, the British were not actually stealing African land or exploiting local labor but were instead self-appointed trustees for the hapless “natives”, who had not yet reached a point on the evolutionary scale when they could make responsible decisions on their own. With proper British guidance, and paternalistic love, Africans could be made into progressive men and women, although in their own estimations, the process would take many decades or centuries to bring total transformation to African societies. Officials turned to educators, armed with a citizenship-training curriculum, as guides capable of providing juveniles with the necessary character to navigate the unfamiliar waters of Western modernity. Youth civics
and citizenship had entered the colonial discourse in Kenya just prior to the Second World War, and moves were made to create an Empire Youth Movement in Kenya as well as expand the Boy Scouts. According to Elkins (2005), British officials and settlers looked to inculcate African youth with notions of citizenship, with an emotional attachment to the British Empire, perhaps a response to similar projects in the colonial territories of Vichy France, the Soviet Union, and the Nazi Germany.

A developing and identifiable strategy began to put these regulations into practice. In 1955, the strategy entailed separating young and old detainees and systematizing juvenile detention. Thomas Askwith and the Department of Community Development were given responsibility over the construction of a youth camp system designed to cleanse Mau Mau youth and reintegrate them back into society. In July 1955, the government transferred 1,200 juveniles out of Manyani, and dozens from Langata and Kamiti, to Wamumu Youth Camp in Embu. It was during this period that Griffin and Roger Owles made an application to the newly created Ministry of Community Development and Rehabilitation. They applied for positions, and both of them were taken as community development officers. By the end of May 1955, Griffin left for Manyani Detention Camp. Initially, he had expected to be working with adults in a village development program; it was sheer coincidence that on the very morning he reported for duty a major scandal had broken out about the incarceration of youths, and the reports by eminent clergy, politicians, private citizens, the Red Cross, former member of Legislative Council, Mrs. Dorothy Hughes and British opposition parties especially Labour Party on the detention of the juveniles at Manyani had just reached his
commissioner. The result was that Griffin and his colleague were sent there promptly, with instructions to segregate the juveniles from the adults, and to recommend to the government what should be done. Commenting on various voices of protest at the time, Elkins (2005) notes:

Much of the protest came from the ranks of the Labour Party, some from within the British colonial government itself. Some came from missionaries, others from the press. Together, the critics marshalled forth a stream and then a flood of evidence and decried the continued use of detention without trial, torture, famine, abuse of Emergency Regulations, and summary executions…. (p. 274)

Griffin had no idea what kind of work awaited him. He thought he and Owles they were going to form villages and force Kikuyus into them for closer monitoring. Little did he know that a major and important national undertaking awaited them. In narrating this coincidence, prevailing conditions of the youth in detention camps, and how these events shaped his future career, in his interview with Slingerland, Griffin recalled:

From Kikuyuland and mostly in barbed wire cages were 20,000 Kikuyus. Now, the adults in detention mixed up with them, there were kids. And there was screaming and questions were being asked in the British House of Commons and all these were coming to the government. Is this true? Do you have kids in concentration camps? And the Governor had posed it to this Ministry come on you are supposed to do the rehabilitation you gonna do something about this. And here I come walking like a lamb to the slaughter upstairs. A brand new officer,
with no duties. So, they said right, you get in the car straight down to Manyani. We give you documents to tell the prison authorities to cooperate with you. You have access to all the compounds there. Check around if you find any children segregate them, then report back and we see where we go from there… This is what brought me in touch with the kids…. (G. W. Griffin, television interview, 2000)

This and the subsequent events that followed marked the start of the involvement of Griffin in youth education. It is under these circumstances that Griffin and his friend were summoned and told to go to the Manyani Detention Camp to find out the truth of the claims and given full authority to investigate and act if necessary. They were required to identify and rehabilitate any young men who were under age of twenty. At Manyani, Captain George Gardner of the Royal Engineers was waiting to take charge of their training.

During this period, there were detention camps in different parts of the country, the worst being Manyani, situated in Tsavo, along Mombasa road near Voi. Those of the Mau Mau fighters who were unlucky to fall into the hands of British troops or the administrators found themselves in those camps. It was not only bush fighters who ended up there; suspects, some of them innocent people, ended up there too. According to Griffin, Manyani “was hell on earth” (King’ala, 2005, p. 45), both in terms of climate and detention conditions. There was no single blade of grass, no trees, no shade other than the one construction in the middle of the two compounds which was used by the warders to have “barazas” (meetings). “With nowhere to hide while outdoors, the sun scorched the
detainees’ bare bodies!” (p. 45). In terms of detention conditions, the camp was staffed with useless drunkards, people who had lost hope in life and were ready to do anything. They had been recruited as wardens after the colonial government advertised in the United Kingdom for people who would be willing to work in African prisons. The prisons were small in size and were designed to accommodate very few prisoners. Prior to Independence, the country had very few prisons. But with the State of Emergency, and the need to detain numerous Mau Mau rebels, who had surrendered or were arrested, there was a lot of congestion in these prisons.

Manyani Detention Camp had two compounds that were divided into cat-walks of barbed wire to allow warders to patrol in between the compounds. In the middle, there was a very high tower manned by wardens with machine guns and powerful searchlights to make sure no detainee escaped. Detainees were housed in low A-frame tin huts. One could only stand in the middle of the huts, the sides were too low and did not allow a person to lie down. The long tunnels had no windows or light. One A-frame hut accommodated 50 prisoners, 25 on either side of the structure. To avoid trouble, the detainees were forced into these huts at 3 o’clock in the afternoon and were not allowed into the open air until 9 o’clock the following day. So the greater part of the day and night were spent by the detainees locked in these A-frame structures lying down trying to sleep. They were only free to walk around, sit, and talk together between 9am and 3pm. The great moment of the day came when the prisoners left for the only meal which was just plain “posho” (corn meal). There were no greens and no fruits and many detainees suffered from kwashiorkor and marasmus. Those that were unlucky enough to
get scurvy walked like crabs in agony because of their painful swollen joints. It was disheartening to watch any of the detainees walk. The detainees did not have adequate clothings. All they wore was a pair of yellow short trousers. They wore no tops, no shoes, no underwear, nothing else. Griffin observes that “it was very boring, emotional and some times an inhuman exercise….,” (King’ala, 2005, p. 45). They looked tired; a great number of them were sick and mentally ill. They had been locked up for years with the intention of turning them into nonfunctioning zombies who were not dangerous to Whites. Commenting on the Manyani Camp conditions, Elkins (2005) writes:

The camp compounds were routinely filled above capacity. Detainees slept on the ground, often one on top of the other, detainees had close quarters…water supplies were also abysmal. Detainees remember drawing drinking water from drainage ditches, swamps and muddy boreholes…infectious diseases continued to be ubiquitous in the pipeline. Pulmonary tuberculosis was widely reported…waterborne infections-- particularly dysentery, diarrhea, and other epidemic intestinal diseases”-- ran through the camps. So too did vitamin deficiency, with cases of scurvy, pellagra, kwashiorkor, and night blindness. Detainees often slept and ate in the same room where toilet buckets overflowed with urine and faeces. With poor sanitation and worse ventilation, the air quality was wretched. Bed bugs infested blankets and lice in their hair. Their rations generally consisted of maize meal, with an occasional piece of meat or vegetable thrown in-- a diet that was often reduced or completely taken away as a form of punishment…the camp commandants and guards represented the bottom of the
barrel…they were hardly paragons of efficiency or virtue…empowered and
maddened by the confining atmosphere of the camps, many of the guards, beat,
tortured, and murdered the detainees without any remorse. (p.145)

Griffin compared the conditions at Manyani to those of the German concentration
camps during the First World War. In his interview with Imbira, he observed:

Talk about things that happened in World War II concentration camps this was
as bad as anything and shameful because it was being done by “Wazungu”
(Whites) who were proud that they had knocked hell out of Germans and they
were doing the same sort of thing. (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005)

When Griffin and his colleague arrived at Manyani they did not receive a cheerful
welcome. The camp authorities were well aware of the public revelations of their brutal
handling and gross neglect of the detainees, and they viewed Griffin and Owles as
government spies. Most of the officers were reluctant to talk to them. The promise to take
the youth from Manyani did not carry any weight in the eyes of the officers. The “hard-
core” Z-category detainees, however young, had been repeatedly told that they would
never go home. On the other hand, the detainees viewed Griffin and his colleagues with
suspicion. Hatred for Whites was a key factor in their lives and they wondered about the
mission of Griffin and his colleague.

Despite these early hardships, in these series of barbed wire corrals in Manyani,
where thousands of prisoners were confined without opportunity for exercise or
recreation, Griffin and Owles were able to identify 1,000 children of 16 years or younger
and 1,000 young men of 17 years, whom they placed in separate compounds. They
identified their levels of education and used those who were educated to teach those who lacked education. There were no teaching materials such as black boards, chalk, and paper. Griffin and his team were forced to improvise by taking advantage of the Manyani red soil to write on it using fingers and little sticks. They began by teaching the young detainees basic literature and numbers. The long confinement of Manyani detainees with nothing to read had turned the boys into zombies. They brought in some soccer balls to help boys exercise, in order to get their blood circulating in their brains and to bring them back to life. Griffin and his colleagues succeeded in stimulating the young men and boys in terms of making them to talk, walk, and smile. This enabled them to slowly start restoring their confidence, trust that had been destroyed by the brutality and inhumane conditions of Manyani Detention Camp. Anything that could wake up the young detainees was undertaken by Griffin and his colleagues. These early basic, trial- and-error educational experiments laid the foundation for Griffin’s involvement in youth education, a process that spanned 46 years. In King’ala (2005), he remarked that “this is how I cut my teeth in dealing with young people and which was to become my lifelong career” (p. 44). The handling and shaping of the despairing boys, ravaged with disease and other difficulties, into meaningful citizens gave Griffin hope, courage, confidence, and recognition of his abilities in youth programs.

A critical examination of the academic activities that Griffin engaged in during this period reveal modest, unstructured, and basic educational activities that got further refinement at Wamumu and eventually blossomed at SBC. Although most of the educational activities undertaken functioned under colonial rehabilitation policies, there
were a lot of innovations, improvisations, and creativity that Griffin introduced to enrich the students’ learning despite lack of essential learning tools such as books and pens. Through the Manyani rehabilitation program, Griffin learned a lot about the youth psychology, leadership, academic abilities, and their role in school administration. These early experiences were further expanded at Wamumu, when at the end of June 1955 the youth were relocated there.

It was the initial success of these simple educational ventures at Manyani that made Griffin begin writing to the government agitating for the relocation of the youth to a new site where they could be offered more educational training. As far as he and his colleagues were concerned, they had already accomplished their mission at Manyani. In response to Griffin’s request, the government made a brand new camp on Mwea Plains (Wamumu Camp). To back them up they were given a lot of security to maintain order. The process of relocating boys to Wamumu was a difficult one especially from the standpoint of the officers at Manyani who were not ready to back Griffin’s efforts. When the Special Branch wing of the police dealing with state security learned of Griffin’s plans to move the youth out of Manyani, they opposed the idea. Griffin recalled:

The detainees were classified into three categories. The…X meaning White was made out of people who were not bad because they had not taken the Mau Mau oath. They were just unlucky to be arrested. According to the Special Branch, these were expected to go through the “pipeline” which meant being transferred to a lesser camp that dealt with development projects in Agriculture. If they behaved themselves, they would be moved to a camp near their home district and
eventually be released…Z class, meaning Black, were classified as very
dangerous terrorists who would never be released. They were to be taken to a
higher security camp where they would stay until they died. Y class was Grey,
they were supposed to be detained for some time, watched keenly and if they
kept track of good records, they would be repatriated to their homes… Each
detainee had a detaining order, a small piece of paper, which was put in an
evelope. It was incredible to find a one line detaining order stating that he was a
dangerous murderer! I said to the government, I don’t care whether they are A, B,
C or X, Y, Z, get us the hell out of here. (King’ala, 2006, p. 47)

The authority didn’t mind if Griffin and his colleague carried the X and Y
categories for rehabilitation but certainly not category Z. Majority of the juvenile
detainees were Y. They warned Griffin and his team that the youth were killers
and would eventually kill them. Upon sensing a standoff, Griffin went back to the
government and pointed out that the children were underage and it was ridiculous
to treat them like adult criminals.

Several battles ensued, and in the end Griffin and Owles were permitted to move
the delinquents to the Mwea plains to establish a rehabilitation center and some kind of
school that would restore the tattered lives of the young Mau Mau detainees. The Special
Branch people laughed at them. In his interview with Slingerland, Griffin observed that
they warned him “fine, you take them, they will cut your throat and they will be back in
Mt. Kenya forest. Wait and see, we will laugh when we read about it in the newspapers”
(G. W. Griffin, television interview, 2000). With totally inadequate resources and very
little assistance, Griffin and his colleagues had to rely on their own initiative, ingenuity and imagination to fashion a wide range of educational activities and exercises to stimulate the bodies and minds of the young juveniles.

Wamumu Experiences

Wamumu was the first of the several youth camps built by the Ministry of Community Development in Central Province, and it would remain the largest and perform most of the rehabilitative work on young Mau Mau suspects. At Wamumu and within the youth camp system, the rehabilitation scheme developed by Tom Askwith and Community Development was put to work. According to the Rehabilitation Progress Report of 1955, by the end of September 1955, approximately 1,800 juveniles were being housed at Wamumu and were turning out 1,000 bricks a day to construct the staff housing and offices. In that first year, the boys built an institution for their own detention and punishment, differentiated from adult works camps only in the age of the inmate population. The school was very much a detention camp, hedged about with barbed wire and armed warders.

The Wamumu Youth Camp was gazetted in 1955 and little did colonial officials realize that this little makeshift detention facility for suspected Mau Mau youth under the age of sixteen was to outlive them. According to the KNA DC/EMB/2/1/1 report by E.P.B. Derrick, district commissioner of Embu, March 1959, a juvenile confined at Wamumu was required to fit the following criteria: have no parent or guardian, must have been abandoned by his parents or guardian or his parents or guardian must have been detained or imprisoned in circumstances related to the Emergency. Originally the
camp housed youth, who had been detained at Manyani Detention camp, nearly all
picked up by Operation Anvil on April 24, 1954. On this date, Britain’s military forces,
under the command of General Sir George Erskine, launched an ambitious operation to
reclaim full colonial control over Nairobi by purging the city of nearly all Kikuyu living
within its limits. According to Elkins (2005):

Erskine deployed nearly twenty-five thousand security force members whose
mission was to cordon off the city for a sector by sector purging of every African
area. The general took his cue from a similar “clean-up” conducted by the British
military before the Second World War in then Palestinian city of Tel Aviv, where
the elements of surprise was the key to its success...likewise in Nairobi, the entire
population-- African, Asian, and European was caught off-- guard.... (p. 121)

According to the Annual Report of the Department of Community Development
and Rehabilitation, 1956, administrators within the Ministry of Community Development
quickly discovered that the camp held rehabilitative potential. Askwith believed that the
experiences gained in Wamumu camp would be of great importance because it had
become clear over the years that the most intractable problem in Kenya was the training
of adolescents in citizenship. According to Ocobock (2005), that year there were calls to
give Wamumu a face-lift, removing the feeling of a detention camp and creating a unique
atmosphere of its own. To effect this, the barbed wire fencing was removed and the 200
armed personnel were reduced to 40. To improve the quality of life the 1,200 male
inmates, the dormitories were no longer locked at night, classes were offered and 14
playing fields were constructed, including athletic track and a boxing ring. In addition,
there was also the construction of a Protestant church and a Catholic church. Wamumu expansion continued well into 1957 when three facilities were developed for younger inmates who were placed under its care and protection.

Greater and direct influence of Griffin’s involvement in youth education can be traced to Wamumu, where activities that resemble modern schooling were provided. It was here that much of Griffin’s educational practices were put to the test. As Griffin was only at twenty years of age and Roger Owles slightly older, it was felt the two were too young to be left on their own to run the Wamumu rehabilitation camp. Captain George Gardner was thus seconded from the Royal Engineers to take charge of the camp. Griffin and Owles were the junior members and the fourth was the much-loved George Dennis. Griffin was in charge of administration and Roger Owles popularly referred to as “Wamathina” (a person of trouble) supervised the boys’ day-to-day projects.

Wamumu had been intended to be a detention camp but it was never used for that purpose. Its purpose was to steer youth away from traditional tribal shortcomings of family and kinship. It was a brand new camp, very much like Manyani. Surrounded by barbed wire, it had A-frame long tunnel-like huts, and houses for junior and senior staff. It was overgrown with long grass and full of poisonous snakes. It was here that the 1,000 young detainees were taken and a new educational program of rehabilitation begun. It was the beginning of a new chapter for their lives, rehabilitation, and rescue from Manyani into normal life. For Griffin, a new chapter in his life of getting involved in Kenyan youth education which later blossomed at Starehe began.
Getting the boys to develop trust in Griffin and his colleagues at Wamumu was a gradual process. The boys at first were very difficult and suspicious of the intentions of Griffin and his colleagues. They kept wondering why they had been taken to Wamumu; some thought perhaps they were going to be killed. It took them time to develop trust in Griffin and his team despite the constant promise that they could be released to their families if they reformed. The first two months at Wamumu were hard months for both pupils and staff alike. From early in the morning to late in the evening, the boys were kept busy. They were driven hard, digging ditches, marking roads, building classrooms and workshops. Commenting on these early hardships, Griffin, in his interview with Slingerland, remarked:

We had a hard time at first because the kids when they first arrived were solemn, they were filled with apathy, they wouldn’t look at you, they wouldn’t smile at you and many of them wouldn’t even talk to you. They wouldn’t open their mouths at you and they just sat stubborn. We knew that somewhere, within them there were leaders among them who were holding them… whom they feared and were not letting anybody co-operate to any degree, even if it meant getting on the way of freedom. And until we could find out who these people were and get rid of them, our hands were tied, we could not make much progress…. (G. W. Griffin, television interview, 2000)

Griffin and his colleagues had to fight from the onset to remove the boys who were dangerous. The aim of the program was to rehabilitate all the young detainees irrespective of their previous past-- whether they had killed, taken the Mau Mau oath, or
were just Mau Mau sympathizers. The removal of the hardcore boys from the camp cooled the atmosphere drastically and boys begun to confess their wrong deeds and to participate in the rehabilitation process. The rehabilitation program of Wamumu was a staggering success. The entries, searchlights, and watchtowers that were placed in the compound disappeared, the boys built classrooms and churches, sports teams and a scout troop flourished, employers spoke enthusiastically of their ex-Wamumu recruits, and the attorney general issued a blank pardon for all former crimes to every boy who passed successfully through the school. According to Martin (1978), “everyone who was there remembers the boys singing “Come back, enjoy yourselves, be free,” they sang all day in their own tongue as they worked and played and rested; and the music transformed the wilderness and gladden the hearts of the young officers who had brought the barren camp to life” (p. 16). Explaining the success of the Wamumu Rehabilitation Camp and its educational programs, Griffin noted:

Within a year, the double-banked barbed wire that surrounded the camp came down. When we began, there were about 200 armed guards to make sure that the boys, who were still inmates, didn’t run away or do anything dangerous. These were reduced to 40, who were needed for outside guarding to make sure that Mau Mau fighters didn’t come to interfere with the rehabilitation work. We used a gradual process in giving them freedom…That way, mutual trust developed. (King’ala, 2005, p. 50)

Within a year, youngsters who had been tough and insolent became transformed into obedient and useful citizens. The great achievement of the Wamumu rehabilitation
program within a short period of its existence made Governor of Kenya Sir. Everlyn Barring, who on visiting the camp in 1956, during his tour of areas under Emergency, to grant the Wamumu boys amnesty. He declared, “Any boy, going through Wamumu and through your hands and being released by you because you are satisfied with him, I give a free pardon of any crime he has committed including murder…” (King’ala, 2005, p. 54). Immediately after one year, rehabilitated boys were repatriated to their home areas and given jobs by the colony as technicians and clerks throughout the country. In addition, the boys were also exempted from a ban which prevented members of GEMA (Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru) from travelling in Kenya or from getting jobs anywhere in Kenya. This success made the Special Branch leave the camp sooner than had initially been planned. It was essential that they leave because Griffin and his colleagues were intending to run a school and not a detention camp. To successfully carry out their mission, it was imperative that Griffin and his team get rid of the guards and the barbed wire as quickly as possible.

From the beginning, Griffin and his colleagues proposed to transform Wamumu from a jail to a school even though the juveniles included at least 60 who had taken human life and hundreds more with tough records. According to Griffin, what he and his colleagues had to do was to “sweep away the cobwebs and rehabilitate them into society” (“The White man who cared about Black Dropouts,” 1988). This purpose is clearly evidenced in Captain Gardner’s words to the boys in his first inaugural speech. He remarked:
Gentlemen, I hope you enjoyed your long journey from Manyani, the place I know you all hate with passion. I’d like you to know that this is not a prison,” here you will obey, keep yourselves clean, tell no lies, and work hard. If you cooperate, you will learn many things which shall help you in the future and your country…. (“Re-Shaping Minds Warped by Mau Mau,” 1956)

The Wamumu staff believed that young Mau Mau suspects had to be managed separately as well as differently than their adult counterparts. They argued that their crimes had been committed under the stimulus of a general tribal movement, with the youth imitating their elders in a condition of genuine, albeit misguided, enthusiasm. The degree of guilt could not be considered as equivalent to that incurred when such crimes were committed for personal reasons. It is because of this recognition, that from the very beginning Griffin and his colleagues strived to put in place educational programs at Wamumu. By December of 1955, Wamumu began looking more and more like a “school.” To achieve this, the camp required a face-lift. First, the boys began dismantling the catwalks, watchtowers, and barbed wire fences while the 200 armed warders watching them was decreased to 40. With voluntary labor from the boys in their spare time, trees were planted and avenues of hedges grew up. Rock gardens, a mass of color, marked the road junction. Locker rooms, tables, and seats were built of brick within the dormitories, which, together with the recreation rooms and other buildings, were decorated with gay murals and many-patterned color friezes. One by one, the tall watchtowers vanished from the skyline. As the new year began, Wamumu’s inmates began building an institution for their own rehabilitation rather than for detention.
It was at Wamumu that some of the programs and traditions that have become the hallmarks of Starehe were born: the collaborative administration, “Baraza” (Parliament) system, freedom, sporting activities, academic programs, discipline, scouting; spiritual activities, student leadership, community service, the school band, Old Boys Society and school traditions.

Baraza (Student Parliament): Barazas were very useful for the management of the camp. Through them the boys were encouraged to speak openly about their past experiences in a free and relaxed atmosphere. That way, “they were able to vomit out all the rot and eventually started feeling at home” (King’ala, 2005, p. 50).

Freedom: The boys were granted freedom gradually. This enabled mutual trust to develop within the camp. As a sign of gratitude for being granted freedom the boys reciprocated by conducting themselves well. The boys were no longer locked up in their dormitories at night. They had freedom to do whatever they liked. In addition, visits of parents and relatives to the school were always encouraged, and a special building was constructed where the boys could be met in private. The number of such visits increased monthly throughout the year. Tribal elders, members of native courts, and members of organizations such as ‘Maendeleo ya Wanawake’ (Women in Development) were greatly interested and conducted tours of the school which became almost a weekly occurrence. Depending on the availability and if time permitted, parties of boys would be taken to see their relatives and friends.

Agriculture: For the boys who had interest in the land, an agricultural program was started, irrigated by the waste-water from the camp. When not learning in classrooms, the
boys worked in a five-acre school farm to make the camp self-sustaining in (milk and vegetables). They grew fresh foods. In later periods, prize vegetables from this farm elicited the admiration of many who visited the school. With access to a herd of cattle, the boys were taught animal husbandry and blacksmith courses. A section was also opened for a dairy that was later extended to pigs and chicken.

**Sporting Activities:** The boys created playing fields and within a year, they had at least 14 full-size soccer playing fields, an athletic track, and a boxing ring. The boys had Interhouse football competitions each month as part of the “Cock House Challenge Cup” (Hongo & Mugambi, 2000, p. 27). In addition, they also competed in the adult district leagues; athletic meetings; cross-country meetings; and tug of war. Sport competitions were held between Wamumu and youths from Kigari Teachers College and incarcerated juvenile criminals from Kabete Approved School. In all competitions the Wamumu camp performed well and won several of them, for instance, in 1956, Wamumu’s 11 triumphed over the East African Sisal Estates youth team ending their two years victory.

**Academic Programs:** The camp had 20 open-sided classrooms. The school fulfilled a long-standing need within the colony, and the visit of the governor on December 20th, 1955, was considered the final recognition and approval of the program. In addition, there was also the opening in January 1956 of the classroom block and workshops which were constructed by the boys themselves. The classes flourished and demonstrated high standards of teaching. There were workshops for the training of various trades namely, carpentry, blacksmithing, shoe-making, tailoring, sign writing and motor mechanics. A system where senior boys spent in turn 6 weeks in the classroom and 3 weeks in the
trade-shop of their choice was adopted. Expansion of academic programs “marked the fulfillment of one of the earliest promises ever made to the in-mates that facilities for their education would be provided” (King’ala, 2005, p. 26).

Toward the later end of the year, the school was allowed to register boys for examination with the hope of enabling them gain admission in the new Railway Training School, where they would be taken on a five-year apprenticeship program of the highest quality. The examination consisted of academic papers and character-based tests, rigorous physical training (cross-country and, running), manual tasks, and inspection of the candidate’s quarters. In a fair competition against boys from three other African Territories, Wamumu School gained 20 places out of the 40 that were offered for competition.

Scouting: Scouting and campcraft were some one of the earliest activities that were introduced at Wamumu. They were used in the early days to forge a harmonious relationship between the African and the White youth. Occasionally, Griffin merged both troops-- the one of St. Georges Primary which was for the European children based in Nairobi and the Wamumu one. Jointly they participated in camping, presentations, and parades during special occasions and holidays. These scouting activities helped in cementing sound relationships between the two groups despite animosity that existed in the larger society between the two races.

Spiritual Activities: The boys built their own church in five weeks with a sitting capacity of 500 people at a cost of 152,000 shillings donated by Roman Catholic bishop of Nyeri Rt. Rev. Charles Cavallera. It was a grass-thatched building made from mud and wattle
walls. The church provided the boys with spiritual nourishment, there were Christian teachings offered by varied evangelists on the school staff, visiting padre, and by the Navigator Organization. There were showings of religious films by Christian Council of Kenya through their mobile van. Commenting on the religious aspects of the camp, Hongo and Mugambi (2000) write:

During the year over 490 boys were baptized into the Protestant faith and several moving cleansing ceremonies were held by the request of the boys who wished for the church’s aid in spiritual decontamination from Mau Mau. Over 300 further boys were received into the Roman Catholic fold. (p. 28)

There was general reawakening and self-actualization through various religious activities in the camp.

**Student Leadership:** In order to ease their administrative functions at Wamumu, Griffin and his colleagues decided to incorporate boys who had leadership skills into the main administrative structure. Hongo and Mugambi (2000) observe that “it was impossible for a tiny handful of European Officers to supervise the intimate daily discipline of a school containing 1,200 boys, and it was necessary to foster a reliable prefect system” (p. 26).

They appointed some of the boys as prefects. The prefects were reliable, capable, and worthy of the confidence that was entrusted on them. Because of the good working relationships that were forged at Wamumu many of these boys later became cornerstones in the building of SBC. Key among them were the late Geoffrey Geturo (former assistant director, boarding) and Joseph Gikubu (the current acting director of the school). Both were prefects at Wamumu and later became cofounders of Starehe. Affirming this in his
interview with Imbira, Griffin noted, “we begun appointing prefects to help us. Mr. Gikubu was a prefect in Wamumu so was Mr. Geturo. This is where I got to know them...because they were outstanding even among detainees...They were natural leaders and whatever I couldn’t break through, they would be able to do” (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005).

**Boarding Houses:** The 1,200 boys were divided into four senior boarding houses namely; Boyes, Delamere, Grogan, Lugard and Junior for the youngest members of Wamumu. Houses Grogan, Delamere, and Boyes were named after “pioneering” British settlers while Lugard House was named in honour of the “founder” of British indirect rule and “conqueror” of Uganda. Each of the houses had its African house master and an assistant, a captain, school and house prefects. Each boarding house had an office, a recreation room and a kitchen. The daily affairs of running the houses were managed by its office occupants who were answerable to the various Europeans in charge of various sections of the school.

**Community Service:** This was reflected in Wamumu’s flag embroidered by the boys. Emblematic of the school’s aims and objectives at the center lay the motto, “Truth and Loyalty” in a wheel of progress, combined with a cross of religion. On it, there were also tools representing work, the torch of learning, and the lion of Kenya (King’ala, 2005, p. 55). The hoisting of this flag, which symbolized change, gratified Griffin and his colleagues. It signified the services of the reformed boys of Wamumu to the future Kenyan development. It is this same motto that Griffin underscored at Starehe through the Voluntary Service Scheme.
Old Boys Society and Re-unions: The Wamumu boys hoped to form an Old Boys Society, which was expected to hold regular meetings in the city, produce its own news sheet, and have its own school tie. In addition, the old boys also conducted several re-unions meetings at Wamumu.

School Traditions: Numerous school traditions begun to evolve that aimed at fostering Wamumu’s unique character. For instance, “boys, who were due for release, on the evening preceding their departure, stood on the small dais near the flagpole during the ceremony of retreat” (Hongo & Mugambi, 2000, p. 30). Reveille was played each morning at 6:00 am and retreat at 6:00 pm at which all boys had to be at attention. And on Empire Day, a special parade and lecture were held at which all boys learned of the “glorious history and inheritance of the British Empire” (Hongo & Mugambi, 2000, p. 30). The significance of these ceremonies was carefully explained to all new boys on entry to the school, and they were also taught about the history and symbolic construction of the flag itself.

Discipline: Camp officials marveled at the discipline of the boys. Out of the 6,000 articles of clothing issued to the boys, only three were damaged. The boys also demonstrated discipline among their fellow inmates. Escapees were hunted down by their fellow classmates and returned. According to the annual report of the Ministry of Community Development, in 1958, even after their release, ex-Wamumu inmates were praised for their dedication. In one instance, an escapee was tackled and held by an ex-Wamumu in the middle of a busy Nairobi street, where despite having multiple head injuries, the former inmate waited with his quarry for the police to arrive.
Although many of the educational activities that were offered at Wamumu were improvised by Griffin and his colleagues, in order to adequately comprehend them it is imperative to understand the colonial rehabilitative policies under which they functioned. The business at Wamumu was not simply about discipline; and order, rather, its goals were far loftier-- the treatment of the “Mau Mau disease”. Such therapy required two procedures: the removal of Mau Mau ideology and its replacement with ideas of citizenship and the development of practical, employable skills which would allow inmates to participate in colonial society. Rehabilitation policy at Wamumu, according to Elkins (2005), was threefold, in direct accordance with the plan laid out by Thomas Askwith years earlier. First and foremost was the spiritual decontamination of the Mau Mau oath from young minds. To accomplish this, Louis Leakey’s prescription of Christian confession was implemented. According to the camp officials, once the 32 hardcore Mau Mau youths had been purged, confessions at the camp were more forthcoming. Officials frowned upon forced confessions; they wanted full disclosure from the boys. After the purge, 790 youths were baptized either as Protestants or Catholics and part of their religious conversion involved “cleansing” ceremonies performed on the boys as part of their spiritual decontamination. At the camp, the Christian influence permeated every activity. State-sponsored exorcisms were not the only tool employed by camp officials. Football and boxing, masculine activities socializing millions of male youth in Britain, were also an integral part of Wamumu’s construction of colonial citizens.
The second component of rehabilitation at Wamumu was the forging of colonial citizens through re-education and character training. To attain this there was need to instill into the inmates the concepts of citizenship and civics. In order to accomplish this, the camp was run on lines almost identical to the British military service and public school system. School tradition became an integral part of discipline and the colonial state strived to bond with the African community. Ocobock (2005) notes:

Wamumu inmates had to connect in more intimate and material ways with the colonial state. In his monthly reports, Gardner always noted the number of circumcisions the camp medical dresser would perform on the boys, sometimes a dozen or more each month. Not only was the state presenting itself as a guardian, and a family with a vast imperial kinship network, but also the social guarantor of the transition into adulthood. (p. 10)

But for many of the Kikuyu youth at Wamumu, young adulthood meant little without land and freedom. In June of 1956, an agricultural officer had been called to Wamumu because the inmates were showing a considerable interest in the land consolidations taking place in the Kikuyu reserves. Thus, the rehabilitation at Wamumu took on a third characteristic-- transforming the boys through education and technical training into a literate, skilled laboring class employable in colonial industries. The camp provided senior boys with six weeks of training and three weeks of in-shop experience with carpenters, blacksmiths, and fitters as well as two fields for agriculture and livestock herding. Similar training programs were employed at Mukuruweini Youth Camp in North Tetu. Prior to an inmate’s release, Community Development would arrange for job
placement. In 1956, according to the Annual Wamumu report, 79 juveniles trained in masonry, carpentry, blacksmithing, and agriculture were sent to Rift Valley Province to fill various vacancies; another 126 boys had already been sent to Nairobi. The Kenya Sisal Growers Association took about 200 Wamumu youth in 1957 to work at D.W.A. Plantation. In addition, according to Ocobock (2005), several Wamumu boys were given employment in the Police Special Branch and civil service, quite possibly becoming part of the colony’s counterinsurgency movement.

A critical examination of Wamumu’s educational programs indicates that they were a success. The intention was to equip the boys physically, academically, and mentally so that they could go back to their homes and build a better life for themselves, with their own resources. The boys greatly changed in their outlook on life. Work was no longer hated but, rather, was seen as a source of pride and interest. When there was work to be done, Owles would announce it over the centers trumpet. He would ask for five volunteers but at last he would get 50 of them. Cheerful smiles, laughter, courteous greetings, supplanted the boys’ earlier hostility and insolence. Colonial officials within the Ministry of Community Development were, naturally, convinced of their success. Within a year, “every aspect of the camp was changed. Mau Mau was not only discarded, it was almost forgotten” (Elkins, 2005, p. 210). Once finished with their training, the inmates were released back to their districts or given employment. Job opportunities in Nairobi took a considerable number of the youth, given that the expulsion of tens of thousands of Kikuyu, Embu and Meru from the city created a severe labor shortage. The 1956 annual report lauds the transformation of several Mau Mau boys who had been tried
and convicted of capital offenses, sentenced to Nairobi’s new prison, transferred to Kamiti, and two years later on to Wamumu. Once free from the camp, the influence of rehabilitation did not wane, at least in the minds of those in the colonial administration. When the police investigated crimes in which Wamumu youths were suspect, the juveniles need only to show their leaving certificates and they were absolved of any accusation.

Commenting on their overall joy at the success of the program, Griffin opined that “the transformation we made in the lives of the boys was heartwarming. Less than a year back, they were on their journeys end in a ghastly detention as condemned criminals. But now, they were alive, vibrant and on their total freedom” (King’ala, 2005, p. 55). In July 1956, the first releases were made of 20 outstanding boys whose detention orders were suspended so that they could be taken on as paid staff by the school. With time, more and more releases followed that provided proof of the efficacy of the training methods that were being used at Wamumu. Every place that the Wamumu boys went for employment, they won praise for themselves. In many cases, employers were asking for more boys from Wamumu and were ready to create vacancies to absorb them. After an initial period of suspicion, the Wamumu administration became enthusiastic when it was found that the boys not only kept out of trouble but also went further in setting an example of good behavior to others in their respective employment stations. The district commissioners of Nairobi, Thika, and Kiambu Districts, which took the bulk of the early releases, expressed the utmost satisfaction; and, by the end of the year, the district commissioners
in the Rift Valley were preparing to open their areas to the entry of ex-Wamumu boys for employment.

Attesting further to the success of the Wamumu programs in reforming the detained youth and how it made him discover his abilities in youth educational programs, in his interview with Slingerland, Griffin succinctly noted “it was a wonderful rehabilitation experience. It was one of the most successful experiments in the world… as far as I am concerned, this showed me that I had a gift and a talent for dealing with young people... So this was the first step on the way to what I do now” (G. W. Griffin, television interview, 2000). Toward the end of 1956, Wamumu continued to face a delicate problem in turning away of scores of spirited youngsters and their equally enthusiastic parents, who would write or turn up at the school gate seeking entrance to the school. This public enthusiasm with Wamumu illustrates the initial educational experiences that cemented the ground for Griffin’s future involvement in Kenyan youth education. From a wide range of educational programs that were offered at Wamumu, it’s evident that Wamumu was a key launching pad for Griffin’s future educational experiments. Its success gave him confidence of his abilities in managing young people.

In comparison with the rest of the camps in the pipeline, Wamumu with its proclaimed ethos of “Truth and Loyalty” was “a paradise for young Mau Mau suspects” (Elkins, 2005, p. 211). Many of the boys went on after release to be employed in the Community Development and Rehabilitation Department or with settlers who were impressed with the success of the camp as well as the skills and discipline it imparted on the youth. It was not long before the reputation of Wamumu spread to the other camps in
the pipeline. When the Probation Officer Colin Owen came to assess the youth being held in places like Manyani, young detainees clamored to be selected for transfer to Wamumu camp, although there was not enough room in Wamumu for all of the boys being held at Manyani and elsewhere. Hundreds of those who were arrested and either imprisoned or detained as teenagers remained in the camps for several years, by which time they were too old to be transferred to Wamumu because they appeared to be over eighteen and were thus classified as adults. Some young detainees, in an attempt to get around this, did their best to appear even younger than they were.

Despite its success, the work of Wamumu came under fire. It was asked why former thugs were receiving better treatment and education that was denied to the tribes who had given no trouble. The program was viewed as political propaganda. This opposition was, however, counteracted by the colonial government which argued that “having removed Mau Mau from their minds, these young men were left with minds like empty biscuit tins,” a complete vacuum… It is absolutely essential for bigger and better education to get in and for us to put something back in place of Mau Mau (“Give the Boys of Wamumu a Chance,” 1956). According to Ocoboek (2005) the types of skills developed at Wamumu should be viewed with skepticism. While developing skills, African youth were also building the institution for their own confinement, painting signs for the colonial facilities, and harvesting crops to be handed over to the state. Whether the training, discipline and education at Wamumu had left an indelible mark on the majority of inmates is unknown; however, colonial officials took great pride in their graduates. The construction of African citizenry at Wamumu became less about the mind-set of its
former inmates than the aura the state placed around them. Although there were nine youth camps in operation after 1954 throughout Central Province, nowhere in the official, public records was another camp mentioned other than in passing. As the theater of the Nairobi streets made the Kenyan public anxious, the stage on which Wamumu was performed served to placate those fears. Only at Wamumu could the state take 1,200 hardened Mau Mau juveniles and transform them into employable, disciplined citizens. However, once the 1,200 were released, the Wamumu façade was washed away by practicalities of colonial vagrancy policy.

This brings to the forefront the question as to whether Wamumu’s rehabilitative and civilizing project was successful. In some ways, yes, but what the colonial officials intended the camp to be may not have been what the boys took away from it. Wamumu and the youth camp system did indeed relieve many frustrations that had driven young men and women to join the Mau Mau War in the first place. Wamumu, Othaya, Mukurweini, and other camp inmates received education, skills training, employment, land, and a unique element of kinship with their fellow inmates. Although very basic in its educational programs, the colonial regime introduced the African youth to the colonial economy and patronage network, potentially, but not necessarily lessening their loyalty to the Mau Mau. Ocobbock (2005) observes that “Peter Mathenge, the son of Mau Mau general Stanley Mathenge, bitterly complained that being forced to leave Othaya Youth Camp would end his free education, something to which he believed he was entitled” (p. 11). Furthermore, it is unlikely that rehabilitation had inculcated youth camp inmates with a sense of loyalty or imbued them with colonial citizenship as the state had intended.
But there are those, like Joseph Gikubu, a former Wamumu boy, who argue that the
camps gave them direction and discipline at a time when socioeconomic upheaval could
have thrust them further into poverty and crime. Today, Mr. Gikubu seeks to foster these
same qualities in the boys at the school he runs, the Starehe Boys Centre and School.

An examination of other rehabilitation programs which ran on similar regulations
as Wamumu’s indicates the opposite of their intentions. Elkins (2005) observes that the
emblazonment on the gates of some of the rehabilitation camps did not reflect their
rehabilitation mission. She notes that “At Aguthi Camp, detainees were greeted with
large letters that read ‘He Who Helps Himself Will Also Be Helped’. Fort Hall’s main
camp, which the detainees called Kwa Futi, bore a sign, ‘Abandon Hope All Ye Who
Enter Here’” (p.189). These slogans hardly evoke images of the rehabilitation paradise
that was being peddled by Governor Baring and the colonial secretary to the media and
anticolonial critics.

Although the Wamumu camp was a success and served its immediate purpose of
reforming young detainees, who in the first place should not to have been detained, it was
not suited to the boys who joined the school in later years. Instead of the hardcore ex-
Mau Mau boys, the school began getting street boys and truants. Any boy who was
captured loitering in the streets or was thought to be a deviant was taken to Wamumu. At
the start of 1957, Gardner and his associates at Wamumu faced a swollen inmate
population. More youths were matriculated into rehabilitation than those graduating from
it. And most were not charged with Mau Mau involvement. Scores of orphans, juvenile
criminals, and child laborers without passes were being transferred by district
commissioners and screening teams from the Kikuyu reserves to Wamumu. Emergency restrictions on movement, disruptions from land consolidation and villagization, and the breakup of thousand of families had created a highly mobile population of young people. As large numbers of juveniles were being rounded up and returned to their home areas, officials grew increasingly concerned about the number of the youths in the adult pipeline. The commissioner of prisons was concerned about growing scrutiny over the treatment of young people who whose regulations of care were not provided for within the law.

While amazed that “hardened terrorists” could be transformed into fine employees within two years or less, Wamumu administrators realized that the more ex-Mau Mau suspects they released, the more the cost and merit of the camp came under scrutiny. With more and more bed spaces available, they were being filled with a diversity of juvenile inmates from “waifs, strays and orphans” to upper-class Kikuyu. According to KNA AB/4/44 Report, William Mosley, community development officer in charge of Mukurweini, observed that Mau Mau youth only accounted for 50% of the inmate population. Community Development officials began to complain to the provincial administration that Wamumu as a youth camp and approved institution could only house youth in need of “care and protection” as stipulated under the Emergency Regulations Act. They argued that administrators in Nairobi and in the provinces were using Wamumu as a dumping ground for unruly youth rather than using Juvenile Reception Centers (JRC) and approved schools. As a result of this, the department of Community was under intense pressure from the Treasury Department to reduce the cost of
Wamumu. This meant speeding up the process of rehabilitation of Mau Mau youth. To accomplish this, the Department of Community Development needed to halt the number of juveniles being transferred from the JRC.

In order to address the problem, colonial officials began drawing up plans in early 1957 for a series of JRCs in Kiambu, Fort Hall, and Nyeri Districts which would operate as “sorting houses” from which youth could be channeled on to appropriate institutions whether it be an Approved school, mission school, home village, or youth camp. The JRCs were originally conceived as “places of safety” under the Emergency (Welfare of Children) Regulations. This was mainly a funding consideration, that as a “place of safety” the government could either use its own funds given to the provincial administration or those from the coffers of Emergency Community Development. At its simplest, the JRC was a holding and transit camp for juveniles of all sorts who had been repatriated by the state. The Emergency had relied so heavily on repatriation as a means of removing Africans en masse that juveniles were being removed from multiple locations throughout Kenya. Thus, the JRC provided a badly needed transition structure, to a chaotic colonial structure of handling youth vagrancy.

JRCs were opened in the major districts of Central Province: Kiambu, Nyeri, and Fort Hall. But like Wamumu Rehabilitation Camp, in two years quickly ran into financial and logistical difficulties. As more and more juveniles were being removed from various areas throughout Kenya, transportation costs were beginning to mount. In 1957, the probation services, which was in charge of repatriations out of Nairobi and other areas and into the JRCs (according to KNA OP/1/1017 Report by Barry Riseborough,
permanent secretary for Community Development to provincial commissioner, Central Province, in 1957), estimated that its emergency traveling expenses would increase by 60% because of the number of juveniles it needed to repatriate to the JRCs. Despite the financial woes, the government did all it could to keep the JRC system. By 1959, the state was dependent on the centers for holding and repatriating urban as well rural juvenile vagrants. According to the KNA OP/1/1017 Report, Wilkinson, officer-in-charge, worried that if the JRC system was dismantled, then there would be no control over the return of repatriates. When the Emergency Regulations were repealed in 1960 and funding for the JRCs was in jeopardy, the JRC’s were re-gazetted as remand homes falling under the financial jurisdiction of the colonial government according to the newly introduced Vagrancy Ordinance of 1960. The Ordinance in conjunction with other youth-related laws enabled the state to maintain the institutions it had developed to exert greater control over Kenya’s youth.

The establishment of juvenile reception centers was not sufficient to address youth vagrancy. Simply holding suspected vagrants and criminals in massive pens consisting of four-feet-high barbed wire and open entrance would not prevent the recidivist vagrant from returning to Nairobi. Investigating where inmates lived, which families they belonged to, and how to transport them there took time, especially if those held were urban youth whose homes were back in the cities from which they were removed. One key question in the early days was how the colonial officials would keep the inmates busy. As a result, the JRCs were developed in conjunction with another
mechanism of control developed by the state in the waning days of the Mau Mau: the youth club.

The JRC’s were extensions of previous colonial policies regarding juvenile vagrants and delinquents. They aimed at providing officials with centralized, efficient mechanisms to control the movement of youth. Despite the fact that the Kiambu and Fort Hall JRCs were fulfilling their function as sorting houses, they fell far short of their expectations. The district commissioner and community development officers could not agree to the precise function of the centers. The situation was due, in part, to a shared jurisdiction of the centers between Community Development and the provincial administration. Here conservative and liberal mind-sets were in conflict. The District commissioner of Kiambu believed the JRC was a wholly penal institution, whereas Community Development officials such as Barry Riseborough argued that JRCs were merely sorting houses. Paradoxically, both visions of the JRC system operated in tandem through the late Emergency resulting in neglect and maltreatment that showed the colony’s care and protection policy of the youth for what it was-- deplorable.

There is limited historical record as to the lives that the youth led in their transit camps. What is known is that the investigations into the antecedents of the juveniles undertaken by the district commissioners and community development officers took a great deal of time, the sorting system was slow. In 1959, juveniles were on remand in JRCs for periods as long as 75 and 99 days. And their lives during these months spent idly behind the wire were not pleasant: the juvenile and Mau Mau adults were not separated, boys and girls comingled and slept together. There were no floors in the large
shed in which they slept and because of the rains, the entire camp had become a seething mass of mud. The children had nothing to do but sit in filthy clothes and deep mud. The young people not only had dilapidated environment to endure but physical abuse as well. In 1958, according to KNA VQ/21/2 Report, Griffin observed that corporal punishment was being used to an inordinate extent in some centers. The existence of corporal punishment in the JRC system recalls the competing visions for the centers by the provincial administration and Community Development. District commissioners viewed many of the juveniles passing through their centers as delinquent and in need of discipline. Throughout 1957 and early 1958, the centers were run on a punitive basis, and young people responded to their mistreatment. There were several cases of juvenile escapes in Fort Hall and Kiambu.

Despite the appalling conditions and physical punishment, the JRCs continued to operate as “sorting houses” (KNA VQ/21/2 Report). Roundups, repatriations, and detention became the primary vehicle for juvenile control in the late Emergency period. According to Ocobbock (2005), the “juvenile pipeline” allowed officials to more precisely extract Mau Mau suspects, Emergency orphans, juvenile criminals, and migratory casual laborers from the population and transfer them to a variety of institutions developed to manage them. While the JRCs separated youth from the adult pipeline and systematized the state’s control over the youth, conditions behind the wire were no less traumatic. It is true that Community Development and the provincial administration made no grand claims that the reception centers were to involve a rehabilitative mission; only late in the Emergency would there be moves to incorporate
rehabilitation into the JRCs. Rehabilitation was to take place within the institutions the
JRCs linked to the growing influx of uncontrolled juvenile migrants, places such as
mission schools, approved schools, youth camps, and newly added conduit in the juvenile
pipeline: the rural youth club.

Ocobbock (2005), observes that any lacuna which the secretary of defence
worried was solved by simply shifting juvenile vagrants and other youth from one
institution to another until overcrowding there required another move. Wamumu in Embu
District and Mukuruweini in Nyeri District, because of their available facilities, took the
bulk of these juveniles. In both places, there were juveniles who were detained under the
Emergency Regulations: those who committed criminal offenses and were being held
under the governor’s pleasure; those sentenced to Approved schools; and those classified
as “waifs, strays and orphans”. All were repatriated back to their reserves via the youth
camp.

Throughout 1957, Wamumu exemplified the chaotic nature of Emergency policy
concerning juveniles. Rather than solve the juvenile problem by repatriating thousands of
juveniles back to the reserves and keeping them there, it complicated a set of procedures
that took two decades to sort out. Overcrowding led to the confinement of a cornucopia
of categorized juveniles within the same institution. Yet, while Wamumu was in a period
of fluctuation, officials began to find a firm footing and a structured way of controlling
African youth.

Although Owles and Griffin were convinced that the street waifs needed a lesser
dose of rehabilitation, Captain Gardner was convinced otherwise. Slowly with time, the
administrative differences between Griffin and Owles, on one side, and Gardner, on the other, forced Wamumu to close down. Martin (1978) claims that there was only one cohort of the “terrorists” from the detention camps, and as they were released the vacant places were filled by boys -- sometimes only eight-year-olds-- who had been committed by the courts but whose only “offence” was to be in need of care and protection. These types of boys required a different system of reform program than the tough discipline of Wamumu, a change Gardner was not ready to embrace. Captain Gardner was very conservative, insisting that new boys should be subjected to the same form of severe rehabilitation procedures as those who were rescued from the Manyani Detention Camp. Roger and Griffin were convinced that new boys needed a different form of rehabilitation because they were not hardened in crime. Tension emanating from this threatened to tear the camp apart. Commenting on this administrative impasse, Martin observes:

The tough, unyielding discipline and active occupation of every waking hour which had made Wamumu famous was, however, the only system Gardner could understand. A Manyani detainee looking forward to early release could be philosophical if Gardner flogged him, stripped him, shaved him or made him wear a placard on his neck reading “MBWA” (dog); he could endure solitary confinement in a tiny cell without too much distress. But the young children who failed to sweep their dormitory properly, chatted in church or lost their clothes, were treated with identical severity, so that the morale of the school declined and they became inexplicably but genuinely ill. Griffin and Owles understood the situation but were powerless to correct it, save by running down the numbers in
the school while Gardner was away on leave, and attempting to make Wamumu a base for strict but short “corrective courses” for boys with a record of vagrancy… by the end of 1958 both men had been posted away from Wamumu, the lesson behind its collapse burnt deeply into their hearts. (p. 17)

It was clear by 1958 that the threat from Mau Mau youth, had been neutralized; the issue at hand concerned the hundreds of youth being arrested in Nairobi and throughout Central Province for criminal acts, vagrancy, and pass law infractions. Although by 1958, the days of rehabilitating Mau Mau youth were all but over, the rehabilitation of young criminals had just begun. Accordingly, Wamumu and the sister camps underwent a legal and functional series of changes. Wamumu and the camp at Othaya were re-gazetted as Approved schools and joined Kabete and Dagoretti in their task of managing criminal and delinquent youth only.

The gazettement of Othaya as an approved institution allowed Wamumu to finally relieve itself of the juveniles charged with criminal offenses. Since the closure of Save the Children Fund Home at Ujana Park, Othaya was the only residential institution of its kind in Kenya, and it was a happy place throughout its short span of life. In 1960, despite all the efforts of its supporters, it was turned into an Approved school. This allowed Wamumu to undergo its final colonial transformation, as an intermediate Approved school managing juveniles between the ages of thirteen and fifteen. As an Approved school its function lay in managing juvenile delinquents and some recidivist vagrants. Its days as a means of constructing productive citizens out of counterproductive Mau Mau adherents were over. Owles lost his command and the chance to put his wise and
compassionate attitudes about childcare into practice. Griffin, on the other hand, was more fortunate. Late in 1957, while still fully engrossed in Wamumu, he was asked by his commissioner to become colony youth organizer, a newly created post. From 1957 onward, the state focused more of its attention on repatriating vagrants and delinquents out of Nairobi back to rural areas and making them stay put.

**Colony Youth Organizer**

Between 1947 and 1949, there were increased levels of youth vagrancy in Nairobi. Amidst the postwar population growth of Nairobi and increasing poverty and crime found in the city, mass roundus and repatriation continued to be the mechanism for managing the city’s underemployed. By this time, many officials within the colonial government were certain that repatriation was a long-term failure resulting in “continued vagrancy.” However, they saw no alternative strategy that could operate in lieu of administrative, logistical and financial constraints to solve the increasing levels of youth vagrancy. Although, some colonial administrators believed there were more important issues than juvenile discipline, others sought long-term means of eliminating juvenile delinquency and vagabondage in the colony. During this period, there were huge numbers of children who could not afford schooling or who had dropped out of education at the primary stage. Very little existed by way of secondary education and there was a virtual ban on the creation of new secondary schools for Africans. As a consequence, child vagrancy and delinquency was starting to assume alarming proportions. What was needed was a chain of schools to provide full-time occupation to the children. The word “school” could not be used, but institutions could be created under the name of “youth clubs” or
“youth centres” which would concentrate on technical and agricultural teaching, all extremely beneficial to African rural development.

In 1957, the Juvenile Employment Committee met in Nairobi to discuss ways of putting to work the underemployed youth of the city. According to KNA BZ/4/16 Report, the committee members openly expressed their dismay that despite the Emergency regulations, nothing was preventing juveniles from undertaking their trek back to Nairobi. In fact, the number of repatriations was increasing with the Nairobi district commissioner reporting that he was removing 400 juveniles from the city each month. The committee members had no idea how many youth were residing in Nairobi without permanent employment. Yet, they believed the idle youth of the city were continuing to commit crimes, and providing them jobs would either come into conflict with labor regulations or would result in adult unemployment. As the Juvenile Employment Committee grumbled about urban youth, two new mechanisms were being developed under the auspices of the Welfare of Children Regulations that would attempt to solve repatriation’s inadequacies: the JRC and youth clubs. The JRC and youth clubs were developed to keep African youth occupied in the rural areas once they were repatriated home. Drawing on some of the programs used in Approved schools and the youth camp programs, the JRCs and youth clubs became part of the state’s long-awaited response to recidivist urban vagrancy.

In Britain during the Second World War, notions of citizenship were raised with respect to young people, driven partly by the concerns of loyalty during the war. Organizations such as the Empire Youth Movement promoted the idea of youth as
disciplined and productive members of the British Empire who could defend the empire against fascism and communism. Similar concerns were being expressed in colonial Africa. Drawing examples from British developments in addressing the problem, two Kenyan settlers, Patrick Williams and Olga Watkins, endeavored to develop youth clubs in each of the colony’s districts. These clubs would provide African youth with instruction in agriculture, manufacturing and character training. Williams and Watkin’s plans quickly broke down. A firm lack of interest on the part of Africans and the financial constraints of the colony led to their swift demise. However, notions of African youth were clearly changing. Europeans in the colony were beginning to believe that they could provide the moral and technical instruction that tribal affiliations had failed to foster among urban and semiurban juveniles. The one site where all of this could be accomplished was the classroom. At the end of the 1940s, officials were arguing that improvements in African education were necessary. A ten-year plan drafted in 1948 recommended that the number of teachers and students be doubled and financing for urban schools increased. But the committees researching the deficiencies of African education did not stop with calling for more staff and facilities but rather sought to alter the nature of education itself. In their view, African children required training in civics and citizenship. It was with this conceptualization of African education that the Beecher report recommended the permeation into the entire school life the right attitudes toward society. It observed that:

Children should be led to realize the basic disciplines and responsibilities which are essential in a civilized society. Civic responsibilities in relation to an old tribal
discipline have largely gone, and it is for the parent in the home and for the teacher in the school to replace them by their appropriate counterparts in the modern way of life. And because few parents are yet aware of their responsibility in this direction, a larger responsibility rests on the teacher. (Report on African Education in Kenya, 1949, p. 34)

Education just like the transfer of the African family from the farm to the city provided another set of disciplinary tools to keep African youth off the streets. In the report on Education for Citizenship in Africa, officials revealed their anxieties over urbanizing youth. The state advocated for the introduction of Western civilization to the colonies and controlling of its impact on its people. To do this, the regime turned to the education of citizens using their own design. The goal was no longer reconnecting youth to their “traditional” values but rather equipping them with vital skills that could enable them to tackle unfamiliar tasks imposed on them by modern life. By the early 1950s, the work of committees such as these revealed that perceptions among many officials had changed. Ocobock (2005) notes that it would have seemed that the colony was poised to alter its relationship with African youth and embark on a mission of modernity. Had the momentum been built around these reports and their recommendations, the declaration of the Emergency would have been put on hold. The emergence of the Mau Mau and the violence of the early 1950s confirmed the fears of many British that Africans were unable to cope with the pressures of Western civilization. And as the colonial state was strengthened under the Emergency, many of the failed attempts at control of the 1930s and 1940s were resuscitated.
While Community Development touted the rehabilitation of juvenile Mau Mau suspects and delinquents at its youth camps and the systematization of repatriation through juvenile reception centers, the youth still defied Emergency movement orders. In 1957 and 1958, officials believed the pipeline had slowed the movement of young people, but had sped up the level of recidivism. District commissioners and community development officers began to see the same faces pass through their centers time and time again. As the youth were released from the centers back to their home reserves, many came back to a radically altered environment, in some cases, completely new villages with friends and family noticeably absent. Villagization and land consolidation, called for under the Swynerton Plan, had functioned to cut off the Mau Mau from their rural supply hubs. As of October 1955, the government had constructed 854 villages in Central Province and forcibly moved 1 million Kikuyus and Embus into them. Within the villages, the state hoped to exercise greater social control. These prefabricated villagers could be more easily punished or rewarded for their participation or absention in the conflict.

With tens of thousands of Kikuyus detained, young men and women arrived at the threshold of shattered domestic households held together by mothers and female kin who, between forced labor and household work, had to find a means of supporting their families. According to KNA AB/2/62 Report, Fort Hall women in Kandara Division went out to pick coffee on daily or monthly contracts and had to leave their children home because their employers did not want the children brought along. Visitors to the villages complained that the compounds were solely occupied by children, most of whom had
various illnesses, like typhus, pneumonia, dysentery and measles some reaching epidemic proportions. Without families, education, or employment in the villages, young people were further thrust into the criminal underworld producing “gangs of hunting children, petty thieves and hen fishers” (Ocobock, 2005, p. 59).

While Eileen Fletcher’s expose and the findings of the missions shocked the British public, her findings would not have come as a surprise to officials in Kenya. The Ministry of Community Development had explored solutions to juvenile migration and rural upheaval well before Fletcher’s report was released. The ministry decided to develop a series of youth clubs throughout Central Province geared to occupy the time of children without schooling, delinquent youth in need of reform and the poor. In 1957, pilot clubs were developed in Nyeri District with a club in each location built on five acres of land donated by local inhabitants. Ocobock (2005) observes that for several months, Community Development Officers, such as Don Diment and Peter Moll, met with local chiefs and discussed the project with them. Within the year, local chiefs obtained five contiguous acres from their communities, using “carrot and the stick’ method and large E-framed building, one each site. Self-help (“gwatio”) or more accurately, social control on the cheap was the mantra of the pilot clubs.

Rural and urban youth clubs were developed concomitantly with JRCs, and the state quickly linked the two in an attempt to piece together a coherent strategy that would prevent juvenile migrants from going to Nairobi. The concept of youth clubs had a history stretching back to the late 1930s and 1940s when social programs were developed to occupy the time of African youth in Nairobi. The Boy Scouts, the YMCA, and several
events held in the social clubs of African areas were infrequently held throughout the 1940s. These programs suffered not only from continual funding and personnel shortages but also from a lack of interest on the part of African youth and administrators. Appropriate utilization of time by youth was a continual concern for officials: urban migration was often described as the result of boredom in the reserves, and crime in the city was due to lack of discipline and work.

The clubs were expected to provide full-time occupational and recreational programs for youth in the hope that it would stem the tide of juvenile migration, criminalization, and induction into Mau Mau culture. Youths were to be kept continuously with their attention firmly focused away from the bright lights of the city and the oaths of Mau Mau fighters. The club system was, in many ways, the final component of the expanding “juvenile pipeline.” Illustrating this point, Ocobock (2005) notes that the department of Community Development pulled its staff from two sources: the adult pipeline and Wamumu Youth Camp. Screeners and rehabilitation staff within Community Development, such as Peter Moll who had worked at Athi River, were instructed to manage the youth clubs in Nyeri. Within the clubs, some Wamumu graduates were employed as club leaders. They were in charge of discipline and organization and they were paid well for their efforts, earning 150 to 160 shillings per month out of African district Council coffers.

The task of the Community Development officers and youth leaders within the youth clubs was not to rehabilitate suspect Mau Mau by constructing miniature youth camps across Nyeri but to subvert Mau Mau’s ability to gain new, young converts in the
rural areas. Employing Wamumu boys was not the only connection the youth clubs had to the expanding juvenile pipeline. In Nyeri, youth clubs were organized within juvenile reception centers. Rural youth club members from the division worked inside, engaging the inmates in physical and intellectual activities to prevent their boredom and escape. With its connections to the youth club system, the Nyeri JRC developed characteristics beyond that of a “sorting house.” John Nottingham, in KNA DC/EMB/2/1 Report, observed that a twenty day program was developed to discourage those who were wishing to return to the camp. The state was using the youth clubs and JRCs together to buttress repatriation and keep juveniles at home. The results were effective: 55% of those brought to the JRC remained at home.

The primary difference between the youth clubs and the detention camps was that the former were voluntary and lacked much of the punitive elements seen in the JRCs. Broadly, the youth clubs kept African youth active in four principle ways: through skills training, education, entertainment, and sport. For boys, classes in carpentry, sign writing, agriculture, and leatherworks provided opportunities to develop skills they could later use in the labor market. For girls, instruction in home-economics and sewing kept their skills firmly fixed within the household. Together they were given classes on literacy, agriculture, health, local government, and general knowledge of citizenship. In addition, the members were frequently put to work on infrastructure projects. However, training often spilled over into exploitation. According to the Ministry of Community Development Annual Report, 1959, the youth clubs in Kenya as a whole were responsible for the construction of 93 miles of road, 2,438 homes, 31 dams, and 345
miles of enclosure. In addition, 6,151 acres were harvested and 15,252 acres of land weeded by youth club members. Sport was the centerpiece of community development efforts, and each officer ensured that several tracks and football fields were constructed in communities. Like Wamumu, sport became a central feature of the Ministry’s “hearts and minds” campaign. It enabled the youths to release their energies, show off their prowess, skill and create amongst themselves heroes to admire.

Keen to capitalize on the success of the pilot programs in Nyeri, the government appointed Griffin to be colony youth organizer, to inspect the clubs and consider their applicability throughout the rest of Central Province and, later, to other parts of the colony. He was required to make a survey on how the successful programs of Mathira Youth Club and the character-training Center at Wamumu could be combined to address the problem of juvenile delinquency in the colony. In his tour of Central Province, Griffin noticed a staggering 200,000 unoccupied youth who could benefit from the clubs. In 1957, the Ministry of Community Development began to spread the youth clubs beyond Nyeri with greater assistance from the government. By 1958, clubs were in operation in all districts of Central Province with the exception of Meru where continued Mau Mau oathing hindered the ministry efforts. Three years later, over 150 clubs had been built throughout the colony, and they had become the ideal aftercare treatment for delinquent youth who had passed through the JRCs and part of the rehabilitation process. Youth clubs, therefore, became a means of preventing juvenile migration out of the rural areas and providing activity to idle urban youth. Their later connection with the JRCs was a move to bind first time offenders and recidivists to the rural areas and break the cycle of
urban migration and unemployment. According to Ocobock (2005), from their inception, the clubs in Nyeri District were extraordinarily successful. The clubs initially attracted membership ranging from 50 to 100 youths. Despite the fifty-cent tuition fee, the programs enrolled between 300 and 500 youths eager to take advantage of the skills-training and educational courses. Whether or not the membership was coerced, the bulk of funding came from the local communities in which the clubs operated and the staff the government provided came from youth trained at Wamumu for the particular task.

Griffin’s views in the report were affirmed and strengthened by the work of John Nottingham, a former district officer, of liberating hundreds of youngsters repatriated from Nairobi in his “Juvenile Reception Centre.” Nottingham’s Center had no barbed wire, and the children who stayed there were not isolated from ordinary society. Nottingham based his independent attitude on the clear distinction between a wanton criminal attitude and mere childhood misfortune; he wanted to win the children’s confidence, to help with their problems, and to restore their sense of security, while the law required a vagrant to be treated as a criminal. It was with this distinction in mind that Griffin went to Nairobi, and he was disappointed to discover from his observations and from sympathetic officers like Elizabeth Jackson, how in the absence of a constructive rescue program, an innocent, wandering child could rapidly turn to genuine crime.

In his report, Griffin was also guided by the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of Children, which states that “the child must be the first to receive relief in times of distress, must enjoy full benefits provided by social welfare, social security schemes, must receive the training which can enable him at the right moment to earn a livelihood
and must be protected from every form of exploitation” (Geneva Declaration on the Rights of Children, 1948). The report emphasizes that there is a moral, legal obligation to nourish, guide and assist the raising of generations on whose physical, moral and spiritual welfare the rest of mankind depends. The government accepted the report and set up pilot programs in each and every district in Central Province. The community’s response to the youth clubs was overwhelming; it willingly set aside permanent plots for youth clubs which were used as teaching gardens on proper modern methods of farming and for producing foods for consumption. The clubs had a dual role, serving as means of raising funds and as a psychological strategy for keeping youths busy by engaging them in useful activities.

In order to govern the functional processes of the youth clubs, Griffin drafted the constitution of Kenya Association of Youth Centres, that was registered under the societies ordinances. It began functioning in 1958, under its first chair, Sir Godfrey Slade. Griffin became its first secretary and chief executive in 1959. The governor of Kenya accepted the presidency of the association. The council was compromised of the chairman, secretary, who also served as the chief executive, treasurer, and 15 members. The same procedure was followed in the districts in the latter years. The bulk of the supervision work at the grassroot levels was conducted by government officers in rural districts. In townships, social welfare officers employed by the local councils took responsibility.

Various steps were undertaken by the colonial government to attract youth to the clubs. The first, was to sensitize them on the youth clubs. This was done through chiefs
and headmen and mostly through open-air “barazas.” Unlike the Wamumu camp, youth centers had more formal academic activities that were structured except that students were not able to sit for a recognized academic examination nor were they eligible for transfer to mainstream schools. The activities of the youth centres steered further Griffin’s involvement in youth education. Through them, schools were constructed through the community self-help efforts. Teachers were recruited and the majority of them handled most of the academic aspects of the centers. The youth centers were registered with the Ministry of Education and Griffin was recognized as the manager designate. Entry to youth centers was mainly through application by a parent.

Griffin’s activities as a colony youth organizer indicate his continuous quest to do something more for the youth. As a colony youth organizer, his work included the establishment of self-help youth centers throughout the country and the training of their leaders. It involved organizing all the youth in trouble who required help, and mobilizing government resources for their training. The centers were required to aid in national development by supplementing the work of the schools and absorbing some of the footloose youths who had grown up during the Emergency and were engaging in various vagrant activities. The centers were expected to bring home to the boys and girls the fact that, even though they had been unable to access school, they still had an equal opportunity for a successful and satisfying life in their own home area if they developed skills and qualities of industry, such as hard work and honesty. In addition, the Centers were expected to develop rural cottage industries (see Table 7).
Table 7:

*Central Province Youth without Training, 1957*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hall</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>48,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embu</td>
<td>21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyeri</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For colonial administrators, the clubs served a specific purpose—keeping occupied the thousands of African youth who were returning to the reserves. According to DC/GRSSA/7/22 Report, Ministry of African Affairs report of 1960, clubs dealt solely with:

Juveniles who required occupation to prevent them getting into mischief…the government considers the youth clubs organization to be an integral part of its social services and it cannot be stated too clearly that its main purpose is the preventative one of providing occupation and recreation for youth and young persons in the towns and reserves, and so prevent them drifting into delinquency or actual crime. (Ministry of African Affairs, 1960)
In order to foster the idea of service to the community, the leaders of various centres set aside one day in a week on which all the members would go out to assist someone in need or provide something required by the local people, such as constructing a building or a school. A system of proficiency and service badges had evolved to which the members could aspire and which were given to those who had done outstanding work for their community in a voluntary capacity. Each community was required to provide land, buildings, equipments and the leader’s wage from its own resources. The trained leaders were expected to offer sound practical instruction and set a worthy example of loyalty and responsibility.

Commenting on his position as a youth colony organizer and how the activities he engaged in were a precursor to the growth of Kenyan youth education, in his interview with Slingerland, Griffin noted that “they provided the infrastructure for what later became “Harambee” (self-help) secondary schools and village polytechnics….” (G. W. Griffin, television interview, 2000). The aim of ‘Harambee’ schools, according to Eshiwani (1993), were twofold: to increase the number of secondary schools to absorb students who did not get places in government schools and to aid the country in the production of qualified personnel needed by the new independent nation. Harambee secondary schools increased rapidly from 50 in 1964 to 266 in 1966. According to Kivuva (2000), this figure was higher than that of government schools, which numbered 199 in 1966. By 1974, according to Keller (1975), there were 600 Harambee schools in Kenya. She notes that “since Independence the percentage of self-help secondary schools has gone up from 13.7% of the total secondary schools to 61.6% in 1974” (p. 5). This
number had doubled by 1985. She writes that according to the statistics from the Teachers Service Commission of January 31, 1985:

Of the 2,059 registered schools in the country, 615 were government maintained, 706 were Harambee but assisted by the government (with teachers) and 638 were purely Harambee schools. Of the 7,310 teachers registered under the TSC by the above date, 3,113 were employed in Harambee schools. By 1986, it had the highest accumulation of schools, totaling 941, or slightly over 39% of the total number of schools. (p. 21)

Although the beginning phase of most youth centers was in Central Province, the project gradually moved to all parts of Kenya. The beginning process was hectic since Griffin was alone with no staff to support him. Charitable contributions for financing the training programs and other expenses came from the Kenya Shell and BP, Sheikh Fanzal Hahi Noordin, and Youth Help Campaigns led by Dorothy Hughes. There were also some overseas donations that covered staff salaries and vital equipments. The latter was made possible by Griffin’s Youth Help Campaign tour in 1962. He traveled with two Starehe Boys, George Waigwa and Peter Njenga to London to raise funds; publicize the campaign; and create awareness of the poverty situation, delinquency, and street-children in Kenya. The trip took nine days. The growing importance of the youth centers was demonstrated by frequent calls by probation officers and administrators who did not want juveniles to be placed in Approved schools, which were viewed as being detached from society. Commenting on this growing demand, Griffin noted “since we insisted on
children in the youth centres leading normal lives, they gained preference locally and overseas over the more restrictive Approved schools” (King’ala, 2005, p. 57).

By September 1958, the Kenya Association of Youth Clubs was formed with the motto of “Service and High Endeavor”; two leaders courses had been completed at Wamumu; there were already 65 clubs, with a total of 10,000 members. Most youth clubs were in rural areas, the majority in the Kikuyu homelands. Among the recruits of the youth clubs were boys and girls who had been arrested and repatriated to their home districts.

A critical examination of youth participation in the youth clubs indicates that the majority of youth participated in the youth clubs because there was initially something to be gained, that is education courses and time utilization. Parents hungry to educate their children were eager to exploit the services of Wamumu-trained club leaders. Chiefs, too, pressured youth into attendance as their presence in the reserves posed a threat to their authority. The youth clubs had a solid two-year run before experiencing a rapid decline. Funding for the clubs quickly dried up as less and less could be extracted from local communities. Interestingly, the only youth clubs to remain in consistent, well-funded operation were those in Nairobi which were sponsored by international donors. The financial difficulties of the youth clubs illustrates that parents and youth found little reason to continue their contribution. By the end of the 1950s, youth clubs could be found within the barbed wire fencing of the JRCs. The merger of the two programs indicates that administrators believed vagrants and delinquents rounded-up on urban streets could benefit from instruction and possibly prevent their return to the city. In 1960, the JRCs
were handled on one end by the district commissioner of Nairobi who oversaw the transfer of juveniles from the city to the centers. In each of the JRCs, probation officers investigated the youth and made decisions as to their return while youth club members engaged the inmates in physical and intellectual activities to prevent boredom and escape.

Because of their connection to the youth club system, the JRCs developed characteristics that were beyond a transit camp. Commenting on this, Ocobock (2005) notes that the state was using the JRCs and youth clubs to buttress repatriation and force juveniles to stay home and parents to keep them there. Fifty-five percent of those brought to the JRC were returned home and remained there. This, according to KNA DC/EMB/2/1/1, Report by Nottingham, District Officer, North Tetu, 1959, involved a level of coercion on the part of the state which put pressure on the parents to pay school or youth club fees, or from threats to prosecute for underfeeding. In addition, the JRCs were also becoming a dumping ground for the chiefs and headmen who found local youth unmanageable. Nottingham was intrigued by the number of African authorities who showed up to the center with their local “ne’er-do-wells.”

Ultimately, financial constraints and African disinterest severely hampered the preventive potential of the JRCs and youth clubs right until the end of the colonial period. Nearly one-half of the repatriated youth in Nyeri returned to the city after their initial removal. Despite this, the “juvenile pipeline” had not lost its primary function to act as a conduit for juveniles to be returned home or institutionalized by the state. Because of this, however, the perpetuity of vagrancy within the urban space was never addressed. Thousands of juveniles were still making their way to the city each year and thousands
more were already living there; neither group could find permanent work or education. According to KNA BZ/5/9 Report on Child Welfare Survey of Problems of Child Welfare in Kenya in 1960, officials still warned that vagrant children appeared to constitute the greatest single problem of child welfare in Nairobi, both in terms of numbers and in respect to the moral and physical dangers that beset them. According to the survey, little seemed to have changed in the minds of colonial officials as well. Some still argued that vagrancy was a result of boredom in the reserves, poverty at home, and the criminal inclination of youth. The training courses, literacy classes and labor projects offered in the clubs did not succeed in preventing juveniles from seeking work in Nairobi or turning to subsistence crime when they found none. When the final colonial Vagrancy Act went into effect in 1960, it mentioned juveniles only briefly. Perhaps the colonial state had found an issue too complex to manage effectively or could simply not be bothered by African youth any longer.

An in depth examination of the daily routine of youth centers give a resemblance of a pseudo-academic institution in terms of its programs and organization. Although called youth centers, they had a lot of programs that were similar to those that were being offered in regular schools. Commenting on the educational role played by youth centers during this period, in his interview with Imbira, Griffin noted that “we managed therefore to give education, illegal one in the eyes of the Ministry. But at least education of some sort to young boys and to young girls too who otherwise would never have gotten it” (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005). The daily routine of youth events within the centers reflect features of a typical school program. For instance, the centers had:
academic programs that followed a similar routine of a normal school, sports, community service, discipline, and career talks. Lack of finances was Griffin’s major problem in the running of youth centers and it was difficult to retain good teachers. Teachers were paid less than what they would earn in normal schools although they had a heavier teaching load.

Whatever was achieved in the countryside, the city continued to act as a magnet for the dispossessed children of the Emergency, and it was no surprise to Griffin when, in August 1958, he was asked by the commissioner to make a tour of Nairobi and work out some proposals for dealing with increasing levels of vagrancy in the city (see Tables 8 and 9).

Table 8

*Control of Young Urban Migrants, 1939*

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<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquittal/Discharge</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cautioned</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remanded</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 15 Years Old</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 20 Years Old</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>935</td>
<td>874</td>
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Several reasons contributed to this. First, there was breakdown of the moral ties and traditions during colonial government rule that were instrumental in fostering customs, respect and service, that were strong pillars to the growth of the youth. These ties were further weakened by the upheaval of the Emergency. The majority of the teenagers took to roaming the countryside in gangs. Second, the school was not able to provide an answer for the young delinquents for it could not absorb most of them. It was the success of the rural youth clubs that prompted the Department of Community Development to give Griffin the mandate to form youth clubs throughout the country. Describing the gravity of the youth problem in the country by 1962, Griffin observed:

In February 1962, the Ministry of Education reported a primary school enrolment of 653,000 children, aged between 7 to 10 years. It was estimated that 119,000 children in this age bracket were out of school. In the intermediate range between the ages 11 to 14 years, 228,000 children were in school and about 438,000 were not! Of the estimated 600,000 children between 15 to 18 years, only a small percentage were in secondary school! (p. 58)

The over 200 youth clubs that had been formed across the country were day centers. The clubs had about 20,000 young people. In his proposal to the ministry, Griffin requested the establishment of eight boarding youth “clubs” (centers) in the city which were to be open all day and every day. They were expected to provide a full range of training programs. Unlike upcountry youth centers which were day centers, the Nairobi ones required boarding provisions because the delinquents did not have a home to retire to. Most of the city urchins slept in hideouts called “maskans” and survived by
scavenging for food from the dustbins, bakeries and food processing backyards. In addition, the heterogenous city population was not expected to provide support as in the rural communities. Thus, Griffin recommended for boarding provisions in Nairobi youth centers. Recalling how grave the situation was in Nairobi when he established Starehe and Kariokor youth clubs in his interview with Slingerland, he observed:

I looked around Nairobi and I could see an awful lot of orphan kids rather like the street boys you see today but they weren’t the same. They were war orphans basically. They were kids whose fathers had been killed or put in these camps, whose mothers had been forced out of the family land and put into villages and they had run away looking for something to do. Looking in particular if they could find education. And I looked at these kids on the streets and I took an interest in them … I thought something should be done. So, I went to my Ministry and I said, look, why we don’t start a Youth Centre here in Nairobi rather different from these ones in the field and aim at making them residential ones....

(G. W. Griffin, television interview, 2000)

The Ministry was opposed to Griffin’s suggestions, since they did not want anything that would attract attention to the failures of the colonial administration. By this time Independence was beginning to loom and people were not much interested in starting new things. From the start there was no money from the government or from the city council. This made Griffin approach the Sheikh Trust and the Shell and BP companies for help. With the land and buildings loaned by the provincial administration and the active help of former staff and boys from Wamumu, the Kariokor and Starehe
clubs were born. Griffin’s involvement and efforts to provide education to African youth was not received well by some White people and some of his family. In King’ala (2005) he stated:

My efforts to do good for the black Africans didn’t please some Whites. Some tried to block my efforts...They almost did when a general announcement was made over the media that the post of a Colony Youth Organizer had been abolished. This raised a storm from people like Tom Mboya and Dorothy Hughes, who had faith in what I was trying to do for street waifs and the country at large. I was reinstated within no time… opposition were not only behind the scenes; I remember one day walking into the Norfolk Hotel where young European men like me were enjoying a beer. They sneered at me and called me “a black leg.” But this did not deter me. Family members were no exemption. I had gone against their expectations and the reward I got for this was isolation. But I was determined to surmount all these odds for what I believed was a justifiable course.

(p. 62)

The youth clubs were by no means a progressive advancement in social services on the part of the colonial regime. On one hand, they were a colonial reaction to socioeconomic forces their Emergency policies had unleashed and, on the other hand, they were an attempt to occupy the time and minds of the poor, uneducated rural youth and keep their migratory feet firmly in the rural reserves. Moreover, the adhocery of the early Emergency gave way as Community Development and the provincial administration linked the youth clubs to the pre-existing juvenile pipeline. Officials
believed that they had finally developed a system that would cleanse young people of their Mau Mau oaths, accurately sort and transport them to appropriate institutions or back to their homes, and prevent the future spread of Mau Mau. However, signs of strain were beginning to materialize under the weight of the sheer numbers of juveniles caught up in the pipeline, and the government’s quickly dwindling coffers. Yet rather than dismantle the pipeline, the state sought to preserve its newfound relationship with youth as much as possible.

Given the acknowledgments that the youth centres were receiving locally from parents who were seeking additional admission places for their children and additional external requests from other African nations to adopt Kenya’s model to their own countries to address similar problems, it can be argued that the youth clubs, to some extent, were a success. It is important to note, however, that although the youth centers acted as a supplement to the mainstream educational programs, their programs were of low quality and were constantly faced with lack of funds, trained personnel and vital equipments. This was because they were community-funded projects. In addition, the students who attended these centers were not allowed to sit for a recognized academic examination nor were they permitted to transfer into mainstream schools at a later stage. These strigent regulations hampered many of the students who attended youth clubs from pursuing academics beyond what they were gaining from the clubs. In addition, some African politicians were suspicious of the activities of youth centers, believing that young Africans who were forced into intensive work without pay viewed the program as conscripted labor rather than a character-and skill-building service. On the other hand,
due to its educational activities, there were some Africans who praised the program which they saw as providing an opportunity for more access to education than they would have otherwise received.

Although notions of African youth were clearly changing, the youth clubs had a short life span due to the high level costs that were entailed. During this period, local funds and attendance dwindled. The only youth clubs that remained in consistent, well-funded operation were those in Nairobi, which were sponsored by international donors. By 1960, Griffin, in his Annual Report to the Ministry of Community Development, estimated that there were 95 operational youth clubs in Kenya with over 11,071 juveniles in attendance. Youth clubs, later renamed centers, were not abandoned by the colonial state at the end of the Emergency, nor were they closed in the postcolonial period. They still exist today, the most notable youth center being the Starehe Boys Centre and School.

**National Youth Service**

Griffin’s further involvement in Kenyan youth education is also evidenced in his work at the National Youth Service. When Kenya attained Independence in 1964, it was time for the likes of Griffin to pack their things and go. They had no place in the running of the affairs of the new independent Kenya. Recalling his dilemma during this period, in his interview with Imbira, he observed:

> When independence came, I didn’t know what was going to happen to me at all. Because, I couldn’t be a Colony Youth Organizer as soon as we ceased to be a colony. I was the wrong color particularly in that moment in time. I thought I
would just retire and as a private person, set up a youth centre or something like that very quietly.... (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005)

During this period, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of the republic of Kenya, invited people to help him map out strategies that would spearhead progress for the new nation. One of the invitees to this occasion was Griffin. Among the projects the president had earmarked for national development was the creation of the NYS. It was during this invitation that Griffin was requested to head the new service. When the president asked Griffin to head the new service, he was astonished and hesitant to accept the post. He knew the idea had failed in other newly independent African states. He was also not ready to see the young Starehe, which he was busy trying to convert from a feeding center to a school, die. It needed a lot of devotion and time if it were to blossom. In addition, he also knew that to some degree the appointment was political, for it involved absorbing the former Kenya African National Union (KANU) and Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) youth wings and adapting them to serve the interests of the new independent state, a sphere he did not want to venture into. Further, there was pressure from his girlfriend. Although he considered himself a Kenyan, he felt that, based on the historical events of the time, it was not appropriate for him to accept the post.

Based on these convictions, Griffin declined the offer and tendered his resignation letter to his permanent secretary who took some time to respond to his request. After a while, he refused to accept Griffin’s resignation because the president wanted him to stay on. This was followed later by an invitation from his permanent secretary to see the president. In his interview with Imbira, remembering, President Kenyatta’s directive to
him to take up the NYS post, Griffin recalled the following dialogue between him and President Kenyatta:

Kenyatta: Griffin…!

Griffin: Yes, your Excellency.

Kenyatta: Do you consider yourself a Kenyan?

Griffin: The question caught me off guard and I kept quiet for a moment then I answered, “I consider myself a Kenyan your Excellency.”

Kenyatta: Then why don’t you do your duty?”

Griffin: Meaning, get out and start these youth wings, I want you to begin. …And I said, ok! Sure! You know if you wanted nothing could please me more than to be able to go forward. This was my country, I was born here, I love it, I’ve done some good things in it and I would love to do more. It is very hard to turn down a presidential request, especially under such circumstances! The dice was cast and I had no alternative other than to accept the directorship of the National Youth Service. This meant I must abandon all social activities. I also had to abandon my current girlfriend. I became married to my two jobs, Starehe Boys Centre and the National Youth Service. (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005)

This conversation marked another milestone in Griffin’s further involvement in Kenyan youth education. It gave birth to an institution, that has equipped thousands of Kenyan youth with skills and knowledge for self sustenance. The aim of the service was to map out strategies for training the youth wings into meaningful citizens to serve the interests of the independent Kenya. These were youth who had been active in the political
parties, KANU and KADU campaigns, prior to Independence. The National Youth Service was required to absorb teenagers with no education and jobs and divert their energies into constructive tasks of nation building. Griffin began the National Youth Service with a lean workforce. At the initial stage, the service was stationed at Kenyatta International Conference Centre in a modest wooden office that consisted of Griffin and a single office messenger. At the beginning it was yet to have legislative backing, it had no officers, no equipments, no provision for feeding or clothing and no accommodation besides a derelict barracks in Nairobi’s industrial area. The initial training camp was at Railway Headquarters. Griffin single handendly drafted the NYS Act, formulated the leadership structure, and also designed the Robin Hood-green uniform for the service that was distinct from the other service forces. From the beginning, it was constantly pointed out to Griffin that similar forces had failed in other parts of the world. He notes that “there were many who prophesied that N.Y.S too, would collapse. Some even labeled us “Masikini wa Kenyatta” (Kenyatta’s poor men). But he was determined to succeed.

Due to the political nature of Griffin’s post at NYS, occasionally, during the early years, there were attacks from the National Assembly by members who wanted him transferred or his post Africanized. Martin (1978) reports the following debate that was provoked by the Member of Parliament for Teso, Mr. Oduya Oprong, who asked the minister in charge, what the government was doing to Africanize the post of director of the NYS:

**Member for Teso:** Would the Assistant Minister consider transferring Mr. Griffin to a different position, and get a politically-minded African who understands the
difficulties of the young men-- because I know most of the youth today are those we used during the colonial days and they are still political -- so that they can be brought up on the national bearing?

Assistant Minister: I have previously said, Mr. Speaker, that since Mr. Griffin was born in Kenya, he has the right to enjoy any appointment of the highest order which can be enjoyed by an African in this country. He was born here and I would presume he understands the political outlook of our people as well as we do. (p. 137)

The argument went on for a while, the ministry of labour stood firm, but Griffin’s opponents were not pacified. In the initial days, when the training camp was at Railways Headquarters, Griffin also faced difficulties from the young men in the service who used to sneak to their members of parliament with flimsy complains about the training, with some claiming that they were being tortured because of their party affiliation. Griffin found himself in parliament several times to help his minister answer questions emanating from such complains. Further, he faced difficulties from politicians who wanted favors from him either in terms of admissions or material help, which he declined. He observes that “it was not uncommon for a minister to approach me wanting to borrow a bulldozer or a tipper for private use, but I always put my foot down and they soon realized that it was a futile exercise to try those games on me” (King’ala, 2006, p. 80).

Griffin credited much of his success at NYS to the support he received from his officers, such as Gabriel Owiti, Samuel Tangoi, officer in charge of administration; and
Waruhiu Itote (“General China”), who had been one of the top Mau Mau Generals. Itote was Griffin’s deputy in charge of operations. Although they had initially been enemies during the war, each fighting on a different front, they became good friends. Commenting on the value of Itote to the growth of the NYS in its early years, Griffin says: “China eased my direct access to President Kenyatta, which was vital as I struggled to create the National Youth Service against many odds. This association helped keep off politicians who wanted favors from me” (King’ala, 2006, p. 80). In addition, Mr. Itote was also instrumental in transforming the youth into tough, loyal, and useful service men. The NYS had many field units and work camps. Each field unit was under a commandant assisted by five section commanders. The section commanders were assisted by sergeants, corporals, and lance corporals.

All the recruits went through drill training for discipline and solidarity. In addition, they received general instructions on the principles and purposes of the NYS. After the initial six-week period, during which the youngsters capabilities were tested, they were enlisted for national service work. For instance, if they were interested in agricultural work, they went to a settlement programs, if carpentry, they were put in a technical project camp. As part of their training requirements they were sent wherever the government wanted extra personnel in terms of its national projects. The servicemen assisted in a variety of national projects such as farming, clearing swamps, constructing dams and irrigation programs, building roads, agricultural and industrial programs. They spent ten months on projects that involved physical work as well as educational courses. The servicemen were also given various educational courses. Each serviceman received
basic training on vocational jobs, learning how to operate machinery and other equipments used on projects. There were also literacy classes for those who could not read and write. The recruits were trained in English, Mathematics and Civics. Early trainers for education and technical side came through the Secretariat of Volunteer Services.

Griffin’s involvement in youth education through the NYS and expanding it to cover the whole country was a daunting task. Availability of money and trained personnel was an uphill task. There was, however, goodwill in terms of donations and technical aid that came with Independence from developed countries that wanted to form new alliances with Kenya, especially from the United States and the United Kingdom. United States provided instructors in various fields and assisted in the training of NYS personnel. It also gave specialized machinery for road construction works. The United Kingdom gave technical and financial support.

Due to the success of its programs, discipline, and trust of its servicemen and women, Griffin was requested to expand NYS services to pre-university students. This resulted in the setting up of a three month pre-university National Youth Service training program. Although an enormous undertaking, Griffin felt such training would create better managers for the country. Like regular recruits, they went through drills to gain endurance and personal discipline. They also received lectures. Initially, there were some general complains from the recruits who felt the government was trying to punish them. In the beginning, the students did not have a clear understanding of the purpose of the training. This was solved gradually through continued reassurances from Griffin. With
time many students came to appreciate the value of the course. Commenting on the students’ perception of the program Griffin observed:

Every now and then, there is a light moment in my office when a new teacher who went through the programme is posted to us by the Teacher’s Service Commission. I enjoy listening to them relate the good the program did to them. They all say that it changed their outlook to life for the better. (King’ala, 2005, p. 87)

Although the pre-university course was terminated after a few years because of funding, it proved successful. It made the government commission a special study to explore the possibilities of making the training mandatory for all Kenyan high school leavers who had attained the age of 18 years. The regular NYS program, however, still continues with much the same program structure although much of the curriculum has undergone a major review over the years. Currently, with aid from the government of China, plans are underway to reinvigorate it in terms of its programs so as to contribute further to Kenya’s industrialization process.

The NYS educational programs illustrate Griffin’s efforts in opening more spaces for Kenyan youth to have access to education. Unlike the conventional schools where students graduated from one level to another, NYS was more vocational and service oriented. It was open to all youth and acted as a supplement to the few training institutions that existed in the country at the time of Independence. Although Griffin’s NYS educational programs might seem basic, when weighted against the historical circumstances in which they evolved, they served as a gateway to more educational
opportunities and training to youth, who would have otherwise missed out on training opportunities, a move that would have slowed Kenya’s developmental progress. The programs at NYS functioned as important supplements to Kenya’s mainstream educational programs and training for youth. What began as a modest service in 1964 with a small workforce grew rapidly over the years. Camps were opened in Archer’s post, Gilgil, Nakuru, Timboroa, Mombasa, Hola and Yatta, and Nyanza, each one specializing in one or more aspects of training. Basic training was offered at Gilgil for boys and Naivasha for the girls. Commenting on the contribution of NYS to national development, Martin (1978) writes:

By 1976, 22,000 young men and women had passed through Griffin’s hands, and projects valued at more than 11,500, 000 sterling pounds had been completed including five farms, ten air fields, a road across the Aberdares and the Great North Road to Ethiopia. A huge experimental unit at Yatta offered every kind of agricultural training and even included a miniature silkworm industry, while at Mombasa stood the comprehensive Vocational Training School, providing courses in all practical skills. By 1975, it had become no idle boast to speak of the NYS as a means whereby our youth can use their zeal and strength in the service of the nation. (p. 202)

Through the NYS, many young men and women were granted an opportunity to render national service to their country and also to obtain useful training that gave them livelihood as artisans, drivers, electricians, secretaries, and dressmakers. Others joined the army, regular police force or the administration police. They became disciplined and
trusted and on many occasions helped the police to keep law and order at national functions, manned gates at international shows and the state house. The speed, excellence, and efficiency with which the youth tackled their work was sufficient to establish the reputation of the service. Describing the efficiency the NYS trainees brought to the national service Griffin gave the following narration:

I was very proud when one day President Kenyatta invited me to pay him a visit at State House Mombasa… there was a breakdown in communication and as I rolled up at the State House gates in my self-chauffeured private car, my men on duty didn’t recognize me out of uniform and kept me waiting for some time while they consulted. When it dawned upon them that the person they were detaining was their own director, they hastily saluted me and ushered me in. I was very impressed by their call for duty. They did what I would have expected them to do and I promoted them to the next rank. (King’ala, 2005, p. 82-83)

For many years the NYS has continued to function as a major supplement to Kenya’s youth education. Its desire has always been to raise responsible, self-reliant and disciplined youth. It is this desire that Griffin strived to build and succeeded in doing despite several difficulties that he faced, a legacy the service has nurtured to the present. Griffin served as the director of the NYS from 1964 to 1988 when he reached the age of 55, the mandatory retirement age. Today, NYS needs little introduction. Like Starehe, it has won admiration and acclaims all over the world as one of Africa’s greatest success stories. During Griffin’s tenure as the service commander, major roads, airstrips, dams, and canals were constructed and model farms established. He managed to establish 17
field units and 14 training institutions all over the country. Training programs underway by the time he retired from service in 1988, covered as many as 23 different trades and occupation; nearly 60,000 young Kenyans, men and women, had undergone periods of training. Many on leaving the service found lucrative and satisfying employment as craftsmen, artisans and business entrepreneurs. The activities of NYS were not restricted to national projects only. The offer of sound technical training in the multiplicity of job skills and disciplines, too, was accorded the highest priority from the outset. Although much of the recognition of Griffin as a figure of national importance was built in the first place because of his work at the NYS, whose fortunes he directed from its founding, this same prominence, he also came to enjoy sporadically over the years with his involvement in youth education through his work at SBC.

Summary

Griffin’s involvement in the development of Kenyan education was not influenced by one single force and was not systematic. It was a process where one thing led to another. It was built on experience, trial-and-error methods that were influenced by political, social, cultural, and economic factors that were prevailing in Kenya. It was a journey that was riddled with numerous difficulties across the same forces of influence. The breakdown of social, moral networks of African societies due to colonization; minimal access of youth to education during the colonial period because of racial segregative educational policies and the Mau Mau War and its aftermath created conditions that altered the African family, led to increase in orphans and youth vagrancy in cities, and desolation that placed Kenyan youth in social, cultural, political, and
economic limbo. These volatile conditions propelled Griffin’s involvement in youth education. He saw education as a panacea to addressing the ills that Kenyan youth and society were experiencing at the time.

The forces that influenced Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education illustrate that his efforts at educating modern Kenyans began with his family influences, school life, and early work with Survey Cadet Kenya. This early phase that was based on his family virtues, religious influences, and exposure to the African people were seeding forces that acted as anchor to his future involvement in Kenyan youth education. Griffin’s actual involvement in youth education programs can be traced to Manyani and Wamumu camps and later grew to full national and international stature at the SBC. The National Youth Centres and NYS educational programs were further supplements of these efforts. The two were gateways to creating more opportunities for youth to access education. Although framed in colonial policies of handling youth vagrancy, there’s evidence of Griffin’s ingenuity, creativity, and innovativeness in terms of programs that he added to the initial meager offerings of colonial youth programs.

An examination of Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya shows his determined efforts to design an education system that would address Kenya’s peculiar needs. In the colonial period, this is evidenced in his advocacy of the use of indigenous approaches to addressing problems of childcare and youth vagrancy. He advocated for freedom, returning of the children to their families, and equipping them with useful skills for survival and nation building. He was opposed to the European models that laid emphasis on repatriation, imprisonment,
remand homes, and Approved schools. According to him, this was an “an expensive exotic tree that was likely not to grow in Kenya” (Martin, 1978, p. 37). He advocated for the use of African approaches that entailed community involvement. It is this philosophy that guided his educational programs at Wamumu, youth centres and at the NYS. This educational approach won a great deal of support from the independent Kenyan government. Members of the cabinet who were familiar with his work were naturally anxious to promote his educational and welfare efforts. His methods were seen as “an African solution to African problems of Juvenile delinquency” (Martin, 1978, p. 47).

The rehabilitation efforts by the colonial government to care for youth, in which Griffin functioned during this period, have received varying reviews from both historians and scholars of colonial Africa and the British Empire. The Department of Community Development did deploy their rehabilitation program, albeit in a narrow and peripheral way. According to Ocobo (2005), some skeptical former colonial officials argue that rehabilitation found a place within the juvenile pipeline simply because the government did not care about young people. These arguments seem to obscure the reality that existed during this period. Many colonial officials in Kenya firmly believed that juvenile Mau Mau were a serious threat and had to be handled separately from adults. The Departments of Community Development, Probation, and Prisons as well as the provincial administration did concern themselves in the affairs of Mau Mau’s youngest adherents and seemingly did not represent the homogenous categories of conservative versus liberal visions, which divided them in terms of the management of adults. The Wamumu Youth Camp and the sister camps, as well as youth clubs of Central Province, depict an attempt
to bind young people and the state in a relationship of subjugation and dependence. “Hearts and minds” were to be purchased with education, skills training, as well jobs and land, but the youth were also to be inculcated with a deep sense of loyalty for a patriarchal state and a vast imperial kinship network. The construction of the juvenile pipeline and the relationship between youth and state during the Emergency was not an isolated product of the conflict with the Mau Mau but part of a longer historical process and ever-present colonial interest in its youngest subjects. Throughout the Emergency, methods previously employed to round up; repatriate; or institutionalize juveniles accused of labor infractions, vagrancy, or criminal acts were reengineered to bring the state and African juveniles in closer contact than ever before. In the run-up to Independence, at the very end of the British Empire’s dominance, one finds a regime heavily involved in the social welfare and control of its adolescent population.

The state interaction with African youth during this period illustrates, all the while, that the government had been active in the face of African agency and colonial incapacities. The moment the colonial state declared the Emergency in order to wrestle authority and legitimacy away from the Mau Mau, it not only acknowledged its reduced capacity to govern Kenya’s youth, but its subsequent policies also further eroded state capacity to govern juveniles in the future. The juvenile pipeline was thus a response to the consequences of the war against the Mau Mau. Youth camps, youth clubs, and juvenile reception centers arrived late and in piecemeal during the Emergency, seeking to provide an escape valve for the social, demographic and economic pressures the state had wrought. Operation Anvil displaced thousands of Rift Valley squatters through
horrendous conditions; detention camps; and prisons separated families, military operations tore them irrevocably asunder, and villagization and land consolidation stole from rural youth the land and freedom they so desired. This is clearly evidenced in the activities of the juvenile pipeline that were an utter failure. These processes did not resolve themselves at the end at Independence and the postcolonial state inherited increasing flawed colonial institutions and numerous socioeconomic problems. Despite financial shortfalls and increased levels of juvenile migration, crime, and delinquency, many of the institutions of juvenile pipeline exist today. A good example that suffices in this regard is the SBC.

Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education in the postcolonial period succeeded majorly because of the help he received from African colleagues he worked with and the Kenyan government. It was their unfailing support that enabled his efforts to succeed beyond his initial expectations. Commenting on the support he received from African officers during his twenty-four years tenure at NYS, Griffin noted: “without their support, I don’t know how I would have managed for all these years” (“Griffin Retires to Starehe,” 1988). These were the people who gave him support without whom it would have been difficult for his work to progress. They believed in him and gave him generously of their time and service. In eulogizing Geoffrey Geturo, one of his two cofounders at Starehe, Griffin stated, in 1991:

Many of you here knew Geoffrey only in his later years, when the ravages of his disease compelled him to work in the office and not out among the boys. I wish you could have seen him in those first years as he worked around the clock. He
helped erect the two tin huts; he cooked meals for the original boys; he dug holes for the fence posts; he slept in the store with a panga (machete) beside him, ready to defend our meagre equipment against thieves; he taught classes sometimes two or three of them at once, setting work in one, then hurrying to the next. Whatever needed to be done, he did it superbly well. No matter how weak he was or how much in pain, he never stopped working. Indeed, just a few days before he died, I had to go to an important meeting in the city and he was at my side as he had always been. No man ever had a more faithful colleague than he was to me. His work continues on earth, through the lives of nearly 9,000 boys who knew him, some at least of whom must have been touched by and will follow his example that indeed the path of duty is the way to glory. (G. W. Griffin’s Eulogy of Geoffrey Geturo, June 29, 1991)

This dedicated African group worked closely with a team of spirited expatriates who gave fruitful labor to Starehe. This team served Starehe for many years and established strong cooperative relations with Griffin. These were the pillars that built Starehe. It was this team that enabled Griffin to further his education work among the youth, especially at Starehe. Through their work more than 12,000 boys from deprived conditions were able to receive a sound education. Summing up the role of these educators Griffin writes:

Here and there, of course, one does find teachers who have settled to a lifetime of service, at Starehe, we have some who have been with us for twenty years and
more. Such people become pillars of their respective schools and living legends to generations of pupils. They are the salt of the earth… (Griffin, 1996, p. 46)

On its part the Kenyan government was instrumental in helping Griffin with land concessions and the provision of educators. Other key supporters of Griffin who enabled him to venture further in Kenyan youth education were numerous foreign funding bodies, especially the Save the Children Fund (SCF), which for many years, gave him splendid financial support. The SCF funded the great bulk of Starehe’s academic programs from 1964 to 1996. Locally, Griffin also received funding from Shell BP which has been the longest local funding body of Starehe, dating from its inception. In addition, there was also support from individual donors, both locally and internationally. It was because of these beneficence that Griffin was able to expand his educational work.

The forces that influenced Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education are a microcosm of Kenya’s historical events that have shaped its social, cultural, political, and economic landscape. They indicate efforts that have been made to address its educational challenges both in the colonial and postcolonial period. The historical events in the colonial phase that ignited Griffin’s involvement in youth education point to three main things: state of youth education and increase in youth vagrancy due to the prevailing conditions in all spheres of life and the state of colonial education (that was minimal, racial, segregative, rudimentary, and mainly labor based) that was determined by Britain’s tight budget for its colonial administration. In the British Empire, every colony was expected to be self-financing. This policy placed enormous burdens on both local indigenous populations and colonists to generate enough income to pay for Britain’s
colonial infrastructure and administrative personnel. It also meant there would be little funding for the schools, clinics, and other social and community institutions that presumably were to form the backbone of Britain’s civilizing mission. It was this colonial approach of administration that contributed to increased youth vagrancy. These historical events bring to the fore the struggling efforts that were being made both in colonial and postcolonial Kenya to educate citizens. It is the latter efforts that are evidenced in Griffin’s later works at SBC.
CHAPTER FIVE
STAREHE BOYS CENTRE AND SCHOOL AND ITS REFLECTION OF
KENYA’S EDUCATIONAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND LEGACY

I regard the Centre as my contribution to the building of this nation. There are thousands of other old boys who are rising steadily in commerce, the professions, the civil service or the armed forces. All of them are helping in their own way to build a better Kenya.

(“Repression won’t Work ,” 1988)

The life and times of the late Dr. Geoffrey William Griffin is a story of the Kenyan society from the colonial era to the present. It is also one of selfless and singular dedication to his calling-- promoting the development and education of poor children.

(M. Kibaki, eulogy, 2005)

Introduction

This chapter examines the efforts of Griffin to educate Kenyans in the later part of the colonial Kenya and in the postcolonial period. The establishment of the SBC reflects Kenya’s educational historical context in these time periods. In the colonial period, SBC depicts the nature of colonial education that was racial, segregative, inadequate, and whose policies locked most Kenyan youth out of the educational system. It was this lack of access to education that led to increase in youth vagrancy of which the formation of youth centers within which SBC was born, was one approach to alleviating the menace.
The postcolonial period presents SBC’s transition from a youth club to a center and eventual development into a formal school. It indicates the growth of SBC from 1963 to the present and its contributions to the development of modern Kenyan education. The educational programs that were undertaken by SBC during this period and difficulties experienced are a prototype of the wider Kenyan educational efforts to address the country’s societal needs. The findings indicate that due to its charitable nature (unlike other Kenyan public schools), Starehe’s educational programs are diverse and give a wider view of Kenya’s societal needs that the education sector is required to reinvigorate itself to address. Starehe’s educational programs indicate a dynamic and rapidly changing Kenyan society that requires a dialectical education system if it has to attain its developmental goals.

**Colonial Phase**

**Founding of Starehe Boys Centre and School**

Starehe Boys Centre and School is a private charity, a nongovernmental organization. It was begun in 1959 to provide care and education for needy boys. These were boys whose parents had been killed, detained, or forced off family land and put into fortified villages during the Mau Mau freedom struggle and who were living from hand-to-mouth on the streets of Nairobi. The founding of SBC, which begins with its formation as a hobby club and youth center before its later transition to a school, is embedded in Kenya’s political, historical, social, cultural, and economic contexts. It was a period of Kenya’s struggle for independence, marked by the Mau Mau War against the British colonial government. Some of the boys admitted to the new club had certainly fallen
afoul of the law but through no fault of their own. Seven years earlier, before the formation of Starehe, in October 1952, the nationalist movement in Kenya had shown its hand with the killing of Senior Chief Waruhiu, well known for his loyalty to the colonial government. A few days later, the Governor Sir Evelyn Baring declared a State of Emergency, setting the stage for the final, conclusive struggle which was to lead to Kenya’s Independence.

During the Mau Mau War, thousands of men, most of them heads of families, were arrested and held in detention camps; others lost their lives through their refusal to support the nationalist cause. In the Kikuyu reserves, countless families lost their identity when forced to move into temporary fortified villages. Traditional customs and loyalties, sorely beset since the coming of colonial rule, disintegrated still further under the intolerable pressures of the time; and more and more children, especially boys, found themselves without the support of parents and family. There was no refuge in the country for these homeless youth. With no prospects and little or no support from the state, even the youngest were caught up in the inevitable trek to Nairobi, the distant, glamorous city whose streets were paved with gold. Hundreds of them took to roaming the streets, begging, and mugging. This with time led to increased levels of youth vagrancy.

Starehe’s formation was a response to the colonial state’s inability (because of its inadequate European methods) to eradicate the problem of juvenile delinquency. Starehe’s transition into a school indicates the educational crisis that African youth were locked into due to the limited number of schools that they could attend. Summing up the
historical events that led to the founding of SBC and the state of the youth during this time, Hongo and Mugambi (2000) write:

Loitering on the streets of Nairobi were many helpless children especially boys left as orphans due to the deaths of their fathers during the Mau Mau struggles or as a result of the imprisonment of their fathers in detention camps. These kids wore tattered clothes, walked and had barefoot, nowhere to sleep, leave alone where to bath. They had no food to eat and indeed looked very dirty, helpless and sickly. Their future was dark. For their daily survival they ate left-overs thrown into the dustbins and the older ones had to pick pockets in order to find money to buy food. They slept by the riverbanks, in shrubs, and in some city corridors in the cold, thus being exposed to all manner of dangers including diseases. (p. 51)

During this period, there was high increase of destitute children, juvenile delinquency, and vagrancy in Nairobi, more so than any other town in Kenya. Police figures around this period showed thousands of vagrant children, a large number compared with the small population of people in Nairobi. They were dealt with in the Nairobi Juvenile Court. Martin (1978) observes that the educational possibilities in Nairobi for a destitute child were abysmal in 1959. Out of 15,000 children of primary school age in the city, there were 10,000 not in school at all, and many others were only in school on a part-time basis due to overcrowding. About 300 children left school each year after standard 4, and many of them were below the employment age of 16. The conditions of the time led to increased levels of vagrant activities due to the absence of adult control, which many youth found themselves in and were forced to use any means
necessary to survive. Explaining the state of youth vagrancy during this period, Griffin (cited in King’ala, 2006), gives the following figures to illustrate the magnitude of youth vagrancy and how it was accelerated further by the limited schooling opportunities for Africans:

In February 1962, the Ministry of Education reported a primary school enrolment of 653,000 children aged between 7 to 10 years. It was estimated that 119,000 children in this age bracket were out of school. In the intermediate between the ages 11 to 14 years, 228,000 children were in school and about 438,000 were not! Of the estimated 600,000 children between 15 to 18 years, only a small percentage were in secondary schools! (p. 58)

The situation was worsened further during the Mau Mau war and the declaration of the State of Emergency by the colonial government. During this period there was a rapid increase in juvenile delinquency and youth vagrancy and the methods that were being used by the colonial government could not alleviate the problem due to the limited colonial structures in terms of juvenile courts, Approved schools, and repatriation orders. According to Griffin:

It was a grotesque exercise, they’d ask where a boy came from. He’d give them a wrong address and they’d just take him out on a lorry and drop him in the country. The kid would walk straight back to Nairobi. There were boys who’d been through this process 20 times. Apart from anything else, it was a silly waste of the taxpayers’ money. (“The White Man who cared about Black Dropouts,” 1978)
It was under these conditions that Griffin was appointed a youth colony organizer by the colonial government in late 1957 and transferred to Nairobi. His mandate included establishing self-help youth centres throughout the country and the training of leaders. The purpose of the centers was to aid national development by supplementing the work of the schools and absorbing some of the footloose youth who had grown up during the Emergency period and were engaging in all vagrant activities like petty theft, vandalism, and violence. Each community was required to provide land, buildings and equipments. The leader’s wage came from the community’s own resources. Trained leaders were expected to guarantee sound practical instruction and a worthy example of loyalty and responsibility. Griffin took on his new role with determination. By September 1958, the Kenya Association of Youth Clubs had been formed, with Griffin’s own striking motto of “Service and High Endeavour,” two leaders’ courses had been completed at Wamumu, there were already 65 clubs, with a total of 10,000 members. The clubs which were solely self-supporting were mostly in rural areas, the majority being in Kikuyu homelands. The recruits included both boys and girls who had been arrested in Nairobi and forcibly repatriated to their home districts. Whatever was achieved in the countryside, the city continued to act as a magnet for the dispossessed children of the Emergency but until Starehe and Kariokor clubs opened their doors, there was almost no attempt made by the colonial government to care for the hordes of children living on the streets of Nairobi. Commenting on the deplorable state of the youth in this period and lack of adequate colonial approaches to address their plight, Martin (1978) observes:
A Church Club at Karen met once a week, another in Pumwani on two evenings. The Christian Industrial Training Centre in Pumwani offered a full-time training course, but only for those who had reached Standard Seven in primary school, and furthermore on a fee-paying basis. The excellent Save the Children Fund Home for the helpless children at Ujana Park had closed early in 1958. There was virtually nothing else. All that a boy could look forward to was a periodic arrest and judicial beatings, perhaps “repatriation” to his home area, where he would be unwelcome and from which he would promptly return to Nairobi, and eventually, an Approved School. The city authorities showed little enthusiasm for clubs or training centres, such well-meaning ventures could only serve to attract still more youngsters to the capital, and their sole desire was to clear the streets. (p. 6)

It was thus no surprise to Griffin when, in August 1958, he was asked by the commissioner to take a tour of Nairobi and work out some proposals for dealing with vagrancy in the city. His views were strengthened and clarified by his friendship with John Nottingham, the North Tetu district officer who had been removed from detention camp administration and was now devoting himself to the liberation of the hundreds of youngsters repatriated from Nairobi to his ‘Juvenile Reception Centre’. Nottingham’s Center had no barbed wire, and the children who stayed there were not isolated from the rest of society. The children who were within his “Juvenile Reception Centre” were allowed to mix with the community. Nottingham based his independent attitude on the clear distinction between wanton crime and mere childhood misfortune; he wanted to win the children’s confidence, to help them deal with their problems, and to restore their
sense of security against the demands of the law which required a vagrant to be treated as a criminal. It was with this distinction in mind that Griffin went to Nairobi, and he was perplexed from his own observation and from the reports of sympathetic officers like Elizabeth Jackson, how in the absence of a constructive rescue program and structures of addressing the problem, an innocent wandering child would rapidly turn to genuine crime.

In his report to the commissioner, Griffin requested the formation of at least eight “clubs” in the city, which would have to be open all day and every day and provide a full range of training schemes. Among the possible sites he had noted was “a community centre, built in stone with an adjacent playing field, at Starehe” (Martin, 1978, p. 19). He thought that the colonial government would have to take the lead in financing the venture, since the heterogenous city population could not be expected to support it in the same way the rural communities would. Griffin’s proposal was denied by city authorities and, for that matter the colonial government. Since independence was nearing they did not want to attract attention to anything that could be seen as the failure of the colonial government in tackling youth vagrancy. The building of such a center in the city would cause a lot of pressure and bad publicity to the colonial government. It would attract the international community’s attention to the plight of children in the colony and add fuel to the independence movement. It was at this point that Griffin got fed up and approached his permanent secretary and asked if he could start a private youth club. In King’ala (2005), he recalled that he received a classic civil service reply: “As long as you don’t ask for money and as long as this does not interfere with your proper duties, I don’t mind
what you do” (p. 63). It was with this assurance that he set off to start what later became SBC in 1959 with absolutely nothing except boys.

Although the colonial government and the city council declined to finance the clubs in any way, he persuaded the provincial administrator, R. A. Wilkinson, to identify sites and buildings. He granted him both the use of Kariokor and the Starehe Community Hall. Summing up how he began SBC and the forces that guided its founding, Griffin, in his interview with Imbira, narrated:

I noticed a lot of ragged “watoto” (children) on the streets of Nairobi. Obviously underfed, stealing everything they would lay their hands on and heading for a life of total crime and it was time somebody got in and did something. So, I went to the new government and said, look you know we’ve got to do something about these kids. A lot of people gonna pay for this in future. Very, very sad! I am willing to work. So they said okay. What do you want to do? You want to start more Approved schools? And I said, for God’s sake No! I had no higher opinion of Approved schools, they were just too much… but Wamumu was the answer. Because that worked. I thought we would probably introduce this into some sort of youth centre movements. So I began the Kenya Association of Youth Centres. And that spread like wild fire all over the country and became very popular indeed and that is how Starehe began because I hid it under the name of youth centres…. (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005)

More help came from private sources. Although Griffin was uncertain about where to find funds to run his newly formed clubs, he had faith that somehow he would
get some help. With the given charter, he notes that, he relied on God to start the process. Affirming this, he says that “faith in those days was some kind of capital” (King’ala, 2006, p. 63). Narrating his miraculous encounter with Shell & BP which eventually became key financiers of Starehe, he recalled:

As I walked down the present day Harambee Avenue, I stopped near a building and walked in. I asked the receptionist if they had a Public Relations Officer. It turned out to be Shell/BP and I was led to its Public Relations Officer, a Mr. John Francis. I explained to him my mission of trying to rescue Mau Mau orphans from the streets of Nairobi and he gave me an ear. I managed to interest Mr. John Francis and took him in my car to show him the hideouts of the street waifs. We went to bakeries and food-processing companies like Tru-Foods and he was able to see for himself the terrible conditions under which the poor boys lived, collecting bread leftovers and fruit peel from dustbins. I also took him to their sleeping places along the Nairobi River and he became as convinced as me that something needed to be done to arrest the explosive situation. He was touched and decided to support me…. (King’ala, 2005, p. 64)

This marked the beginning of the funding partnership with Shell/BP which has remained to present. In addition to the financial help, Shell/BP also granted Griffin two tin huts which served as dormitories for the first 17 boys who joined the school. On November 14th, 1959, Starehe Youth Club was officially opened. The occasion was graced with the attendance of various distinguished guests including the minister for African Affairs in the colonial government, Hon. C.M.G, Johnson. As time progressed
more funds and offers came in from private sources; for instance, the Sheikh Fazal Ilahi Noordin Charitable Trust, the Child Welfare Society, the Kenya Welfare Trust and the African Welfare Trust all contributed. Several local firms supplied building materials and advice. Fruitful contacts were also made with the juvenile court magistrate, the minister for African Affairs, and Dorothy Hughes, doyen of welfare work in Kenya and a former member of the legislative council.

Other support at the initial stages came from Youth Helps Campaigns through the Child Welfare Society. To boost support for the Youth Help Campaigns, Griffin traveled a trip to London with two boys, George Waigwa and Peter Njenga, with the aim of raising “funds and creating awareness of poverty, delinquency and the need for help in order to arrest the situation” (King’ala, 2006, p. 66). Other support came from the Hon. Thomas Mboya, the first African political leader to interest himself actively in SBC’s work. After obtaining land and initial financial help, Griffin searched for people who could help him with the work. He needed people who understood what he was doing and he requested Geoffrey Geturo Gatama and Joseph Kamiru Gikubu, both former Mau Mau detainees at Manyani and Wamumu Camps who had served under him as student leaders. These two men became his cofounders at SBC. Both men were in gainful employments but left determined to work with Griffin in circumstances of uncertainty in terms of salaries, and guarantee of success owing to the existing political opposition. During the campaigns for formation of youth clubs, Griffin begun a youth rescue center at Kariokor and placed Joseph Gikubu as the person in charge. In addition, he also created a second centre, at Starehe and placed Geoffrey Geturo in charge.
Getting boys and persuading local people to allow their sons to join the clubs was a tough undertaking at the beginning because of the mistrust that Africans had for the Europeans and the colonial government. A number of youth were not willing to join the clubs. Describing these early difficulties of interesting the boys to join the clubs, Martin (1978) gives the following scenario to demonstrate the reaction of the youth to early club recruitment rallies:

By now the crowd was two hundred strong and every eye was fixed on the speaker’s serious, determined face. He seemed sincere, and the interpreter made his meaning quite plain; but Europeans did not offer such things to African children, neither did they venture unescorted into locations after dark. Clearly this was some trick on the part of the Government, though the idea behind it was obscure. The children hovering behind the group were cautious in their response. Before the speech was over their scampering had ceased, and the vagrant boys who might have been taken away in the Land Rover were safely hidden in the long grass around the cemetery. The Pale stranger and his assistant left Ziwani Location empty-handed. (p. 4)

The schools’ early beginnings in the latter part of the colonial period were tough, and most of the founding work of the school at this period was accomplished by the school founders, the 17 boys who had joined the center and former staff and boys from Wamumu. The boys did not have a dinning room and each day they had to walk down to Kariokor Market for their meals. They also lacked bathrooms and lavatories and had to use the communal facilities in the nearby housing estates. There were inadequate
classrooms and workshops, limited administrative offices which often times were shared, and no medical facilities. Any sick or injured boy had to be taken across Nairobi to the hospital in Griffin’s car. The first uniforms were khaki donated by the Prisons Department and cut down to fit the boys; there were no shoes and stockings. The first staff members had to be prepared to turn their hands to anything-teaching, building, cooking, searching the city for runaways, guarding the Center’s meager property against robbers by night. No fixed hours, no trade unions!

In addition, the boys were not certain about their future, how long the founders of Starehe would care for them and the quality of education they were to receive. Needless to say, those early boys were as wild as hawks: it was extremely difficult to instill discipline. Some of these first boys had suffered from the trauma of the loss of their parents, others were sickly as a result of the difficulties on the streets, and others were convicts from Makadara courts and were therefore perceived as criminals. Indeed, some of them thought Starehe was an extension of prison. These worries plagued the boys’ minds. It took time before the boys themselves could develop confidence in the founders. Despite these difficulties, the boys built for themselves open-sided sheds to serve as the first classrooms and workshops for technical and artisan courses. Griffin begged for old corrugated iron sheets from a prison that was being pulled down and wood from a sympathetic company, Timsales Ltd, to put up the first buildings.

There were no teachers and adequate staff to run the center during its formative years. To solve this, Griffin invited any qualified artisan who wanted to make articles for sale to use Starehe’s workshops as long as he taught the boys some form of trade. Getu
and Gikubu assisted in the teaching of boys and at the same time alternated as watchmen at night to guard the few assets of the center. Another problem the boys faced came from the inhabitants of SBC’s neighboring estates. They viewed SBC as a security threat. Commenting on this, Geoffrey Geturo (cited in Martin, 1978) writes:

The reaction of our neighbors was very hostile. They could not understand that these boys were in need of care and protection, and deserved their sympathy; instead, they thought they were criminals, and referred to Starehe as that “Jela” (prison). They saw the club as a threat to their property, and were sure to blame us if a window was broken, or if something disappeared from a clothes-line. They would tell the staff that they were as bad as the boys and at one time they went to the District Officer and demanded that the club be removed. The unfortunate staff had to take turns in guarding stores and equipment by night-- not against Starehe’s own boys, but against theft by covetous neighbors. And they were often called on to go out and look for boys who had been so intimidated by jeers and complaints from outside that they ran away. (p. 4)

In order to overcome these initial difficulties, Griffin and his cofounders worked to instil self-confidence and pride in the boys. To them this was a battle which had to be won, irrespective of the hostility and difficulties that they were experiencing. Griffin and his cofounders functioned as true parents laboring to provide clothes, food, shelter, and education to these boys. Once these initial social problems were addressed, Griffin decided to start a primary school without adequate structures and teachers. In King’ala
(2005) he recalled this was met with opposition from the Ministry of Education which felt he did not have adequate teachers and facilities required for a school. He observed:

The authorities thought I was mad! They wondered how this could be done without qualified teachers and with no proper classrooms! But I was adamant. When we started, we were not even allowed to call ourselves a school, we hid behind the name Starehe Youth Club and later Starehe Youth Centre. The City Council of Nairobi complained bitterly that I was breaking its by-laws but the critics left me alone when I told them to show me a better way of dealing with the problem. In fact, I invited them to take the boys away if they had any better ideas. But deep down in my heart, I knew they wouldn’t do it. When they realized I wasn’t willing to relent, they learnt to condone the situation by looking the other way, pretending we didn’t exist! (p. 67)

This marked the beginning of SBC. It basically began as an “illegal school.” It was here, using the experiences and knowledge gained from Wamumu, that Griffin was destined to create a school which would rise to national and international fame. Although the founding of SBC was Griffin’s personal achievement, neither he nor his friends guessed the later consequences of this bold move into the unknown. Griffin’s establishment of Starehe prior to Independence gives a picture of Kenya’s educational historical context of the time. First and foremost, it indicates the racially segregated system of education that existed at the time, one that favored the European population in terms of finance, curricula and structure. Most Africans were still lacking adequate access to education both at the primary and secondary level compared with their European and
Asian counterparts, who had compulsory schooling. Many of the Africans had their education terminated at primary level. Commenting on this educational quagmire, Bogonko (1992) writes:

Throughout the 1950s European children and Asian boys of ages 7 to 15 had compulsory education. The Africans did not. Although they sat for separate preliminary examinations, European and Asian children had continuous primary education up to Standard 7. African children, on the other hand, were pruned by the Standard 4 Common Entrance Examinations (CEE) and had to do four or three more years at the Intermediate school before sitting for their preliminary examination. While the Kenyan European Preliminary Examination and the Kenyan Asian Preliminary Examination (KAPE) acted as qualifying examinations for secondary education, for Africans, KAPE was a school-leaving examination. Almost all the European and Asian pupils who finished primary education were admitted to secondary schools, but the successful African candidates were issued with a certificate which was considered a qualification for secondary education and for some type of training and direct employment. Throughout the 1950s into the early 1960s, those KAPE candidates who were not admitted to secondary schools joined teacher, medical, veterinary and agricultural training centres, among others… Only 13.6 percent and 20 percent of African children proceeded to secondary schools in 1954 and 1955 respectively. (p. 69)

By 1959, the percentage of the KAPE candidates who did so had risen to 28. This meant that dropouts at standard 8 continued to be high and posed a big problem to those
in authority. Although some dropouts found their way to trade schools, direct employment, or training centers for various jobs, as 1960 approached, many had no places to go. The proposal to remove CEE or increase the number of intermediate schools so as to allow all African schoolchildren to proceed to standard 8 had proved to be just a dream. Whereas in 1954, 20% of the CEE candidates proceeded to intermediate schools, in 1956 and 1958 only 23% did so. Lack of funds, buildings, and staff were the limitations that made it impossible to provide intermediate education to all African children. The most important limitation was the half-heartedness with which the colonialists handled African education; they thought of creating African educational standards for the first time in the 1957-1960 period, and money for education continued to be disproportionately allocated in favor of Europeans and Asians. It was not until 1962 that 80% of the CEE candidates found their way to intermediate schools. Around that time almost all schools had seven or eight years of primary education. It was also in that year that expenditure on African education rose to 61 percent of the total money spent on education.

Explaining the lack of access of Africans to education during this period, Otiende and Sifuna (1992) give the following figures in terms of schools enrollments at both primary and secondary by 1963: At primary the figures were Africans (43.7 %), Arabs (39.8 %), Asians (77.5 %), and Europeans (74.6 %). In the secondary division, the figures were Africans (1.3%), Arabs (9.4%), Asians (80.0 %) and Europeans (98.9 %). In addition, there were also few schools and inadequate learning facilities. In terms of curriculum and content, it was basic education and was mainly labor based. These
conditions made Africans demand better education. Many of them began their own independent schools. But lack of adequate educational opportunities offered to African youth resulted, for many of them, in vagrancy. This was worsened further with the declaration of the State of Emergency in 1952. Describing the high levels of youth vagrancy especially in Nairobi during this period, Griffin (cited in King’ala, 2005) gives the following figures of African students, who were out of the educational system both at the primary and secondary by February 1962:

The Ministry of Education reported a primary school enrolment of 653,000 children, aged between 7 to 10 years. It was estimated that 119,000 children in this age bracket were out of school. In the intermediate range between the ages of 11 to 14 years, 228,000 children were in school and about 438,000 were not! Of the estimated 600,000 children between 15 to 18 years, only a small percentage was in secondary school! (p. 58)

Because of this increase in youth vagrancy and Griffin’s successful work at Wamumu, he was asked to become a colony youth organizer; his mandate included the establishment of Self-Help Youth Centres (Youth Clubs) throughout the country and the training of their leaders. The purpose of the centres reflects the educational historical context of the time in terms of lack of limited opportunities that Africans had for schooling. The Centers were meant to aid national development by supplementing the work of the schools and absorbing some of the increased numbers of youth who were engaging in vagrancy. Each community was required to provide land, buildings and equipment, and the leaders’ wages from its own resources. Most of the youth centers
offered a rudimentary type of education whose purpose was to occupy the idle youth and give them simple functional skills. Many of these youth centres later evolved into village polytechnics or “harambee” (self-help) schools when Kenya attained Independence, and supplemented greatly the educational efforts of the new postcolonial government. To reflect their low education status, the students who went through these centers were not allowed to sit for a recognized academic examination nor were they eligible for transfer to mainstream schools. There was also no need for them to aim for higher academic training.

Most of the 65 youth clubs that had been formed (with a membership of approximately 10,000) were in rural areas, especially in the Kikuyu homelands. Although much had been achieved in the rural areas, the city still continued to attract more dispossessed children of the Emergency. It was in this regard that Griffin was asked by his Commissioner to make a tour of Nairobi and advice him on how to handle the increasing problem of youth vagrancy. His proposal demanding the formation of eight clubs in Nairobi that were boarding in nature was refused. It was this refusal that made him to ask his Permanent Secretary if he could be allowed to start a private club. The acceptance was the foundation stone that saw the birth of Kariokor and Starehe clubs that later merged to form the SBC. The population of the boys grew quickly at the two clubs and by the end of January 1961, the two clubs had admitted approximately 593 boys.

Until the opening of the Starehe and Kariokor clubs, there was virtually no attempt made to care for the hordes of children living on the streets of Nairobi. A church club at Karen met once a week, another in Pumwani on two evenings. The Christian
Industrial Training Centre in Pumwani offered a full-time training course but only to those who had reached standard 7 in primary school and on a fee-paying basis only. The Save the Children Fund Home for the helpless children, Ujana Park, had closed early in 1958. There was virtually nothing else. All that a boy could look forward to was periodic arrest and judicial beatings, perhaps “repatriation” to his home area, where he would be unwelcome and from which he would promptly return to Nairobi and eventually, an Approved School or prison. The city authorities showed little interest in clubs or training centers, for they feared they could serve to attract more youngsters to the capital, and their desire was to clear the streets. The lack of facilities to address the youth vagrancy in Nairobi illustrates inadequate educational efforts that were being made by the colonial government to absorb the increasing number of youth. The start of Starehe and the conversion of many Youth Centres (Clubs) to “harambee schools” and village polytechnics thus indicate these early educational efforts that were being made to create more educational opportunities for the African youth.

The process of getting boys to join the clubs was a hard one due to the political tensions that existed between the Blacks and Whites owing to the events of the Mau Mau War and colonial rule in general, there was an understandable suspicion from the Africans on the real intentions of the clubs, which they saw as an extension of colonial educational programs. On the other hand, some Whites saw Griffin as a traitor. Discussing these tensions Hongo and Mugambi (2000) note:

Being a white Kenyan, Griffin was an automatic target of suspicion to the Blacks. How could you trust your “enemy” to be working for your good? The Blacks saw
Griffin’s mission as yet another way of trying to subject them into a White man’s terror. They saw him as a spy hiding behind the cover of a youth club. On the other hand, Griffin’s fellow Whites looked at him as a traitor! How could he develop such an interest to help a people with whom they had been fighting? An incident took place at New Stanley Hotel where the youthful Griffin was publicly challenged by his White colleagues to drop the idea of helping the Blacks. Others warned him that he risked to lose life if he continued with such a venture and he was publicly referred to as a “black leg”. At one point a close White friend of Griffin was shot just next to Starehe’s gate by some unknown Blacks. Griffin was undeterred, he went ahead with his plans. (p. 52)

The process of getting the boys to join the clubs involved persuasion through the local chiefs meeting with local communities, visiting the boys in their hideouts in the streets, river banks, and industrial areas of the city, where they sought food. Due to horrifying events of the war and State of Emergency many of the boys were afraid to join the clubs because they were terrified of authority. Some who had their parents killed in the war had little trust for anyone. With time as the boys came to trust Griffin and his team their numbers increased. When the chiefs realized the advantages of the new clubs, they became busy rounding up homeless boys for the clubs. Within a year Starehe club alone had over 100 members although the tiny “dormitory” could only hold 30 boarders. Few of the boys had come of their own free will: the clubs were still the object of suspicion among the local people, and new members often ran way, deterred by the disciplined routine and the hard work required of them.
Despite the early hurdles of getting the boys to join Starehe youth club, its purposeful, constructive atmosphere proved increasingly attractive, especially to the many boys who were secretly longing to escape from the hopelessness of scavenging on the street. Most of them came to the clubs at first through Elizabeth Jackson, the district officer at Makadara, well known for her kindness to those in need. This led slowly to steady development of the center starting from the two tin huts to permanent buildings and the offering of programs that were continually improved upon. From the beginning the aim of the clubs was to rescue and rehabilitate vagrant and destitute boys, and in so doing combat juvenile delinquency-- not by inaugurating a British-type recreational club but, rather, a training center in elementary academics and manual skills.

The early educational programs at Starehe youth club indicate Griffin’s early interpretation of the basic requirements of Kenyan needs at the period of Independence. Given the boys backgrounds, there was need to equip them with skills that were most vital to enable them to function in the new independent state. It was against this historical backdrop that Griffin argued that although occupation was the key word, it was imperative to keep the boys busy with useful activities beyond the provision of recreational activities. His clubs aimed at offering elementary academic and manual skills that included literacy, carpentry, signwriting, tinsmithing, leatherwork, all types of sports and games (particularly boxing), scouting, drama, and singing. In addition, the boys were also given the Government Trade Test exams to qualify them for adult employment. It was these modest educational provisions that Griffin set from the beginning to improve
on with time to make his students relevant in the new government hence his struggle from the onset to change the Centre from a youth club to a school.

Initial plans for starting numerous city clubs did not materialize. A third club at Doonholm Road, Makadara, specializing in tailoring training, closed early in 1962 due to poor levels of supervision and instruction. Even before this, in August 1961, Griffin had already decided to absorb the Kariokor club into the more spacious grounds at Starehe, believing that centralization was the best option for the effective management of his youth clubs. Joseph Gikubu, the principal of Kariokor, agreed to move Starehe to work under Geturo and during September of that year the first 50 boys were transferred. Through the merger, the duplication of some essential services was eliminated. The Kariokor building was converted into a dining hall for all the boys. Despite these improvements, the fierce of loyalty and rivalry implanted in the clubs made the migrants from Kariokor very upset. Some boys did not like the decision and almost caused uproar, a situation that was immediately resolved by a word of persuasion from their area Member of Parliament, Thomas Mboya and Griffin. With the merger of the two clubs the stage was set for the formation of SBC as it’s currently known. Mboya’s help to Starehe during its formative years was phenomenal in enabling it plant a foundational base. He was the first African political leader to interest himself actively in Starehe’s work. He paid them a visit at its earliest stages of foundation and became an astute supporter of the center, and its first patron.

Few of Griffin’s associates understood the past experiences and the clear–sighted resolve that had taken him to Starehe, his driving force, unaided courage, determination,
and effort behind his formation of the Nairobi youth clubs. To serve his aims, this school was required to operate outside the country’s educational system, since he himself was to decide how it was to operate and the criteria for admission. To succeed in his aims he had to disguise his school as a club. Martin (1978) succinctly observes that: “only by disguising his new venture as a ‘club’ could he hope to avoid breaking the law or offending the Government” (p. 11). His recommendations in the report he submitted to the government on ways of managing youth vagrancy had been ignored and neither was the colonial government willing to fund his clubs. Although the founding of Starehe can be said to have been Griffin’s personal achievement, but neither he or his cofounders and friends anticipated the eventual consequences of that first bold step into the unknown.

From the onset, Griffin sought to provide quality education to his students, refusing to concede to his critics’ arguments that the Center was in any way inferior to a regular school. Although different from the mainstream schools, Griffin wanted his students to be able to hold their heads as high as any student who came from the best schools in the country. From the beginning he destined to make it different from other clubs patterned along British models. Summing up his aims of starting Starehe and intentions to make it a strong educational institution he remarked:

From the beginning, I made up my mind that I would give quality parenting and the best education to the poor boys who came under my care. It was pointless to give the best care in the world if this was not matched by quality education, which could enable the boys to change their social standing. Passing exams very well
was the only way they would get quality jobs and change their social status when they left school. (King’ala, 2005, p. 68)

It was with this grand plan that although he had resident “principals”, Geoffrey Geturo at Starehe and Joseph Gikubu at Kariokor, he was determined to play an intimate part in the life and development of the two clubs. Although not a professionally trained educator, he was ready to use his previous minutiae educational experiences and to learn from the experts and relevant educational literature ways that could enable him to establish a strong academic institution. He was particularly interested in American attitudes of handling difficult and delinquent children. In 1960, he had the opportunity to spend four months in the United States, and he returned to Kenya doubly encouraged. First, he had received enthusiastic moral and practical support for his work in Nairobi. Second, he was convinced of the appropriateness of his own methods. Despite this progress, he continued to experience three major challenges: the lack of recognition of Starehe as a school, social welfare and political challenges.

**Struggle for Recognition**

Although the center was on the right track making slow but steady progress the route for recognition took five years. Griffin battled with educational authorities to have the school registered for the center was marked with grave suspicion. For instance, the Health Department and the city engineer were not impressed with its overcrowding and lack of approved facilities; the education officer was disturbed by Starehe’s attempts to masquerade as a formal school; the probation officer did not trust Griffin’s insistence on smart uniforms and the sense of corporate identity; the chief inspector of children
objected to the lumping together of large numbers of admittedly delinquent boys in substandard accommodation and an alarmingly “free” disciplinary regime. In addition, according to Martin (1978), there was a fallacious belief that intelligence levels of the vagrant boys who formed a great percentage of the population at Starehe was low and unsuited for academic work. No one believed that Starehe could constitute an educational institution.

Griffin understood well that he could not make any progress without a concrete building program and in 1961 he was pinning his hopes on the generous assistance of the Ford Foundation. His urgent needs included living space and facilities for the boarders, more classrooms, and more staff to cater for the increasing numbers of students. The more he pressed harder, for the registration, the more the authority concerned hardened its stance. This began to create tension among the students and the few staff members at the center. Griffin worked hard to strengthen and encourage members of the staff and students of the bright future of Starehe.

In 1961, although the center was given the mandate and official recognition as a “continuation school” for boys outside the mainstream national educational system, Griffin was discouraged from following the primary school syllabus and was warned that his students were not going to be allowed to take Preliminary Examination when they reached the equivalent of standard 7. This implied that they could never gain a secondary school entry nor attain any qualification while at Starehe apart from the trade test that was meant for artisan employment. Other challenges that hampered the registration of the school by the Ministry of Education were inadequate qualifications of the staff, the poor
quality of the classrooms, and lack of sanitary facilities. The youth club nomenclature, with its provision for a transient and voluntary membership, was not liked by the ministry either. Because of these deficiencies in 1963, the permanent secretary in charge of education permitted Starehe to function only for a year on the condition that new buildings were constructed failure of which it would forfeit its registration. The center did not have the huge sums of the money that were needed to build the classrooms. In order to alleviate the situation, Griffin embarked on the construction of temporary structures using borrowed timber from Timsales Company, prisons department and donations from the provincial administration. It was during this period, that the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) came to Griffin’s rescue by building the primary school section of the school.

During this period, Griffin ceased making excuses for Starehe’s magnetism, which was drawing in boys that technically ought to have been relocated to their home areas. Instead, he began thinking of Starehe as his personal contribution to the Kenyan nation. He reasoned that such a mission was destined to fail if it had boundaries or admitted boys based on their place of origin. It is in this regard that the ministry’s rejection to register Starehe as a primary school worried Griffin. He felt that the long-term solution to solving the boys’ problems was in Starehe establishing its own school and offering a sound education. According to Martin (1978), he reasoned:

Education was highly prized in African society, and its provision would assist the Centre’s remedial aims, most important, all its work would be wasted if a boy left only to find himself unemployable. Sending boys out to ordinary schools, the
normal practice of charitable institutions, was simply not good enough, the
problems of fees, fixed entry dates, previous expulsions, emotional disturbance
and possible provocation of teachers could only be properly resolved if the centre
educated its boys on its own ground. (p. 28)

In addition, Griffin was concerned about what was to happen to the boys if they
were not given proper education. These conditions made him to hold back some of the
bright boys for a year with the hope that they would be allowed to take the examination
in 1964. Although perhaps not the best decision, but that was the only option that Griffin
felt he had given the prevailing circumstances. It was not easy to prepare the pioneer boys
for the Kenya Primary Examinations and the Ministry of Education gave Griffin stringent
conditions to abide by. Despite all these hurdles, Starehe performed better than most of
the registered schools due to the determination of the volunteer teachers and students.
Their success gave Griffin the confidence to press for the registration of the secondary
school. Although Griffin was given tough conditions to fulfil by early 1964, Starehe was
not only registered as a primary school but as secondary school as well and was officially
opened September of the same year.

Social Welfare Challenges

Griffin also faced challenges from the social welfare department. He was accused
of being inexperienced and lacking qualifications in the field. A powerful lobby within
the colonial government protested that Starehe was trespassing on the territory of the
Approved schools and remand homes. He was indicted of using a sentimental approach to
juvenile problems that were preventing his seniors from solving youth delinquent
problems. The lack of order and supervision at Starehe was interpreted as implying that the center was leaning toward the idea of “free discipline.” Bearing in mind that most of the boys who were residing at the center were proven delinquents cases, it was seen as posing a security threat to the city’s residents. In addition, Griffin was accused of attempting to make “Etonians” out of destitute children. Although Griffin was supported by the officer in charge of provincial administration, the police and several juvenile court magistrates the feeling among the “experts” within the government authority was very profound and by late 1962, he was confronted by his permanent secretary, with an ultimatum to stop offering any educational activities at Starehe. In his memo to Griffin, he advised:

The best way to reduce the size of Starehe would be to remove some of categories of boys at present in training them, notably those on probation orders, those from outside Nairobi and all proven delinquents. This could be the first step, the long–term aim should be to turn away from the attempt to provide any form of actual education, and instead merely to supply occupation and past times for idle hands. (Martin, 1978, p. 36-37)

This ministry directive was totally in opposition to all the strides that Griffin had attempted to make in three years in Nairobi. Moreover, it was not easy to implement. Griffin’s ideas differed extensively with those of the “experts.” During this period, he was supported by John Nottingham, one of the earliest colonial officers to be interested in the problem of youth vagrancy. Despite these challenges, Griffin was clear in his conscience on what he was trying to do, it was work which few individuals were prepared to do and
there were minimal colonial structures in place for it. Further, handling was practically impossible to gain admission to the few small, carefully controlled children’s homes in Nairobi, and many boys committed to Approved Schools were not in fact admitted, because the schools claimed they were full.

It was not possible to reconcile Griffin and his adversaries because both had varied views on the best ways of solving juvenile delinquency. Griffin looked at the situation from a different perspective. The colonial “experts” seemed to have been more engrossed in the theoretical attitudes of care, correction, and education of the young, mainly derived from Britain where resources were plenty and education was free and compulsory. Their aim was to carry on their work within comfortable and manageable horizons, ignoring if need be the actual conditions under which so many Kenyan youth were living in at the time. Addressing the Kenyan Council of Social Services in 1961 in Nyasaland and their inability to address the problem of youth vagrancy, Griffin gave a diagnosis of Starehe’s difficulties and the educational realities of the time. He succinctly posed to his audience:

I would like to ask you whether you are shooting at the right target. There are large groups of children who have no spokesman, probably 80% of the children of this country are not at school. I would like to ask what we are to do about the rest, who have no basic discipline or preparation for life, no school background and often no parental control either. My last words to you are that you should go out and find these children, before it is too late. (G. W. Griffin, given speech, 1961)
Griffin’s criticism of “institutions” as he saw them in colonial Kenya was, first, that they tended to duck their primary obligation, for instance, taking positive steps that could train children for adult life in a harshly competitive society. He seemed to argue that even if they could not aspire to provide their own educational structure, they could take into account the contemporary Kenyan situation, rather than assume that there was a system of public education that would take care of all their requirements. On the other hand, they failed to take advantage of the African “extended family”, which meant that practically every child would have someone, somewhere, who would take an interest in him or her and provide a contact with the real world. In his view, rules and regulations based on Western patterns were likely to deprive a child the natural and precious right of community life. Addressing a child welfare seminar in Nairobi, Griffin argued:

We are in Africa! Let us use the social system of Africa to help us in our work, and not try to isolate the children in an antiseptic island on which their relatives may not venture save in official hours!... there was a tendency to perpetuate the Victorian notion that children from institutions were “second-class beings.” (G. W. Griffin, given speech, 1971)

Griffin did not trust the “love and affection” that was consciously bestowed upon destitutes by most of the expatriates who were busy decrying the institutional life. He saw education as the prime route through which the problem of vagrancy would be solved. Although a time consuming and costly investment, he felt it was the long-term solution to the problem. Explaining his position on this, he noted:
I have chosen to place as much emphasis on education as on care, trying to create the highest possible standards of primary, secondary and technical education as an integral part of what remains basically a social welfare project. This has been so costly and time-consuming that I hardly dare to commend the policy to you. All I can say is that, if I had to start again, I would do exactly the same. (Martin, 1978, p. 207)

Political Challenges

Although used to battling with authority, Griffin almost despaired in February 1961, when he was informed that his post in Community Development and much of the department itself was to be terminated due to economic reasons and he was to be deployed into the civil service on a junior rank, to continue his youth work in Nairobi and the countryside as a private citizen, if he wished to do so. According to Hongo and Mugambi (2000), he was like in essence, sacked, the reason being his involvement with an illegal institution in the name of Starehe. Although Starehe was considered a youth club and therefore under the Kenya Association of Youth Centres, it was not recognized as an educational institution; thus, anything to do with learning activities taking place in Starehe were considered illegal.

Griffin understood the underlying opposition to his ideas in government circles. Because of this, his official title was changed to a more constrained title “colony youth organizer.” As a private citizen with no standing in government at all, he would lose all power of independent action if it conflicted with established ideas. This decision was, however, rescinded, with campaigns and a petition to the governor from his friends and
supporters especially Dorothy Hughes who believed in the work that he was doing. There was also pressure from leaders of all races and political groups in Kenya. Yet Griffin was undeterred and determined to see to it that the school did not die. He apportioned his time between two offices, one in government and one at Starehe. Gikubu and Geturo did the bulk of the work keeping, the center together and to a larger extent lessening Griffin’s work.

**Challenges of Establishing “A Place of Safety”**

The last battle, hostility and misunderstanding between Griffin and the colonial government, was waged when Save the Children Fund (SCF) was planning its new operations in Kenya. This was with regard to its plans to establish the “Place of Safety” that was meant to provide accommodation and security for the vagrants in Nairobi. SCF intended to provide a transitional home before the children’s final placement to their respective families. The process of locating these children’s families and arranging for their settlement at home and the provision of school fees and other necessities could be long and complex and a “transit home” of some sort was necessary. The dispute continued for a year, Griffin’s opponents insisting that the concentration of large numbers of boys in a small area with inadequate supervision and “liberal discipline” was a risk to security. Starehe was accused of being used as a center of refuge by criminal boys to plot further delinquent acts, and it was seen as delaying a delinquent’s inevitable arrival in an Approved school. Approved schools were seen by the colonial government as better alternatives. Responding to the latter criticism and Starehe’s sound approaches, which had low criminal occurrences as opposed to the Approved homes, Griffin observed:
In three and a half years, there had only been two instances where a group of Starehe boys had committed a crime together. This was probably a good record as that of any of Kenya’s leading European schools. On the other hand there had been reports within the last three years of Approved School boys breaking out at night, robbing houses, smuggling drugs into schools and even growing it on the premises. The escape rate had also risen alarmingly and physical attacks on members of staff were becoming commonplace. Griffin steadfastly refused to accept that Approved Schools, with their prison-like regime of confinement, regimentation and poor educational standards, were the right agents to direct the compassionate venture being launched by S.C.F. (Martin, 1978, p. 43)

Despite this opposition, Griffin received a lot of support and generous contributions from local firms. This support enabled SCF Rescue Centre to open its doors for the first time in May 1961. The winning of this battle excited Griffin. To him it had disproved the colonial government arguments that the only way to handle vagrant children was to arrest them. The opening of the SCF Rescue Centre, however, did nothing to improve Griffin’s reputation in official quarters. It was seen as confirming that the center was attracting hard-core vagrants, delinquents, and innocent newcomers to the city. His critics saw the act of repatriation as having a statutory function that was exercised by specific officials in accordance with a court order. This function was now being illegally usurped by a voluntary body under the name of the SCF. Despite these outbursts on the SCF, Griffin was confident that he was offering a Kenyan solution to a Kenyan problem, and his courageous refusal to bow to hostile authority were rewarded
on March 4th, 1963, with the inauguration of the new place of safety. The place was to offer a more permanent base for boys under investigation and for those who in the end could not be returned. Griffin was offered the position of a honorary administrator of the Save the Children Fund in Kenya.

From the start Griffin was determined to give boys who came under his care the best education possible. The only two major handicaps he had were: lack of money and the right personnel. He knew this was to be overcome and he methodologically began putting systems in place. He argued that “with a strong foundation to stand on, I knew the sky would be the limit… I was not bothered by doubting Thomases who were convinced that nothing would be achieved with street waifs” (King’ala, 2005, p. 70). In 1961, Starehe received some special donation from the African Trust Fund and Nairobi Round Table No. One, which built for Starehe the first permanent structures. Soon after, Starehe got support from SCF, which had enormous effects on its affairs. The SC.F met almost all the expenditure including boys’ sponsorship and hiring of more teachers.

Griffin’s establishment of the SBC reflects the Kenyan educational historical context of the time and its legacy in the colonial period. It brings to afore the social, cultural, political and economic underpinnings that underscored the formation of SBC. In this phase, the findings illustrate the events of 1950s that comprised of the Mau Mau war of independence, the declaration of the State of Emergency and its effects on altering the African societies childrearing mechanisms and the state of the youth due to war during this period. The youth especially boys after the war were in a state of disarray due to a variety of reasons namely: death of their parents or detention or being forced out of
family land and placed in fortified villages; lack of food; and rejection by relatives. This coupled with a degenerated state of breakdown of social networks that had set in during the colonization period, stamped out traditional education, a situation that led to increased levels of youth vagrancy.

Due to colonial policies of education that were minimal, racial and segregative very few African youth had access to schooling both at primary and secondary levels thus many of them were on the streets. The situation was worse in Nairobi and was aggrevated further in the late 1950s. The colonial methods of addressing the situation through: rehabilitation programs; repatriation orders and; Approved schools were not effective in alleviating the problem. It is this state of affairs that saw the colonial government appoint Griffin based on his success with the Wamumu rehabilitation program as a Colony Youth Organizer. His mandate was to devise ways of engaging the “idle youth” into meaningful acts. This gave birth to youth clubs across the country. Although Nairobi was the most affected region the colonial government was not keen on setting up youth clubs in the city even with Griffin’s recommendations on the same. It is within this desolate state of affairs that Griffin sought permission to begin two private youth clubs one at Starehe and Kariokor.

The founding of Starehe in 1959 gives a reflection of: effects of colonialism on African education; effects of Mau Mau war and State of Emergency on the African family especially the youth; the colonial education policies that granted Africans minimal access to education; inadequate educational facilities and personnel and; the social, cultural, economic and political quagmire that the African youth were placed in
that gave them minimal options except engaging in vagrancy. It is within this framework that Griffin was very clear in his mind that his intention was to build something much more like a school than an ordinary youth club that would enable the youth overcome their difficulties and prepare them adequately for participation in nation building. From the beginning he observed:

I made up my mind that I would give quality parenting and the education to the poor boys who came under my care. It was pointless to give the best care in the world if this was not matched by quality education, which would enable the boys to change their social standing. Passing exams very well was the only way they would get quality jobs and change their social status when they left school. (King’ala, 2005, p. 68)

The period between 1959-1962 prior to Kenya’s independence after the founding of Starehe present the struggles of Starehe to get boys to join the Centre, suspicion from both Whites and Africans on its work, seeking of financial aid to sustain its programs, obtaining of essential facilities, constructing buildings to accommodate its increased student enrolments, wading of criticism from the colonial government of its approaches to handling youth vagrancy and social welfare services. Concerning the latter he was vehemently opposed to the Western approaches that the colonial government was using to address the situation that advocated for repatriation, probation orders and Approved schools. These approaches required adequate resources, and compulsory education which was not viable given the fragile economy of Kenya. For Griffin, the colonial approaches to solving youth vagrant problems were entrenched in theoretical strategies
that placed emphasis on attitudes of care, correction, and education whose sole concern was to carry out colonial work within comfortable and manageable horizons, without being cognizant of the actual conditions under which so many Kenyan children were living. Through his educational approaches at Starehe, Griffin set out to provide facilities in which waifs and orphans could grow as part of the community. He advocated homegrown approaches to alleviating the problem.

During this period, Starehe was taking on many special problems pertaining to youth vagrancy because there were minimal structures within the colonial government to tackle the menace. This is clearly evidenced in the fact that right from the beginning the government had refused to finance Griffin’s efforts in addressing the problem. In addition, there were few children’s homes and Approved schools that had been set up by the colonial government to tackle the same and many boys committed to Approved schools were not in fact admitted. This reflects the wider inadequate educational facilities and training programs that the colonial government had for African youth during this period. According to Ocobock (2005), this was done purposefully to serve the needs of the colonial state and to enable it maintain its status quo. It is this educational void that the foundation of Starehe was determined to fill. Through the educational process, Griffin hoped that African youth would be empowered to confront their societal challenges and be adequately equipped to contribute to Kenya’s national development.

Postcolonial Phase

The postcolonial educational activities of Griffin at SBC give a historical phase of the school that entails: Starehe’s recognition as a school and the evolution of its programs
to meet Kenyan needs. These efforts reflect wider Kenyan educational efforts and search for an effective education system that can foster its developmental goals. After Independence, Griffin felt secure due to the confidence the new independent Kenyan government showed in his educational policies and ideals. The Kenyan government not only provided land to SBC but it also started providing some aid in the form of teaching faculty. Members of the Kenyan cabinet who were familiar with Griffin’s work were willing to enhance his educational and welfare programs among the underprivileged especially if the methods and aspirations were African based. This support confirmed all that Griffin and his friends had fought for during the last years of colonialism.

In mid-1964, Starehe seemed to have reached the end of the long and weary road. It was assured of the government’s support and its reputation stood high at home and abroad. At this particular time, its first crop of candidates for the Kenya Preliminary Examinations were wondering what the future had in store for them in terms of their secondary education and Starehe’s ability to fund it. The Youth-Help-Campaign had illustrated how limited the resources of Kenyan charities were. There was thus urgent need for help if Griffin’s plans for establishing a secondary school were to materialize. During this critical period, there was a visit from Dr. Mulock Houwer, secretary-general of the International Union for Child Welfare. His short article in his Union’s Newsletter served not only to reinforce Griffin’s principles but led to a flood of international generosity beyond expectations. In the article he described Starehe as the best example of a private initiative of addressing issues of youth vagrancy that he had ever seen in a developing country and called it a model project that deserved funding. In his words, it
was ‘a flower in the mud’—an institution with an astonishingly efficient and dynamic avant-garde approach, in fact, a model project for Africa” (Martin, 1978, p. 49).

This appeal led to massive capital grants in the following years that transformed Starehe into a gigantic institution with a clear purpose and momentum of its own, overwhelming its founders. Among the key donors during this period were OXFAM; Nuffield Foundation; Mrs. Walter Kerr; the Danish government; the Danish Scouts Help Organization; Bernard Van Leer Foundation; the Government of Netherlands; the International Union for Child Welfare; Blue Peter; the German Protestant Central Agency for Development; Netherlands Comite voor Kinderpostzegels; the British, Norwegian, and Danish SCF. The Kenya government reacted positively to this international generosity. The lands department gave Starehe both the old and new sites a 99-year lease, with a small amount of nominal rent. It approved most of the building plans in record time and added additional acres of land to it on the Racecourse site. The rapid growth of Starehe beyond what the founders had anticipated was viewed by both Griffin and the Starehe community as a miracle. Griffin strongly believed that the growth of Starehe was a proof that God was involved in the activities of his people. He observed:

Boys sometimes ask me how one can proof the existence of God, and my invariable answer to this is that their own Centre provides all the evidence. I have been struck in time and again with the manner in which one door opens as another closes. We reach the end of one phase of development, and have no idea at all how anything further can be attempted. Yet after no more than a breathing space, a chance meeting or casual contact sets us off again. One or two such happenings
might be dismissed as coincidence, but not when they occur over and over again. My personal belief is that any scheme for the needy receives something special by way of divine intervention for just as long as the people concerned work to the limits of their own human ability. (Martin, 1978, p. 70)

Other key factors that guided Starehe’s growth during this early period were its efficient, transparent, accountable, and dedicated administrative and teaching staff. Despite the numerous challenges which Starehe was experiencing, their vision and unwavering purpose were essential to Starehe’s material success. A number of them worked to the limits of their abilities from the ordinary members of staff to the three Cofounders of the school. It was their sacrificial labors on which the growth of Starehe rested. In later years, due to his emphasis on forming strong relationality ties with his staff, Griffin was also able to attract committed administrators, many of whom came as foreign volunteers. It was this group that assisted him in setting up Starehe’s good solid systems. Among the key early volunteers who aided in the growth of Starehe in its vintage years were Roger Martin and Patrick Shaw. Speaking of the latter, Griffin remarked:

He was an incredible person, who could interpret my thoughts into reality. He was instrumental in transforming the school from a filthy slum to beautiful scenery. He ran all the extra-curricular activities single-handedly but very efficiently. He was very loyal to me and I could rely on him entirely. Most of the buildings in the school were built under his supervision. So incredible was he that if he was not
satisfied with the way a wall was built, he leaned on it and the stones fell down!

The Builder had to re-do it…. (King’ala, 2005, p. 72)

These men helped the secondary division to grow in its early years, against many odds. As new generations flooded in each January, the staffing position seemed to deteriorate even more rapidly. The ministry had by now increased its official “establishment” to six grant-aided posts; but for much of 1968 five of these posts were unfilled, largely because Starehe, unlike other Government secondary schools, had no housing for expatriates with families. Even after their leaving Starehe some of these early volunteers have remained in touch and have been strong ambassadors in Starehe’s financial campaigns overseas, especially through the endowment funds. One of the early British volunteers who has remained close to the center is Paul Whitehouse, who came to Starehe in the early sixties. He is currently the chair of Starehe United Kingdom Association that is comprised of former volunteers. He was the Chair of a very successful fund-raising appeal of the Starehe Endowment Fund which was launched in London by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne in 1996. The fund raised 1 million sterling pounds to endow 100 places perpetually for the needy boys at Starehe.

Other devoted expatriates who provided fruitful labors and devotion to the Center during its vintage years included Peter Attenborough, Sister Linda, Rex Roberts, Don Lowreys, Roger Beeneys, Sister Christiana, Vera Lewins, Andrew Passey, Donald Lamb, Rodney Bendon, Christopher Read, Erik Nielsen, Ramilla Ruparel, Rex Roberts, and Rev. “Bill” Owen. As the era of expatriate predominance gave way to fuller Kenyan involvement, new colleagues such as James Nyoike, Isaac Ngatia, Ernest Ahere, Raphael
Wanjohi, Eliud Wosonga, Ciciliama Puttanickal, and Jason Kihara, rendered splendid service. And there was always the fresh enthusiasm of the young volunteers that was enriched by the recruitment of Old Stareheans James Mungai, and Michael Kipande who were instrumental in strengthening Starehe’s growth. In later years, there was also enormous support from other Kenyan faculty members and support staff, some of whom that are still at the school. These include: Peter Ng’ang’a, Fredrick Okono, Elizabeth Pamba, Edith Karaimu, Samuel Obudho, Yusuf King’ala, Paul Mugo, John Imbira, Elizabeth Kangethe, Edwin Otieno, and Kennedy Hongo. Upon these shoulders Starehe cemented its foundation and growth. Although Griffin believed that a bad teacher was better than no teacher, and a greater number of these early volunteers rendered significant service to Starehe, some of them were not cut for the teaching profession. In King’ala (2005), he states:

I can remember times when half of the teachers left at the end of the year. Even worrying was when some of them tried to incite the boys. I could not believe my eyes when one British Volunteer stood up in assembly in front of the entire staff and boy population to make a farewell speech but instead tried to incite the school by attacking every aspect of my administration. But as I expected, my boys rose above the whole episode; nevertheless, I must give praise to the majority of the volunteers who did a wonderful job. (p. 70)

Staffing Difficulties

Griffin insisted on seeking African teachers, for it was his belief that an Africanized staff would provide continuity as opposed to the disruption of having
seasonal expatriate staff. His efforts at securing local staff were met with numerous setbacks. The reliability of the teaching staff was uncertain and there was an approximately 50% turnover every year from both the local Kenyans and the expatriates. Some of local difficulties with regard to recruitment were caused by the ease with which the well-educated Kenyans could find better remunerative jobs. Explaining how desperate the situation of attracting local staff to the school was during this period, Martin (1978) gives the following description to depict the magnitude of the problem:

A Kenyan science graduate teacher resigned after one term in his first teaching post. A technical instructor, asked to add three periods a week to his light timetable, refused point-blank and had to be suspended for insubordination. One man stayed for a year, found the pace too hot for him and resigned without notice on a plea of ill-health after his scheme for obtaining a secret transfer failed; another was posted to Starehe on completion of his Makerere B.Ed degree, arrived, took one look round and resigned on the spot. (p. 97)

Due to these difficulties, the secondary division was forced to depend excessively on its volunteer staff, an admirable thing from the standpoint of energy, morale, and extracurricular activity but less so where continuity and efficiency of school work was concerned. The staffing problems during this period affected the performance and continuity of the syllabus in some subjects. The 6th form, for example, suffered most especially in English, history, and geography where the turnover was very high. By 1971, geography, had virtually collapsed when the only member who was remotely capable of teaching it was interdicted. Prior to 1973, the appointment of teachers was difficult
enough; their incessant and often unexpected departures were even more frustrating. A few were the result of disaffection, usually because the man concerned could not bring himself to accept and work within the centers which had authoritarian structure.

Commenting on the latter, Wosonga notes that Griffin:

> Was too strict at the beginning and he found that he was losing a lot of teachers. The chain of command is what he wanted. When teachers did not want to engage in an argument with him, they asked for transfer. Thereafter he changed. (E. Wosonga, personal communication, July 11, 2005)

Despite these difficulties, there was, however, no possibility of removing the incompetent or dissatisfied elements from the staff, even when criticisms of the center’s administration and of Griffin himself reached dangerous proportions. In principle, the ministry had promised to gradually build up the posts in both the secondary and technical divisions until all the essential teaching staff were paid by the government; but every new year Griffin faced the same protracted rigmarole of queried estimates, mislaid letters, and accusations of over-establishment. More than once he was compelled in the end to break through the red tape by going straight to the top with a plea for urgent action, since the granting of a post was only the first step; then intent had to be entered, and to secure an expatriate for the job would still take another year. In the end, everything was always arranged and the establishment increased by about six posts each year. But the negotiations for a given year were not always completed before the first approaches for the following year had to be made.
In 1973, Starehe saw a breakthrough with regard to the formation of the established posts, when the Ministry of Education finally agreed to a planned annual increase, climbing to a full establishment of forty teachers for the two divisions in 1975. During this time, according to Martin (1978), the Van Leer Foundation bridged the gap with a final grant of 7,500 sterling pound; and in 1976, after a reassessment, the number of government posts was increased to 47, while the assistant directors in charge of each division became eligible for heads allowances. This progress seemed to imply that from now on the volunteer teaching help could be regarded, in theory, as an additional luxury whose work would enrich the center but without whom it could survive. The practical situation on the ground, however, was different because an established post was of no use unless it was filled with a teacher. Describing the reality of the situation, Gikubu noted:

For months in 1974 several forms had to go without Mathematics teaching; even in 1976 there was a critical situation which Griffin could only resolve by appointing a man himself and paying him out of Starehe funds. And there will always be the case like that of the geographer who walked in this evening and resigned with effect from this morning, in order to return to university. (J. Gikubu, personal communication, August 27, 2005)

Despite, these teething staffing problems, the boys accepted the situation calmly. The adverse effects over the years were far more outweighed by the fruitful labors of a spirited, devoted, and dedicated team of both Kenyan and expatriate teachers. It was upon these strong pillars that Starehe built and honed its academic excellence.
Administrative Difficulties

During the formative years of Starehe, the secondary division had a heavy leadership turnover, but despite these forebodings, there were no disastrous examination results. By 1972, the school had a sound administrative system and steadily improving examination outcomes as well as encouraging academic responses from the students; the stature of the staff had increased greatly, although according to Martin (1978), the school still suffered from “poisonous” and “destructive” staff room gossip with its criticisms of the center’s integrity, which threatened at times to tear the school apart. It seemed that only the passing of time, and the imperceptibly growing collective maturity of the staff, could resolve this problem. This was greatly improved with the coming of Raphael Wanjohi in January 1972. He managed to bring a magnificent serenity of temperament, together with real firmness of purpose, to bear on his work, and the boys responded significantly well to him and his administrative style although, he was suddenly transferred to Eastleigh Secondary School as headmaster. He was succeeded by David Hunter, who only lasted one term, leaving to become principal of the Friends’ College at Kaimosi. He was replaced by Rev. Bill Owen, who championed the academic success of the school for more than four years.

During this period of rapid change, Griffin ensured that there was basic continuity. He did this by keeping his own hand strongly on disciplinary issues and strengthening and empowering heads of departments through the formation of ‘Board of Studies’ under his chairmanship that was charged with enhancing academic standards within the school. Despite his heavy administrative schedules he took a close personal
interest in the minutiae of the school’s life. It is this grip that guided the school for several years with regard to improving its academic excellence, from 1974 onwards.

**Technical Education**

From Starehe’s opening of the secondary division, in 1965 Griffin established two streams, secondary and secondary-technical, and ran them concurrently unlike other Kenyan schools which had only one of the two. Griffin’s choice of both was guided by his vision of the future needs of his students based on their deprived socioeconomic backgrounds, their academic abilities, and Kenya’s labor policies that emphasized a skilled workforce. Since majority of Starehe’s students came from deprived environments, Griffin wanted to ensure that those who could not excel in the mainstream secondary division or those who had doubtful academic promise would excel in the Technical Education.

Until January 1966, Starehe’s technical division was comprised of boys who had no clear academic talents and whose aim was to pass the Ministry of Labour Trade Test for artisans. Despite their overall success, the division worked within limited spheres and this became clear with the formation of the secondary school. Griffin utilized the richer opportunities that were given by OXFAM technical building to train students in a course that would enable them sit for the Kenya Junior Secondary (Technical) Examination. This would give the students a qualification in basic academic subjects and a sound basis in engineering techniques, technical drawing, and workshop that could enhance their employment opportunities. The students learned motor mechanics, metal work, carpentry, and sign writing. Although the OXFAM workshops were ready for use, there was a grave
shortage of equipment, vital tools, and teaching faculty that made performing of practical work difficult. This made Griffin abolish the stream and absorb the boys into the secondary division the following year.

In 1969, with the building of workshops it made it possible to enlarge the division to enable it to run. With greatly improved facilities, engineering, motor mechanics and technical courses were added to the existing courses. At this time it was possible now to run a three year Kenya Junior of Secondary Education (KJSE) technical course and this led to the recruitment of a new form in 1969, under the full control of the technical division. Despite this progress, Griffin still feared future availability of qualified staff to run the program without expatriate volunteers support. Even with its new workshops, the division still labored under great hardships in terms of classroom space. The situation improved in 1970 with the intake of higher caliber of “vocational” engineering classes, the practical and experienced approach of Bill Glover, the division’s new head, improved supplies of materials and equipment, and the success with which the artisan students were securing jobs. The national importance of this division as one of Kenya’s national resources was emphasized by the educational permanent secretary, Mr. Gacathi, when he visited the center in March of the same year. He noted that the country possessed 800 secondary schools, but few technical training institutions, and it was a vital issue of policy that boys should learn “to use their hands as well as their heads” (Endeavor, 1970, p. 3).

By 1973, the second Netherlands building was opened, and the division moved entirely to new school, the old “artisan” courses were phased out. The Trade Tests were
viewed as not being a reliable measure and, with a more competitive labor market, the Grade III test was not an assurance of employment. Although most of them made a fair showing at the Kenya Junior Secondary Examinations (KJSE), it was abolished in 1972, immediately after the pioneer “vocational” class had sat for it and the boys obtained permission to do the basic engineering examination of City and Guilds, which the ministry abolished before the candidates sat for it. This required their staying on for a year to finish the course, a move that led to the birth of Starehe’s first Technical Form IV.

Starehe’s technical division was unique, and it was one of the country’s few technical schools that were fullfledged and well equipped to offer a full secondary technical course. The abolishment of the basic engineering examination of City and Guilds led to the introduction of its equivalent qualification, the East Africa Certificate of Education (EACE) Technical, which was to become mandatory for all technical schools. This meant that Starehe’s students who might have been “good with their hands” but lacked aptitude for academic work were now required to undertake examinations in English, mathematics, science and general subjects that were equivalent of Secondary EACE.

From the onset of the introduction of the technical division by the ministry, Griffin realized that the division could no longer be a place of refuge for the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) failures, and none of the students would be admitted to the Technical Form I unless they had demonstrated ability that met the secondary division entrance exam. This did not however, solve the center’s dilemma with regard to what was to happen to those students who had failed from Starehe Primary School, those many students with unhappy backgrounds who simply could not be prematurely thrown into a
hostile world. To solve this predicament, the school designed a temporary measure, introducing elementary Pitman courses in English, mathematics, and book-keeping, together with the old Grade III Trade Test. As in the past, Starehe purposed to find jobs for the boys upon their completion of school in 1974. To facilitate this, Griffin established a company (the Starehe General Engineering Co-operative Society Limited) in 1978. This was an industrial venture that aimed at creating a steady income for the school, in addition to employing and training a certain number of its own school leavers each year, in technical and commercial skills. Although it had a short span of existence, it was effective in meeting Starehe’s objectives at that time.

Griffin was opposed to the idea of the government phasing out technical education for he saw it as a vital avenue of training students who did not make it to the university and an essential source of skilled personnel. Commenting on Griffin’s views on technical education, Karaimu observed that “Griffin was a great advocate for the middle level technical colleges. He was advocating that those would be the radius in the development of our country…” (E. Karaimu, personal communication, September 3, 2005). Commenting further on the value of technical education and middle level colleges to the growth of Starehe, Griffin observed that Kenya’s educational planning needed to focus sharply on the expansion of middle-level institutions partly because of the growing numbers of those students who were unable to gain entry to the university and the fact that universities were already satisfying high-level personnel demands. He argued:

We need to be flexible and constantly evaluate training at tertiary level so as to redress deficiencies in terms of skills which are in short supply and reappraise
disciplines whose skills are abundant and therefore not an immediate priority. It all boils down to rationalizing educational training to match labor demands. Emphasis must be sharply focused on the type and nature of education which will ultimately produce individuals who can be effectively absorbed into the job market and hence activate improved productivity and economic growth. (“Falling varsity intakes: Case for new strategies,” 1995)

Accountancy and Computer Studies

The period between 1973 and 1981 saw Starehe improve and reshape its academic programs to enable it meet the demands of the country. This period marked its permanent positioning in the top ten secondary schools in Kenya and the phasing out of its technical high school. It was during this time that Starehe took a great leap in introducing post secondary school training programs, specifically, accounting. Initially, the school offered only accounts clerk national certificate courses which were low-level accountancy training programs, but in 1983, it introduced certified public accountancy course offering CPA1.

In 1988, with the introduction of the new system of education, 8-4-4, which came about because of the educational policy reforms of the 1980s, instituted to address unemployment difficulties experienced by both primary and secondary graduates in Kenya, Starehe undertook further reshaping of its academic programs to meet these new changes. It started a post-secondary institute to offer accountancy and computer courses, the latter funded by the Austrian government although it had been introduced to the school much earlier. Accountancy courses in this period were also raised to the second
level. These are two-year programs that cater for two-year gap period that Kenyan students have after their high school education before joining university. The two courses blended well with Starehe’s old programs and they were introduced mainly to train those students who did not qualify for a university education. Commenting on the reason behind the introduction of these courses, Griffin noted:

> Our initiative in setting up a Computer and Accounts college was our natural response to the question of those boys who fail to gain university admission but are obviously capable of pursuing further education to enable them to join gainful employment. ... Post-secondary education must be geared towards ensuring that the young pursue skills which will adequately prepare them for the job market so that they can meaningfully participate in national development. (“Falling varsity intakes: Case for new strategies,” 1995)

To increase the academic qualifications of its students, from early 2000, Starehe affiliated itself to the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, with whose mandate it offers a diploma course in computer studies. In addition, Starehe offers its own internally designed and examined diploma in Information and Communication Technology. This enables students from Starehe who have undertaken the course to go for a three year instead of a four-year degree program in information related fields. In these courses, Starehe focus has always been on quality rather than quantity and is guided by market demands. Commenting on Griffin’s vision in introducing diverse courses at the institute, Okwemba noted:
I think he kept meandering depending on the needs of the day. When it was convenient to bring out people with technical skills, he had a technical school in place. When he thought that accounts were the in thing he created an accounts class and in two years when you joined the accounts class you would leave with a CPA qualification. When he found himself with more facilities after the old system he thought of expanding the school and making a university, so I think he kept abreast with educational development not just in Kenya but also in the world. (D. Okwemba, personal communication, July 17, 2005)

This constant reinvigoration of its courses has made Starehe one of the leading partners in Kenya’s youth education. Starehe was among the pioneer schools in Kenya to offer computer and accountancy programs and it is not surprising that there are a lot of Starehe old boys on the forefront of information technology and in business-related sectors in Kenya.

Expansion of Secondary and Tertiary Education

Focusing on the future demands of Kenyan society, in the last five years Starehe has sought to expand its secondary and institute education. This has meant phasing out of its primary section of the school and more investments in secondary and tertiary levels. The reason behind this was because Griffin realized that with the introduction of free primary education and the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and global advocacy of Educational for All (EFA), there were far more adequate groups taking care of basic primary education both at the governmental and non-governmental levels. With this foresight, he saw a future high demand for secondary and tertiary education. Explaining
the global education demands in the last five years and its impact on secondary
education, Kivuva (2004) suggests that global market competition, growing access to
primary education, and the new information technology during this period have created a
fast growing demand for more and better secondary education services in developing
countries. Expansion of secondary education has been seen as vital to faster
industrialization of developing nations. This is evidenced in the increase in developing
countries of secondary school gross enrollments. For instance, with industrialization, the
newly industrialized countries of Korea, Malaysia, and Mauritius had achieved secondary
school gross enrollment ratios of 42%, 34%, and 30%, respectively. By 1991, these ratios
had risen to 88%, 58%, and 54%, as compared with Kenya’s 29% (MPET, 1988). It is
within this frame of thinking that Starehe in the last decade has strived hard to increase its
investment in secondary and tertiary education. Currently, plans are underway to start a
university in partnership with other five institutions. The purpose of this increased
investment has been the government’s quest to provide quality education to modern
Kenyans who are capable of fostering its developmental goals.

Griffin’s establishment of SBC in the postcolonial period reflects Kenya’s
educational historical context of the time and its legacy. The phase presents the growth of
Starehe from two tin huts to a modern complex institution. The phase discusses the
educational historical growth of Starehe in terms of: its struggles to be recognized as a
school and the opposition it faced from the Ministry of Education and its final registration
in 1964; and the difficulties faced by Starehe in these early decades with regard to:
finances, land, classrooms, workshops, teachers, facilities, low academic levels and
continuous reviews of its educational programs. In addition, this period also presents the current historical educational position of Starehe and how it has been negotiating its educational difficulties and equipping its students for Kenya’s developmental needs.

This period depicts the inadequate educational institutions, facilities and personnel that were in Kenya at the time of its independence that reflect colonial educational structure of the time. These are evidenced in Starehe’s challenges during this period. It was difficult for Starehe to get Kenyan teachers despite Griffin’s constant requests and the Ministry of Education’s constant promises. Varied reasons accounted for this: new promising jobs for early African graduates and limited training opportunities for African teachers provided by the colonial government. Thus, with the dawn of Independence, there was intense need by the Kenyan government to find more trained African teachers. Providing adequate educators to the numerous new schools that were being built to accommodate the large Kenyan school age population, with no access to education prior to Independence, was a daunting task for the new independent government. This expansion had not been adequately planned for and it created new staffing difficulties. The spillover effects of this crisis were later felt at the secondary level due to the increased numbers of primary graduates. It is in this regard that the government in the mid-seventies began a recruitment program to employ untrained teachers to ease the problem.

The findings bring to the fore the new Kenyan government replication of colonial methods of registration of schools. This is seen in its strict regulations of school registration that required schools to have sufficient space for classrooms, teachers,
textbooks, and buildings. Although this might have been a good move to check on the quality of education that was being offered, the process of approval took too long at the peril of a society in dire need of education that few existing schools were not able to provide. Starehe’s constant reinvigoration of its educational programs during the postcolonial period reflects Kenya’s educational evolution and its struggles to foster development. Although Starehe does not give a wholesale picture across all Kenyan schools, because of its charitable stature which gives it some autonomy to function independently on some educational issues, it does to a larger extent present the picture of Kenyan education over the years.

Between 1959 and 1962, Starehe was engaged more in artisan courses—literacy, carpentry, sign writing, tinsmithing, and leatherwork. These were “transitional courses” that were meant to give the boys quick skills that could allow them to function in society. Years after Independence brought great hope to Africans who had suffered discrimination in all spheres of life during the colonial rule. Colonial education was structured along racial lines, with Africans getting the least advantage in the system. The period between 1963 and 1971 were years when Kenya was confronted by a high shortage of skilled workers to run its economy. Education was viewed as a gateway to training the required workforce. This was the central objective of the government’s Sessional Paper Number 10 of 1965 and the Ominde Commission that formulated the new educational policy. In this policy, education was seen much more as an economic, rather than a social, service, a key means of alleviating the shortage of domestic skilled workers and a vehicle for creating equal economic opportunities for all citizens. The organization of education was
closely linked to the management of human resources and labor market needs. These were the objectives that formed the framework of Kenya’s first and second developmental plans of 1964/1970, and 1970/1974.

For Starehe to fit into this postcolonial education plan, Griffin strived to move it from a club to a school so that his students could attain the technical skills that were required to build the new nation. Immediately after registration, Starehe begun two wings of education—the technical and secondary wing, both aimed at enabling its graduates to meet the demands of the new independent state. The opening of both wings, unlike the regular schools which had only one secondary wing, was to enable the weak Starehe graduates who failed to excel in normal secondary education to gain skills that could enable them get employment. The employment prospects for the weak form 4 leavers was worsening rapidly, and many of these students were still too young to be abandoned to the cut-throat world of Kenyan jobseekers. To meet their needs, Griffin introduced a “commerce course,” lasting for a year and three months, which would prepare such students for the Accounts Clerks Examination of the Kenya National Secretaries and Accountants Board. This was meant to provide a valuable qualification for their professional employment.

Starehe’s problems of lack of teachers, equipments, and workshops to enable it to run its technical division is a reflection of the wider Kenyan difficulties that most technical schools were experiencing at the time. This depicts the scarce government’s resources during this time that could not enable it to meet its demands for technical education. The Kenya government’s efforts at investing more in secondary education
during this period were influenced by the human capital theory that led to the growth of secondary school enrollments. It was a growth that continued to be experienced in the 1980s. During this period secondary education enrollments grew rapidly. Education was seen as a vehicle for individual mobility and a good life. Although during this period, education seemed to have expanded drastically its expansion did not tally with the country’s economic growth. Thus, most school dropouts were soon left out without jobs or training. By 1970, secondary school dropouts began to experience unemployment.

In 1975 the government realized that its education system was not meeting its objectives. The education sector was experiencing problems of unemployment for its graduates. According to Kivuva (2000), “most secondary school dropouts still preferred being employed in offices as clerks, secretaries or managers” (p. 3). These were perceived as prestigious jobs compared with the technical, mechanical, and agricultural jobs. Because of these educational difficulties, the International labor Organization (ILO) started calling for change in the education system (ILO Report, 1972). It is in this regard that the Kenyan third developmental plan of 1974/1978 emphasized effective utilization of human resources and further development of appropriate skills at all levels. The education system was required to produce, among other things, high-level skills needed for economic and industrial growth. To meet this demand, the plan advocated the introduction of vocational/technical training programs as well as the promotion of appropriate attitudes favorable for development. In addition, it also sought to make education more beneficial to both the individual and the nation. The plan laid emphasis on the practical and technical components of education.
In order to address the problem of wastage during this period, the government placed emphasis on technical education so that those who were not able to go on with secondary education could receive training that could lead them to either self-employment or grantee them jobs in the nonformal sector. A critical examination of Starehe’s programs during this period indicates more investment and increase in its donor funding for its tertiary technical section of the high school and a phasing out of the technical wing of secondary education. All these changes were aimed at ensuring that its graduates would meet the needs of Kenya’s third developmental plan.

In 1976, there was the formation of the National Committee on Educational objectives and Policy (Gacathi Report). It emphasized the provision of free primary education. The report observed that there was need to integrate secondary education with the nonformal sector so as to cater for the school dropouts and unemployment challenges. It recommended the introduction of more technical subjects in secondary education. It sought to restructure the educational system to enable it meet the demands of the country and to prepare the candidates adequately for the labor market. It also endeavored to address issues of quality, relevance, and equity in education. The report laid more emphasis on pre-vocational, technical, and practical education. Starehe’s response to these demands was to expand further its technical division. It also introduced a commerce course and expanded the accountancy program. These efforts were aimed at training its graduates adequately for the challenges of the Kenyan labor market.

The 1980s witnessed the government’s change in its educational policies. The government sought to address employment difficulties which were still being experienced
by both primary and secondary school graduates. As early as the 1970s, the ILO report showed that there was a need to make changes to the education system in order to help reduce unemployment. The ILO recommended increasing technical aspects of education. There were also proposals from the United Nations and World Bank pertaining to the educational plans of most Third-World countries that had attained their independence in the 1960s and 1970s. The UN proposal focused more on the production of a skilled workforce, reducing social inequalities and providing basic education for all. The ILO proposal for vocationalizing education was supported by the World Bank. This led to the establishment of technical and vocational training centers with financial assistance from developed countries. The International Development Agency (IDA) was instrumental in spearheading the logistical fundings of equipments required by various secondary schools across the country. These conditions necessitated the Kenyan government to change its educational approach that had existed since Independence. The government sought to establish an educational system that would make Kenyan citizens self-reliant. To effect this proposal, the Kenyan government formed a Presidential Working Party on the Second University in 1981 (Mackay Commission), to explore possibilities of attaining this need. Its purpose was to enable the youth to play a more effective role in the life of a nation by giving them the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitude required for work and social development.

It was with this mind-set that the Mackay Commission recommended the establishment of a second university that was geared to addressing the needs of the country in terms of providing higher education that emphasized vocational courses. It
underscored the need for education to address national development. It gave rise to the current Kenyan 8-4-4 system of education. Education under this commission was designed to provide lifelong skills; make individuals self-sufficient; and productive in agriculture, industries, and commerce.

In order to meet the objectives and demands of the new system of education and improve the quality of its graduates unlike other Kenyan schools, Starehe started a postsecondary diploma institute to offer accountancy and computer courses. It also became affiliated to Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and technology to offer a diploma in computer studies. The purpose of this was to make use of the two year gap years before its graduates go to university and to prepare them adequately for the immediate and future dialectical demands of Kenyan labor market. The institute was also meant to enable its graduates who did not qualify for university education to acquire skills that were essential for securing employment. In order to harness further Starehe’s excellence and to contribute to Kenya’s educational development Griffin, in partnership with five other institutions, began plans to establish Concord University, an ongoing process. The university is expected to expand further, the mission of Starehe of educating modern Kenyans and creating more educational opportunities for the poor to access higher education.

Summary

The founding of Starehe reflects Kenya’s educational historical contexts both in the colonial and postcolonial period. Through the founding of Starehe, Kenya’s educational struggles over the years are reflected, efforts to reform its educational system
to enable it to alleviate myriad societal challenges are made clear. Additionally, the foundation and growth of Starehe reflects Kenya’s efforts to reshape its national character through the educational process. Over and above, it can be deduced that a critical examination of Starehe’s spiral educational programs over the years provide insights on the future shape and form of Kenya’s tertiary education in the next decade and beyond. The examination reveals the challenges and necessary resources that can make Kenyan graduates relevant to its developmental agenda. It is with this thinking that “Griffin always had a new project up his sleeve, wasting no time to move on to the next one, and doing it with admirable perfection” (“Griffin waged a courageous battle against cancer,” 2005).

By and large a historical overview of education in Kenya that is reflected in the founding and growth of Starehe shows certain, almost definite, social, cultural, political, and economic trends and concerns in education reform during different periods of Kenya’s history. Kivuva (2000) notes that after Independence, the main concerns of the Kenyan educational system were how it could create national consciousness, adequate personnel to fill jobs left vacant by foreign expatriates, address societal needs, improve quality of African education, and how it could be expanded and made accessible. In the early 1970s, the central concerns of the educational system were how to curb the increased levels of unemployment in the country and how to improve and enhance quality of education. Between 1975 and 1985, the Kenyan education system was more preoccupied with revising the previous educational policies, creating new proposals on how to improve the educational process, and working to ensure that education that was
being offered was relevant to the needs of Kenyan society. The late 1980s were marked with more revisions and curriculum reviews and enhancement of the quality of education. In the 1990s, the main issues of concern were how to improve the quality, equity and accessibility to Kenyan education.
CHAPTER SIX

GRiffin’S INSIGHTS ON KENyan YOUTH EDUCATION

It is possible to run a school by methods contrary to those generally accepted and practiced in Kenyan schools—for instance, giving pupils’ considerable freedom of movement and speech, by training them to handle major responsibilities in the administration of their school; by bringing them, without force, to reject bullying within the school and to joyfully accept community service outside it. By enabling them to follow a wide range of co-curricular activities without prejudice to academic work, and generally by creating an environment in which discipline and punishment terms are clear and in which pupils are orderly, yet happy and free from undue stress.

(“Learning how to lead Starehe- style,” 2001)

Introduction

This chapter examines Griffin’s insights on Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial periods in light of his functions as an educator and administrator. Griffin’s views on Kenyan youth education evolved over time and many of them emanated from his experiences in Manyani and Wamumu Detention Camps, his work as a colony youth organizer and director, of the NYS and the SBC.

Griffin as an Educator

Although originally an army officer, Griffin spent most of his life in the practice of education pioneering new educational approaches to problems that were confronting Kenyan schools. From the onset of his involvement in Kenyan youth education, he
realized that education was a central factor if the boys he had taken under his care, drawn from deprived conditions, were to overcome their challenges. It was not enough to offer shelter, food, and medical care without equipping them with high quality education that could enable them to change their social standing. From the start, his aim, therefore, was to build a ladder that would enable the poor boys who had absolutely nothing to move up to whatever level their intellectual capacities and abilities could propel them to. He wanted a ladder with the bottom rungs in the slums and top ones in the university, so that the boys could climb right up into their respective careers. Recalling his underlying purpose for engaging in education during Starehe’s 40th Anniversary, he noted:

My first objective was to provide disadvantaged boys at that time, those orphaned or separated from their families as a result of the independence struggle with food, clothing, medical care and security that they desperately needed. Once this was achieved, I had to think of their future. It was plain that only a first-rate education could ensure their long-term welfare. Therefore, I began to build an educational ladder, the top rung of which would one day rest at the doors of a university and which would have side-branches in technical and business training.

(G. W. Griffin, given speech, July 24th, 1999)

Griffin did not have any educational philosophy when he became involved in Kenyan education, however, he knew he wanted to give his students the best education possible. To achieve his goal, he was ready to learn from all the key stakeholders in education including educational experts, his students, faculty, support staff, friends, administrators, and other schools within and outside Kenya. In addition, he did a lot of
readings on anything that was educational, particularly literature on the founders of top schools in the world. Describing Griffin’s approach to creating a sound education system at Starehe, King’ala observed:

Dr. Griffin’s educational philosophy has evolved over many years. He was not shy to admit that when he started Starehe, he didn’t have a set philosophy of education. However, he knew he wanted to give his boys the best education in the world. He did this by reading anything on education, which he could lay his hands on. He read about the founders of top schools in the world, like Eton, Winchester, Christ Hospital, Gordonstown, Abbatsholme to name a few. (Y. King’ala, personal communication, August 28, 2005)

Pragmatic Education

Griffin believed that a sound education system should be pragmatic, dialectical and innovative. If something worked, he enhanced; if it failed, it was discarded. It was because of this flexible approach to education that he was in a continuous pursuit of the best educational approaches that could enable his students to contribute effectively to the Kenyan nation. Commenting on his pragmatic approach to education he noted:

Our systems were pragmatic geared to the Kenya situation, and the real difficulties by which we were confronted. If something worked, we fostered and developed it. If it did not work, we threw it out and tried an alternative. I believe that, in any important enterprise, it is essential to have a clear purpose to work towards, but that it is not wise to bind oneself too tightly to plans. The problem with plans is that they may deprive you of the flexibility you need to meet
changing circumstances. Indeed, a good motto for any head is *Solvitur Ambulando* (we solve it by going on) -- the need for innovation becomes clear as you work, and seek people’s support for it until you get it. (Griffin, 1996, p. 4)

This approach to education enabled Starehe’s educational methods to improve, reputation, to spread and admission pressure began to come from rural districts that wanted to join Starehe. This made sense, particularly as the original problem of the Mau Mau orphans had abated. In 1973, Starehe’s intake ceased to be from Nairobi alone and became national.

**Benefit-Based Education**

From the beginning, Griffin knew that the education he wanted to offer to his students would have to be different from the ordinary type that was being offered by government schools. He had two quotes that were strategically placed on the wall of his office to exemplify the type of education he wanted to offer to his students. It was a type of education that embraced views of philosophers: Aristotle and Confucius. Borrowing from the two he advocated for an education that was beneficial to human beings and noble in enabling them to solve life challenges. It was an education that had to create equality of persons and tear down walls of class distinctions. Quoting from Aristotle and Confucius he noted:

> There is a form of education which should be given to our sons not because it is useful and not because it is necessary, but because it benefits a free man. And because it is noble. (Aristotle 384-322 BC)
By nature men are much alike; it is learning and practice that sets them apart. In education there are no class distinctions. (Confucius)

Attitude-Changing Education

Griffin believed that Kenya had good young people who were academically superior to any other in the world; the trouble, however, was that the education system did not nurture them well. A good Kenyan educational system was thus expected to have faith, courage, and less fear in addressing difficulties that were confronting youth. This is the mission that educators are expected to address in the teaching and learning process. For this to be realized, Griffin underscored that educators must alter the “attitude” of the young people to enable them to develop into responsible citizens. Schools are therefore expected to put the needs of the learners at the core of their mission. In 1976, presenting his views to the national committee examining the basic objectives and policies of education in Kenya, he argued that “there is nothing fundamentally wrong with our boys and girls; they will respond positively and joyfully to proper training and control. The fault is ours for not providing it. Schools should be run for the good of the pupils, not for the convenience of the teachers…” (Martin, 1978, p. 209).

According to Griffin, it was this change of attitude approach that had brought good results to Starehe. It made the students develop pride in the school and motivated teachers to give their best. Due to the soundness of the students’ attitude to education, Starehe has never, in all its years of existence experienced discipline problems. Starehe’s attitude to education has been nurtured through trust. The students know beyond any reasonable doubt they can place their trust in the key members of staff. Although these
men and women may be impatient, difficult or angry, on some occasions, they are seen by students as human and completely trusted in their educational shepherding mission. This is partly because they have been at Starehe for a very long time and are always there, both in the terms and holiday periods. It this tradition of hard work which the teachers have built up through their incessant, relentless work across the years that challenges students.

**Wholistic Education**

Griffin advocated for a wholistic education. He wanted his students to get an education that would prepare them adequately to face their world with confidence and permit them to make a positive contribution to it according to their means. It was an education that had to blend academic and co-curricular activities. It was expected to make the students tough, reliable, honest, hardworking and real gentlemen. In his challenge to the guests and parents during the school’s 35th Founders Day, he posed the following questions to them to underscore his views on the kind of wholistic education he expected Starehe students to obtain:

What are your aspirations for your son? Power? Money? Fame? Indeed such things may await him somewhere down the corridors of time. But, for the present, it would not be wise to hold such fantasies before his eyes. Rather link with us, in a common aim to make him a “whole man”. A “whole man” is ardent in piety towards God, strong in patriotism and no petty tribalism, just in all his ways, resolute in honesty and impregnable to the temptations of corruption, devoted to duty, no stealer of his employer’s time, always willing to go the extra mile,
courageous in adversity, peaceful at temper but no coward, protector of the weak, prudent in decision making, temperate and honorable. (Hongo & Mugambi, 2000, p. 56)

It was because of his emphasis on wholistic education that Griffin encouraged numerous groups, societies, and sport activities in the school. Starehe has over 44 flourishing clubs, societies and activity groups. A good deal of liberty is allowed in the use of leisure time, permission is freely granted for boys to leave the center on weekends, and visits are made to theatres and other cultural amenities within Nairobi. Students are encouraged to excel in all these activities the same way they do in academics. Just like the latter, they are encouraged and honored.

Starehe’s belief in wholistic education saw it accepted into the International membership of the Round Square Conference of Schools, an association of more than 50 world leading schools on five continents whose educational systems are directed at educating the “whole person”, in line with theories of experiential educational philosopher Kurt Hahn. Hahn believed that schools should have a greater purpose beyond preparing students for college and the university. He believed that it was crucial to prepare students for life by having them face it head on and experience it in ways that would demand courage, generosity, imagination, principle, and resolution. He felt that young people should be empowered and permitted to develop skills and abilities that will allow them to be leaders and guardians of tomorrow’s world.

All member schools of Round Square view learning as an ongoing self-confrontation and formation process whose fundamental objective is wholistic
development of every student in the realms of academics, physique, culture, and religion within a supportive school environment. The association underscores the importance of giving service to others, adventure, leadership training, responsibility, and international understanding. All these are seen as essential in preparing young people to meet the challenges of the future with confidence and compassion. Students attending Round Square schools make a strong commitment, beyond academic excellence, to their own personal development and responsibility. This is achieved by participating in community service, work projects, exchange programs and adventure, which can, and often does, take students to different parts of the world. The students in Round Square schools are part of the Round Square International Service (RSIS) which espouses philosophy that requires youth to blend education with community service. The aims of the RSIS are to encourage young people to give and enjoy voluntary service. RSIS enables young people from many cultural, national, and racial backgrounds to work together with and for those who are in need in various parts of the world.

Round Square schools are founded on a philosophy that embraces a series of six precepts: internationalism, environment, democracy, adventure, leadership, and service. Students at Round Square schools make a commitment to addressing each of these pillars. The overriding goal is to ensure the full and individual development of every student as a whole person through the simultaneous realization of academic, physical, cultural, and spiritual aspirations. Starehe is among the six schools in Africa who are members of this conference and the only one in Kenya. Further, it is the only school in the Round Square Conference, which admits students mainly from destitute backgrounds.
and educates them on charitable funds. In 1996, Starehe hosted the annual International Round Square Conference under the joint chairmanship of His Majesty King Constantine of Greece and Her Excellency Sonia Gandhi of India. The theme of the conference was “Preparing Together for Service and Responsibility.” The reason for the choice of Starehe was because of its commitment to wholistic education. Commenting on this, the editor for the official conference magazine, ECHO, noted:

Indeed Starehe was the most appropriate venue for the conference, since as an institution it specializes in providing a good complete education. It is a living example of the fact that despite limited resources, the responsibility of service can well be undertaken if there is proper commitment and preparation. (“Hahn’s philosophy comes alive at Starehe,” 1997)

It was because of Griffin’s value for wholistic education that he supported and nurtured Starehe’s holiday Voluntary Service Scheme, where Starehe students render free service to the Kenyan nation during their vacation. The idea was borne out of the students’ “baraza” (Parliament) in the early years of the school when a student asked how they could show gratitude to their sponsors for the generosity they had bestowed on them. The scheme was begun very modestly in 1966, when seven boys spent their August holiday working without payment at the Nairobi and Kenyatta Hospitals, in response to Presidents Kenyatta’s call to all young people to participate in nation building by giving service to society. Through the scheme, Starehe’s virtues of hard work and loyalty to one’s country were demonstrated. Griffin believed that the Voluntary Service Scheme was education in the widest sense of the word, and he was willing to commit money and
other resources to it just as he would to academic subjects or any of the school’s projects. Through the scheme, students give up at least three weeks of their vacation to offer free services to the community— in hospitals, old people’s homes, churches, children’s homes, libraries, schools, and government offices. There is no pressure on boys to volunteer and no reward of any kind is given to them.

From the beginning of the scheme, Griffin underlined three ways in which the scheme would be beneficial to the student in terms of adult life. First, the student is required to learn how to find satisfaction in the humblest type of work and not to be discouraged by boredom or challenges faced. Two, the student is expected to be humble with regard to his or her approach to life. Through the scheme, the student puts into practice the scheme’s motto “If you are given a coffee cup to wash, wash it better than any coffee cup has ever been washed before in the world!” (Hongo & Okono, 2005, p.20). This motto encompasses both the idea of excellence and the admonition that no task is too menial, or too lowly, to be performed well. Third, the student is expected to practice the principle of “stickability.” Explaining Griffin’s views on this, Martin (1978) writes:

He shows us how people fail and become helpless because they give up on a job when they meet a difficulty, or because another job seems more attractive. He tries to make us understand that it takes time to do anything well, and that one cannot get far in the world unless one sticks to one’s work. (p.185)

It was with this conceptualization of work that Griffin believed that people must be committed to their professions and not be lured by money to grass-hop from one job to
another without caring about the damage this does to professional growth and to the recipient(s) of the service. He strongly advocated for apprenticeships and the aspect of people sticking to a job long enough, if possible for their entire working life. According to Martin (1978), there are various conditions that govern the Voluntary Service Scheme. The first job must be of pure service and the student must be prepared to perform any duty given to him no matter how disagreeable; the student must wear a smart school uniform, be punctual and work normal hours; and lastly, he must not accept any financial remuneration of any kind. The scheme is popular with students, and approximately 200 boys volunteer their services each term, which means that slightly over six hundred students give their services each year to the community. Each student is required to bring back a written report at the end of the holiday job.

The Voluntary Service Scheme was seen as an avenue that offered students an exposure to the real-life work environment; and, in some instances, it guided their career choices. Commenting on the schemes role in the students’ career preparation, Okwemba remarked:

In a way it prepared us for the careers that we would later take on in life. You would find guys who went to Kenyatta National Hospital and most of them ended up being doctors. You would find guys who went to the Voice of Kenya they would later end up as broadcasters. You would find people who went to newspapers ended up being journalists. That exposure, I think, helped most us to focus on how working life is, it prepared us for adult life and made us to
appreciate what hard work is all about…. (D. Okwemba, personal communication, July 17, 2005)

**Education for Service**

Presenting his views to the Kenyan National Committee examining objectives and policies of education, in 1976, Griffin emphasized the need for educational institutions to provide sound moral training, inculcate self-discipline and, initiative and, above all, instill a spirit of service to the nation. It was only through the latter that the educational system could make a positive contribution to society. He argued:

In our schools . . . we should surely be striving to give sound moral training, to inculcate self-discipline, initiative and a spirit of service. We want our young people to leave school not expecting to be spoon-fed by the government, but with a realistic knowledge of the problems they will meet, the cheerful courage to face such problems and the initiative to overcome them. We want them to possess the moral principles that will enable them to overcome temptation to steal and cheat and defraud those who trust them. We want them to use part of their time and talent in service to the country and to the less fortunate. . . . (G. W. Griffin, given speech, 1976)

Griffin saw education as an avenue of service to society. He argued that a head who puts all his attention into trying to improve the teaching/learning of academic subjects is likely to be disappointed by the ultimate examination results. Whereas the head who concentrates on creating a happy and harmonious school-- a school which develops habits of service in its students-- will find that academic success is added unto
him. Affirming his value for education for service in his speech during the school founders’ day in 1998, he asked the audience:

> Are the principles of duty and discipline still as strong in Kenya as they once were? We all know that they are not. Throughout our beautiful country, men and women of all ages and classes are inclined to sell themselves above the law, to seek gain through corruption and to ignore duty. Money alone is their standard and self is their god. They believe that they can enjoy the licence of the barbarian, while still enjoying the advantages of a civilized community. How can we help to put matters right? The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, discussing what distinguishes a free man from a slave, observed that: The slave’s job in life is just to work. The freeman’s job is to be the best possible kind of man. The key is mastery, the power to use the world and all resources and hand it on improved to those who come after you. To gain this mastery, boys must learn, not just what is in the academic curriculum, but to explore, to endure, to lead, to give services freely. To think, act and speak like independent men, unhindered by fear of their neighbors and unfettered by their own infirmities. To learn to do everything that a man can do not for the sake of gain but for the power to serve one’s country and one’s God. (“We must give preference to vital principles of duty”, 1998)

In several of his addresses during Founders’ Day he reminded his audience on the nobility of duty, service, discipline, and courtesy and their centrality as pillars upon which man raises himself above the animals towards God. According to Martin (1978), Griffin reminded his audience on the vitality of rendering service to society:
As we all know, the world is passing through a difficult time. We see around us all too many people of ability but no conscience— who, if they feel it is to their personal advantage, will abandon without scruple the responsibilities entrusted to them. We see people who have no conception of the word service, and whose only touchstone in any situation is the question: How will it benefit me? We see young people who are bewildered and unruly, venting their frustration through strikes in their schools and colleges. Here at Starehe, we are not afraid of words like duty, discipline, service or courtesy. We do not subscribe to that sickness of the mind which will describe such virtues as old-fashioned. Rather, we look upon them as the eternal pillars by which man raises himself above the animals and towards God. Nor shall we be content to pay lip-service to such ideals, but will labour constantly to present them as living and vital realities to the boys in our charge. (p. 216)

Griffin’s value of education for service is reflected in his educational programs at Wamumu, the Youth clubs, the NYS and SBC. To emphasize his views on the role of education for service, he ensured that when he took over the helm of the Kenya Association of Youth Clubs in 1958, he designed a striking motto that embodied this: “Service and High Endeavor.” The clubs were expected to aid national development by supplementing the work of schools. The trained leaders were expected to guarantee sound practical instruction and be a worthy example of loyalty, responsibility, and service to society.
The basis of Griffin’s determination to offer service-based education to Starehe was to change the fundamental attitudes of the boys which had been destroyed by their pasts. It was meant to build their confidence and trust. Through NYS, young men and women were given the opportunity to give national service to their country and at the same time obtain useful training that improved their livelihood. In rendering their services to the nation, the servicemen assisted in a variety of hard work such as clearing swamps, constructing dams and irrigation schemes, building roads, helping on agricultural and industrial projects. Because of their contributions to national service, by 1975 it had become common to hear references to NYS as “a means whereby our youth can use their zeal and strength in the service of the nation” (Martin, 1978, p. 79).

According to the NYS annual report, by 1976, 22,000 young men and women had passed through Griffin’s hands, and projects at a total cost of more than 11,500,000 pounds had been completed including five farms, ten airfields, a road across the Aberdares, and the Great North Road to Ethiopia. A huge experimental unit at Yatta offered every kind of agricultural training and even included a silkworm industry, while at Mombasa stood a comprehensive vocational training school, providing courses in all practical skills.

Further, to emphasis the importance of education for service, Griffin reminded his students every Friday during the assembly of his aspirations for the education that they were receiving from the school. He expected his students to know that they were being prepared to render service to their nation and to carry the weight of the government through their later work. Service to mankind was seen as service to God and the path of duty was the way to Glory. He prayed to students each week using the following words:
“have in thy keeping, O Lord, this school; that its work may be through and its life joyful; that from it may go out, strong in body, mind and character, men who will give faithful service to Kenya and to the world” (Martin, 1978, p. 84). To ensure that Starehe boys received an education that was meant to prepare them for service, Griffin enshrined the message within the school song. A critical examination of some sections of the school song demonstrate this:

1. These are the years when we are helped and guided
   Taught by Starehe to know, judge, and do;
   Prepared for the future, encouraged and provided,
   Strengthened to serve: Natulenge Juu!

3. Honour the school, away of life which fires us,
   Lifts up our spirits, sets us all ablaze,
   Teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us,
   Planting the seed to serve all our days.

4. We pledge ourselves, when this our generation
   Must in its turn the weight of government bear,
   To all mankind, through service to our nation,
   Head, heart and hand in justice, zeal and care.

   (Starehe Hymnal, 2005)

To ensure that Starehe students never forgot his lessons on the value of education for service, Griffin underscored its importance in his last words to the Starehe students before his death. He saw this type of education as the ideal education that a good
education system should strive to provide because it labors on vitalities of life and it is the eternal pillar upon which man raises himself above animals and towards God. In his final words to Starehe students read to Starehe community during his funeral, he wrote:

My dear boys, I have enjoyed a fruitful and happy life, and I learnt one great lesson that I would like to share with you. I hope that Starehe will always teach this lesson--for as long as it does so, it will remain a great school. Our world is full of people who do their duty half-heartedly, grudgingly and poorly. Don’t be like them. Whatever is your duty; complete it as fully and perfectly as you possibly can. And when you have finished your own duty, go on to spare some of your own time and talent in service to less fortunate people, not for any reward whatsoever, but simply because it is the right thing to do. Follow my advice in this and I assure you that your lives will be both happy and successful.

(F. Okono, eulogy, June 8, 2005)

Griffin always maintained that all people have something to give, because there is always someone with less than what we have. In each student lay the power to do great things, the power to transform society, and the ability to touch others through good works. Griffin saw the youth as having the energy, vigor, idealism, and vitality to give--in return for which they could receive succor, experience and even wisdom from their rendered service. To have been born destitute was no excuse for habitual mendicancy. He viewed himself as the “sole legitimate beggar and his students as givers” (Hongo & Mugambi, 2000, p. 23). He sought to engender a spirit of giving, not so much as an act out of empathy and compassion but more as a sense of civic duty. He charged his
students in the future never to forget the benefits they had received from Starehe and according to their means to enter into others labor as they had entered theirs and to do all they could to enable others enjoy the same advantage.

**Virtue-Based Education**

Griffin believed that Kenyan education must strive to encompass all aspects of life. Borrowing from African forms of education, he observed that in the olden days young people were introduced to the ways of their clans and tribes in increments, as they grew, so that by the time they were fully grown, they knew everything they needed to know to make them productive members of society. They, in turn passed on the traditions to their younger ones. Unfortunately the passing on of customs was destroyed by colonialism, and this responsibility has been left to schools and churches. Griffin knew that his students required guidance in life if they were to develop into responsible citizens. He thus began by giving career/life talks to his students once per week especially to those who were in their final year of school. The topics discussed focused on a variety of issues and were aimed at preparing students for life outside the school.

In many of his career talks to his students, Griffin emphasized that education was expected to inculcate virtues of discipline, excellence, hard work, honesty, uprightness, endurance, determination, initiative, integrity, probity, tolerance, trust, passion, commitment, motivation and inspiration. It was upon these virtues that the pillars of education were to be built. To demonstrate the significance of character-based education, Griffin exemplified these virtues in his own life and wove his educational programs around them. He espoused to his students what was expected from each virtue and its
importance to overall life, emphasizing that education alone was not adequate— it had to be clothed with character. Commenting on his views on character education, Otieno noted:

His argument was that the academics on its own never made any body. You needed character of the individual. Whatever academics one would get from Starehe that trait of character would push you to whatever level you wanted to reach. He used to tell us that he was not training doves but eagles. That alone, in essence, would drive you to go out and achieve. His emphasis on the character surpassed anything that I see in most educationists today.

(E. Otieno, personal communication, August 26, 2005)

Discipline

Griffin viewed discipline as the foundation of a good educational system. He observed that a head’s public and professional reputation depends more on the standard in his or her school than on any other single factor—for good discipline brings good results in every field of school endeavor. He argued that “a head who lets discipline out of his hands is risking trouble” (Griffin, 1996, p. 27). The head is required to be the pivot of discipline and must endeavor to establish a school spirit that can nurture it. He or she is expected to be responsible if things get out of hand and must be ready to examine his or her administrative style in situations of indiscipline. The central purpose of school discipline was the ability to endow students with habits of responsibility, obligation, trust, self-respect, and pride in their own integrity so that they will observe that they will
observe the norms of good conduct when not under compulsion or supervision-- and will move on with them into adult life. He opined that:

Sound discipline is an essential ingredient in the creation of a happy and industrious school community, performing properly its function of training the citizens of tomorrow. It is best achieved through the establishment of a positive and powerful “school spirit.” A good school spirit is not created in a day; once attained, it is self-perpetuating to a considerable degree and will enable the head to maintain a smooth-running and efficient institution, free from the worry of continual disciplinary crises. The application of such methods requires a real and sustained effort on the part of the head. (Griffin, 1996, p. 29)

Discipline was seen as an inseparable and indistinguishable part of the person’s character and it was a core value that one carried in the heart to provide guidance in all activities both within and outside the school. Griffin emphasized that it is vital to make students aware that “discipline is not something to be discarded like a garment on leaving the school premises, but that you expect boys to maintain standards as much at home as in school…”(Griffin, 1996, p. 29). It is through such pervasiveness of sound discipline that students internalize positive character traits.

From the beginning of his involvement in youth education, one unique characteristic that identified Griffin’s graduates was discipline. It was the tough, unyielding discipline and active occupation of every working hour that made the Wamumu camp famous. It is in this regard that Owles, the administrator, of Wamumu made a plea to the East African Women League in 1956 to give employment
opportunities to former Wamumu boys. It was in the field of character training that Starehe attained great distinction before it made a mark in academics. Commenting on the high trust that was accorded to Starehe in its early days, due to its high standards of discipline, Martin (1978) writes that “its boys were so well trusted that they were engaged as security guards for the City Council show. Many charities came to Starehe for help on the streets on their flag days. The band played more and more on great occasions, notably at the independence celebrations in December 1963” (p. 30).

Starehe has consistently maintained high levels of discipline and has become a model institution in terms of character training, which, according to Hongo and Mugambi (2000), has made it attractive to many visitors from within and outside Kenya who are interested in exploring its managerial style. It is because of this increase in demand that Griffin begun the one-day seminar to induct Kenyan school heads about effective ways of managing secondary schools. It is in this recognition, that secondary school heads were taken to task by the Ministry of Education in 1978 and told to emulate Starehe’s discipline mechanisms to curb school strikes. In its circular to the Kenyan secondary schools, the Ministry of Education stated:

There is so much merit in the Starehe’s approach to school discipline. The school encourages constructive ideas from the boys. Boys feel responsible for their discipline and all employ democratic principles of the rule by consensus. It is hoped that schools will take serious note of this suggestion. (Ministry of Education Newsletter, 1978)
Starehe’s reputation for discipline has been a model that, if utilized within the education process of African countries can enable the continent to produce first-class leaders capable of creating peace, stability, and progress. Affirming this, Agu, a former Starehe student from Nigeria, noted:

If all the schools and colleagues in the continent of Africa could adopt the system at Starehe and strive to acquire what has been achieved by the Centre – a high standard of discipline-- Africa would consequently have first-class leaders to make it more peaceful and progressive continent. There would also be less work for the Organization of African Unity! The Centre, which has today become not only Kenya’s showpiece but Africa’s pride, can lead the way and show other countries how it can be done. (“Starehe Boys Centre a model for character training and high academic achievement,” 1977)

According to Griffin, discipline is not synonymous with punishment but comes from the people in charge of schools being accessible, consistent, and ready to explain the reasons behind hard decisions as well as listen to appeals. It stems from easy and frequent communication between the leaders and the led, from granting of as much trust as possible to people lower down, and from being lavish in encouragement rather than blame. Good discipline arises from having an institutional tradition and ethos, a group identity with which young people can associate themselves. Griffin drew a distinction between discipline and punishment. He argued that “pupils who are trusted and who are subjected to reasonable and humane rules will reciprocate with responsible behavior and will not require the deterrent of heavy punishment” (Griffin, 1996, p. 24). A good head is
thus expected to use varied punishments that are useful to the community and those that
are healthy to the individual. For grave offenses, a counseling approach is seen as being
ideal. On the whole, the art of discipline in Griffin’s view consists of knowing where to
set your boundaries as a teacher. On the one hand, a student needs rules and limits in
order to know where he or she stands, and to feel secure. He also needs space in which to
maneuver in developing his or her personality and his initiative. It is equally harmful to
be too permissive or too strict.

A school head is not expected to give up on discipline matters, except when an
offender menaces other pupils or sets a really bad example to them, whereupon the good
of the community may have to transcend that of the individual. And, when the heads
patience is sorely tried, he or she is expected to comfort himself or herself with the
reflection that “the most difficult boys sometimes turn out to be the best and most loyal of
old Boys!” (Griffin, 1996, p. 44). Starehe believes in discipline that is firm, has self-
control, is moderate, and makes no compromise to breaches of decency, good manners,
and the rights of other members of the community. A discipline that comes from within
that endures forever and one that is borne out of understanding, responsibility, obligations
and a reciprocation of trust.

Despite Starehe’s platitudes on its disciplinary structures, it has sometimes faced
criticisms. Some of its approaches have been viewed as being too military and rigid.
Commenting on this, Martin (1978) writes that “it has sometimes been decried as a
military establishment, whose rigid hierarchy, ponderous ceremonies and apparently
repressive discipline must deprive the boys of individual opportunities which a good
school should offer. Yet in truth the reverse is the case” (p. 194). Clarifying the underlying order and reform benefits beneath Starehe’s disciplinary methods, Odindo observed:

Four years within the walls of “Colditz”, as Starehe was known to our generation of pupils, were enough to turn the wildest delinquent into a fawning gentleman, respectful of authority, willing to serve and formidable competitive. What to outsiders seemed like a repressive regime of rules and punishment was in reality a highly organized educational family designed for effective learning and imbued with qualities that marked out its graduates at every level. (“Griffin’s magic mix of uniform, rules and cane,” 2005)

This, however, does not rule out the fact that some of the approaches were borrowed from the military and given an educational twist. Affirming this assertion, Kingori noted “that given the background of Mr. Griffin, you can’t rule out the fact that his discipline aspect must have come from his own experiences as a military person. But normally the structure in military is one of effectiveness” (P. Kingori, personal communication, August 23, 2005).

**Excellence**

Griffin believed that a good educational system should strive to create excellence in students in all areas. An effective education system required meticulous planning and efficiency. An examination of Griffin’s involvement in youth education through rehabilitation programs at Manyani, Wamumu, the NYS, and SBC attest to this. In all these places Griffin established a culture of excellence. Speaking of his value for
excellence in all his undertakings, in an interview with Imbira, he noted that “it is just that when I am given something to do, I like doing it well. Whether it is for the younger grown ups as National Youth Service or younger boys. Something I can be proud of. Something that makes a good contribution to Kenya” (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005).

Because of his high regard for excellence in education, Griffin constantly expected those he worked with to perform to the highest possible level. Okono noted that he often used phrases that depict highest points of excellence to express his expectations from those he worked with. For instance, he used phrases such as “if it’s worthy doing then it is worthy doing it well,” “second is good but first is better,” and “whatever you do you must do it worthily” (F. Okono, personal communication, August, 27, 2005). It is this same spirit that he embraced when he founded Starehe. From the beginning Griffin endeavored to nurture a spirit of excellence among his students; he made it clear that his clubs had to be excellent and unique. They were expected to go beyond recreational clubs. He constantly encouraged them to aim for the best in all their undertakings.

Although at the beginning he didn’t envisage the national and international fame that Starehe enjoys at present, from the onset he had fairly high hopes for the school and had a dream that something great might conceivably come from it. It is because of his value for excellence that he struggled hard to change Starehe from a club to a center and later a school with a primary, secondary and technical wing. At the time of his death, he had plans for establishing Concord University in partnership with a few other institutions.
namely: Carlile College, St. Mark Teachers Training College, Kigari, and St. Annes High School. Summing up Griffin’s views on the need for his students to excel, Murugu noted:

He imbued in us the desire to excel and the knowledge that in each of us lay the power to do great things, the power to transform ourselves and the ability to touch others. He told us often that he was not training doves, but eagles. And that we must soar in whatever we did. Repeatedly he told us “if you are given a coffee cup to wash, wash it like no other cup has ever been washed before”. He made us appreciate the school motto, very simple but profoundly inspiring “AIM HIGH.”

(K. Murugu, eulogy, 2005)

From the very beginning of their secondary life in Starehe, the form 1 students are encouraged to study purposefully and enthusiastically, with the goal of succeeding in their examinations and life. It is because of this push for excellence that Starehe, for many years, has maintained its academic perch among Kenya’s top ten secondary schools with a vast majority of its pupils (approximately 90%) qualifying for university places.

Griffin emphasized that quantity must be matched by quality. It this emphasis that has seen majority of Starehe students admitted to highly competitive professional programs and eliminated failure in its performance in national examinations. Affirming this, Griffin succinctly observed that “our greatest achievement is that we have created a learning atmosphere which ensures that failure is practically unknown here, anybody prepared to work hard can at least attain a leaving certificate” (“The power of purpose,” 2005).

In his last words to Starehe students, delivered posthumously at his final farewell by Okono, Griffin exemplified the need for education to foster excellence. In his advice
to Starehe students on the need to aim for excellence in all their undertakings, he stated: “this world is full of people who do their duty half-heartedly, grudgingly and poorly. Don’t be like them. Whatever is your duty, do it as fully and perfectly as you possibly can” (F. Okono, eulogy, 2005). Because of his value for excellence Griffin loved hard-working people and had little room for idlers and lazy people. King’ala (2005) recalls:

I remember a boy, who suspected he didn’t like him because he was dull and lazy, standing up in “baraza” and asked, “what can a child who thinks his father doesn’t like him do?” “Nothing,” he bellowed back with a penetrating and unnerving stare. He minced no words when talking about those who disgraced the name of the school by their conduct. (p. 108)

Due to his regard for excellence, in his work Griffin’s self-effacing character saw him effortlessly preside over the Guiness Stout Effort Award (GSEA), a program of the former Guiness Brewing Company. GSEA was founded to recognize individuals who went beyond the call of duty and displayed outstanding bravery, self-sacrifice, and community service or contributed remarkably to development. The judging panel for GSEA was drawn from the top editors of leading Kenya media houses such as Standard, Nation, Kenya Times, Parent magazine, The People, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and the now defunct Weekly Review. GSEA was highly acclaimed, locally and internationally. According to Ng’ang’a, the panel decided to select Griffin as its chair, because of his value of excellence, a virtue that made GSEA win great acclaim. She writes:
I think what made the GSEA a winner was the charisma of its chairman (Griffin). Despite his busy schedule, he never missed one meeting. Working with Dr. Griffin required triple the thoroughness and efficiency demanded by even the biggest corporation, I have represented. Yet in the four or so years I managed GSEA, I did not feel the pressure. The difference, I believe, was that Dr. Griffin did not demand. He set extremely high standards and then pivoted you along. (‘‘A life well lived,’’ 2005)

Trust

Trust is a fundamental aspect of education that Griffin sought to establish among his students. By every possible means, he advocated for the students being taught on how to develop a sense of self-discipline, confidence, purpose and responsibility. The students were also expected to be taught the value of freedom-- to say or do what they feel is right, to wear their own clothes (not official uniforms) in the evenings and at weekends, to go out when and where they wish outside official school time. But it was to be made clear to them that freedom comes with responsibility, that liberty must be accompanied by accountability, and that they must be ready for the consequences of their actions.

Griffin believed in granting a great measure of trust to the students. In his view this encouraged them to accept demanding responsibilities and learn the high standards of conduct, courtesy, and thoughtfulness that are expected of them not just in school but as a way of life. Trust enabled them to proceed into the world with confidence and determination to resist many evil lures. Despite his students having come from deprived
backgrounds, he allowed them to chart their own path in life and to develop their own personality. He gave his students a framework of certain ideals and philosophies and left them to shape their destiny. Apart from the students, Griffin also had full trust in his teachers. He argued that extending trust to the teachers makes them more productive. In King’ala (2005) he noted:

I trust my teachers. They only come to school when they are teaching. My only requirement is that when they are down for teaching, they come prepared and not to arrive late for their lessons. I get no problems whatsoever but instead I get good dividends. My teachers are very devoted and pour out their hearts to the boys. They not only teach very hard and well but offer to teach boys in their free time… pro deo out of their professional devotion. Even some are ready to turn down Teachers Service Commission promotions if this means they will be transferred from Starehe. The teachers are selfless and work from the heart. They are not driven by the urge to make money but to serve. (p. 96)

**Integrity, Honesty, and Probity**

As the school grew, Griffin was keen to inculcate in the students virtues of hard work, honesty, and probity. He was determined to turn out responsible citizens even in those early days when the majority of the students who were joining the school were vagrants. Modest success in this period gladdened his heart. He advised his students not worry about where they came from; what was important was where they were going. He exemplified these qualities in his work and demanded the same from those he worked with. According to Odwessso, an old boy of Starehe, Griffin was “the epitome of moral
Griffin emphasized to Starehe students that their word must be their bond, and it was vital for them to always stand up for truth and do it in good faith whatever the repercussions. He demanded transparency and accountability from his students and staff. It is this same spirit that he demonstrated at the NYS. Everything was done aboveboard. Recruitment was on merit. His high demands for integrity, honesty, and probity made him unpopular to some people. Commenting on this, King’ala (2005) observes that “this ofcourse did not please those who are fond of following shortcuts but unfortunately, there was no way they could arm-twist him…” (p.140). He strongly believed that if you wanted
something, you must work hard and earn it. This made him appear strange and inhuman in the eyes of most people who believed in favors.

Griffin’s passion for integrity, honesty, and probity was so intense, and his observance of the same so unrelenting, to the extent that his name and that of Starehe became a byword for the same. Narrating a story to illustrate the premium that Griffin placed on these values, King’ala (2005) tells the story of the Kenya National Examination “leakage” in 1991. Many school heads in Kenya knew about the “leakage” but not a single one of them reported except Starehe. He writes:

On November 9th, 1991, boys went into the school hall for their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Christian Religious Education (C.R.E) paper. When they opened it, some of them found it was word for word, coma for coma as a hand-written manuscript which had innocently circulated to them from another school. When the exam was over, Innocent Wanyama walked straight to the Director’s office to report the “leakage”. With my help [King’ala], we rounded up all the boys who had seen the hand-written manuscript. It was an easy job because boys didn’t try to hide anything. Once this exercise was over, Dr. Griffin wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Kenya National Examinations Council reporting the same.

(p. 110)

Sacrifice and Humility

Throughout his 46 years of service to the Kenyan nation, Griffin advocated for an education that would make students recognize the joy of giving to society. Through his own example, he challenged his students to be givers. Having been a successful
philanthropist, one would have expected him to have been very wealthy but he wasn’t. Instead, he lived on a modest pension from his long service to the Kenyan government. He did not take any money from the millions of shillings he raised throughout the world to educate the needy boys and girls. Describing his humility and sacrifice in his education of the needy, King’ala (2005) notes:

He is a living testimony to show that there is joy in giving because he has never paid himself a salary from the millions of shillings he raises locally and internationally to educate and give life to disadvantaged children. He lives very humbly on the pension he gets from his 24 years Government service as founder and Director of Kenya’s National Youth Service. So humble is he that when the value of his pension was overtaken by the ever rising inflation and he started finding it difficult to feed himself and pay his servant, he came to Mr. Gikubu and myself for help. He very kindly requested us to allow the school to take over the payment of his servant’s salary. (p. 3)

Through the school’s induction program of new students and teachers, Griffin imparted Starehe’s ethos and traditions and sought to instill virtues of sacrifice and humility in the Starehe community. Commenting on his humility, Mugwandia noted:

He had become a legend in his own life time and his power of charisma overwhelmed and even intimidated those that came into contact with him and yet surprisingly he was a humble individual, always insisting that one must always attend to the lowly before attending to the mighty. Drawing lessons from top officers in the First World War, Dr. Griffin told his school prefects “you must first
look after your horse then after your men, then after your officers and only then after yourself.” He often declared that the true mark of greatness is respecting those lesser than us for it is easy to respect those above us. The two greatest offences came when any of his boys was to fail to take care of those young adults or show disrespect to established authority... his deepest wish was that the boys embrace and display the same. (N. Mugwandia, eulogy, 2005)

The virtues of sacrifice and humility made Griffin’s philanthropic work in Kenyan education unique. Although, he did not have much to give by way of financial resources, he gave of his person and was able to convince others to give to his mission. Using his own example, he demonstrated the value of devotion, sacrifice, and the need to nurture these qualities in an educational system. He did not have a chance to lead a private life, never paid himself a salary from Starehe, nor did he take leave. He lived on his civil service pension. Griffin regarded Starehe as his contribution to the building of the Kenyan nation. Describing his life of sacrifice to Kenyan youth education, he noted:

I have never had a chance for a private life. When somebody decides to do something good for the community, he must be willing to sacrifice his life. I lost my fiancée when she found out that I would be dedicating about 16 hours in running both the NYS and Starehe Boys Centre. I can’t remember any time since I started this Centre, when I have ever paid myself salary. Mine is a mission and one cannot succeed when he starts grabbing money from the same cause. I depend on the pension I got from the Government service for my upkeep. (“I have never had a chance for a private life,” 2002)
Ironically, one of the sacrifices Griffin had to make was not to have a biological family of his own. Unmarried, he never had time for personal life. He did not regret this decision. He believed he was a father to all 11,819 Starehe students who had passed through the school. He observed that “Old boys of Starehe write me letters signed: your loving son. Others come back to introduce me to their wives, children or grandchildren. This gives me great happiness. It is success-- infinitely greater success than anything money can buy” (“The power of purpose,” 2005).

Although he was a figure of national importance, he avoided the limelight out of real, not simulated, modesty and appeared publicly only when obliged to do so as a service commander. He did not seek accolades, fame or material wealth but, rather, was contented with a simple life while devoting all his energies to the path he had chosen. His joy was in seeing his students over the years rise from the depths of hopelessness to playing their rightful roles in nation building. He treated his students as equals despite their vulnerable backgrounds. Describing Griffin’s humility Murugu stated that “he treated us as equals, never looking down upon us. He quoted Kipling and John Bunyan to boys who only the year before had most likely not worn shoes, used electricity nor been to a library” (K. Murugu, personal communication, August 19, 2005).

Other instances of Griffin’s humility are evidenced in the way he handled his succession and will, he did not pontificate about who would take over after his death but instead left it to the management committee of the school to decide. He bequeathed all his belongings and entire savings to the school. Gikubu noted that “he gave everything he had to the school, even his body. It belongs to Starehe” (J. Gikubu, personal
communication, September 3, 2005). The only tangible asset he ever owned was a residential house in the city’s leafy neighbourhood of Westlands, which was given to him by his mother in the 1970s. He sold the property and used the funds to run Starehe. To him, it was honor that was more important. He was proud of his contributions to the Kenyan government, a process he was ready to repeat. He noted that “If I had the chance to lead my life over again, I would gladly use it the same way” (“The power of purpose,” 2005).

Endurance, Determination, Hard work, and Perseverance

Griffin advocated for an educational system that would instill in students virtues of endurance, determination, hard work, and perseverance. He reproached students with the advice “Never to give up” and he made it a punishable offense for any athlete who entered in the annual Interhouse Cross Country Race to fail to finish the race, often insisted on a loud cheer for whoever came in last (Hongo & Mugambi, 2005). Recalling Griffin’s teachings on endurance, determination, and perseverance during an interview with Imbira, Ragu observed:

Then he said, when you find a wall, go, if you can’t go through it, go over it, if you can’t go over it, go under it, if you can’t go under it, go round it, if you can’t go round it, chip through until you break to the other end. When we bring you to Starehe we train you to bend low and bend low and bend lower and not break....

(N. Ragu, documentary interview, 2005)

Griffin had endless faith in the power of education to reform youth. Having transformed the Mau Mau gangsters in Wamumu and Manyani detention camps, his faith
in helping his students who had difficulties in learning was immense and endless. He would spend several hours with his students trying to reform them. He placed high premium on endurance, hard work, determination and perseverance and challenged his students to embrace the same. For 24 years, he ran two full time jobs very efficiently. So incredible was the success of both the NYS and SBC that those who associated him with one naturally could not associate him with the other.

Griffin’s life was marked by sufferings and joys and constant overcoming of new challenges whether financial, regulatory, or new curriculum. He felt that whatever one did he or she had to stick with it, regardless of the obstacles. Initiative was seen as being important but initiative without finitiative was viewed as not being good. Both were required and the link between them was determination, perseverance, endurance.

According to Okono, he argued “the problem is not that you’ve fallen down, the problem is, are you going to stay down” (F. Okono, personal communication, August 27, 2005). He firmly believed in one rising up irrespective of how many times he or she fell. Putting one foot after another when one had fallen without giving up was seen as important. According to Griffin, success in any endeavor demanded remaining on course, investing in time, life, effort, and doing what was vital. The process was like the casting of bread upon the water that was to return after many days, multiplied beyond dreams.

Griffin had a great sense of the importance of endurance and he taught his students the reality of life of joy, persistence and determination. Mugwandia states that “he made it clear that a true Starehian is an overcomer, a creator of destiny not a creature of destiny, a victor not a victim. He stressed hard work as an essential ingredient for
excellence... (N. Mugwandia, eulogy, 2005). He personally worked very hard being at his desk from 7.30 am in the morning and often not retiring before 8.30 pm. A workaholic, Griffin did not take a holiday for 45 years. He considered his job at Starehe as his holiday. He defined holiday as doing what one loves best. Griffin said determination was a quality which he always enshrined above all others. He argued:

> It has certainly been my experience that virtually any ambition in life can be attained, provided one is determined enough. And provided too, that one is prepared to pay the price, which could be very, very heavy indeed... The price of real success, generally involved many years of overwork, coupled with the taking of innumerable risks and making of enormous, and repeated, sacrifices in terms of one’s own personal relationships and pleasures. (“The power of purpose,” 2005)

Griffin expected teachers to have faith and courage when teaching young people and not to give up when they encountered difficulties in the teaching process. Nothing was impossible if one was optimistic and gave the best. Griffin’s devotion to Starehe was so binding that he lost touch of his blood relations. He noted that “I believe I have cousins somewhere in UK. . . . All my relatives are either living out of Kenya or are dead. My life is really focused on Starehe” (“Service fit for royal honour,” 2002).

**Passion and Commitment**

Educators are expected to have passion, commitment, and a sense of purpose to their professions. Griffin often advised his students to keep their eyes on the dream, to remain focused and not be distracted by secondary issues. Through his own life he
demonstrated the prize of deep devotion, sacrifice, and commitment to service. In
eulogizing Griffin, Obath noted:

He has left a rich legacy and heritage. He sacrificed his personal life to give others
a chance. He spent all his resources, energy and time on us. He pursued
extraordinary things with such zeal till they became real, even if it meant personal
sacrifice on his part. Such deep commitment motivated him to find Starehe Boys
Centre. That vision has seen over 11,000 boys get a new lease in life. (P. Obath,
eulogy, 2005)

**Motivation and Inspiration**

By nature, Starehe is a therapeutic environment that constantly inspires and
motivates its pupils. Griffin enhanced this through the student “Baraza” and career talks.
He would invite Old Starehians, government ministers, diplomats accredited to Kenya,
leading educators, and professionals to talk to the students. In addition, he used the daily
afternoon assembly as a forum for interacting with the students, sharing his wisdom with
them, and passing on encouragement. These relations with students enabled him to forge
closer links with them and gave him an opportunity to influence their character and
perception of life. To motivate his students he often quoted the words of L.J. Cardinal
Suenens that he had pinned on his office door: “Happy are those who dream dreams and
are ready to pay the price to make them come true.” Remembering Griffin’s motivational
teachings, Murugu noted:

He equipped every student with a belief that within you lies the power to do great
things. That is, every day you are given the opportunity to do many things but in a
great way. He often told Starehe Boys that it is very good to dream but you must be willing to pay that price. If you want to be an accomplished doctor then you must put in the hours…. (K. Murugu, personal communication, August 19, 2005)

In motivating teachers, Griffin argued that a teacher’s greatest motivation and inspiration was derived from his professional success and not from material rewards. He believed that a head who uses material rewards was seen as turning the teachers into mercenaries. And mercenaries are known to be notoriously unreliable. He equated giving too much money to an employee to a tiger tasting blood. It will always want more. Instead, he encouraged his staff to view their occupation as a calling and to go an extra mile for the good of their students. In his view, educators were expected to use positive methods in parenting children placed under their care and to commend those who excelled in school.

Although Griffin succeeded to a greater extent to motivate his students, very few pioneer boys bothered to come back to school. There were a few who came back forced by circumstances to look for places for their sons. There were some who had difficulties in life and came back to Starehe for help. No specific reasons were evident to explain their lack of association and perhaps this might have been due to: their early traumatic life that might have affected their perception and overall outlook on life. Being pioneers it might also have been either due to the way Griffin used them as guinea pigs and in the process, he could have made a few mistakes; or it could have been due to the false motivation that he gave them--where they were expected to be the best and soar like eagles. Those who failed to make it in life or thought their achievements could not make
Griffin proud decided to shy away from him. According to King’ala (2005), some of them even developed “some elements of hate. After being given so much hope, they felt cheated when they found no hope out there” (p. 147). As Griffin became more experienced in education, he begun attracting more students. He knew his intentions were noble, and he tried to get the best out of each of the students. Even when he knew his expectations were too high he was convinced that in a large group not everyone can achieve but somehow he had to give his students hope since the majority of them came from deprived conditions.

Initiative

Students are expected to be creators of knowledge. Griffin argued that an effective educational process should enable students’ talents to flourish. Starehe students are expected to use their talents to develop Kenyan society. His immediate reaction to the students whenever they sought his counsel on any issue was “What have you done about it?” Or the equally demanding, “Do something about it!” (Hongo & Okono, 2005, p. 21). Griffin expected his students to be pro-active, ingenious, and independent in their decision-making process.

Spiritual Growth and Development

Griffin believed that a sound educational system must have God at its core. An effective spiritual system was seen as vital for the school’s success. Griffin insisted that every pupil must devoutly practice his faith when he joined the school. Sabbath services were mandatory for Adventist pupils, while Sunday church was compulsory for all other Christian denominations. Special arrangements were made for Muslims to make their
religious observances. Starehe has a chapel and a mosque. These places of worship are served by a local imam and resident chaplains.

The religious life of Starehe is positive and profound. Various religious groups within the school co-exist peacefully and respect each other. Religion has been seen as the anchor for Starehe’s success over the years. The growth of Starehe is seen as a testimony of God’s existence and His continuous providence to His people. Quoting Thomas Arnold, one of the greatest English headmasters of Rugby in 1842, Griffin observed that a school ought to ground itself first in religion if it expects to realize success in all areas. He argued that a school should impart:

First, religious and moral principles, secondly, gentlemanly conduct and thirdly, intellectual ability. Indeed a school which pays due reverence to God, which is staffed by men and women motivated by professional ideals and which gets right its systems of character training and discipline, will find that good examinations results follow. A pupil of such a school, in addition to fine academic qualifications, will gain principles and standard that will not fail him throughout life. (“Starehe Glamour Boys,” 1995)

**Griffin as an Administrator**

Griffin spent the greater part of his life in the realm of work. This is evidenced in the way he functioned as the director of Starehe until his death, his assuming presence over the school, and how his entire life revolved around the same. Commenting on his longtime engagement in Starehe’s work, Karaimu noted:
There was no time he [Griffin] did not take his time in the realm of work. And every time you talked to him everything you had, had to fit within his work schedule. The foundation of his life was work. His social life had to be within his work. He would never talk about anything unless it was about school. Griffin never retired…he went on working till that time, he was really taken hurriedly ill…. (E. Karaimu, personal communication, September 3, 2005)

Because his life revolved around Starehe for over 45 years, Griffin accepted and developed some superstitions about some of the landmarks central to the Starehe community. One of these was the mugumo (fig) tree that stood next to the two tin huts, the genesis of Starehe. When Starehe begun in 1959, the fig tree was small but as Starehe grew and became established, so did the fig tree. The mugumo tree has great significance to most African tribes. It is under the tree that most African religious rituals and sacrifices were performed. In the 1990s, when Griffin began ailing, around the same time the mugumo tree started drying up. Griffin became worried and thought that his time was up. The mugumo tree was cut and only a stump remained. A seedling sprouted in the pith of the stub and Griffin interpreted this to mean a lack of a void in Starehe’s leadership in the event of his death. The young sapling was in place to make sure that the dying of the real mugumo tree is not the end of the dream but the beginning of a new chapter, which to him was the continuation of Starehe’s story.

Due to his long involvement in youth education, Griffin believed that it was difficult for one to be bored when looking after energetic, hot-blooded, and vibrant young people because there was always something stimulating and new to learn from them.
Over time he developed various views on how to take care of young people, especially in an educational institution. It is upon these views that he built his administrative structure.

**Brotherhood**

From the beginning, having been badly bullied by bigger and older boys at Prince of Wales (presently, Nairobi School) in his high school days, Griffin was determined that the same never happened at Starehe. To effect this, he ensured that from the inception of the school the spirit of brotherhood would be nurtured among his students. He regarded brotherhood as a key characteristic of a good educational institution. He also advised his students to practice tolerance and insisted that the shared values that Starehe inculcated in them precluded ethnophobia, and ethnocentricism. Starehians of all generations and ethnicities call each other “brother” disregarding ethnicity, religion, wealth, status, and the generations they belong to. They strike an immediate rapport when they meet.

Commenting on the spirit of brotherhood that permeates Starehe, Griffin noted:

> We are one big happy family, we call each other brother. There is no bullying. The new boys [Form] become comfortable and settle faster since the older boys help them socially and academically. We have good counselors. For the boys, there are father figures. This includes the housemaster, assistant boarding master, a chaplain and of course myself… (“Geoff Griffin, man with a mission,” 1988)

To emphasize further, the importance of the spirit of brotherhood and the need for the Starehe boys to nurture it after their studies, Griffin placed it in the valediction prayer which he pronounced to the students during their leaving service. In the valediction he
advised his students to keep and enhance the spirit of brotherhood in their lives and to constantly endeavor to help the less fortunate in society. It reads:

   Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no man evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all men; love the brotherhood; serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. (Starehe Boys Centre and School, Leaving Service Manual, 2005)

The genesis of Starehe’s brotherhood emanates from the common experiences that were generated by living together and springs less from the constant exhortations addressed to them by public figures than from the profound experience of days lived together, without privacy or respite, in a framework of routine which combines dignity with austerity, ceremony with simplicity. Under Griffin’s guidance, the Starehe community evolved its own sanctions and safety valves, and its traditions are directed toward simple goals: the protection of the weak, the encouragement of the ambitious, and the possible extension of personal freedom within a structured society.

Brotherhood is nurtured from the first day when new students arrive at school when they are received at the main gate by the older students, mostly those in the second form and are immediately made to feel welcome. They become members of various houses that comprise all age groups from varied ethnic backgrounds. They are cared for by their elders and made to feel part of the “Starehe family.” As part of their induction process, the new students are given a “grace period” that lasts for half a term during which they are permitted to make mistakes without being punished and they are
exempted from work in their dormitories, classrooms, or school compound as a way of enabling them to learn school customs and systems. They are also inducted into the academics by the senior master/mistress and would be talked to by Griffin. This helps to cement brotherhood among the students. Explaining how the brotherhood is nurtured in Starehe, Lemasagharai remarked:

The first thing, when you come to Starehe, that is impressed upon you is that we are all brothers and it is that kind of brotherhood that you feel that is built through hymns. The director cannot fail to preach that when you see your brother sinning just talk to him. So you become your brother’s keeper. If you are a senior boy and there is a first former, that is your younger brother. (P. Lemasagharai, personal communication, July 15, 2005)

Unlike many schools where the year ends with a whimper, the Starehe year ends with a bang! The end of the year celebrations emphasize Starehe’s role as a family, bonding together those who are continuing with those leaving or have already left the center, whatever their age, wherever they may be. There are house parties and speeches, advice from leavers to those remaining, and general merry making often presided over by a prominent Old Starehian or some dignitary serving as chief guest. But the principal ceremony is the leaving service, a solemn ceremony at which God’s blessings are invoked upon the leavers and the director delivers a benediction and the “Charge.” This ecumenical ceremony takes place in the school chapel, attended by all staff and pupils. After the chapel ceremonies, out on the main quadrangle and, the School band plays “Auld Lang Sine” beats retreat. The leavers stand rod-stiff, some with tears in their eyes,
while the bugles mark off their last seconds as school boys and the national and Starehe flags are lowered for the last time that academic year. It is the charge that is solemnly pronounced that remains a strong bond for many Starehians in years to come. Many boys repeat it from memory before their time comes to leave the school. It reads:

I charge you never to forget the great benefits you have received in this place; and in time to come, according to your means, to do all that you can to enable others to enjoy the same advantage. And remember that wherever you go, you carry with you the good name of Starehe. May God Almighty bless you in your ways, and keep in you the knowledge of his love, now and forever. (Starehe Leaving Service Manual, 2005)

Among many recollections of growing and maturing, striving and achieving, cooperating and befriending, the leavers keep this last moment forever in affectionate memory of the place where they became men. Beyond the school, the Starehe brotherhood is also fostered through the activities of the Old Starehian Society (OSS), founded in 1970 to function as a gluing force of the “Starehe family.” Although in its early years it had maintained a low profile in Starehe’s activities over time, it has gradually become part of the school. Through it, links of friendship, obligation, and brotherhood have been strengthened and secured. In recent years members have been very active in the raising of funds for the school. In 1990, the OSS gave its support to the creation of an endowment fund for the school, which by 1996, had grown to 10 million Kenya shillings. Over 200 old boys were making contributions to it from their earnings each month. They have organized dinners dances, raffles, and golf tournaments towards
the same course. In addition, OSS has a monthly social meeting that takes place every last Thursday of the month, commonly referred to as “Mbuzi’ (goat) meeting. It is informal in nature and is meant to create a social forum and bonding of the old boys. Recently, there has also been the formation of OSS Savings Cooperative Union to assist in advancing economic investments of the old boys and a website. In addition, the OSS has also begun opening up various Starehe chapters both within and outside Kenya to further strengthen the brotherhood.

Through the spirit of brotherhood, the old boys also help each in solving their various individual life challenges. The following extract from Griffin which was posted in all Kenyan daily newspapers appealing to the old boys to render aid to an ailing old boy affirms this:

Peter Maragua after obtaining a national diploma in computer studies left Starehe Boys Centre in 1994. He went straight to employment and looked forward to being able to help his widowed peasant mother. Now his kidneys have failed and his life revolves around sessions in a haemodialysis machine. To give Peter back his future requires the transplant of a kidney from one of his siblings at an enormous expense. I live on a pension, accepting no salary from Starehe, so my personal resources are limited, but I have donated 50,000 Kenya shillings to begin a fund to save Peter. Smaller donations have been given by two teachers and the church that Peter’s mother attends…Through your columns, I now invite Old Starehians, wherever they are, to remember the brotherhood and join with me to save Peter. (“Help me rescue a Starehian,” 1996)
Running a School Like a Home:

Griffin believed that the best way to eliminate stress from students was to run a school like a home, where students are given the freedom of speech and movement, as opposed to administering the school like a jail. Instead of gagging up students, he advocated for elaborate channels that can allow students to express their views, and to steam off fear without reprisals. He viewed the running of a happy school as an extension of running a good home where brotherhood takes center stage. It was through this administrative style that Starehe’s fraternity and strong bonds of relationality were created and cemented. The notion of running a school like a home made the boys view Griffin as a father to them and Starehe as a home. An examination of a poem written by one of the students in the school magazine in 1978, reveals one of the keys to this basic friendliness, the essence of a shared destiny which allowed the boys to see Griffin as a father, with lots of affection, care and respect. It reads:

1. He walks in the field with long strides and folded arms,
   
   He stares at the sky as if something was there,
   
   Something keeps occurring in his mind:
   
   How shall we get the help we need?

2. Still in the field, he stamps his heel in the ground,
   
   He stares at the shoe, and the hole he has made,
   
   We know he is worried:
   
   How is the boy in hospital doing?

3. Yet a time comes when he looks different,
He smiles gently and looks gay…,
Chats with boys in and out of their dormitories,
Such is the time when we respond to him as our true father.

4. Yet we should realize,
When he is drawn from us, patrolling the field,
Planning our future, contemplating our problems,
This is also a part of his care. (Endeavor, 1978, p. 12)

The figurehead of Griffin grew over time and varied across various generations of Starehe students. It seems that the earlier generations were very reluctant to view him as their biological father, despite the respect they had for him. In the later years all the students had closer relations with him and this helped to strengthen the family bond within the school. Describing this metamorphosis, Kingori observed:

If you asked different generations of Old boys whether they would have wished Dr. Griffin to be their biological father, you would get very interesting responses. Most of those who went through the school in the sixties and seventies would have nothing to do with him. But as you go to the eighties and nineties, the number of boys who saw him as a father increased. By the time of his death, nearly all boys saw him as their surrogate father. Many according to Kingori would comfortably start letters to him with the words “Dear Dad…!” In turn, he sees all Starehians as his sons. This is the reason why he starts and ends “barazas” with the words, “My sons’ good evening, my sons’ good night. (P. Kingori, personal communication, August 20, 2005)
Because of his notion of running a school like home, Starehe Boys Centre and School does not close. It operates 365 days a year and students can choose whether to go on a vacation or to remain in the school. This is because many of the boys have no homes to go back to during vacations. For over 70% of the students at the school, Starehe is both a home and a school. All the school’s facilities are therefore kept operational throughout the year, which, in effect, means that administration and running costs are stretched to the extreme. It was with this conceptualization of running a school that Griffin built a leavers hostel for the students who finished school and were waiting either to enter university or to be absorbed into the Kenyan labor market. Just like a normal home where senior boys are supported till they get a sound placement in employment or college, Starehe does the same for its senior students.

Like a home, the students remain part of the “Starehe home” when they leave school, “once a Starehean, always a Starehean” (K. Makokha, personal communication, July 17, 2005). It is because of this view that many of the old boys would come back to school to introduce their future spouses to Griffin and some would conduct their marriages in the school. Those who became parents or received promotions or were given new appointments and awards were sent congratulation cards and applauded at school assemblies and on notice boards. Those who died were mourned and honored through plaques in the school chapel. Griffin always followed up old boys’ progress and never really closed their files. Whenever any one of them made some significant achievement in life, he would record it in his school file, either as a note or a newspaper cutting.
Explaining the family relations that he had established in Starehe and what the success of his students in life meant to him, Griffin observed:

> I feel well rewarded when I see the achievements of the old boys. For instance, this year, the election to Parliament of Philip Godana at the age of 27 and the Olympics Gold medal of Paul Ereng at the age of 22. There are thousands of other old boys who are rising steadily in commerce, professions, Civil Service or Armed Forces. All of them are helping to build a better Kenya. When they re-visit the school, bringing their wives and children to meet me, I am joyfully content. (“Repression won’t work, says Griffin,” 1988)

Commenting on Ereng’s victory in the Seoul Olympics of 1988 and its significance to Starehe on the school assembly, upon receiving the news he noted that “we are very proud of his present great achievement. Paul while here, was a responsible, cooperative young man of very good character. He always tried hard in whatever he undertook. His achievement is a special gift to Starehe having won gold on the same day the school was celebrating its 29th Founders Day” (“Ereng’s victory thrills Starehe,” 1988).

It was because of his view of running Starehe as a family that Griffin was not very much bothered with retirement. He argued that “Starehe is a family and a father never retires from looking after his own family” (“The man who built Starehe,” 1984). Griffin loved being with his students just like a father would do to his family. In the early days, he brought air pistols to teach students how to shoot, taught them archery, and played badminton with the boys. He had a club of boys who played him over the
weekend. He would also invite eight boys to his house every weekend in what was famously known as the “Directors Tea Party.” Just like a father he would take his students for holiday camps. For instance, every year since 1964 on, he would accompany a group of 80 form 1 students during December Christmas to the school holiday camp house (commonly known as the “White House”) at Likoni on the banks of Kilindini Harbor, in Mombasa. The facility was donated to Starehe by East African Oil Refineries and it runs the entire year. The December holiday is usually reserved for the new boys. This recreation program helped to strengthen Starehe’s family bonds. Over and above relaxing and enjoying themselves at the beach, the students spend quality time with the staff members outside the regimented schedule of the regular school. Each student gets an opportunity to tell their life story. Griffin and his cofounders would also tell the students their life stories and the history of the school. Quite importantly, the new students tell of their reception into Starehe and their initial impressions and experiences, commenting on weaknesses and strengths they observed. Coming back to school at the end of the break, they were required as a tradition of the school to receive the new students and implement their discussions from the camp.

The family bonds created at Starehe by the students are maintained throughout their lives, and old students are free to obtain any advice or help from the school as if they were still at school. Explaining these permanent family bonds, Martin (1978) writes:

Even now, an Old Starehian can obtain help and advice from the Centre as readily as if he were still at school. Letters reach him [Griffin] from young men in distant places, from those celebrating success and from those in trouble –even from one
in prison. All are answered, fully, affectionately and helpfully. One recent leaver expressed a wish to correspond regularly with the Director, but only on condition that they addressed each other as “Godfather” and “Godson.” His condition was accepted. (p. 199)

The functions of Starehe as a home rather than a school go beyond the confines of Starehe to serving the larger Kenyan nation. There have been perennial problems that Starehe has handled and has been constantly exposed to from time to time and has rendered its services outside its school obligations. Illustrating these wider functions of Starehe to the broader Kenyan society, Martin (1978) gives the following examples:

When sixty Boran tribesmen from the Northern Frontier District came to demonstrate in Nairobi, they were accommodated by Starehe. When a group of Kamba women were imprisoned for a month for illegal squatting, their seventeen sons were kept at the Centre. Thirty-two Kisii children, who were rescued after being kidnapped and working in a “slave labour” camp, in Tanzania for two or three years, “rested” at Starehe on their way home. Eighty primary school children and their teachers, stranded during an educational visit to Nairobi, came to the Main Office to beg for housing for the night. Near the Centre a huge shanty town was burned down and hundreds left without food or shelter. Starehe fed them. (p. 128)

To offer wider services to society, Starehe endeavored to establish an all, purpose emergency unit to be deployed for rescue operations in the country. The unit was expected to supplement Kenya’s existing emergency establishments. Boys at the center
received extensive training to be able to handle emergency cases ranging from firefighting to rescuing stranded flood victims. The following excerpt affirms the services of Starehe to the wider community:

For the second time in less than a fortnight the Starehe Boys Centre has come to the rescue of people trapped by floods. This time four young Asians were saved from possible drowning by the boys of the Centre. Under the command of the Assistant Director of Starehe Boys Centre, Mr. P. D. Shaw, the Starehe boys pulled them to safety when Mr. Rogers Kakani swam to the car with a safety-line. The first time the Centre did its rescue act was when a man was stranded up a tree for 14 hours due to floods in Dandora. (“Starehe Boys rescue four in a car,” 1977)

Although Griffin’s great efforts of being a father figure were touching and he constantly encouraged boys to excel in all areas of life, he did not have room for idlers and lazy students. He minced no words when talking about those who disgraced the name of the school by their conduct.

“Baraza” (Student Parliament)

The granting of freedom to students, faculty, and support staff was seen by Griffin as a key characteristic of running a school. He advocated for creating avenues where students could air their grievances and let off steam and stress without fear of being intimidated. This was done through the Friday student ‘Baraza’ (student parliament) held once a week after supper, in a totally free, relaxed family-like atmosphere, for one and a half-hours in the evening. Here, students were given a total parliamentary immunity to say whatever they liked without fear of reprisals from their teachers, prefects, or fellow
students, against whom complains were made. The freedom was immense such that
students could challenge the school authority on anything under the sun which was
bothering them. No subject was prohibited, including the director’s conduct. There were
rules that governed the ‘Baraza.’ Griffin (1996) writes that “the system rests on the
assumption that Baraza is privileged and what is said within it cannot give rise to
recrimination, reward, and victimization. Complaints must be genuinely felt and put
forward in courteous terms” (p. 88).

In the initial days, boys of all ages came together, but as the school grew, it
became difficult to have one single ‘Baraza’ so it was decided that it should be split so
that Forms 1 and 2 alternate with Forms 3, 4 and the technical institute. This aids in
keeping the size manageable and also enables the debate to be pitched at a level that is
appropriate to age and academics. The director serves as the “speaker of the house” and
the boys serve as “parliamentarians”.

‘Baraza’ is one of the oldest, unique, and vital traditions of Starehe. From the
early days of the clubs, Griffin had formed the habit of assembling boarders and a few
day students who took turns to spend at the center for a meeting with him on Friday
evenings. He treasured these evenings. ‘Baraza’ was quite central to Starehe’s
administrative system, and in over 45 years, Griffin had missed very few times, mainly
due to illness. He noted that “I will not agree to have appointments or commitments on
Friday evenings because of Baraza” (King’ala, 2005, p. 91). In the early days, Griffin
would tell students stories on Kenya’s history, classical legends, politics, religion,
culture, and character. He gave students a broader background of general knowledge that
they could not obtain from their classroom instruction. At the same time he also invited the students to interrupt him, to ask questions, proffer their own views, to think together as a community. The most common complaints were community ones and were based on the school, its management and future plans. By listening and answering students’ questions, Griffin learned a lot about the undercurrents within the school. Discussions, though often spirited, were never rowdy and in the whole history of the ‘Baraza’ no member was ordered from the chamber. The ‘Baraza’ system is a reflection of true democracy and shows how avenues and seeds of effective democracy can be planted among youth at an early stage.

‘Baraza’ was not only an avenue for boys to complain and criticize the school. Some significant ideas that eventually became traditions of Starehe emanated from there. One such tradition is the Voluntary Service Scheme. The issue was raised by a student who asked about the best approach that could be used by Starehe students to express their gratitude to their sponsors. Another significant idea that emanated from the ‘Baraza’ was the annual sponsorship scheme of one needy girl at Starehe Girls Centre by Starehe boys. Commenting on the genesis of the latter, Lemasagharai explained:

We decided that how can we contribute? Why don’t we sponsor one student? So, we discussed ways of how we are going to raise money and we said maybe we can go for a walk and then be able to sponsor. And some said, we normally eat cakes on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Why don’t we sacrifice those cakes and the money that is used to buy those cakes. We sacrificed our cakes for a week and by
the end of it we were able to come up with enough money to sponsor a student.

(P. Lemasagharai, personal communication, July 17, 2005)

In addition, Griffin also found ‘Baraza’ a significant vehicle for informing the students of his new plans, and he took them in confidence with regard to addressing school challenges. Occasionally, he would produce school accounts to explain the school’s financial position. This made students avoid waste for a while, but more importantly, it built trust and team spirit in the school. Above all, ‘Baraza’ was also a psychotherapeutic avenue where critics and complainants gained an audience to air their grievances. Through it, happiness and a deep sense of belonging were fostered in the school.

Old boys were also invited in the ‘Barazas’. Usually, such old boys were at the university or were already doing well in their careers. The mission was to pass on pieces of good advice to the current students of the school. In addition, they served as good role models to the students. The attendance of the old boys helped to strengthen the link between the school and the wider Starehe brotherhood. Most heads of schools to whom Griffin would mention the ‘Baraza’ system were usually apprehensive about giving students too much freedom of speech. This feeling was also shared by some of Starehe teachers, especially those who had never been to the ‘Baraza’. Over and above, it was evident that the ‘Baraza’ system had worked perfectly well for over 45 years and had tremendous effect in fostering the family and brotherly atmosphere that permeates Starehe. Summing up the importance of ‘Baraza’ and how it created peace, freedom, dignity, respect, transparency, and accountability in Starehe, Murugu, remarked:
Here was a man who treated us with dignity despite our vulnerability. We who paid nothing, we who had no claims on Starehe, were given rights, and the right to demand rights that do not exist in the most expensive schools in this country. We could question the very hand that fed us! He never sought to dictate our destiny, allowing each one of us to chart our own course. He gave us the kind of opportunity, the kind of freedom many fathers are apprehensive to give to one or two teenage sons. (K. Murugu, personal communication, August 19, 2005)

Freedom

Griffin saw freedom as a vital component of school administration. He rejected the idea of turning a school into some kind of a jail with high walls, barbed wire, and watchmen to stop students from going out as an exercise in vain. Students who were brought up in these kind of conditions were likely to be rebellious compared with those granted much freedom. Such students will always seek ways of breaking out in order to engage in evil acts like smoking, drinking alcohol, and taking drugs. On the other hand, if students feel trusted and are given freedom they are unlikely to do naughty things.

In Starehe, freedom of movement is methodologically planned. A boy can easily obtain permission from his house captain to go out after school on Saturday afternoon or on Sunday after church service. Those in lower forms, like forms 1, 2 and 3 get their leave passes, that indicate time out, place to be visited and expected time of return. They are required to be in school uniform when going out. Those in the upper forms, like form 4 and the institute enjoy what is referred to as “upper-school privilege.” They don’t require permission to go out of the school. Because of this freedom, the boys feel trusted
and less stressed out. Griffin saw a stress-free environment as nurturing happiness and capable of producing a well-balanced student. The freedom and trust at Starehe is enjoyed by all members of the school community. Teachers only come to school if they have lessons. This style of management has made Starehe register good academic results over the years because of trust it has created.

Although Griffin granted Starehe students adequate freedom, he made it clear to them that freedom went with demanding responsibilities that required developing personal initiative, transparency, and accountability. The students learned that a high standard of conduct, courtesy, and thoughtfulness was expected of them. According to Hongo and Okono (2005), Griffin argued:

One of the great skills of being a school educator concerns the placement of restrictions on the pupil. Besides the need to maintain order, it is vital for the proper psychological growth of children that they be given clearly defined limits. But, on the other hand, such constraints should be set sufficiently wide to provide ample room for youngsters to test themselves, make decisions, practice responsibility, exercise trust, learn from their own mistakes and generally advance towards maturity. (p. 32)

Starehe’s methods of freedom and discipline have drawn criticism from those who do not understand them. Some school heads who used to come for the schools annual day-long seminars on educational management at Starehe would express their horror on the amount of freedom that students are given and the risk they would run into if they adopted the same approach in their schools. Others have viewed Starehe as a
military establishment, whose rigid hierarchy, ponderous ceremonies, and repressive discipline are seen as depriving the students of individual opportunities and freedom that a good school should offer. Griffin’s constant willingness to listen to the students, and the encouragement he constantly gave them to express their views reasonably but frankly, provided the key to the great paradox of Starehe’s freedom. A critical examination of Starehe’s organization indicates that the various avenues of freedom that students are granted is far greater than what is offered in most Kenyan schools. Explaining some aspects of “Starehe’s character”, which tend to surprise the skeptical outsider as well as the insecure teacher in terms of freedom that is granted to students, Kombe noted:

Although Starehe boys are polite and respectful, they do not just accept anything you tell them. You must convince them that what you say is right. They have confidence in themselves and in their knowledge. This confidence does not make them disobedient. Their intellectual emancipation is as striking as the amount of physical freedom allowed to them. They have liberty and this enables them to accept and value the “military” and ceremonial aspects of life. (B. Kombe, personal communication, July 17, 2005)

Running the School in Partnership with Students

Griffin believed that a school should be pupil-centered; that is, that all planning, all systems, all decisions should stem from the touchstone “what is best for the children” (Griffin, 1996, p. 48). For this to be effective, students are expected to play a key part in the school administration. Griffin endeavored to run Starehe in partnership with students. This according to him helps students to learn and nurture their leadership skills. His
advice to other educators was “do not treat young people as objects. Involve them in management of their institutions. Have genuine dialogue with them and solve problems together with them” (“The power of purpose,” 2005). The most common form of student leadership at Starehe is prefectship. Prefectship is one of the unique aspects of Starehe’s administration. Their selection is done by the help of senior prefects who work along with the director in the process. With their help, subprefects (learner prefects) are chosen who have prefectorial powers for taking care of certain areas of the school like the library, dinning hall, chapel and boardinghouses. If they excel in their duties, they are promoted to house prefects who have power over all nonprefects. Prefects who do a good job and demonstrate sound leadership skills are promoted to house captains. Each captain is in charge of a boardinghouse of 80 boys or a key area in the school. These are the senior prefects who are used to select new prefects. It is from this pool that the director selects the school captain and his two deputies. Outside these areas there are “commoners” (ordinary students who are not prefects).

The reasons Griffin designed the prefectorial system was the need to enhance school discipline. In the early days of the school, Griffin did not have regular teachers; he relied on American and British volunteers who came and left after two years. It was inevitable that he had to use senior students to run school activities outside the classroom; otherwise many aspects of the school would have collapsed because of the high turnover of volunteer teachers. Through the prefectship system, he sought to inculcate the virtue of service among his students. He made them recognize that it was a honor to be identified as worthy of service to the school community. Emphasizing the prefects mission of
service to the students he would tell them the dictum that was used by the British colonels commanding cavalry regiments in World War One “look after your horses before your men, your men before your officers and your officers before yourself” (Griffin, 1996, p. 96). This meant that, prefects were expected to take care of the weakest members of the school community first and the strongest of the society, including themselves, last.

Unlike other schools in Kenya where prefects receive privileges for their work, Starehe’s prefects do not. Their reward lies in the chance they are given to serve the school and the trust bestowed upon them.

Starehe students are deeply involved in the running of their school. The prefects manage all the school activities outside the classroom (nonteaching aspects). This gives teachers time to concentrate on academic matters. They design rotas, which ensure that every student has a specific area of responsibility and they can impose constructive punishment where required. They are in charge of the cleanliness of the entire compound; they run their dormitories, with a capacity of 80 students each, and the dining hall that accommodates over 1,000 students; and they manage the school library that has more than 33,000 volumes of books. In addition, they supervise academic preps in the evening, and plant and take care of trees and flowers in the school compound. Starehe’s prefect system has undergone numerous improvements over the years with each group of prefects improving upon the work of their predecessors and striving to maintain the framework of good order in which the school has flourished.

To ensure that there is good organization within the school, Griffin made sure that prefects had free access to him. One of the forums he created to facilitate this was the
weekly meetings, commonly known as the ‘Cabinet.’ It lasts for an hour and a quarter after supper each Sunday night. It enabled him to review with the prefects the events of the past week, to discuss challenges that arose, and to plan for any special activities of the coming week. In this meeting, discussion is free although it is protected by ‘Cabinet rules.’ Members understand that they are not permitted to discuss its deliberations to their juniors.

Apart from the prefects, there are other forms of leadership in the school. For example, the school has 45 clubs and societies. These clubs and societies are all managed by student leaders and most of them adhering to the highest professional standards. Through the clubs, students are able to use their free time positively, develop their talents, dissipate steam, and harness their leadership potential. The students take leadership roles in sports, expeditions, outings, adventure activities and serve as nurses, ambulance men, and firefighters. They play leading roles in the Presidential Award Scheme and scouting movements. Explaining the professionalism and diligence with which boy leaders discharge their duties and the success they attain without any assistance from the faculty, Griffin (cited in King’ala, 2005) observed:

We do not have a scout master for the scout troop; a boy-leader assisted by seven other boys run it. Our senior and junior scouts have been national champions in the Inter-Patrol Bata Competitions and for three years in a row, our junior scouts have not only been national champions, but have been regional champions after beating Uganda and Tanzania. Our St. John Ambulance Cadets have also been
national champions for many years. The same can be said about the President’s Award Scheme and Athletics. (p. 94)

Because of its success in involving students in school administration and their effective leadership program Starehe was admitted into the membership of the American Global Connections Foundation. In 2002, it was chosen to host its Annual Global Connections Conference, with ‘Student leadership as the theme’. The headteachers who attended the conference came from 70 leading high schools from all over the world. The founder and director of the Foundation, Peter Pelham, wanted to expose the heads of schools to the importance of student leadership and their role in school administration. Starehe’s ways of partnering with students in school leadership surprised many of the school heads who gathered for the week-long conference. They were astonished to see Starehe students chairing meetings with confidence. Starehe’s insights on student leadership had profound effects on the conference participants. Commenting on their reactions after the conference, Griffin (cited in Kingala, 2005), observed:

On their departure, a fair number of heads, who came from 27 different countries from all the continents, were all keen to see student leadership started in their schools. Some of the comments they made were very humbling with some saying that what they saw here transformed their lives. These were heads from top schools in the world. (King’ala, 2005, p. 95)

The use of students as leaders was seen by Griffin as ensuring there was continuity unlike in situations where the clubs are led by teachers where situations of a power vacuum might arise upon their departure or retirement. With student leadership
Griffin argued that “leadership rolls from one generation of senior boys to the next like an oiled wheel” (Griffin, 1996, p. 94). All that is required is to keep an eye on them to make sure that standards don’t drop or bad habits do not creep in. The idea of using boys came from Griffin’s desire to understand all the happenings within the school and to have his finger on every pulse of it. The intelligence officer in him nurtured the urge to want to know everything, all the time, everywhere. He knew the students would never let him down. Based on his experiences with youth from colonial days, when he would mix White scouts with Black ones, when there was animosity between White colonists and Black Kenyans, he was convinced that the students would do what he wanted them to do without fussing like adults, thus allowing him the room he needed to think his educational ideas through, plan and implement them. This later became one of his administrative pillars at Starehe-- running the school in partnership with students.

Despite their central significance to the school administration there were some complains from teachers who felt that Griffin seemed to have had more time for his prefects than for them. Some teachers wanted more involvement in school administration that went beyond their academic functions. Giving his views on the use of students in school administration, Puttanickal observed:

Starehe has put too much emphasis on student leadership . . . by doing so you alienate many other strata of the school. So, by being a student leader you sometimes assign yourself the roles that other members of administration are supposed to play. You take away most of their responsibilities. So they become more or less only people teaching in class but teachers’ responsibilities are not
only teaching in class. That I believe has always been absent but it also has its ups as well. (S. Puttanickal, personal communication, August 16, 2005)

This seems to call for the creation of a balanced administrative structure that involves teachers without jeopardizing their teaching work. Although the approach of involving teachers more in school administration is sound and has its merits, it is certainly a challenge in terms of creating an equilibrium between classroom work and their involvement in co-curricular activities. Commenting on this dilemma, Okono noted:

I wouldn’t like to see that done at the expense of the student centered nature of the school. But I think somewhere in there, a balance can be struck that we can draw more upon the diversity of skills and talents that are in the faculty and blend with that which is available. (F. Okono, personal communication, August 27, 2005).

On the whole, a critical examination of the role of prefects at Starehe indicates that prefects’ work has been founded on well-defined principles and has not suffered the decline which many Kenya’s older schools have suffered. Starehe prefects have never had “fags”; they enjoy no exceptional degree of privilege or privacy; they are strictly accountable for all their actions. Griffin never buried his head in the sand and permitted them to do unpleasant things in the name of law and order.

Open Door System of Governance

An effective school administration, according to Griffin is expected to have an open-door policy of management. It is because of this style of administration that Griffin’s office and those of other senior staff did not have administrative secretaries,
and one did not require a prior appointment or approval from elsewhere to see or consult them. It was first come, first served. Office doors were kept open at all times, a perpetual invitation to any one in the school to come in and consult, unless there was a meeting in progress. This created easy accessibility for students and staff to the school administration and eased the handling of day-to-day activities. In a school, Griffin argued that every student should feel that he has access to his head if he has a serious problem because “something which seems trivial to you [head teacher] may be an emergency in the eyes of a boy” (Griffin, 1996, p. 36).

Starehe is not an institution with secrets except where protocol and the dictates of good order demands. All matters affecting the welfare of the school are openly discussed including the school finances. Griffin would often present the Centre’s accounts at weekly ‘Baraza’, especially where financial difficulties were anticipated and the pupils were required to make certain sacrifices. More importantly, students were made to understand that any funds given for their welfare were to be used only for the intended purpose.

Partnering in Leadership

Griffin believed in an inclusive style of management, where all different segments of the school have a role to play. Although he did a lot of delegation, at the end of the day he would get to know everything that was happening in various sections of the school. Each school department is autonomous and has the power to execute its duties independent of the central administration. He advocated for team leadership that was not
based on one individual but on the total whole, of all members of the school community. Commenting on Griffin’s collaborative approach to school leadership, Okono stated:

His presence was pervasive but not intrusive. He let you do the job. And he would never take any decision however miniscule concerning your department without talking to you. He would ask you to make suggestions. He insisted on being involved but it was more of wanting to know what is happening. He would not be there looking over your shoulders telling you, you must do it that way. Anything that any of us felt strongly about he would cede with advice and with all sorts of caution and caveats. (F. Okono, personal communication, August 27, 2005)

He advocated for participatory management in schools. According to him, inappropriate leadership and administrative practices are often the cause of indiscipline and general disharmony in schools. Although the school head is the ultimate decision maker, all stakeholders in the school administration have something to offer. An emphatic supporter of a student-centered school environment, he recommended delegation of duties to teachers, prefects, and housemasters, as well as ordinary students. Griffin believed in sound and humanistic management principles where individual industry contributes enormously to the success of the organization. At Starehe challenges are faced collectively and everybody is made to feel proud about his role in the team.

Effective School Administration

According to Griffin (1996), learning environment of a child is supposed to be effective, conducive, enabling, free from avoidable negative influences, and a happy place full of Godliness. Teachers are expected to be good role models to their students
and are expected to use positive methods in parenting students under their care. Griffin (cited in King’ala, 2005) argues that “teachers should always go out of their way to commend those who have done well to do even better and those who didn’t, to try their best to improve” (p. 99). He advocated for teachers to use every opportunity to bestow praise on students. He argued that students bloom under the heads appreciation as opposed to being lazy and complacent. He asserted that “if you bring your boys to believe that they will succeed, then they are more than half way to success” (Griffin, 1996, p. 36).

In an effective school system, a school head is expected to stand on his two legs, with teachers on one leg and student body on the other leg. By doing this he or she is able to keep his finger on every pulse of the school. According to Griffin, one of the mistakes most school heads make is to alienate themselves from mainstream administration. This style of school management creates a weak administrative structure that can easily lead to student unrest because when things go wrong at the bottom, they are likely to reach a crisis level before the top administration gets wind of them. An effective school head is therefore, expected to create a happy and harmonious school that develops qualities of integrity and habits of service in its students. According to Griffin, this approach grantees high academic performance. A head who concentrates on improving the teaching of academic subjects alone is likely to be disappointed by his academic performance. Creating of a happy and harmonious school demands eliminating of fear, frustration and stress from students. It also requires being clear on what has to be taught within the school.
Griffin believed that a good school head should treat students as young saplings. This requires creating of a healthy environment that allows the potential of the students to sprout and flourish. Like a sapling if given saw, manure and watered properly students sprout into admirable characters. A head who takes great care in looking after his students and creates a positive environment for them to learn and grow, receives in return reward from his students through their good conduct and academic performance. For an institution to be successful, therefore, it requires a soul, warmth and happiness.

Griffin (1996) warned that head teachers should not have “sheep mentality” (p. 16) in their approach to school administration, where students are conceptualized in terms of units, classes, forms, dormitories, and boardinghouses. This type of conceptualization makes the head inefficient and inhuman. It is, therefore, important for the head to remind himself or herself that he or she is dealing with unique and intelligent human beings who, young as they are, deserve to be informed and even consulted on matters that affect their lives. He thus viewed school as a complex organism that has three levels that require nurturing. At the surface level, there is the good order and cleanliness, the keenness of the pupils, and the dedication of the teachers. Beneath them is meticulous planning that balances the academic and co-curricular activities that are valuable both in themselves and in the way they offset academic pressure and relieve stress. At the third level is the foundation, without which the two higher levels cannot attain excellence. This is the level of matters that are vital, yet cannot be quantified-- matters of religion, worship and supplication. It also includes issues of history-- the lingering effects of the men or women, boys or girls, who have contributed to the school’s growth across the years and
matters of philosophy, which, at Starehe, is the education of ‘the whole person’ through the granting of great measures of trust, freedom and responsibility to pupils. It is from this third level that the spirit of the school-- its ethos, atmosphere, and tradition stem.

Creating, nurturing, and maintaining school traditions is seen as a vital component of an effective school management system. It helps to provide a strong secure framework within which education of the whole person becomes possible. According to Griffin, “it is among the main factors that differentiates a real school from a mere teaching factory” (Griffin, 1996, p. 13). A new head of a school is therefore, required to resist the temptation to set an immediate personal stamp on or make drastic changes to the institution. Instead the head is required to study the history of the school, customs, and tradition, consulting with former students and with long-serving members of the staff, both teaching and nonteaching. This helps in understanding the good traditions that deserve preservation and the bad ones that require altering or uprooting. Even undesirable traditions require skill in their eradication.

The school is seen as testing ground for the heads’ aptitude. In order for the head to bring this to fruition in school management, he or she is expected to nurture spiritual and moral training and must take the lead in the school governing process. Griffin (1996) underscores that the school head should ensure that teachers perform to their full capacities. Although the head is expected to refer certain matters upward to members of the school board and might delegate some duties, he or she remains the pivot of the system. Griffin compared a good headmaster to a good cook: “If you get the right
ingredients, mix them in the right proportions and cook them in the right way, you end up with a first rate cake or a first rate school” (“Repression won’t work,” 1988).

**Teaching as a Vocation**

School headship is seen as a vocation which no man or woman should accept unless he or she has a genuine calling for it and is willing to give time and talent without stint to the process. Griffin observed that “the head is expected to lead the way, to be constantly available, competent and of good integrity.” Quoting Samuel Butler of Shrewsbury School in the United Kingdom, considered one of the most successful headmasters in United Kingdom, who in 1798, took over a school that had been totally run down, with hardly a single pupil left, in his promise to his employer, the local town council, he noted:

> I will seek no relief from labour, no relaxation from solicitude and anxiety in the scrupulous discharge of my duty…from these objects I will neither be diverted by business nor allured by pleasure, neither shall the enticements of ease beguile me from faithfully directing my actions to fulfill promise of words. (Griffin, 1996, p. 14)

All a head needs to ask himself or herself is “would I like my own son or daughter to be in this school?” (p. 15). To be effective, the head of the school is required to be hard working and conversant with what is going on within the school. If he works diligently and puts in long hours, he or she will not have much trouble in getting the teachers to work hard, too. This demands being devoted to the administration process. Commenting on Griffin’s devotion to work as a head of school, Kiruhura noted:
He was more than a head of a school. He was always involved in whatever we did. He was there for ‘Baraza”, he was there for the school assembly, he was there any time somebody was sick, he would visit them in clinic, he was there for roll call, he was there for sporting activities and sometimes he would come out for camps…. (E. Kiruhura, personal communication, July 14, 2005)

Griffin encouraged heads to look upon the schools as their own. This calls for commitment. He advocated for firmness of the educational policy that would ensure that heads have long tenures in their schools as opposed to frequent transfers. This would encourage heads to devote themselves to the school’s interests. But, equally, important, the head is required to appoint careful and competent assistants who are given responsibilities that can enable them to run the school in the event that the head is absent. An effective school administration therefore, according to Griffin requires sound preparation of future school leaders. Hinting at his intentions to retire after serving Starehe for 46 years, he was confident that Starehe would not wither when he eventually left. In his interview with Imbira, he observed:

I have no qualms about the future. I will gradually take my hands off and that means others will put their hands on more firmly. The management systems I have put in place in Starehe will work equally well with anybody else. Most of the senior managers in the school are old boys who grew under the system. None of them, I think, will change in the future because they know how good it is. I am very happy with the team I have in this office. I have excellent people, who are coming up in various positions. . . (G. W. Griffin, documentary interview, 2005)
Establishing Relations

Griffin believed that a good educational institution should strive to establish firm relations both within and outside. It is because of this view that he nurtured and maintained firm relationships with a number of volunteers and teachers who had left Starehe. Because of these relations, there are a number of former volunteers to Starehe who have, over the years been key players in its funding projects. Key among these are Roger Martin, the Martin and Sue Moore family, and Paul Whitehouse. The latter had been at Starehe in the early sixties and was instrumental in the formation of Starehe U.K. Association and serves as its chair. He chaired a very successful fundraising appeal for Starehe’s Endowment Fund launched in London by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne in 1996. Over 1 million pounds were raised to endow 100 places perpetually for needy boys at Starehe. Roger Martin served as deputy director of Starehe in the late sixties till the mid-seventies and has remained a close ally of the school ever since. Martin Moore and his wife through the Moore Foundation too have been active in enhancing Starehe’s Endowment Fund in the United States. These relationships have played a significant role in giving Starehe some financial security.

Apart from the volunteers and teachers Griffin also endeavored to foster relations in his administrative staff. The relations were so firm that they created some loyalty of some kind between Griffin and them. Griffin seems to have had a spell that hooked those who worked with him, even those who differed with his style of administration. He was very persuasive in getting people to buy his educational ideals, and many of those who saw what he was doing found themselves following his course. Others were simply
gravitated in his relations by the gigantic wave that was brought by his success. A number of them were attracted to him because of his commitment, zeal, and success.

When he began Starehe, he called in two of his former students (Gikubu and Geturo) whom he had rescued from Manyani Detention Camp. He knew they would support his course without question. The two joined him because they believed in him. Commenting on their loyalty and commitment to Griffin’s educational ideals, King’ala (2005) states:

The two were fanatically behind him and were ready to follow him even when they didn’t quite understand where the new venture would lead. Like the disciples of Christ, they mortgaged their lives to him. When I got to know the late Geturo, who was Deputy Director, I realized he was an extremely loyal disciple; he didn’t keep anything away from Dr. Griffin. If I wanted Dr. Griffin to know something, but didn’t want to tell him personally, I told it to Mr. Geturo, it reached Dr. Griffin before the end of the day. (p. 120)

Apart from his cofounders, Griffin also had a firm following from other administrators and teachers at Starehe, many of whom served Starehe for many years. Key among this was Patrick Shaw who was one of the early administrators of the school. He was a close ally to Griffin and was instrumental in setting up most of the current infrastructure within Starehe. Due to these relations there are several faculty members who left Starehe many years ago but have continued to assist the school free of charge either in teaching or in the setting of examinations. Explaining some of the assistance that some of these teachers have continued to render to Starehe over the years, despite their departure from the school, Karaimu noted:
The teacher who had set the exam (biology) is a Dr. Makombe, she is at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. She still sticks with Starehe after leaving. She came and taught in Starehe and when she wanted to move on, Griffin was like, why don’t you teach a class or so of biology even as you do whatever you are doing there. She has found it almost impossible to leave. (E. Karaimu, personal communication, September 3, 2005)

Other relations that Griffin established were with his students. Griffin believed in running the school in partnership with students. Due to the help he had given them, and the creating of hope in them where there was none, they had total trust and allegiance to him, the kind of relationship that exists between a biological father and a son. Griffin stayed close to his students and created firm enduring ties which stretched beyond ordinary student-teacher relationships. These relationships enabled Griffin to have control in every part of the school and to realize his plans. It would have been difficult for him to make progress if there were internal squabbles and opposition. Apart from his current students, Griffin also maintained close links and mutual friendships with his former students both at the individual level and through the OSS.

Beyond the school community, Griffin forged close relations with the financial donors both at the governmental, individual, and corporate levels; and he ensured that those who had assisted the school for many years were immortalized within the school, either by having a building named for them or by having their portraits displayed in key areas of the school. He constantly advised the school community not to forget those who had contributed to the growth of the school. It was these broad relationships that Griffin
had established with various stakeholders that enabled Starehe to grow tremendously within a short period of time compared to much older schools in Kenya.

Although these relations helped Griffin to enhance his contributions to Starehe too much emphasis on total loyalty that emerged from them was seen as Griffin’s leadership weakness. He did not have room for those who were opposed to his ways of administration or those he did not manage to forge close relations with. Commenting on this shortfall, Wang’endo observed that “Griffin was totally afraid of someone refusing to take instructions from him. He desperately craved for loyalty, unquestioning loyalty. He could actually not stomach other people who did not have views like his…” (F. Wangendo, personal communication, July 14, 2005). In addition, Griffin’s passion for relations made a number of Starehe teachers fearful of informing him that they were leaving for another job. He would reprimand them to the letter. Commenting on Griffin’s reaction to a teacher who broke his loyalty, King’ala (2005) recalls Griffin exploding angrily on learning of the teachers intentions to leave the school:

Money; the smell of money! Just because of money, you have decided to throw away the lives of innocent destitutes boys; really! What is the world coming to? I remember meeting a dazed teacher after Dr. Griffin was through with him. “He has cursed me,” he said in tears. What made matters worse is that the teacher had given long faithful service and expected a pat on his back now that he had made up his mind to try his hand on something different. (p. 141)
To express further his belief in sound relations, Griffin designed prayers that he could use on Friday assemblies to express his dismay for teachers or workers who had broken their loyalty to him or close relationships. An example of such prayer read:

O Lord God, when you give us, your servants to endeavour in any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning but the continuing thereof until it be thoroughly finished which yields true glory. Give us grace therefore, we beseech you that in the tasks to which we have set our hands, we may not flinch or waver, but be strong to persevere, until under your blessings we bring them to a right end. (G. W. Griffin, office prayer clips, 2005)

This prayer was directed at a teacher who had resigned from teaching, giving a one-day notice, to the Teachers Service Commission, to join a private firm. Griffin was infuriated and perplexed at how a trained professional could abandon innocent students without remorse.

Committed Administrators

According to Griffin building an effective school administration requires attracting a committed staff. Griffin attracted committed administrators, teachers, and support staff who stayed in Starehe for several years, some well over thirty years. It is this team that was instrumental in setting up of Starehe’s sound academic programs. Among these were the late Geoffrey Geturo and the current acting director, Joseph Gikubu. These were men, according to Martin (1978), who undertook the work of a battalion and gave their full devotion to Starehe’s work. Other committed volunteers who gave splendid service to Starehe were Roger Martin and Patrick Shaw. Roger Martin,
who served as an assistant director for the secondary division between 1969 and 1974. He came in as a volunteer from Great Britain and had a close attachment to Starehe as a school for the poor, he himself having been a pupil at Christ Hospital, an old school for the needy. Commenting on his contributions to Starehe, Griffin (cited in Kingala, 2005), stated:

He was a most talented man and set himself to helping me cement academic programmes in the school. He indeed lived to his call of duty. He was multi-faceted. On top of organizing teaching programmes, he cracked the whip to make sure they were followed strictly. He was also a charismatic teacher of English but where he beat them all was in music. Roger understood me, unlike most, and stubborn as I am to change, I found myself listening to him, and adapting some of his good ways from Christ Hospital. One of this is the Leaving Service. Roger also wrote the history of the first ten years of Starehe. I have remained in touch with him ever since. (King’ala, 2005, p. 407)

International Education

Griffin believed in an education that trained students for global citizenship. He argued that a well-trained Starehe student should be able to function in any global environment. This was clearly evidenced in Starehe’s hosting of the Round Square Group of Schools International Conference in 1997 and the Global Connections Conference in 2002. To ensure that Starehe students got international exposure, Griffin set up several educational exchange programs with various schools in Britain, the United States, and Australia. Beyond the international linkages Starehe has also had regional or Africa based
networks. Over the years Starehe has attracted several students from different countries of Africa, namely, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and South Africa. Commenting on this, Kombe noted:

We had some old boys from Nigeria, and Ghana…his [Griffin’s] dream was to have an International school. And right now we have students from outside the country, we have a Tanzanian in Form 4, we have in Form 3 a Congolese from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Last year, we had a Sudanese and a Rwandese in Form 4. And this year we have in Form 1 several Sudanese boys. Last year we had a deputy school captain, who was a Ugandan. (B. Kombe, personal communication, July 14, 2005)

The school has been very popular in West African countries especially Ghana and Nigeria. The first batch of Five Nigerian students came in February 1972. This was the result of arrangements worked out between the Kenyan and Nigerian Governments after the Nigerian head of state’s visit to Kenya in 1971. The Nigerian Head of State, Major-General Yakubu Gowon was extremely impressed with Starehe’s work. Apart from donating his own contribution of 1,000 pounds and giving his inscribed portrait to the school, he promised to send a few orphaned Nigerian boys to the school, a request Griffin accepted. The boys who joined the schools were Emmanuel Edozi a Bini from Benin state; Ferdinand Agu an Ibo from the East and Central State; Manasseh Haruna, a Kaje from the North Central State; Alhaji Meleh, a Kanuri from Maiduguri in the North-Eastern State; and Friday Tommy Akai-an Efik from the South Eastern State. Due to the
good academic progress of the Nigerian boys, and the growing fame of Starehe’s discipline methods in West Africa, Starehe was able to attract more students from Ghana in 1978. This followed a visit of a group of Common Wealth educators to the school in 1977. During this visit, Mr. Ofusuhene of Ghana looked at the progress made by the Nigerians boys who had joined Starehe in 1972. He pleaded his country’s case and asked too, if he could select some orphaned boys and send them over to Starehe. After consultations with the Ministry of Education, Griffin offered Ghana four places. The four Ghanaian boys who joined the school included: Jabez Aikens of Service Primary School, Takoradi; Charles Agbemaisie of the Sogakope L/A School; and Godfried Komla Tettey and Edward Abbew both of the Presbyterian Boys Middle School, Koforidua. Over the years, the center has wished to admit many students from other African countries but the high local admission demands have impeded the process.

Locally, Starehe’s administration methods have also attracted interest from various schools over the years, and the visits have increased as heads of schools, educators, parents, teacher associations, prefects, and schoolboards have come to learn its administrative structure. In the mid-1990s this began to put a strain on Starehe and forced the school to plan visits carefully to avoid interfering with its teaching programs. In 1994, about 267 education officers, teachers, inspectors and chairmens of board of governors visited Starehe (“Griffin shares experience,” 1996). There was positive feedback from most of these visitors on the impact the visits had on their educational approach to school leadership. Griffin (1996) writes “One headmaster told us that, because of what he and his staff had learnt in the course of their day here, his school would never be the same
again. Others, pleased with the effects of their first visit, including improved examination results, write and ask to be allowed to come a second time. . . . ” (p. 3).

These administrative insights induced Griffin to write a book on the management of boardingschools in order to meet the increasing demands from various educators who had visited the school. They wanted something to carry away that they could study at their own free time and share with other schools in their home districts. In order to share his educational administrative experiences, Griffin further, began the annual one-day educational management forums where over 300 educators from Kenya and beyond could attend at SBC to explore the best ways of managing secondary schools.

**Challenges That Griffin Faced in His Involvement in Kenyan Youth Education**

In his involvement in the Kenyan youth education, Griffin faced several challenges. In the colonial period the main challenges included opposition to his policies on how to solve youth vagrancy problems. The colonial government felt that he was inexperienced in the technical aspects of the problem. While the colonial government advocated for expertise, repatriation, Approved schools, remand homes, and regimented methods as ways of handling the problem, Griffin advocated for liberal, individual, and family approaches. He endorsed African based strategies as opposed to Western ones. Other difficulties Griffin faced during this time were lack of support from the colonial officers who were staffing Manyani and Wamumu Camps. A number of them were opposed to his rehabilitation programs.

Early foundations of Starehe prior to Kenya’s Independence were marked with lack of finances, facilities, teaching faculty, and recognition of Starehe as a school. There
were also personal challenges that included Griffin’s isolation from his family, the European community, and some Africans. He was seen as “a black leg” by the Whites who sought to dissociate themselves from him and his work. His commitment to youth education was viewed as an “opium dream” that was unattainable. Some Africans were suspicious of his position in the colonial government.

The first decade of the postcolonial period was marked with a continuation of some of the difficulties of the colonial period, although on a reduced scale especially the finances and staffing positions. In addition, the school experienced limited admission spaces to absorb the increasing numbers of applicants across the country; political outbursts from some political leaders who did not understand Starehe’s admission criteria; death of two key committed administrators of the school, Geoffrey Geturo and Patrick Shaw, and withdrawal of funding from Save the Children Fund, which was one of Starehe’s major source of funding.

Other challenges that Griffin experienced in this period were opposition from the teachers’ especially overseas volunteers who did not understand his vision and educational philosophy. Having come from countries where educational administration followed a fixed pattern, some of them found Griffin’s dialectical educational approaches strange. They questioned his administrative style, tried to incite students, and were sometimes cynical. It was not only the volunteer teachers who found Griffin’s ways strange, even some Kenyan teachers, who went through the Kenyan schools and universities where educational systems are rigid, found his educational and administrative approaches unique. He was seen as a fair yet very tough person and sometimes very
intimidating. In addition, during this period, Griffin engaged in protracted debates on Kenya’s curriculum, discipline, and student leadership. His views on these subjects were seen as “too good to be true.” His was a lone voice in the wilderness. In addition, Griffin felt that he was not able to do much for girls’ due to the political, social, financial, and logistical intrigues entailed in the project. The establishment of Starehe Girls in 2005 marked a great milestone for him in this regard and greatly delighted his heart.

Many of these challenges were overcome steadily through the establishment of a strong foundation, committed staff and students, and a steady vision. Griffin cited in King’ala (2006), observes that “with a strong foundation to stand on, I knew the sky would be the limit. I was not bothered by doubting Thomases who were convinced that nothing would be achieved with street waifs” (p. 70). Despite these challenges by the time of his death, in June 2005, Griffin felt he had accomplished all that he had proposed to do insofar as youth education in Kenya was concerned and if he were to relive his life he would have done it exactly the same way. He noted:

My life has been fruitful and satisfying. By the grace of God, when I look at all the kids I have helped and I see them now, working, professional, married and happy with their families, building their lives well, I say this has been a fruitful and good life. (“Service fit for royal honour,” 2002)

**Summary**

From the beginning of his involvement in Kenyan youth education, Griffin saw education as a central factor if the youth were to overcome poverty and other societal challenges. Only a first-rate education was to ensure their long-term welfare. He
endeavored to build an educational ladder that one day would rest at the door of a university and which would have branches in technical and business training. He called for a high-quality education that could enable the students to change their social standing.

When he got involved in education, Griffin did not have a clearly defined educational philosophy. His insights in education emanated from his experiences in youth programs and were perfected over time. Although he did not have a clear educational philosophy, he knew he wanted his students to get the best possible form of education. At this point he was ready to learn from anybody and from anything that could enable him to attain what would for him be a clear educational philosophy. Education for him had to be beneficial and noble to the individual and society. In order to achieve this, from the beginning he advocated and searched for a relevant, pragmatic, flexible, and innovative educational process. It was within this frame of thinking that he was constantly in search of relevant educational programs. If an educational program worked, he fostered it. If it didn’t, he discarded it. For him, a good education was expected to give students faith, courage, and less fear in handling their life challenges. For this to be attained, educators were required to alter the attitude of the students to enable them to develop into responsible citizens.

Griffin believed in a wholistic education process. He wanted his students to obtain an education that would prepare them adequately for the outside world and permit them to make a positive contribution. To underscore the importance of a wholistic education, he strived to enhance the Voluntary Service Scheme. The Scheme was meant to expose students to the real-life work environment.
Educational institutions, according to Griffin, are required to give sound moral training and inculcate self-discipline, initiative, and spirit of service to mankind. Giving was seen as a civic duty and not an act of empathy, charity, and compassion. He advocated for character-based education that inculcates virtues of discipline, excellence, hard work, honesty, uprightness, endurance, determination, initiative, integrity, probity, tolerance, trust, passion, commitment, motivation, inspiration, and spiritual growth in the students. A good learning environment is expected to be conducive, enabling and free from negative influences. In a teaching and learning process, educators are expected to be positive role models for their students, and students should be treated like young saplings and be exposed to a healthy learning environment that can enhance their potential. With regard to school administration, Griffin noted that headship should be taken as a vocation that calls for devotion and commitment. This requires the school head to look at the school as his or her own. This demands giving of individual attention to students and forging of relations.

Griffin emphasized the need for education to nurture and foster the spirit of brotherhood in the school. A school according to him should be run like a home. He viewed school as an extension of a good big family where brotherhood takes centre stage and strong bonds of relationality are nourished. He believed in an empowering education system. To nurture principles of freedom, democracy, and liberty he introduced student “Baraza” (parliament). Through this forum, students were given the freedom to dialogue on various school challenges and to be part of the solution. He saw freedom as an essential component of an effective school administration. Students are expected to be
partners in school administration. Griffin believed that students should form an integral part of school administration. By participating in school administration they learn to develop and nurture their leadership skills. He underscored the importance of developing an open-door system of management where all matters affecting the school are openly discussed.

Having a committed staff that can stay on for many years, according to Griffin is vital in an effective school administration. They are the pillars upon which growth of the school is built. They assist in setting up of sound academic programs. Maintaining relationships with those who leave is also important for they act as ambassadors of the school, especially in the funding areas. The success of this requires creating an administrative structure that enhances trust, loyalty, and forges relations among its members.
CHAPTER SEVEN
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

Exploring the relationship between a given individual’s life experiences and how those experiences determine, shape, reveal, and impact on his or her society encompasses one underlying consideration-- change. This is evidenced in both the particular and general interests of the study. Indeed, not only were research questions designed to highlight the participants’ interpretations on the role of Geoffrey William Griffin in the evolution and growth of Kenyan youth education, but furthermore, they were framed in the context of an educational undertaking philosophically and pedagogically designed to understand his insights about youth education and educational leadership. This chapter is dedicated to a further discussion and analysis of these interests. It will summarize the implications of the findings with regard to the educational context in which they occurred as well as consider their relevance to the theoretical perspectives encompassed in the literature review. Finally, it will conclude by providing suggestions of consideration for future research.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to gain an understanding of the person of Geoffrey William Griffin, identify and examine forces that accounted for his involvement in the development of Kenyan youth education in both colonial and postcolonial periods,
interpret how the establishment of the Starehe Boys Centre and School reflects Kenya’s educational historical context of the time and gaining of Griffin’s insights on Kenyan education in both the colonial and postcolonial periods.

The design of the study was a qualitative research approach using an interpretive educational biography. The research participants were primarily those individuals with whom Griffin had interacted in the various youth educational programs that he was involved in, both in the colonial and postcolonial Kenya who knew him well. They included former and current alumni, students, administrators, colleagues, staff, and friends within the institutions that Griffin had worked. Majority of them were drawn from the SBC due to the long association that Griffin had with the school. In total, 36 participants took part in the study.

Data were collected from both secondary and primary sources using a qualitative inquiry. The methods used in collecting data from the primary sources were life histories; open-ended interviews; direct field and participant observation; documents, archival, material, and audiovisual analysis. The main method of collecting primary data was through the use of open-ended interviews that covered the following categories of subjects a co-founder, current and former: administrators, support staff, teaching faculty, and SBC students. The secondary sources formed the foundation of the study. They were extracted from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and past researches.

Analysis of the data collected was done using techniques of biographical research, namely, description, reduction, and interpretation. In the descriptive phase, narrative themes were isolated based on the major research questions of the study. In the reduction
phase, generative themes in the narratives from each of the aforementioned periods were categorized. The interpretation phase involved the reconstruction of the participants’ narratives through the creation of a biography, in which the subthemes served to guide and direct the plot of each participants’ views on the key themes of research. This last phase also included discussions of various themes under study. These three stages were implemented to create a structure for understanding Griffin’s involvement and contributions to modern Kenyan education.

Summary of Major Findings

Research Question 1

What forces caused Griffin to be involved in the development of education in late-colonial Kenya? Why and in what ways did he become involved in the development of Kenyan education?

The study findings demonstrate that an examination of forces that propelled Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education, especially in the colonial period is a look at Kenya’s history of a society that has passed into oblivion. It brings to the fore the nature of British colonial rule, its racial and segregative policies that designed social conventions that restricted contact between different races living side by side. It was a period, when Africans, especially those living in the Rift Valley and Central Provinces of Kenya, lost most of their prime lands and property and were pushed into reserves by the colonial government to pave the way for the development of a White settler economy. Many Africans were pushed into forced labor on these farms. During this time, the Africans had minimal access to education.
The events of this period, especially between 1950 and 1962, led to the breakdown of social and moral networks of African societies as well as minimal access of youth to education due to colonial segregative educational policies. The Mau Mau War and its aftermath especially the colonial government’s declaration of the State of Emergency, forced detentions, numerous military operations, brutal killings, and domestic terror created conditions that altered the African family, leading to an increase in the number of orphans and youth vagrancy in cities, along with desolation that placed Kenyan youth in social, cultural, political, and economic limbo. The colonial programs that were engaged in to address youth vagrancy such as rehabilitation programs, repatriations, detention camps and youth clubs, exacerbated the problem insteading of alleviating it, especially in Nairobi. It was a period during which it was impossible for Africans to take the initiative to help their own people, especially during the period when the indigenous population was clamped under the military regulations of the Emergency, where their freedom of movement, speech, and action was restricted.

The events of the Second World War, Africans’ establishment of independent schools, brutal colonial rule, particularly during the Mau Mau War and the Emergency period, slowly gave way to the rise of African nationalism. The conditions of the time threw into envitable prominence a small number of Europeans who were forced on their own to act. Their humanitarian aspirations were shared by many Africans who were unable to play their rightful part, since they labored under heavy military restrictions. It is these circumstances that propelled Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education. He
saw education as a panacea to addressing the precarious challenges that youth were experiencing during this period.

Although the involvement of Griffin in the development of Kenyan education was influenced by several factors, the actual participation can be traced to the Manyani and Wamumu detention camps and youth centers (youth clubs). Although these were government programs with a colonial agenda of rehabilitating, civilizing Africans, and curbing the Mau Mau War, a critical examination of them reveals Griffin’s creativity, ingenuity, and innovativeness in equipping young juveniles with training and skills that would enable them to participate more in societal development. It was upon the hollow colonial educational curriculum that Griffin creatively forged his early educational programs. This was the beginning of an educational journey that was to span 46 years. Griffin’s activities with youth centers and the NYS were accessory supplements to these efforts. Their aim was to create more opportunities for youth to access education and enable them to participate adequately in nation building. The central purpose of education was service. The full-scale involvement of Griffin in Kenyan youth education is evidenced more in the founding of SBC. It is here that much of his stature in Kenyan education was built; his earlier educational theories, thoughts, and experiments that were begun at Manyani, Wamumu, and the youth centers brought to full circle.

Others forces that accounted for Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan education were his family, school, and early working experiences, especially as a survey cadet and military intelligence officer. These experiences imbibed in him virtues of honesty, integrity, love and sense of equality, all of which impacted on his later working life. In
his position as a military officer he saw the horrors of the Mau Mau War from both sides, and this ignited his desire to do something about it, for they contrasted with the values that he had learnt as a child. It were these happenings that governed his resignation from the military and his later involvement in youth rehabilitation programs.

Griffin’s involvement in youth education succeeded primarily because of the support he received from many of the African colleagues he worked with, a team of spirited expatriates, and the Kenyan government. He enjoyed the confidence and support of his staff. The responsibilities attached to the various offices he held as a rehabilitation officer, youth colony organizer, director of the NYS and the SBC, and the fact that he held some of them especially the latter two at the same time may suggest that he was a “superman.” But he was not. How was he able to combine these two offices? We find the answer to this question in Griffin’s readiness to delegate authority and the quality of his chosen assistants to whom he delegated authority. He was fortunate to have worked with men and women of remarkable abilities and experience who were equally dedicated, committed, patriotic, disciplined, and loyal to the cause for which he stood. Whatever Griffin may have achieved, in various capacities, was not as a result of his individual efforts. There were many others who either supported him or worked assiduously behind the scenes to complement his efforts. As Donne wrote, “… no man is an island entirely of itself. Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main” (cited in Carr, 1961, p. 31). This also goes to affirm the view of J. S. Mill, who notes that “the individual apart from the society would be speechless and mindless” (Mill, 1991, p. 207).
The findings in this study conclude that Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education can be seen as a microcosm of Kenya’s historical events that have shaped its social, cultural, political, and economic landscape, as well as efforts made to address Kenya’s educational challenges both in the colonial and postcolonial periods. The historical events in the colonial phase that guided Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education were influenced by three key things: the state of Kenyan education, which was minimal, racial, segregative, rudimentary and labor based; the increase in youth vagrancy; and the struggling efforts by both the colonial and postcolonial governments to educate its citizens. It is these latter efforts that are evidenced in Griffin’s work at the SBC and the NYS.

From these observations, it seems that Griffin’s involvement in Kenyan youth education was influenced by varied historical forces that were serendipitous in nature. His activities in youth education both in the colonial and postcolonial periods illustrate the role of individuals who use education as a tool for social change in society. These findings concur with research studies done by Adeoti (1997). In his study, he advocates for the need to recognize individual African educators who might not have been proprietors or founders of schools and yet they made significant revolutionary contributions to society in the sociocultural, economic, and political spheres. From these findings it is evident that there is need to investigate more African educators who have contributed to the growth of education in Africa, especially those whose efforts have gone unrecognized or have been swallowed up in the contributions of renowned missionary educators.
Research Question 2

*How did Griffin’s establishment of Starehe Boys Centre and School reflect Kenya’s educational context at the time?*

Griffin’s establishment of SBC reflects Kenya’s educational historical contexts both in the colonial and postcolonial period. In the late colonial Kenya the founding of SBC, its educational struggles for recognition, lack of finances, personnel, facilities and the land are emblematic of the broader Kenyan educational challenges at the time in terms: of accessibility, equity, quality, and facilities. Starehe’s educational metamorphosis and efforts to reform its programs to enable it to meet the changing Kenyan needs in the postcolonial period reflect the power behind Kenya’s numerous educational reviews and commissions that were undertaken during this period. Starehe Boys Centre and School’s spiral educational programs undertaken during this time such as technical, business, and commercial courses and plans to establish a university illustrate Griffin’s insights on the future shape and form of Kenya’s youth education. It reflects Kenya’s educational challenges in terms of its goals, objectives, curriculum, structure, implementementation, and evaluation as well as its efforts to equip its graduates with vital skill to advance its developmental goals.

The findings seem to suggest that the establishment of SBC during the colonial period indicate minimal access that the African youth had to education, a situation that was worsened during the State of Emergency period and Mau Mau War that saw levels of youth vagrancy escalate. The formation of SBC was an attempt to create an educational opportunity for youth who were caught up in this political quagmire. The goal was to
equip SBC students with tools that would enable them to address their predicament, give them a new lease in life, and empower them to change their communities. In the postcolonial period, there were shifts in Starehe’s educational programs to meet the broader Kenyan needs. After Independence, the new government’s concerns were mainly creating a national consciousness; filling jobs left vacant by the colonial government; and addressing the relevance, quality, expansion and accessibility issues of education. Other concerns included: equity and quality in education. From these observations, it is evident that the foundation of Starehe, its growth and educational challenges in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya, depict the educational state of the youth education in both periods, challenges, and future prospects. Although privately run, Starehe’s educational programs in both periods reflect the wider Kenyan educational context and the efforts required to make its education relevant to its sporadic needs. The process calls for constant reinvigoration of the educational programs.

Research Question 3

*What insights into the Kenyan education system does Griffin’s involvement in youth education provide in terms of educational change in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya?*

From the beginning of his involvement in Kenyan youth education, Griffin advocated for a high quality education that would enable his students to change their social standing. Education was expected to be pragmatic, flexible, and innovative. A sound education was required to give students faith, courage and less fear in handling their life challenges. Griffin believed in a wholistic education that would prepare students
to adequately face the outside world with confidence and permit them to make positive contributions to it. According to Griffin, educational institutions were expected to provide sound moral training, inculcate self-discipline, initiative, and instill a spirit of service to mankind. He underscored the importance of virtue-based education. A good learning environment, according to him, was expected to be conducive, enabling and free from negative influences. There was need to expose students to a healthy environment that would allow them to reach their potential.

In terms of school administration, Griffin saw headship as a vocation that requires time investment and mightiness. This demands that heads of schools give individual attention to students, forge relationships and view the school as their own. Education is expected to nurture and foster the spirit of brotherhood. This calls for running of the school like a home. Griffin believed in an empowering education that embraces principles of freedom, democracy, and liberty. Students are expected to be partners in the running of the school. An effective school management system, in Griffin’s view should be transparent, have a committed staff, and be relational in its functions. From these observations, it is evident that Griffin presents a wider view of education. He views education as a pragmatic process, wholistic, virtue based and service oriented in its mission. For the education process to be effective within the school setting, it is imperative for the school to function as “a home” where relations of brotherhood, freedom and partnership are nurtured. This calls for commitment from educators who are expected to view their work as a vocation.
Griffin’s insights on education seems to resonate with the educational thoughts of various educational theorists. For instance, his views on a pragmatic system of education concur with Counts (1932), Kohl (1994), hooks (1994), and Dewey (1938), all of whom espouse the need to link education to societal needs. For these authors there is an intimate relationship between the process of “actual experience and education” (Dewey, 1938, p. 76). Counts (1932) notes that, “until school and society are bound together by common purposes the program of education will lack both meaning and vitality. An education that does not strive to promote the fullest and most thorough understanding of the world is not worthy of its name” (p. 15). Schools, therefore, are required to prepare the young for their later responsibilities and success in life. According to these authors, education functions well when it fuses the skills and knowledge of the community with those of the educators. This calls for marrying theory and praxis. For these scholars, education is expected to enable learners to “live beyond what theory has theorized” (hooks, 1994, p. 65). The main task of educators is to be cognizant of ways that can shape actual experiences by checking their environmental conditions and recognizing specific surroundings that can enhance growth. Interaction is seen as essential for interpreting an experience in terms of educational role and power.

In order to attain this, the educator is expected to view his work in terms of what it accomplishes or fails to accomplish. This is the future whose objects are linked to the present. This demands being aware of potentialities that direct students into new fields that belong to experiences that they already have that require being used for selecting and arranging conditions that influence their present experiences. Unlike these educational
theorists who do not demonstrate how this link should be created, Griffin addressed the practical aspect of this through his continuous educational innovations in his various youth educational programs.

Griffin’s views on wholistic education parallel the works of Noddings (2005), hooks (1994, 2003), Buber (2002), Palmer (1999), Miller (2000), and Senge (2000). These scholars place strong emphasis on the need to incorporate spiritual practice in education. To them, education is about healing and wholeness. All work that is undertaken in the teaching and learning process, whether in thought or action, is seen as “losing the vitality of power and meaning if educators lack integrity of being” (hooks, 1994, p. 164). This practice sustains and nurtures progressive teaching and politics. Theory, in this regard, is seen as a healing plane that entails critical thinking, reflection, and analysis. The curriculum must provide students with intellectual, imaginative, and emotional resources to understand education from the “inside.” This simply requires acknowledging that students have an inner life that needs nourishment. Schools are expected to rescue, nurture, motivate, give hope and foster growth in students. Students “should be encouraged to learn to dream beyond their immediate world or environment and thinking critically of ways of creating fullness of life” (Kohl, 1994, p. 44). According to Freire and Shor (1987), whatever the perspective through which people appreciate authentic educational practice, its process implies hope. Teaching is a vocation rooted in hope. Unlike these authors who do not elaborate on the details on other components that form wholistic education, Griffin emphasizes both academic and nonacademic activities
and their role in the educational synergy. In addition, he discusses in detail the role of the spiritual ecumenism in the education process.

Like Griffin, Dewey (1932), Hutchinson (1999), Kohl (1994), hooks (1994), and Zinn (1994) all emphasize virtue-based education. Schools are seen as places that sustain dignity and enable human lives to flourish. Passionate pedagogy is seen as vital in the learning process. hooks (1994) suggests that when teachers teach with love, care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust, it makes it easier for the subject matter to be understood by the learner. All meaningful love relationships are seen as empowering, challenging, and changing. Love is viewed as the foundation upon which every learning community is built. Eros is presented as a force that makes those involved in the learning process to be self-actualized. It provides them with an opportunity to use their energy in ways that can facilitate discussion, it excites critical imagination and makes it possible the purpose of “learning to live” (p. 86). According to Hutchinson (1999), education dialogue must be put in the frame of morality that entails meaning, identity, and growth that enables students lives to flourish. To sustain virtue-based education schools are required to create contexts where identities are developed and articulation of meaning respected, honored, and allowed to flourish. Virtue-based education is seen as having the potential to address and aid people in overcoming various societal wounds such as racism, classism, and sexism. Education, according to Zinn (1994), “becomes most rich and alive when it confronts the reality of moral conflict in the world” (p. 120). Griffin’s discussions on virtue-based education are elaborate and detailed. He saw virtue based education as the hallmark of any significant process of
education and he goes in detail to enumerate several virtues that in his opinion are vital in an educational process.

Schools are expected to have characteristics of a family which educators are approachable and open so as to enable students to express their aspiration, wants, and feelings Dewey (1938), Kohl (1994), hooks (2003), Noddings (2005), Martin (1986), and Palmer (1999). hooks (2003) suggests that the family is the first giver of a sense of meaning and education. This educational approach creates space for discovering students’ hidden strengths and is an avenue for students to learn to mutually and willingly listen, disagree, and ability to make peace in the learning field. This is education as the practice of freedom. For this to be fully realized, hooks notes that learning should be made an engaged pedagogy, where both students and learners are empowered. The process enhances the capacity of students to live fully and deeply. It is the only type of teaching that generates an exciting learning community of both students and educators and enables them to develop mutual agreement of ideas, critical thinking and engage in dialogical exchange. As a classroom community, their capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by their interest in each other, hearing each others’ voices, recognizing everyone’s presence. Schools, according to Noddings (2005), cannot achieve their academic aims without giving care and continuity to their students. Care is seen as a key component in the education process. Caring teachers are seen as teachers who listen and respond differentially to their students needs. Noddings presents the notion of caring from a wholistic perspective, which entails taking care of everything. To meet these
challenges of caring in schools, Noddings argues that schools must plan for continuity of care.

Like Griffin, hooks (2003) notes that schools should aim at establishing “genuine” communities that are grounded on trust both in the teaching process and in administrative functions. This requires recognizing the value of genuine commitment to the well-being and success of all students. This kind of a community constantly restores and renews hope, cares for each other, reaches out to one another, acknowledges differences among students and is a place where all understand, accept, and affirm that ways of knowing are created in history and in a relational manner devoid of power differentials. It is a community where there is a shared commitment and a common good that unites all those involved. Palmer (2002) views enlightened teaching as having the power to evoke and bring in the community. This community is a sanctuary where the passion of people to connect and to learn is constantly attained and renewed. The community goes beyond face-to-face relationships with each other as human beings. In the education field, this community connects all those involved in the process with great things, great teaching, community, feelings, and sensing and brings in and renews students’ spirit in the teaching and learning process. According to these educational theorists, learning cannot take place deeply until a community of learning is created in the classroom and a relationship between a teacher and student is established. Educators are expected to bring students into the community with themselves and with each other in order to enable them to do the difficult things that teaching and learning requires. These views seem to concur with Griffin’s assertions on the “school as a home”, a community that is full of care and
brotherhood. The recognition of school as a home and community according to Griffin, is the foundation of educational success. This is clearly evidenced in Starehe’s care and management process.

Griffin’s views on human relations and their vitality in forging an effective school are similar to Sidorkin’s (1999) views on relationality and its place in education. According to Sidorkin, human relations are a crucial context of education. Learning is seen as a function of relations, and thus good schools are required to pay attention to it. This calls for creating of dialogue that addresses issue of difference. According to Sidorkin (1999), nothing in school is significant or insignificant “without taking into consideration the larger purpose of dialogical relation” (p. 4). Making education dialogical, according to him, therefore, makes school a wholistic constituency that is capable of producing shared and inclusive satisfaction to all its members. This calls for creating situations where all voices are valued and constant interaction is allowed among the members without limitations of any kind in their given social world. Further, it requires creating place, time, and opportunity for dialogue to take place in education.

According to Noddings (2005) teaching is first and foremost a relational activity. The relation between teacher and student, and among students themselves, is the foundation of all that goes on in classrooms. Learning is seen as springing from these relations. Noddings recognizes human encounter and affective response as a basic fact of human existence. Affective issues are seen as a fundamental part of what is happening in the classroom. Noddings describes the caring relation as comprising of two equal persons, the “one caring” and the “cared for.” The archetypal relation of this kind is
parent-child; the teacher-student relation is comparable. The central characteristic of the one-caring is what Noddings calls “engrossment,” the seeing of another’s reality as a possibility for one’s own ability. In terms of classroom teaching, Noddings sees “engrossment” as the ability of the “one-caring” (the teacher) to see things from the perspective of the “cared-for” (the student). The notion of caring offers a number of advantages in terms of examining classrooms and the student-teacher relation. First, it captures the the unequal power and status inherent in the relation without making this imbalance the central issue. Second, Noddings recognizes the potential conflict in the way a class, with many students, can make competing demands not just on the teachers’ time but on their emotional resources. Third, Noddings emphasizes the relational nature of teaching and indicates that, whereas the primary responsibility lies with the “one-caring” (the teacher), the “cared for” (the student) also has a part to play in the relation. Finally, Noddings acknowledges that, because of the “uniqueness of human encounters” (p. 5), it is not possible to talk in general terms of a “universal caring” (p.18); rather, “to care is to act not by fixed rule but by affection and regard” (p.24), and thus teachers’ relations with different students will themselves be different. According to Noddings, the teacher can help make real learning take place only from the attempt to engage with specific learners at the point where they find themselves. The education process, according to Noddings, depends largely on the teacher’s ability to meet the students where they are and to lead each student to greater knowledge and skills in ways that are best for that student.

For Griffin this was exemplified in his open approach to administration and the “Baraza” system, which permitted students to engage in dialogue and involved all
stakeholders in Starehe’s management, as well as his efforts to maintain strong relational links with his sponsors, both at the local and international level.

Griffin’s call for a strong commitment by educators in the teaching profession and the need to regard the work as a vocation are thoughts that Noddings (2005) and hooks (2003) discuss at length. According to hooks (2003), institutions in which teachers are committed to service always strive to nurture the intellect of students so that they can become scholars, critical thinkers, and cultural workers who can improve society. Teachers perform their work with excellence, grace, commitment, and focus. Here, educators teach without restrictions or fear of reprisals. This requires the teacher to make connections with students in their entire learning process and to ensure that they all participate in the learning process as a collective. The process is seen as rewarding for both the teacher and the students. hooks (2003) views the entire process as an ecstatic experience. Schools are expected to create space where teaching and learning can be conducted outside the norm, and with commitment from both the students and the teachers, all laboring to make learning a success. Commitment to service helps teachers to remain accountable to students for ethical content offered in the teaching and learning process. Care and service undergird the managerial notions of teaching and learning activities. It is in this regard that Griffin argued that no man or woman should accept the headship of a school unless there is genuine vocation for such work and willingness to give time and talent to it. There is no substitute for effort, and good schools are expected to have a committed faculty dedicated to developing intellectual rigor in the learners that can enable them to reconstruct their societies.
In terms of administration, Griffin believed in creating freedom spaces for students. This is seen in his creation of “Baraza” (student parliament). This concept is similar to the views of hooks (2003), Freire (2002), Giroux (1993), McLaren (1989), and Shor (1992) on schools as liberatory and as places where freedom is nurtured. Schools are seen as places of promise and possibility that enable freedom to flourish. Schools are expected to make students become independent thinkers who ponder critically about pedagogy in relation to the practice of freedom. This means that schools should be avenues where pedagogical practices are interrogated, and knowledge offered to students empowering.

According to Giroux (1993), for schools to foster liberation, teachers are required to be actively committed to the process of self-actualization. This entails viewing schools as democratic public spheres and teachers as transformative intellectuals. In this regard, teachers view schools as avenues dedicated to forms of self and social empowerment, where students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills that can help them live and function in an authentic democratic society. In this respect, schools seek to establish meaningful dialogue and action that provide students with the opportunity to learn social responsibility and democratic processes. As transformative intellectuals, teachers are expected to direct their teaching through a political spectrum and view school as avenues of struggle for meaning and power relations. They advocate for emancipatory possibilities. Education according to these theorists, is expected to empower students to be better scholars, to live more fully in the world beyond school. They should strive “for knowledge not only in books, but knowledge about how to live in
Freire refers to the latter, as “praxis” that entails action and reflection on the world as well as exploring possibilities of changing it. Schools are, therefore, expected to teach in ways that can transform consciousness. The process of teaching is expected to transcend the subject matter to embrace critical thinking. Critical education is expected to integrate students and teachers into a process where both can mutually create and re-create knowledge. In order to enhance critical pedagogy, Shor and Freire (1987) observe that teachers should help students “to read” the world critically, instead of mastering tools of reading it. In other words, schools are expected to make learners examine the world more critically. For this to be realized those who are committed to the process of liberation are expected to reject the banking method of teaching and instead replace it with the problem-posing method, a process that requires both the teacher and the students to be learners and critical agents in the knowing process.

The context of transformation is both inside and outside the classroom. McLaren (1989) underscores that schools should endeavor to foster critical pedagogy. Educators are required to develop analyses that acknowledge spaces, tensions, and opportunities that enable students to participate in democratic struggles and reforms within day-to-day activities of the classroom. Schools are, therefore, expected to offer high-quality education that empowers students to be critical thinkers and communicators. hooks (2003) points out that schools should strive to foster democratic education, and learning should transcend the institutionalized classroom. Education is expected to go beyond getting information or getting a job. It entails healing, wholeness, empowerment, liberation, and renews the vitality of life. The process involves sharing of knowledge and
challenging the construction of certain forms of knowledge as absolute truths. According to Griffin, when students are taught in a democratic way, they can experience learning as a whole, rather than as a restrictive process that disconnects and alienates them from the world.

A democratic educator seeks to forge a learning community that values wholeness over division, disassociation and splitting and works to establish closeness. Palmer (2000) refers to this as “intimacy that does not annihilate difference” (p. 50). According to Dewey (1938), the purpose of education is to create a democracy of citizens, who are able to govern and to be governed. This purpose places learning in the context of learning skills, discipline, and rigor in the service of social change and democratic life. This democracy is supposed to be part and parcel of students’ deep understanding that embraces values of humanness and diversity. It is required to become “a part of the blood and bone of a people, the fiber of their being” (Dewey, 1938, p. 160). This calls for developing schools that are democratic learning communities that engage people with the moral and technical problems of the day.

Griffin’s views on running a school in partnership with students are also evidenced in the works of Dewey (1938), Freire (2002), and Kohl (1994). Dewey insisted that education is an active and constructive process, and the central strength of progressive practice is its inclusion of students. To achieve this, schools are required to ensure that all students are included in the learning process irrespective of their backgrounds. According to Freire (2002), schools should establish an educational practice that makes learners experience the power and value of unity within diversity.
Kohl (1994), advocates for the need to make habits of inclusion and exclusion a vital part of the teaching and learning process. Unlike these authors, Griffin, through the prefectship system, demonstrates on a practical basis, how to involve students in school administration. An examination of Starehe shows that it is basically a student run school. Students take on almost 80% of the schools’ administrative tasks outside the classroom.

**Relevance of Theoretical Perspectives to the Study**

The theories of relationality and leadership address a wholistic educational administration process that is required for an effective teaching and learning process. The theories emphasize that interhuman relations affect and define teaching and learning and meaningful education can only occur when relations are comprehensively defined, understood, nurtured, and developed. Education is viewed as an interaction between the activities of the educator and the educated. Education is not located in the activities of the learner but in the interaction between the learner and the educator. In this respect, education according to Sidorkin (2004), is seen as a “relationality of relations” and is only possible through and within relations. In this regard, therefore, the purpose of education, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes are one and the same, to form human relations.

The common thread in these theories is the assumption that education is a function of specific human relations and “should enable the young people to live in the world beyond just having the knowledge of it…” (Martin, 1994, p. 91). An effective relational pedagogy, therefore, is expected to produce several results. First, it is expected to open way to an intellectually, moral and admirable way of existence. Two, it is
expected to enhance experiences of both the educator and the students. Three, it should increase the subject matter. Four, it should enhance teachers’ pedagogical choices. Five, it should teach students to be active and constructive participants in the world-- making it a better place for themselves and their progeny. And sixth, education should enable students to integrate elements that are essential in life to enable them to effectively engage in commendable decision and judgement making processes. According to Martin (1994) this calls for offering of an all-round education that entails ontology, axiology, and epistemology; this is an education for life.

These theories put forth a critical reflection on the significance of human relations in the teaching process. The findings of this study concurs with much of the tenets of relationality theories. This is evidenced in Griffin’s views on education and school administration. His views in both areas emphasize the significance of human relations in an education undertaking. This is clearly seen in his promotion of a wholistic, character, and service-based education. In terms of school administration, Griffin advocated for the nurturing of brotherhood, the running of a school like a home, student parliament that emphasizes dialogue, running of the school in partnership with students and collaborative leadership. In all these areas, he underscored the importance of relations. To affirm his arguments, Griffin strived to nurture numerous relations at the individual, state and international level. It were these strong relational links that enabled him to get numerous beneficence that made the NYS and SBC to develop to significant heights.
Although viewed as a good tool for enhancing learning some scholars have pointed out some difficulties inherrent in the theory of relationality. It is seen as creating certain epistemological difficulties. The human knowledge of relationship is seen by Margonis (cited in Sidorkin, 2004) as being partial and limited. It is in this view that Thayer-Bacon (cited in Sidorkin, 2004), in discussing relational epistemology, Griffin underscores that epistemology should be expanded to include qualities of knowing that have historically been regarded as hindering the acquisition of knowledge. There is need, therefore, to synchronize knowing with relationality that is essential in the formation of relations. However, this proposal also presents difficulties, especially if the relations are the main objects of knowing. The proposal does not prescribe special mechanisms of understanding and nurturing relations. Relational understanding is not the same as understanding relations. This is the central thesis of Bakhtin’s theory of polyphony and the polyphonic. Bakhtin argues that the multitude of individual consciousness has some epistemological meaning. He asserts that what could be known by the means of dialogue cannot be known by any other means. Although this does not apply to all kinds of knowledge, it is relevant to relations and gives them wider sphere of application than any other form of knowledge to the teaching and learning process.

The theories of leadership especially transformational and contingency to which this study findings incline, depicts leadership as a transforming process. Griffin’s administrative approaches show him as a transformational leader. First, his leadership was inspirational, transforming, and progressive (Rost, 1991). This is seen in his
involvement in youth education programs both in the colonial and postcolonial period. The central objective in all his involvement in youth education was to equip youth with vital tools that would enable them to contribute effectively to societal development. Because of his inspirational work, the postcolonial government was willing to support his cause. Further evidence of Griffin’s transforming and progressive aspects of leadership is evidenced in his ability to bring a new lease on life to thousands of Starehe students and NYS youth whose lives would have been destroyed had it not been for the training they were able to receive from the two institutions. Many of these youth have been able to make significant contributions to Kenyan society in various fields. Griffin laid emphasis on pragmatic, wholistic, character and service based education, collaborative, partnering, and relational leadership. His personal and professional qualities inspired and transformed many of the youth who went through the two institutions. In addition, his innovative educational and administrative programs at the NYS and SBC brought excellence and admiration to the two institutions that saw many educationists, school heads; administrators visit the two institutions to learn his methods. It is the same spirit that saw him start the one day annual educational management seminar for all heads of schools in Kenya. It is this progressive nature of leadership that enabled Starehe to be admitted to international educational associations such as Global Connections and the Round Square Group of schools. The inspiring, transforming and progressive aspects of Griffin’s leadership are also seen in the way he was able to transform Starehe from a two tin hut institution to a full complex institution with branches in primary, secondary,
technical, and Institute. At the time of his death plans were underway for university education.

As a transformational leader Griffin demonstrated the three functions that it embodies: expansion of specific needs, wants of the constituency and its dialectical nature. In his involvement in youth educational programs, Griffin strived to equip youth with specific skills that would enable them address their challenges and satisfy their needs. He believed in a pragmatic, dialectical and innovative educational programs. What worked was fostered; what did not work was discarded.

Griffin also demonstrated the four cognitive manifestations of transformational leadership that Burns (1979) espouses: charisma, inspiration, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Griffin was an inspiration to both his colleagues and students and the many who admired his virtues of work, dedication, commitment, and integrity. From the findings, it is evident that he virtually led by example. He practiced individual consideration for both his students and faculty and was opposed to the “sheep mentality syndrome” (Griffin, 1996, p.16) style of administration, instead he sought to address each individual’s particular needs. He spent long hours counseling his students, had ongoing direct contact with his staff, and acknowledged their individual contributions. Intellectually, he was respected by his students and colleagues. Despite his lack of a college degree and background in education, his educational innovations, were a challenge to many Kenyan educators. He was a gifted orator, avid reader, brilliant and thought provoking in his speeches. Griffin also exemplified the transformational leadership characteristics of being critical, transformative, educative,
and ethical (Foster, 1986, 1989). As a critic, he challenged the colonial government policies of handling juvenile vagrancy. In the postcolonial government, he was a strong advocate for disciplined, democratic, and student-centered educational system. These were administrative spheres that were not emphasized in the mainstream administration of most Kenyan schools; and, in many instances, his views on these issues put him on a collision course with educational “experts.”

Further, Griffin’s methods were transformative and educative. He viewed education as a vehicle for solving youth vagrancy and a route to Kenya’s progress. He sought an education system that would engage youth more in societal development. He underscored the importance of a virtue-based education and demonstrated its significance through his own example. Virtues to him were not a garment that could be disposed off at a person’s whim but, rather, they were part of a person’s character. It were these virtues and their standards that made his leadership appealing, and through them he challenged and raised the consciousness of his people on ethical issues and mobilized their energy and resources to improve Kenya’s youth education. His partners, both locally and internationally, trusted, admired, were loyal and had immense respect for him. Many were willing to invest their time, energy, intellect, and resources in his mission. At Starehe, many of the staff were willing to work with him for many years, and those who left continued to partner with the school in various capacities. Although Griffin’s leadership qualities depict more tenets of transformational leadership for instance, shared commitment with his constituency, empowerment of his followers, increasing their motivation and performance, just like transactional leaders, he was still the pivot leader,
founder, and ultimate decision maker behind most of the educational programs at the NYS, the SBC and other earlier educational programs in which he participated. This affirms Bass (1985) assertion that although transformational and transactional leadership are distinct they are not mutually exclusive processes; some effective leaders use a combination of both types of leadership.

The findings show that Griffin demonstrated to larger extent qualities of contingency theory. Contingency theory of leadership, according to Fielder (1967), asserts that a leader’s effectiveness depends on how well his or her leadership style fits the context. Leadership is seen as a product of three key components: the leader, the led, and the situation. In order to understand the performance of leaders, it is imperative to understand the situations in which they lead. An examination of Griffin’s leadership style in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya indicates the use of varied styles of leadership in creating different educational activities for the youth depending on the given context and period. A look at Manyani and Wamumu camps and the youth clubs show simple educational programs that were meant to rehabilitate the youth by equipping them with simple functional skills. Much of the training was trade based and minimal in terms of academic rigor. The context of the time required this kind of educational base if the youth were to become productive members of society and overcome the colonial war challenges of the time. Griffin’s postcolonial educational activities at the NYS and SBC were varied, dynamic, and sought to address several issues in their varied societal contexts. The NYS programs were aimed at absorbing youth who were part of Kenya’s Independence struggle. Much of the emphasis was on vocational skills and literacy. The
purpose was to prepare youth for the skilled workforce that was required by the young independent state. SBC, on the other hand, sought to address the youth vagrancy problem. At its founding in 1959, as a youth club, it offered basic educational programs and more vocational skills. The programs changed rapidly as the school struggled to transform itself from a club to a school. There have been numerous educational reviews in Starehe’s programs which demonstrate that Starehe has consistently been devising new educational programs to address varied Kenyan needs. Early emphasis was on technical and liberal arts and later focus was on technical, commercial, computer science, accounting, and liberal arts. In all his programs, Griffin seems to have designed his leadership style to match the context of the period. It were these varied contexts that determined his leadership design and the relationship between him and the people he led. Much of his success in his educational activities in both colonial and postcolonial Kenya was primarily because of the degree of acceptance, confidence, trust, and respect that his followers and the government had for him and his work.

Although Griffin’s contingency approaches to leadership varied depending on different historical contexts, the findings show that, due to the complexity of leadership issues, there were other accessory conditions in both colonial and postcolonial government structures that governed his leadership styles and in order to comprehensively understand his leadership approaches, it is vital to understand these structures and their governing policies. These complexities required an integrated, multifaceted, and systematic approach that a comprehensive leadership analysis requires, which goes beyond the contingency parameters of the leader, the led, and the situation
synergy. It is these complexities that are evidenced in Griffin’s innovative educational programs during the colonial period that were not part of the main colonial rehabilitative programs of “civilizing” Africans through changing their “hearts and minds”.

Implications and Policy Recommendations

This study has several implications. First, it reveals that individuals play a significant role in shaping the history of their societies. Their study illuminates the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts of their communities; their challenges; and future prospects. It also suggests the relationship between the individual and their history. Although individuals shape history they are also shaped by history. The findings in this study indicate that there is need for educational scholars to examine the role of various individual educators and their contributions to society. This implication is inferred from the involvement of Griffin in the growth of Kenyan education in both colonial and postcolonial period. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that there is need for scholars of African education to examine further the contributions of African educators to the process of education and change in Africa. Specific attention should be paid to those less known educators whose contributions are significant but yet undocumented.

The study findings reveal that there is need for school administrators to use leadership approaches that promise success and create space for the participation of all stakeholders. These findings indicate that although most school heads strive to improve their administration process, the used leadership approaches do not necessarily lead to improved school performance and neither are they inclusive. This implication is inferred
from Griffin’s insights on educational leadership and his administrative style, based on his experiences in youth education at Manyani, Wamumu, the Youth Centres, the NYS, and SBC, in which he emphasized service, hard work, devotion, commitment, integrity, competence, relationality, and partnership in school administration as key ingredients for effective management of educational institutions. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that there is need for school heads to build leadership structures that are inclusive and create room for the participation of all stakeholders. This demands commitment, competence, collaboration, and effective command of the administration process.

The findings of the study also reveal that there is need for school heads to look at schools as their own and to make a strong commitment to their administrative work. School head must take the lead in the school governing process and create a happy and harmonious learning environment that develops qualities of integrity and habits of service in students. The findings imply that management of schools should be seen by school heads as a vocation, which a person should accept only when he or she has a genuine call for it. This demands the giving of time and talent to the process. To be effective, heads of schools must be hard working, committed, and dedicated. It is also important for them to appoint effective assistants. This implication is drawn from Griffin’s insights on how to establish an effective school administration and his critical examination of teaching as a vocation. Based on these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that there is need for school heads to be committed and dedicated to the management of schools. Offering of wholistic education and establishing of
relations, are imperative educational components, if the students have to be active agents of social change.

Further, the study shows that there is need for the Kenyan Ministry of Education to develop strategies that allow continuous reinvigoration of its educational programs in terms of goals, aims, objectives, methods, process, curriculum, administration, teaching and evaluation to enable it address dialectical needs of society. These findings imply that although the Kenyan government seeks to create an industrialized nation by 2020, there is a disconnect between its educational process and developmental goals. This implication is drawn from Griffin’s continuous reinvigoration of Starehe’s academic programs and his early innovative educational programs at Manyani and Wamumu, the youth centers, and the NYS. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that there is need for the Kenyan Ministry of Education to constantly endeavor to marry its educational theory and practice. This requires creating a link between educational content and societal needs and continuous review of educational programs and policies. This type of education must go beyond educating people for citizenship—merely obeying of societal rules.

In addition, this study reveals that educators are expected to be good role models for their students and should use positive methods in parenting students under their care and in forging an educative community. This findings imply, that although most educators actively participate in the educational process and are pivotal in the implementation process of education goals, aims, curriculum, and administration, few of them strive to build an educative community beyond classroom theorizing. This
implication is drawn from Griffin’s early administrative experiences that made him devise strategies of involving students in school administration. Other insights are also evidenced in his overall strategies and views on how to handle school personnel and the importance of partnering with students in school administration. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that educators should use teaching and learning strategies that allow wholistic education to take place. Wholistic education should aim at equipping students with the necessary theory and practice that can permit them to adequately face their societal challenges and to bring about change. This calls for commitment; a fusion of educational theory and practice; and creating a sense of freedom, dialogue, trust and partnership in the education process.

This study reveals the significance of offering service, as well as a democratic and character-based education to students. The findings bring to the fore the importance of creating relationality and partnership in the learning and teaching process. These findings imply that students’ learning outcomes are enhanced more in a disciplined, wholistic, and collaborative educational structure. This implication is drawn from Griffin’s broad insights on educational administration and leadership which covers the aforementioned components. On the basis of these findings, this study recommends that there is need for an education process to produce wholistic students who can address societal challenges. For this to be effective, it is vital that the offered education is pragmatic, democratic, service and virtue-based, relational, and inclusive.

The study findings also reveal that there is need to create accessory training opportunities for youth to enable them to participate adequately in national development.
These findings imply that offering more training opportunities to the youth, in addition to mainstream education, is vital and greatly supplements the existing educational programs. This approach creates more avenues for the youth to access education and puts them in a more secure position in terms of participating adequately in national development. This implication is drawn from Griffin’s formation of supplemental educational youth programs such as, the youth centres/clubs and the NYS. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that there is need for the Kenyan government to create more additional training opportunities for youth who cannot access mainstream education. To achieve this, it is crucial to formulate a clear and well defined educational policy that can guide the establishment and operations of these programs.

The theoretical significance of this study is in a contribution to the conceptualization of educational leadership in terms of human relations. It is only within a relational administrative structure that a wholistic educational process can be established. The study demonstrates that human relations are the primary building blocks of a sound educational structure and the central foundation of societal progress. The purpose of education, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes are the same, to form relations. A relational educational institution is seen as opening the way to an intellectually, morally, and admirable educational process. The relational nature of teaching and learning enhances experiences of both students and teachers, increases students understanding of the subject matter, enhances educators pedagogical choices, steers, fosters and has the potential for increasing teachers’ choice of teaching methods as well the potential of influencing students learning outcomes. The findings of the study
imply that for these relations to succeed in creating a firm educational system, it is important to involve all the relevant stakeholders and to use varied activities that can foster mutual transformative relations beyond what a normal school provides. Schools are expected to be hybrid institutions that enhance both in-class and out-of-class relations. This implication is drawn from the theoretical tenets of relational theories that present human relations as being core in an education process. They are seen as possessing “nurturing capacities” and “ethics of care” that determine and define human existence. Qualities of care, concern, connectedness, and nurturance are seen as being significant in maintaining society’s economic, political, and social processes.

On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends that it is important to examine the role of relations in understanding discourse of educational theory and practice. Educational theory should strive to forge relations and should aim at transforming society. For this to succeed, it is important first to redefine, nurture and understand, the functional roles of education. Two, it is vital to involve all the relevant stakeholders in the education process. Three, it is essential to put relational thinking into the mainstream functions of ethics, educational theory, and practice. Four, it is important to examine how the underlying reality of human relations constitutes the crucial context of education and its role in cementing teaching and learning process. This requires creating an educational structure that is innovative, dynamic, transforming, and collaborative. Further, it also requires an educational process that seeks to teach its students a new form of citizenship that ensures that there is societal tranquility in society. This calls for being cognizant of the fact that school as a moral equivalent of home
requires a remapping of the logical geography of education as well as revisioning the public world in which it functions. The “schoolhome” can effect this by bringing into alignment the values of the home, school, and the world by deriving its overarching aim from a rewritten domestic tranquility clause that seeks to forge a relational educational process.

In terms of school leadership theories, the study underscores the need to re-examine further school effectiveness in terms of its leadership approaches and the contextual parameters that define and shape its functions. This implication is drawn from the study findings that bring to the forefront the vital role that contingency theory plays in establishing an effective functional leadership structure. From the study findings the theory asserts that a leader’s effectiveness depends on how well a leader’s leadership style fits within a given context. Thus, in order to comprehensively understand the performance of leaders, it is essential, to understand the situations in which they lead. Leadership in the larger educational functions is viewed as a product of three central components, the leader, the led, and the situation. The interrelations between these three factors determine the effectiveness of the given leadership structure that is measured by the degree to which the given leader is accepted by the followers (the degree of confidence and trust), the respect the followers have for the leader, and the extent to which the leader possesses the ability to influence the followers. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends, that those who are charged with the leadership of educational institutions should be able to build sound relationships with
those they lead. It is these strong relational links that define and determine leader acceptance, certainty, predictability and effectiveness.

Further, the study findings recognize that leadership is interpersonal, and leaders cannot be examined in isolation from the people they lead. The linkage between the two embraces the dynamics of wants, needs, and motivation that is essential for an effective educational process. The interaction between the leader and his or her followers is seen as the cog that defines human interactions. These are the key tenets that contingency theory accentuates in its discussions on the contextual tasks of leaders.

From the study findings, the education process is expected to be transformational. The study findings place emphasis on the importance of transformational leadership in the effective running of an educational institution. It is the embodiment of the superlative type of leadership and the cornerstone of the postindustrial school of leadership. Transformational leadership is seen as inspiring, transforming and puts the society to a greater developmental level both locally and globally. The study affirms the vital role that transformative leadership plays in the educational change process. Administrative approaches of Griffin depict him as a transformational leader. Because of his transformational approach he was able to negotiate the colonial educational programs of Manyani, and Wamumu, youth centers/clubs that offered limited training opportunities to youth. It is this same approach that saw him constantly reinvigorate, change and expand the educational programs at the NYS and SBC. Griffin’s ability to interpret the colonial government’s political agenda that was imbedded in its educational programs gave him the insights into developing a transforming leadership strategy that aimed at equipping
African youth with skills that would enable them to bring about societal change. In order to effect this, he greatly employed qualities of transformation. First, he endeavored to provide leadership that was inspirational, transforming, and progressive. This is evidenced in his youth educational programs both in the colonial and postcolonial Kenya. His overarching mantra in all his programs was to equip the African youth with the tools that would enable them to contribute effectively to societal development. Because of the transforming power of his works both the colonial and postcolonial governments were willing to support his cause. Through his partnering, relational, collaborative, innovative, pragmatic, wholistic, character and service-based education approaches, Griffin was able to transform the lives of many youth whose future would have been destroyed and talents laid to waste. Because of his innovative and pragmatic educational programs, many of these youth have been able to make significant contributions to Kenya’s development. Griffin’s leadership qualities inspired and transformed many of the youth who passed through NYS and SBC.

The progressive nature of Griffin’s leadership style enabled SBC to be admitted to international educational associations such as the Global Connections and Round Square Group of Schools. His inspiring, transforming, and progressive aspects of leadership are vividly illustrated in the way he was able to transform SBC from a two tin hut institution into a full complex institution with branches in primary, secondary, technical, and Institute. At the time of his death, plans were underway to build a Starehe University to meet the increasing Kenyan demands for tertiary education.
As a transformational leader, Griffin demonstrated three key functions that are embodied in a transformative process: expansion of specific needs, wants of the constituency, and its dialectical nature. In his educational programs, he endeavored to equip youth with specific skills that would enable them to address their societal challenges. He believed in pragmatic, dialectical, and innovative educational programs. Griffin also depicted various cognitive manifestations of transformational leadership that entail, charisma, inspiration, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. He was an inspiration to both his colleagues and students and many admired his virtues of work, dedication, commitment, and intergrity. From the findings it was evident that he led by example. He had individual consideration for both his students and faculty. He was opposed to “sheep mentality syndrome” style of administration and instead he strived to address each individual’s particular wants.

By and large, Griffin exemplified the transformational leadership characteristics of being critical, transformative, educative, and ethical. As a critic, he challenged the colonial government’s policies of handling juvenile vagrancy and educational policies. In the postcolonial government he was a strong advocate of disciplined, democratic, and collaborative approaches of effective school leadership. These were leadership approaches that were not emphasized in the mainstream administration of most Kenyan schools. Because of his belief in a dialectical education process, at many times he always in conflicts with conservative educational “experts.” Further, the findings indicate that Griffin was a transformative and educative leader. He saw the latter as the vehicle to solving youth vagrancy and a route to Kenya’s progress. He sought an education system
that would enable the youth to participate more effectively in societal development. He underscored the importance of virtue based education and demonstrated its significance through his own life. Virtues to him were not a garment that could be disposed off at a person’s whims but rather they were part of a person’s character. It were these virtues and their embedded standards that made Griffin’s leadership style appealing. Through his high ethical standards, he challenged and raised the consciousness of the people he worked with and mobilized their energy and resources to improve Kenya’s youth education. On the basis of these findings and implications drawn, this study recommends, that it is important for school heads to establish a transformative educational structure that can empower students to bring change in society. This calls for a dynamic, collaborative, and wholistic based educational process that creates space for the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

Based on the findings, conclusions and implications of this research, this study recommends the following as areas of further research:

- Need to study further the historiographical significance of various African educators and their contributions to the evolution and growth of education in Africa. Attempts should be made to pay some attention to lesser characters whose contributions, modest in their own way, cannot be ignored in any final analysis of the achievements of other notable figures of history.
- Need to draw a correlation between the quality of African education and its ability to address societal needs. This entails addressing the following questions: how
often should the process of education be reviewed to enable it to address the
dialectical demands of society and who should spearhead the process? What kind
of education do African nations need for development?

• Need to examine the place of pedagogy of relations in education and its
  significance in educational leadership. This entails examining how interhuman
  relations determine, shape, affect, effect and define teaching and learning
  processes and their overall significance to education. This requires addressing the
  following question: what is the place of a theoretical reconstruction of relational
  theory in the education process?

• Need to assess the kinds of students that an effective education system is expected
  to produce. This entails addressing the following question: How can wholistic
  education be created?

• Need to investigate the relationship between school leadership and learning
  outcomes. Need to examine notions of transformational leadership, running a
  school like a home, school regeneration, nurturing of brotherhood, collaborative
  leadership, democracy, freedom, liberty and partnering in education, as well as
  their effects on the education process. This entails addressing the following
  question: What kind of educational leadership do schools need?
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

EDUCATING MODERN KENYANS: GEOFFREY WILLIAM GRIFFIN AND
STAREHE BOYS CENTRE AND SCHOOL.

TAPED INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

I, ____________________________, have agreed to participate in the research study entitled Educating Modern Kenyans: Geoffrey William Griffin and Starehe Boys Centre and School, a dissertation conducted by Peter C. Otiato, a doctoral candidate, from Ohio University. I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, and I can discontinue participating in the study at any time without embarrassment or reprisal. I also understand that at any time during this research study I can ask questions about the research procedures, and these questions will be answered honestly by the researcher.

I am fully aware that this research study consists of individual, in-person, face-to-face interview sessions, all of which have been audio-taped. During these sessions, I have been asked about some of my personal, educational, and career history as well my attitudes, perceptions, relationship and experiences with Geoffrey Willliam Griffin (the subject of inquiry). I understand that a copy of either the tape or the transcription of the tape (or both) will be given to me for my personal archives.

I understand that the information collected during and for this study will be treated with sincerity, discretion, respect, and with no malicious intent. I understand further that any data collected will be used in professional presentations and publications.
connected with this study and that my name will be used unless I choose as indicated below.

_____________ I choose to have my name used in any professional presentations or publications.

_____________ I choose not to have my name used in any professional presentations or publications

__________________________________________________________________________ ____________
Partcipant Signature Date

__________________________________________________________________________ ____________
Researcher Date
APPENDIX B: INFORMANTS AND THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ASKED

Teachers’ Questionnaire

Part A: Demographic and Personal

1. Name of the participant______________________________

2. Duration of being in Starehe Boys Centre and School_________________________

3. Position and capacity served _________________________________________

4. Educational Level___________________________________________________

Part B

5. For how long have you known Griffin and in what capacity?

6. What do you consider to be the characteristics or Griffin’s style of leadership and what
   is its relationship with Starehe Boys’ performance?

7. Has there been cooperation or teamwork in the running of Starehe Boys Centre?

8. What was the position of Griffin on the relationship between the school and the
   following: school community; Ministry of Education; other academic institutions;
   International community and funding agencies?

9. What contributions both academic and affective do you think Griffin made
   to the growth of Starehe Boys Centre?

10. What was Griffin’s view of an effective education system?

11. What future prospects of the growth of Kenyan education system does Starehe Boys
    Centre provide?

12. From the administrative educational experiences at Starehe Boys Centre, what
essential components ought to be in an effective education system?

13. What in your opinion was Griffin’s philosophy of education?

14. What is the educational significance of Griffin in the development of Kenyan education?

15. What uniqueness does Starehe Boys Centre have that you think other schools in Kenya do not that you would like me to convey to the Kenyan public?

16. What, specifically, would you want Kenyans to remember Griffin for?
School Founder(s) Questionnaire

Part A: Demographic and Personal data

1. Name of the participant_____________________________________
2. Duration of being in Starehe Boys Centre and School _____________
3. Position________________________________________________
4. Educational Level________________________________________

Part B

5. In what capacity have you known Griffin and for how long?
6. How did you come to be involved with Griffin and what was the nature of your involvement? Elaborate on how the idea of beginning a school begun.
7. What challenges have you faced with Griffin’s since the inception of the school?
8. What do you consider to have been the characteristics of Griffin’s style of leadership?
9. Do you consider Griffin to have been an effective school administrator?
10. What, in your opinion, would you consider to have been Griffin’s philosophy of education?
11. What was the position of Griffin on the relationship between the school and the following: Community; Ministry of Education; International Community and funding agencies.
12. What contributions both academic and affective do you think Griffin made to the growth of Starehe Boys Centre and School?
13. What was Griffin’s position on an effective school management system?
14. What future prospects of the growth of Kenyan education system did Griffin
represent?

15. From your administrative educational experiences at Starehe Boys Centre, what essential components ought to be in an effective Kenyan education system to enable it address both its local and global needs?

16. What is the educational significance of Griffin in the development of Kenyan education system?

17. Explain the relationship that existed between you, Griffin, and other members of the school?

18. “Baraza” system is a system that Starehe Boys Centre has used for along time in setting up an effective administrative system. Explain more about its origin, benefits and shortfalls?

19. What is the uniqueness of Starehe Boys that you think other schools in Kenya do not have?

20. What is it that you want me to convey about your co-founder? What specifically would you want the Kenyans to remember Griffin’s for?
Students’ Questionnaire

Part A: Demographic and Personal data

1. Name of the participant_____________________________________

2. Duration of being in Starehe Boys Centre_______________________________

3. Position______________________________________________

4. Educational Level________________________________________

Part B

5. Discuss your experiences at Starehe Boys Centre (both academic and affective). Do you consider these experiences to have been wholistic?

6. What were your joys and challenges in the above experiences?

7. How have these experiences shaped your present career?

8. What do you think differentiates Starehe Boys Centre from other Kenyan schools?

9. What bonds Starehians?

10. Comment on the following models of Starehe: school culture, traditions, values of commitment, hard work, service, perseverance, cooperation, honesty, and self-reliance, school and community relations both local and international.

11. Discuss the “Baraza” system and its effects on Starehe’s administrative system.

12. What were your interactions with Griffin? What kind of a person was he?

13. What was the relationship between Griffins style(s) of leadership and Starehe Boys Centre’s performance?

14. What is the key component that ought to be in an effective education system?

15. What do you think was Griffin’s educational philosophy and contributions to the
Kenyan education system?

16. What do you want me to convey to Kenyan school administrators and students about the person of Griffin and Starehe?

17. How can we interpret Kenya’s educational historical development and legacy through the works of Griffin at Starehe Boys Centre?

18. What insights of the Kenyan education system does Griffin’s involvement in youth education in Kenya provide in terms of educational change in both colonial and postcolonial period?

19. What future prospects of the growth of youth education in Kenya did Griffin represent?

20. What were his strengths and shortfalls as an educational leader?
Administrators’ Questionnaire

Part A: Demographic and Personal data

1. Name of the participant_____________________________________.
2. Duration of association with the school and the capacity served___________________.
3. Educational level_______________________________________________.

Part B

4. From your interactions with Starehe Boys discuss your experiences (both academic and affective). Do you consider these experiences to have been wholistic?
5. What have been your joys and challenges in working with Starehe Boys Centre and school?
6. What motivational factors have made you work with Starehe Boys Centre for a long time?
8. What do you think differentiates Starehe Boys Centre from other Kenyan schools?
9. Comment on the following models used at Starehe Boys Centre and their impact on its performance: school culture, traditions and values: commitment, hard work, service, perseverance, cooperation, honesty, self-reliance, and the “Baraza” system.
10. What were your interactions with Griffin? What kind of a person was he?
11. What do you think was Griffin’s educational philosophy and contributions to the Kenyan education system?
12. How do you think Griffin should be remembered? What was his legacy?
13. What do you want me to convey to the Kenyan community, educational administrators and students about the person of Griffin and Starehe Boys Centre?
14. How can we interpret Kenya’s educational historical development and legacy through the works of Griffin and Starehe?

15. What insights of the Kenyan education system does Griffin’s involvement in youth education in Kenya provide in terms of educational change both in colonial and postcolonial periods?

16. What future prospects of the growth of youth education in Kenya does Griffin represent?

17. From your experiences at Starehe Boys Centre and School what key components ought to be in an effective education system?
Support Staff Questionnaire

Part A: Demographic and Personal data

1. Name of the participant_____________________________________
2. Duration of being in Starehe Boys Centre and School_____________
3. Position_________________________________________________
4. Educational Level________________________________________

Part B

5. In what capacity did you know Griffin and for how long?
6. What was your relationship with Griffin?
7. Do you consider Griffin to have been an effective leader? What was his style of leadership?
8. What success and challenges have you experienced working at Starehe Boys Centre?
9. What motivational force(s) made you work with Griffin for a very long time?
10. What were Griffin’s contributions to the growth of youth education in Kenya?
11. What do you want me to convey to the Kenyan community about the person of Griffin and Starehe Boys Centre?