

VOICES

COMMENT

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Reading keeps the mind fit, prevents cognitive decline in old age and is a stress-buster

A CHILD WHO READS WILL GROW INTO AN ADULT WHO THINKS

Children are in pre-school, primary and secondary levels of education. In most cases, teachers introduce basic reading right at pre-school. This is because reading is one of the core-competencies in language taught alongside listening, writing and speaking. Literacy is all about reading and writing. At all levels, teachers use core course books to implement the main curriculum. Progressively, in primary school, learners read storybooks. In secondary school, Form 1 and 2 students read class readers spelt out in the Orange Book by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development. In Forms 3 and 4, there are examinable set texts. Next, children read self-help books, sacred scriptures, newspapers and magazines.

When you read the *Jewish Phenomenon* by Steven Silbiger, you will ascertain that Jews use that route to build verbal-linguistic intelligence in children. Jews introduce children to books such as Torah, Talmud and Mishna. Torah are the first five books of the Old Testament. Talmud is detailed rabbinical commentary on the Bible. Mishna contains laws for prayers, religious observance and everyday living.

VORACIOUS READING MAKES PEOPLE IMAGINATIVE, CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE. IT MAKES AND MOULDS GREAT THINKERS. IT BUILDS THE THREE STRANDS OF THINKING: CRITICAL, CREATIVE AND DECISION-MAKING

Indeed, there are several benefits of reading. Reading is a great exercise to the brain: It keeps the mind fit like a fiddle. Reading prevents cognitive decline in old age. Reading is meditative, hence, a stress-buster. Reading is one of the right forms of reflection. Reading is a form of self-care through self-isolation. Reading builds vocabulary and enriches the word bank: It adds glamour to grammar.

Reading about trials and triumphs of others sometimes makes people empathetic and altruistic. Reading expands ken of knowledge: It is a source

of winsome wit and wisdom. Reading expands the attention and concentration span.

Reading builds massive powers of memory. Reading is a form of edutainment: It entertains and educates. Reading exposes people to other worlds. Reading ushers people to the unknown world of fantasy. Reading, to children, enhances content mastery and retention ability, which leads to success in exams. Most avid readers amount to better writers and orators.

Consequently, voracious reading makes people imaginative, creative and innovative. It makes and moulds great thinkers. And builds the three strands of thinking: Critical, creative and decision-making.

Somewhere I read, this world is thronged by numerous adults, only five per cent think, 15 per cent think they are thinking, and 80 per cent do not think at all. Therefore, in case we want to make our children great thinkers in adulthood, then we should introduce them to heroic books. Somewhat, passionate readership of books churns out veritable thinkers.



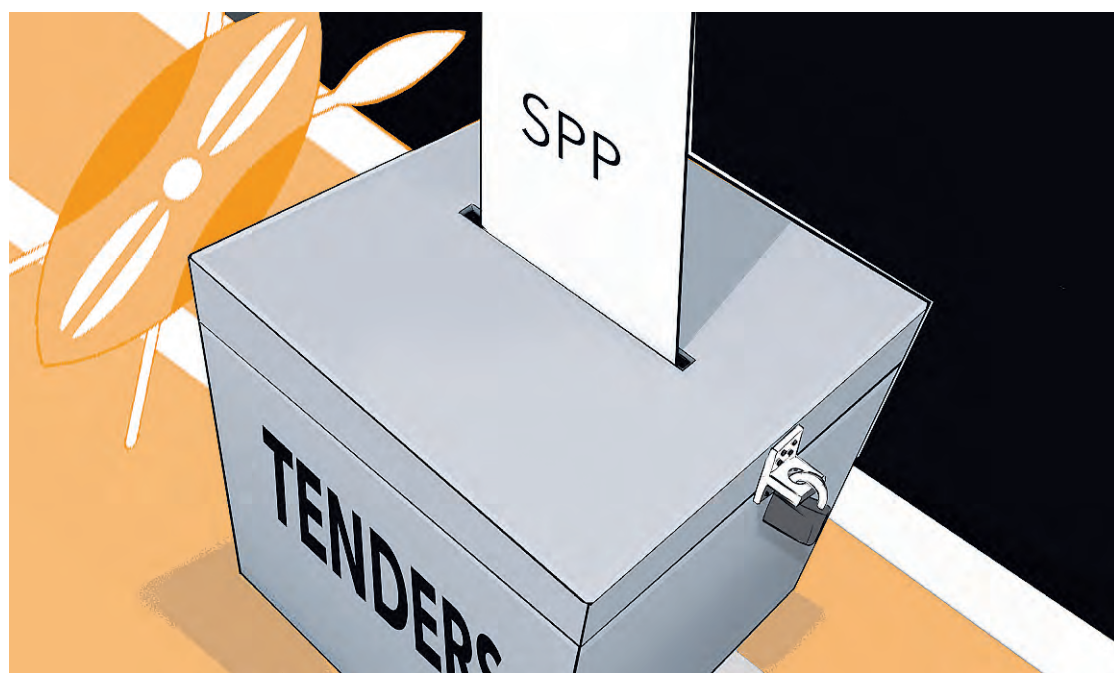
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COMMENT

JOHN KARANI
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Working with sustainable public procurement, the government will ensure that a conducive and stable environment to enhance certainty, instil confidence in citizens, businesses and investors



SURE PATHWAY TO ATTAINING KENYA SDGs

The Kenya Institute of Supplies Management is the national body for professionals in the practice of procurement and supply chain management in Kenya. The institute draws its mandate from the Supplies Practitioners Management Act No 17 of 2007.

KISM is mandated by the Act to license and regulate procurement and supply chain management professionals in Kenya. For individuals to practice P&SCM in Kenya, they must be registered by KISM and pay the subscription and licence fees.

The 2010 Constitution included a provision for the protection and management of the environment and natural resources. Since then, the government has developed several policies and initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability initiatives, such as the National Adaptation Plan and the Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan.

The government recognised the important role that public procurement could play as a tool to work towards sustainable development goals. It introduced the preference and reservation clauses within the current public procurement legislative framework.

These provisions seek to give positive bias towards the marginalised and disadvantaged groups in society, as well as to local companies and SMEs. This positive bias has the knock-on effect of boosting Kenyan business and employment, as well as stimulating job creation for young people, women and those with disabilities. The government has also recognised the important role of public procurement policy as a means to encourage innovation and sustainability in the private sector.

This can be achieved by incorporating environmental, social and ethical criteria into public procurement requirements for suppliers to comply with. This can help reduce the environmental impact of public sector activities and promote the development of new, innovative solutions to public sector challenges.

Sustainable public procurement (SPP) is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods,

services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole-life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation but also to society and the economy while minimising damage to the environment.

Kenya's strategic development areas, such as economic transformation and job creation, human and social development and environmental sustainability, are closely matched by the three pillars of economy, society and environment addressed through SPP.

Working with SPP, the government will ensure that a conducive and stable environment is established with the aim of enhancing certainty and instilling confidence among citizens, businesses and investors.

With the introduction of the preference and reservation clauses, the government took the first and most remarkable initiative towards implementation of sustainable public procurement in Kenya. But the focus has not stopped here.

Recently, KISM partnered with the Global Capacity Development Programme on SPP implemented for Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) by a joint venture of FCG Swedish Development and Crown Agents Ltd.

This is a multi-country programme to support increased deployment of sustainable public procurement practices in Sida's partner countries. Other Kenyan partners taking part in this programme are the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation.

KISM and the other programme partners will now play a crucial role in implementing and upholding SPP in Kenya and ultimately working towards the achievement of sustainable development goals.

It is important for KISM that the implementation of SPP in Kenya brings together the business sector in Kenya and the supply chain practitioners to have a serious dialogue, since it is only through intentional collaboration that the sustainability goals of the country can be achieved.

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