

International conference

on « New philosophical practices »

at the Unesco :

15th and 16th of November, 2006

“Philosophy as educational and cultural practice: a new citizenship”

Seconde intervention : Mme Beate Børresen

Oslo University College

Beate.Borresen@lu.hio.no

Philosophy in Norwegian schools

In 2004 the Norwegian government took the initiative to undertake a project with philosophy in primary and lower secondary schools. The aim is to find out whether and in what form this is possible and desirable. The project started in autumn 2005 and will conclude in summer 2007. Results so far have been promising.

In June 2004, the Norwegian Parliament adopted the principles and main guidelines for a comprehensive reform of primary and secondary education in Norway. This was done by adopting the Government's report to the Parliament, White Paper no. 30. Surprisingly, this included a brief paragraph on philosophy.

The Ministry wishes to ensure that children and young people receive a basic introduction to and experience of the questions and methodical approach involved in the subject of philosophy. This could improve students' capabilities for work with the subject in school and would be a good preparation for their future in society and in employment. Philosophy would give students a perspective on the basis of other subjects, both by showing how problems have developed historically and how problems may be discussed systematically.

The Ministry will assess how this can be strengthened with regard to the curriculum. The Ministry wishes further to stimulate towards further projects with philosophy as a subject and the use of philosophy in other subjects on the curriculum. The results of the projects will form a basis for assessing whether philosophy should be established as a school subject.

We do not know why this paragraph was included at that time. Philosophy with children was neither well known or widespread in Norway, but philosophy had been introduced on a more systematic basis in connection with Religious Education (RE) (In Norway the subject is called KRL. The letters stands for Christianity, Religion and Life views) in 1997. KRL was then introduced as a new and obligatory subject in the curriculum. It is also the case that philosophy enjoys a high status in Norway. Neither is interest in philosophy limited to an academic elite.

In Norway what is usually called P4C or philosophy for children, are called philosophy *with* children (*filosofi med barn*). We also stress that philosophy in schools is about *doing* philosophy, not learning about. At the same time we want the children to do more than practising thinking skills. We usually say that the children shall work with “philosophical things in a philosophical way”. Their work shall be systematic and regular and have a long term perspective. The aim is to be “a better thinker” and to find something true, good, and

beautiful.

Systematic work and high-level activity

In the context of setting up KRL as a subject, we at Oslo University College began to look more closely at how the students could work with philosophy. Until then we had very little experience with this kind of work in schools. A book about philosophy in schools was published and seminars and meetings were held for philosophers, teachers and other interested parties. In 2000, the City of Oslo started a project in which teachers at 6 schools had philosophy with their students. Oslo University College was central in these activities. At the same time, a person at Tromsø University was working on the same topic, without receiving the same support from institutions outside the university. Oslo University College received public support in developing a study of philosophy and children, linked to the education of teachers. This began in Autumn 2001.

The work on philosophy in schools aroused interest among individuals in the Ministry of Education, the Directorate of Education (which is the Ministry's executive organ), and in school administrations, as well as among philosophers and people involved in the education of teachers. We found interest among various circles, many people attended our seminars and there was often press coverage of the work being done in schools and other places. We worked systematically in developing theory, plans, studies and teaching materials. This was done together with teachers so that we could try out ideas and materials in practice. The work on philosophy with children in Norway is still marked by this closeness to the practical field. Unfortunately the disadvantage is that no research is being done in this area among either educationalists or philosophers. That is a great deficiency in the work in this country. Thus far it has proved impossible to obtain funding for research as against practical projects. This is something we are particularly focusing on at present. The Ministry of Education has set up a group to carry out a review about philosophy as a subject in school, with the aim of discovering where efforts should be concentrated in future. This is a hopeful sign, since the Government is concerned about research based knowledge on activities in schools.

The other thing we did which has influenced public awareness, was to contact people abroad who had more experience than us. First we went to Denmark and Sweden and took a closer look at the work they were doing there with philosophy in schools. We invited them to present their findings to us. One of the central figures in this area in Sweden, Bo Malmhøster, has been working in Oslo since 2000. In 2001 we contacted people in Britain. We held seminars in Norway with them. We went to courses and seminars there. And for three years running we sent a group of 10-15 teachers on study tours to the N-RAIS project in the north of England headed by James Nottingham. From 2003 we have also had a collaboration with the French philosopher Oscar Brenifier. He has held workshops in several places in Norway and has come on school visits and some of his books have been published in Norwegian. His work has a great significance for many of those working on philosophy with children in Norway.

We have also made philosophy with children visible through a collaboration with the Norwegian UNESCO Committee over the celebration of World Philosophy Day in November 2005. As part of the preparation for the celebration we published an educational piece on the commission's website. Teachers were encouraged to take a philosophy lesson with their students and send the students' questions and assertions to the Commission. These were published on the website together with our responses and comments. We then prepared a new presentation based on some of the material which came in. This was used in an open meeting where people could observe children in philosophical inquiry.

From White Paper to project

It was the Government which took the initiative for more formal work on philosophy in schools through the White Paper no. 30 “Culture for Learning” (*Kultur for læring*). A White Paper is a presentation to the Parliament of what the Government wishes to do in the years to come. For the work to commence, it must first be approved by the Parliament. In the case of White Paper no. 30, this occurred in June 2004. Thereafter it is up to the Government to decide how the tasks shall be put into action.

The Ministry of Education sent a letter to the Directorate for Education in September 2004 in which they asked them to start preparatory work for a project of philosophy in primary and secondary schools. The work started with a seminar in the Ministry with Oscar Brenifier from Paris and Bo Malmhøster from Stockholm. It was attended by people from both the Ministry and the Directorate. The seminar was very successful and was the inspiration for further initiatives. In December, the Directorate for Education sent a letter to all county governors asking them to collect information about experiences with philosophy in schools in their counties. At the same time the University College was asked to review all the curricula in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools with regard to elements of philosophy. On 1st February 2005 both reports were ready – one on philosophy in curricula and one on experiences of philosophy in Norwegian schools, based on the 50 or so schools which had responded to the enquiries from the county governors. Thereafter the Directorate began preparations for starting a project. It began on 1st September 2005. A group comprising two persons each from the University College and the Directorate for Education was set up to assume responsibility for the project. The project manager was bought in from the University College. A reference group was also set up with one person from the Ministry of Education, one from one of the county governors’ offices, one from a local school administration and two professors from the University of Oslo, one a professor of educational science the other of philosophy.

Autumn 2005 was used to find schools to take part, prepare plans and develop materials.

Training the teachers and work with the individual schools began in January 2006. And thus we were off!

The project – that is to say the work in the schools – will be concluded in June 2007. The final report shall be delivered to the Ministry of Education in October 2007. The report will include a description of what has been done, positive and negative experiences, recommendations of what should be done next and suggestions of possible curricula for philosophy as a subject.

After this, what happens next is up to the ministry and the politicians.

The form and content of the project

The aim of the project is to find out whether philosophy in schools is possible. The task is linked to two White Papers:

White Paper No. 30 (2004-05) “Culture for Learning” (*Kultur for læring*). This report is, as mentioned, the political basis for the new reform of primary and secondary education, the so called “The Knowledge Promotion” (*Kunnskapsløftet*). “Culture for Learning” proposes that a project of philosophy should be started and that the results of the project should be used as the basis for assessing whether philosophy should be established in primary and lower secondary schools as a separate subject.

and

White Paper No. 49 (2004-05) “Diversity through inclusion and participation. Responsibility and freedom.” (*Mangfold gjennom inkludering og deltakelse. Ansvar og frihet.*) This proposes that the philosophy project should also present findings on how students with different religious and cultural backgrounds react to the subject and what questions engage a group of

students with a diversity of cultures and values.

15 schools and 43 teachers from 9 counties across the country are taking part in the project. These are schools in cities, smaller towns and rural areas. Students from class 1 to class 10 are taking part. The schools taking part were selected so that we had some with previous experience of philosophy and some without. A certain number of schools also have students who speak minority languages.

The main points of the project are as follows:

- Participants in the project are regularly trained in seminars on a regional basis twice per term. In addition there was a seminar for all participants in January 2005 and there will be a joint study tour to England in May 2007.
- All teachers are visited by the project management in their schools every term.
- All the teachers conduct a certain number of philosophy lessons, minimum 10 periods per term.
- Develop teaching materials and working methods. In the first term all teachers used material made by the project management. After this, the teachers may develop their own materials. These must be approved by the management.
- All the teachers must report what they have done and how things have gone, every month.
- The project management writes a report per term and a final report at the project's conclusion.
- Assess teaching materials, training and guiding of teachers.
- The project has its own intranetsite containing materials, literature, practical information and similar. Communication is also maintained between participants in the form of mail, chat and forum discussions on this site.

The reason for philosophy in schools

The ministry's reason for proposing philosophy in schools in 2004 was that the subject can give students fundamental attitudes and working methods which can be used in all school subjects as well as later in life. Working with philosophy can give students experience of a systematic debate of issues central to most subjects and to most areas of society and employment. Acquiring a systematic and "scientific" way of working, such as we find in philosophy, can help students cope with higher education regardless of social background and encouragement from home.

When it comes to the rest of the school curriculum, philosophy can help students in developing critical capabilities. This is something which is central to both the general curriculum and the individual subjects. In more concrete terms, philosophy can help to develop one of the five basic skills in the curriculum – namely the ability to express oneself verbally. Philosophy is also, as mentioned, part of RE in Norway.

In general terms, working with philosophy can give participants practice in participating in dialogue in various contexts. They get practice in listening, keeping to the point, assessing assertions and giving reasons for their own views. Because there are no given answers in philosophy, students also have practice in having to assess several possible answers. This is particularly important in a highly diverse society.

In more concrete terms, one also acquires experience and attitudes which are important in a democracy. To listen, to tolerate different points of view and to have an attitude which says that all answers are good until the opposite is proved and that it is up to you to show that a point of view isn't valid. To understand that it is what is being said which is important, not who is saying it. One also learns from experience that what one says – or neglects to say – can

have a bearing on the task in hand. A comprehensive survey which was carried out in Stockholm in the 1990s shows that students who have taken philosophy are better listeners than those who have not. They also display greater abilities in solving social problems on their own account (Malmhøster/Ohlsson: *Filosofi med barn* [Philosophy with children]. Stckh. 1999).

Conclusion

Our experience so far has been that it is difficult to be able to engage in philosophy in schools unless it has a clear place in the timetable and curriculum. Even for very enthusiastic teachers, it is difficult to find room for philosophy in a hectic school day. We see that teachers derive great benefit from training and from materials which support their work with the students. At the seminars during the projects emphasis was placed on the teachers' own philosophical development. You must engage in philosophy yourself, using the same materials that you will later use with your students. We have seen that those teachers who do not manage to engage themselves in the seminars do not manage to get philosophy across to their students either. We also see that students who speak minority languages derive particular benefit from philosophy lessons. One reason for this is the emphasis on everyone understanding. These students discover that everyone can have problems understanding and that it is OK to ask. They see that questions are not for dummies, they are for those who want to find out more and want to understand. One teacher reports that a couple of his students with minority languages have taken this attitude on board and applied it to other subjects with great success. Another teacher emphasised that, since philosophy is often about existential questions, students with minority languages get more practice in using different words and concepts and in using their own personal experience than in other school subjects.

One interesting experience has come from some teachers who connected philosophy with the school rules. Many students feel that these have been imposed upon them from outside, even though it is apparently the students themselves who decide which rules should apply in school. One group of students took the initiative to investigate what rules are, who decides them and how one can take part in the decisions. They learned about the responsibility and difficulties involved in the relationship between formulating rules and their actual implementation, something which is central to democracy.

The most fundamental experience of the nine years we have been working on philosophy with children at Oslo University College has been that it is thorough and systematic work with a long term perspective, both theoretical and practical, collaboration with teachers, with the authorities at all levels and with philosophers and educationalists in the academic system which enables progress.

Troisième intervention : Mr le Dr Ibanga Ikpe

Senior Lecturer

University of Botswana (Botswana)

THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICE IN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Introduction

The concept of philosophical practice is relatively new in Africa. It started, not because of any noble attempt by its practitioners to present philosophy as “an activity which is essential within the life of the city”, but rather out of the need to save the livelihood of philosophy teachers in the universities. The teaching of philosophy in African universities, just as the teaching of other disciplines, was inherited from the various universities of Europe upon whose model particular African universities were developed. Thus such universities as Ibadan, Ghana At Legon, Nairobi, and the Chancellor College in Malawi, which followed the University of London model had the teaching of philosophy as part of its academic traditions. Other universities that teach philosophy either adopted it from other European or American models or copied it from these earlier models. Thus the teaching of philosophy came to Africa as part of an attempt to develop educated African elite in the manner of the educated elites of Europe. But all of that was before the end of the cold war, the advent of globalisation, and the emergence heavily indebted poor countries whose economies operate under the *conditionalities* of the World Bank and the IMF.

More recently, international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF have been advising African Countries to disinvest in academic disciplines that do not have practical applications. Also, the realities of surviving in a globalized world where workplace competences are the only guarantees of livelihoods has resulted in a situation where prospective students shun courses like philosophy that do not train candidates for a particular job in favour of courses in science and the social sciences which have better employment prospects. As a result philosophy fell from its pedestal as a celebrated doyen of academic disciplines to the situation where it is barely tolerated within the academia. Faced with such stark realities and even more importantly with a possible loss of livelihood, philosophy teachers either had to reinvent their discipline and make it relevant in the new marketplace or face redundancy. The Nigerian Philosophical Association, for instance, saved the jobs of its members and the future of the discipline by redefining the relevance of philosophy to the Nigerian elite. At its 1986 business meeting at Ogun State University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria, it took a decision to work towards the inclusion of Philosophy courses within the general education curriculum of Nigerian universities. That decision and the energetic politicking of philosophy teachers resulted in the election of two philosophy courses by the Nigerian National Universities Commission as part of the curriculum for every Nigerian undergraduate. The Philosophical Society of Southern Africa did not wake up to this crisis of relevance until its business meeting of 1998 at the University of the Free State. The closure of the Philosophy department at the University of the Western Cape and a general decline in membership due to the migration of philosophy teachers to other areas, forced the item on the agenda of the association. Several solutions like philosophical workshops and philosophical counselling were proposed but it became increasingly apparent that the most practical way of saving the profession and the livelihood of its members was to make philosophy courses available to a wider audience as a general interest course. Although the action plan adopted by the association was not as radical as that of the Nigerians, it has succeeded in stemming the

decline of the discipline and pointing it in a new and perhaps more sustainable direction for the future.

Understanding Philosophical Practice in African Universities

It is clear from the above that philosophical practice is a relatively new concept in Africa. Unlike what may be the case in Europe and perhaps other parts of the world, what could be regarded as philosophical practice is for the most part, restricted to certain activities within the universities. It involves mainly in the attempt by faculty members with philosophical training to redress certain deficiencies in students by introducing courses that develop the capacity of students for independent thought and expression either through the discussion of philosophical problems or with the use of philosophical methods. Perhaps the only exception to this is the teaching of moral education in primary and secondary schools in some African countries of which Botswana is a good example. But even in such cases the emphasis is not on philosophical training that is geared towards enhancing independent critical thought but rather as a form of moral instruction, aimed at redressing those things that are variously considered to be the enduring ills of the society.

Perhaps the most successful example of philosophical practice in Africa is the University of Zululand where the philosophy department, instead of teaching traditional philosophy courses, offers a three-year Bachelor of Arts degree in Professional Writing. The programme, which started as an intense service course that was specially designed to enhance the students' ability to express themselves coherently in written English achieved unparalleled success in the university. This success recommended it as the primary programme for redressing the academic communication deficiencies of undergraduate students over and above the traditional communication and study skills course that is offered by the Department of English. The success of the course encouraged the department, after consultation with businesses in the surrounding area, to design and mount a full-fledged B.A. programme that prepares students in what the department refers to as "more critical and creative levels of professional writing." Thus in this case philosophy has assumed a more utilitarian goal not only within the university but also within the wider business community.

Our courses at the University of Botswana are designed to redress a different set of deficiencies. Earlier on, we had determined that the problem of our students does not lie in the presentation of ideas but in the cultivations of ideas. The challenge was to design courses that will break through the cultural taboos that have been brought into the University from the traditional society and get the students to cultivate their own opinion and engage others in dialogues concerning their own beliefs. The success of the courses lie in the fact that they does not attempt to teach philosophical concepts but rather try to equip the students with analytic skills and encourage them to apply those skills in everyday life. Our experience has been that these two courses, *Critical Thinking: A Life Tool* and *Logic and the Sciences* are more popular and better appreciated by the students than our course in *Introduction to Logic*, which ultimately aims at achieving the same goal.

Similar courses but with different goals and varying degrees of success are currently being offered at the University of the Witwatersrand, The National University of Lesotho and several Nigerian Universities, among others. It is not clear whether in each of these cases there is an enduring passion to identify a specific objective and thereafter design a course to suit that objective. Also it is not clear whether in each of these cases the new philosophical practice is a conscious creation and is recognized as such by those that are involved in the process. What is however clear is that Philosophy in Africa is changing and that this change favours the adoption of new philosophical practices. Although at this stage the change could

be said to be restricted, there is hope that as society becomes more aware and the number of people involved in philosophical practice increases, it will venture outside the universities and become more available to the general public.

Difficulties and Resistances.

While celebrating our cautious entrance into the new world of philosophical practice, there is need to point out that Philosophical practice is beset with problems that threaten the success of the project. We can classify such problems into two; those that are external to the African philosophical fraternity and those that are internal to it. The internal problems have to do with the attitude of members of the philosophical fraternity to the practice and their doubts concerning the legitimacy of philosophical practice. The external problems have to do with such issues as funding, manpower constraints and resentment from other disciplines within African universities.

On the issue of legitimacy, it is clear that the philosophical fraternity is yet to accept philosophical practice as a legitimate philosophical enterprise. It is often perceived as a cheap imitation of traditional philosophy with little intrinsic value. Its main value lies in the large number of students that it brings into philosophy departments yearly and the instrumental function that such numbers serve to the much nobler end of preserving the funding of traditional philosophy departments and thereby ensuring that such departments continue to function within the academic traditions of African universities. The effect of this has been that once philosophical practice had served the instrumental need of justifying the existence of philosophy departments and the pressure on the philosophical fraternity has been removed a certain complacency has set in. There is often a noticeable lack of will by the philosophical fraternity to thereafter explore other areas of philosophical practice or even to develop the existing area.

The definition of new philosophical practices as ancillary to the philosophy discipline has created a situation where the eggheads of the traditional philosophy departments consider it to be unworthy of their time and effort. The teaching and development of such general courses are often regarded as posing minimal academic challenge and therefore unworthy of serious academic engagement. The level of philosophical rigor is regarded as negligible and the prospects of generating new philosophical insights in the course of teaching are held to be non-existent. Usually it is the new entrants into the philosophical fraternity that are entrusted with the task of handling such courses and in some cases maturity in the profession is measured by the distance that separates one from such *menial* tasks. Senior academics that participate in such programmes merely take a supervisory role and even then, they do not regard such roles as worthy of their time and therefore allocate very little time to it.

There is also an internal debate within the philosophical fraternity as to whether philosophical practice is actually the right way of regenerating interest in philosophy. There are faculty members who feel that introducing a mutant of philosophy and offering it to the rabble will in the long run do more harm than good to genuine philosophy. They argue that such a move may actually stifle genuine growth in philosophical theory upon which the new practices are based. The danger in this, they contend, is that a lack of growth will not only harm traditional philosophy but also the new practices that draw their content and methods from it. The challenge therefore is to find a suitable balance between the new practices and traditional philosophy such that the interest of both is protected.

The external problems are primarily associated with funding. The decline in government funding of universities has created a situation where departments within the university compete for the scarce funds. Thus even where universities are eager to embrace the new

thinking, there is often a reluctance to fund it. At the University of Botswana, for instance, it has become common practice, when introducing new courses and programmes to state that it will not require additional funding. This is because there is a general belief that permission to mount such new courses may not be granted if it involves additional funding. Thus even though our courses in Critical thinking and Logic has to be offered to every student of the university, there is no special funding attached to the courses. Also at the National University of Lesotho, while the faculties of Law and Business enthusiastically embraced the new direction of the courses in Logic and political philosophy, after the restructuring of the courses in 2000 and were happy to add it to their programmes they turned round and opposed additional funding to them since that would have reduced their share of the money from the central pool.

The other hindrance to philosophical practice is staffing. The decline of traditional philosophy departments in the 1980s and early 1990s brought about a decline in the number new entrants into the profession. Thus even where the funds are available for the hiring of new staff, there is often very few to choose from. This has resulted in the hijacking of some of the courses by other departments, thus defeating the purpose that the courses were meant to serve. At the University of Port Elizabeth in South Africa, for instance, the Conflict management programme elected Philosophy of Science to their programme but the course is being taught by someone with no training in philosophy. Also at the University of Uyo in Nigeria, a course in History and philosophy of science is being taught by the science faculty, who wrestled to course from the small department of philosophy with the argument that the philosophy department was already overstretched by their handling of the course in logic and philosophical method.

The problems of funding and staffing have created a situation where a small number of philosophy staff is saddled with the responsibility of catering to a large number of students. At the University of Uyo, for instance, a small philosophy department with 8 members had to teach Logic and Philosophical method to 5000 student. At the National University of Lesotho, one member of staff had to serve over 400 students. Currently at the University of Botswana over 1000 students are turned away annually because the two members of staff that handle courses in Logic and Critical thinking cannot handle such large numbers. The implication of these has been a general decline in the quality of the offering and this defeats the purpose for which these courses were meant to serve. This has strengthen the case of those who oppose these courses, especially the conservatives in the science and social science faculties who refuse to understand why their students should be compelled to take courses in philosophy.

Opportunities for Philosophical Practice

Although philosophical practice is at its infancy in African universities, there is ample evidence that it is the area of philosophy with the greatest potential for growth. One good reason for saying this is that the globalisation of culture is gradually westernizing several African communities, thereby creating in Africa the same need for philosophical practice as in Western societies. But even if Africans were not becoming westernised, there will still be a need for philosophical practice since the capacity for persistent and rigorous thought and the need to develop such capacities is a common to all human populations. But over and above this, the need for philosophical practice and the potential for its growth is, perhaps, greater than in the West because of the unique socio-political and economic situations of African peoples. At the moment, philosophical practice is something that the universities contribute or could contribute to the society and as such its potential can be discussed as either internal or external to the universities.

The internal factors relate mainly to the attitude of the current generation of students within the universities and their impatience with traditional methods of content delivery. The userfriendly culture of the computer generation has made traditional philosophy courses unattractive and has promoted the more flexible method that is associated with philosophical practice. Students are less interested in the thought of great philosophers but would readily warm up to the application of such thought to contemporary problems. Thus while interest in traditional philosophy courses continue to decline, there is an upsurge in the demand for non traditional courses that relate to everyday life.

The external factors relate to the rapidly changing nature of the African socio-political and economic environment. Socio-political issues such as human rights, governance, political accountability, political and racial jingoism, poverty and hunger as well as political and religious extremism are issues of concern in Africa and there is no doubt that philosophy and its method could help the public in analysing the intricacies of these issues. The globalisation of hunger arising from unfair trade and investment relationships and the attendant erosion of the quality of life for the middle class has increased the level of social discontent in various African nations. The rise of nationalism and the increasing popularity of far right groups in the West have created a situation where the African elite is increasingly running out of options for political and economic refuge. All of these underscore the need for a highly critical and politically sensitive populace that will hold their rulers to account and strive towards a better and more equitable society.

The gradual breakdown of traditional values has led to an increasing tendency for people to challenge authority and demand their stake in national scheme of thing. The harsh economic realities of the times have created an environment where people are open any ideas that promise some form of relief and offer an alternative to the status quo. All of these underscore the need for independent thought and a critical evaluation of ideas by the educated elites. This will ensure a proper interrogation of ideas and competing ideologies in order to elect those that will benefit the entire populace. A more rigorous evaluation of political events will ensure a more sophisticated response that will target and isolate the offenders rather than subject the whole populace to civil strife and its attendant social crisis. It will also help to counter the growing menace of extremism and racial hatred.

The case of the University of Zululand and to a certain extent the University of Botswana has demonstrated that philosophical practice could thrive in Africa. In the two instances, the initiative for growth of philosophical practice was actually taken by business leaders who as potential consumers of the products of universities demanded the injection of critical thought into the different professional programmes of the universities. Increasingly, business leaders are becoming aware that professional and technical competence is no longer sufficient for success in an increasingly competitive market place. With the abandoning of state monopolies and the entry of new and sometimes foreign businesses into what was once a closed market, there is pressure on employees to deliver and employers want to ensure that their employees are adequately empowered for optimum performance within the environment. Such empowerment had traditionally involved the running of performance and conflict resolution workshops but increasingly there is a demand for workshops on professional ethics and critical thinking. From the above there is reason to believe that if the public were properly sensitised concerning the benefits of philosophical practice, the demand for it would grow.