An Investigation of the Influence of Christian Religious Education on Student’s Ethical Formation in Secondary Schools in Thika West Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract: There are many ethical problems affecting the students today in many Secondary schools in Kenya which can be attributed to lack of ethical and character formation imparted by C.R.E. These problems are reported in print and electronic media daily. The objectives of the study were: to examine the relevance of C.R.E to student’s ethical formation in Secondary Schools, to explore the extent to which C.R.E influences the ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools, to assess the role of CRE teachers in imparting ethical values among students in Secondary schools, to suggest ways and means of enhancing ethical formation through the teaching of CRE in secondary schools in Kenya. The study used a descriptive research design. The target population of the study was 744. This comprised of 65 Secondary Schools, 65 School principals, 112 CRE teachers, 500 CRE students, Sub-County Director of Education and an official from the Ministry of Education. The researcher sampled seven secondary schools; One public National School, One County Secondary school, three Sub-County Secondary schools because they are the majority category of schools in the Sub-County, One Church Sponsored Secondary School and One Private Individual Secondary School. The researcher purposely targeted the above schools because of their diversity. The researcher used both purposive and simple random sampling. The schools were selected using Purposive sampling to achieve the desired objectives and the students were selected using random sampling to ensure partiality. The study used primary data collection method using questionnaires; the questionnaires included both open and closed ended questions. The study gave the results of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. This study would be used by the ministry of education and other stake holders to underline the importance of CRE in the Ethical formation of the students in secondary schools and make it relevant to influence the ethical formation of students. This would consequently make the students morally upright and less corrupt citizens in public and private sector in Kenya in future. The study found that CRE is practical than any other subject since there are real life applications of what is studied in CRE. The study concluded that Christian religious education significantly and positively influences the student’s ethical formation in secondary schools in Thika west sub-county, Kenya.

Keywords: Discipline, Education, Ethics, Christianity, Secondary School, Morality, Curriculum, Christian Religious Education (C.R.E).

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Christian Religious Education was introduced in Kenyan Education system before independence by the missionaries to add value to education (Gichaga & Kerre, 2004). Christian religious education for character formation is a subject that has received ample attention in both secular and religious circles. This education is geared towards producing socially, morally and mentally developed persons. Students are introduced to the sense of responsibility, ideas of right in relation to the surrounding world and are inculcated with skills necessary for life and service. By so doing, Christianity helps students to attain satisfactory social adjustment, develop a responsible attitude towards life, understands the relationship of law and freedom and importance of physical work. From a Christian perspective Christian education help students to develop their God given abilities, desire to continue the process of education after school, develop physical and mental disciplines, and fashion a biblical life pattern (Onsongo, 2008).

Since independence Christian Religious Education has been a core subject in Secondary and Primary school curriculum. In 1985 the government introduced 8-4-4 system of education to make education to become a practical entity in the lives of the students. Consequently, some subjects were made optional to reduce workload and reduce examinable subjects in secondary schools (Wanjohi, 2011). C.R.E was one of the subjects which became optional in most public schools. However, it remained a compulsory subject in church sponsored schools. It has been noted with a lot of concern that since dropping of C.R.E as a compulsory subject in secondary schools, unrest in schools has continued to rise (Jebungei, 2013). Before 1986, there were few cases of unrest in schools; but since the inception of 8-4-4 system unrest in schools has been on the rise. Among other factors, dropping of C.R.E as a compulsory subject in secondary school has contributed to increase of unethical activities and riots in secondary schools. Christian Religious Education is very paramount in enhancing the ethical behavior of a student during secondary school period and after. The national goals of education are fulfilled through
learning Christian Religious Education (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). In Kenya there are prevalent ethical issues affecting the Secondary schools. A good foundation of values requires to be enhanced in our education system. Christian Religious Education in Kenya is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace. It aims to call forth from people an intrinsic reverence for life and a passionate love of learning. This is done, not through an academic "curriculum" that condenses the world into instructional packages, but through direct engagement with the environment. Miller (1988) asserts that holistic Christian education nurtures a sense of wonder and helps the person feel part of the wholeness of the universe.

Giussani (2001) makes four central claims on education. Christian Religious Education must be oriented towards an experience with total reality in which Christ can come to be seen as fulfilling what it is for us to be authentically human. Second, he posits a respect for tradition as a necessary precondition for the possibility of education, since it is only from within the concrete specificity of a person's location in a family, culture, and society that one can face the question of reality and engage it in a truly critical way. Thus, rootedness in a living tradition can serve as a way of encountering the past and as a guard against unbridled innovation or skepticism. Third, he suggests that the Christian community must play an important and intentional role in education by providing an ecclesial environment in which Christ is made known in relationships and actions. Finally, he sees the teacher as embodying the experience of reality in a particular way, with a coherence that carries with it a certain kind of authority, though not one that is perceived as external or imposed.

Statement of the Problem

Every human being is created in the image of God and has a right to know God. It is in this understanding that the researcher underlines that teaching of C.R.E in secondary schools influences the ethical formation of students. A generation without the knowledge of God and ethical values breeds chaotic individuals. C.R.E imparts both academic and ethical knowledge. Recently many secondary school students are involved in unethical practices like bullying, riots, drug and alcohol abuse, homosexuality and lesbianism. C.R.E should reduce such practices among the students especially those taking C.R.E in secondary schools.

C.R.E enhances moral values among students. However, there seems to be a gap between theory and practice of C.R.E This is evident in the secondary school unethical practices of many students especially when they have challenges in school. Post-secondary students also experience myriad of ethical challenges in their life despite some studying C.R.E in secondary school. The researcher bridged this gap by looking at issues affecting enhancement of C.R.E on student’s ethical formation.

The researcher investigated how C.R.E influences the secondary school students in ethical practices. He also investigated the efficiency of C.R.E in the lives of students in secondary schools. The researcher investigated why there have been high incidences of unrest in secondary schools after dropping of C.R.E as a compulsory subject since the inception of 8-4-4 education system in Kenya. The study investigated the influence of C.R.E to student’s ethical formation in selected Secondary schools in Thika West Sub- County.

Research Objectives

i) To trace the development of CRE syllabus in relation to ethical formation of students.
ii) To explore the extent to which CRE inculcates the ethical virtues to students in Secondary Schools.
iii) To assess the role of CRE teachers in imparting ethical values among students in Secondary schools
iv) To evaluate methods used by teachers in teaching CRE in Secondary Schools.

Research Questions

i) How relevant is the development of CRE syllabus in relation to ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools?
ii) To what extent does CRE inculcates the ethical virtues to students in Secondary Schools?
iii) Which role do CRE teachers play in imparting ethical values among students in Secondary schools?
iv) Which methods are used by teachers in teaching CRE in Secondary Schools?

Research Hypothesis

i) The development of C.R.E syllabus is relevant to ethical formation of students in secondary schools.
ii) C.R.E inculcates the ethical virtues to students in Secondary Schools.
iii) C.R.E teachers play an important role in imparting ethical values among students.
iv) The methods used in teaching C.R.E enhances ethical formation of students in secondary schools.
v) C.R.E teachers play an important role in imparting ethical values among students.
vi) The methods used in teaching C.R.E enhance ethical formation of students in secondary schools.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a model of presentation where the researcher conceptualizes the relationships between variables in the study and shows the relationships diagrammatically (Orodho, 2004).
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of CRE syllabus in relation to ethical formation of students.

Since the creation of the world religion plays a very essential role in the life of man in the society. Religion gives direction in the daily activities of human beings. Kelly (2000) viewed religion as something that would exert a certain social control, but he defined it as belief about the Unseen, with such attendant feelings as fear, wonder, reverence, gratitude, and love, and such institutions as prayer, worship, and sacrifice.

Mbiti (1969) observed that religion has the greatest influence in the life of the people and it inculcates values and knowledge in every generation required in any society to prosper. Curran (2002) retaliates that religion creates social order in the society. Religion gives meaning and guides the social behavior of an individual in the society. In this perspective, St. Ignatius of Loyola, a Catholic theologian and a founder of Jesuit Society of the Catholic Church deemed it necessary to introduce religious education in education system after the reformation in 1599 in Europe (Giussani, 2001). In the nineteenth century there was a debate in Britain regarding introduction of Religious Education in British Education in the secondary schools (Lord & Barley, 1973).

**Inculcation of Ethical Virtues**

Ethics and religion are two sides of one coin. All religions embrace ethics because you cannot conceive any religion without ethics. Christian Religious Education teaches ethics and morality based on the bible (Orchard, 2008). The ethical values are guided by the Gospel values taught in the Old and New Testament. There is almost an answer to every ethical question we encounter in our Christian lives. There is no shortage of books on most substantive moral issues, written from a wide variety of theological positions.

Christian Religious education guides students in their lives especially when they are faced with ethical issues. The bible teaches values which promote peace and harmony in the society. The students through Christian Religious Education can embrace gospel values which consequently influence
them in their daily activities and encounters. Some basic ethical values found in the gospel guide every aspect of our lives whether one is a student or not. We cannot conceive a society where there no love, respect, compassion, patience, understanding and tolerance. These are some of the ethical values imparted by Christian Religious Education and lack of them in the society brings confusion and anarchy hence the importance of Christian Religious Education in imparting ethical values to students in secondary schools.

**Teaching Methodology by CRE Teachers**

The diverse methods that CRE teachers employ during teaching help learners to understand the lesson and practice what they learn. The teaching methods and techniques take care of individual differences in students. The use of the methods varies according to context. According to Lierop (1992), teaching methods are divided into four broad types. These are telling, showing, exchanging ideas and group planning activities. Use of the appropriate teaching methods makes learning interesting and focused (Evening, 2009). A teacher should select methods which make teaching learner-centered and that bring out positive behavior change in the learner. The teacher should also use creativity and innovativeness in order to help promote and sustain positive change (KIE, 2006).

Adeyemi, (1989) argues that real use of instructional methods has been singled out as one area that contributes to the success of the curriculum. A study by Adeyemi (1989) on qualities of social studies found that for a teacher to be effective, he or she should have a large stock of teaching methods. The study concludes that any teacher education programme ought to help the teacher find the methods best suited in the class context. The Ominde Report (1964) disapproves the use of drill method of teaching. The report cautions teachers against ignoring learner participation in teaching. The report encourages teachers to adjust their instruction methods to suit the needs of the learners and use learner activity.

**Role of CRE Teachers**

Perry (2014) argues that teaching is a process or an act of imparting knowledge or skills so that information may be acquired by the learners. It is a way of rendering professional service to the learners. Its quality and effectiveness are determined chiefly by a long and arduous period of preparation or training, continuing education, and commitment to moral values. There has been perception in our society by some people that teaching unlike other professions like nursing, engineering and accounting is for those whose performance in examination has been either within or below average. This is a wrong mentality which only serves to undermine the noble role that teachers play in molding the character and destiny of a nation.

Contrary to that belief, teaching is indeed a vocation and mission. Vocation comes from the Latin word *vocatio* which means to call. If there is a call there must be a caller, someone who is called, and there must be a response. As a vocation a teacher has been called for a mission of teaching by God just like Jesus who was called and sent to preach and teach in Palestine (Lauretta, 2017). Though often used in religious context, the word vocation has a strong bearing on the teaching profession.

Brendan (2015) retaliates that teaching profession should be understood in the context of a vocation. The relationship between profession and vocation has been emphasized in attempts to define the two terms. Such attempts are clear in some dictionaries where the definition of the word profession invariably include the word vocation.

**III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

**Research Methodology**

The study adopted mixed methods approaches, which were both quantitative and qualitative methods. The data collected and analyzed were both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Bryman (2012) argued that the use of a diligent, systematic and well-structured methodology yields best results. The researcher should be independent and neither should he influence or be influenced by the subjects of the research. (Kiernan, 2006).

**Research Design**

This investigation utilized descriptive research design. The research design characterizes a subject by making a profile of gathering of issues, individuals, or events, through the accumulation of information and organization of the frequencies on research factors or their interaction (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). Descriptive research design was picked on the grounds that it would empower the researcher to sum up the finding to a bigger population. The descriptive research design approach was attributed because of the way that it permitted analysis and relations of variables.

**Location of the Study**

This study was carried out in Thika West Sub county, Kiambu County, Kenya. Thika West Sub-county comprised of Thika Municipality and Juja. The location of the study was chosen because of accessibility and diversity of the schools. In Thika West Sub-County we have all levels of schools: National, County, Sub-county and board of management schools. There were also very many private and church sponsored schools. This enabled the researcher to have a variety of choice given the nature of the study under investigation. The location of the study was preferred because there had been frequent unethical practices such as drug and alcohol abuse, strikes, homosexuality, Lesbianism etc. among secondary students in Thika West Sub-County. (Kiambu County Education Board, 2016).

**Target Population**

According to Kothari (2010), target population is a larger group from which a sample population is considered. The
The target population of the study was 744. This comprised of 65 Secondary schools, 65 Secondary school principals, 112 CRE teachers and 500 CRE students. The study also targeted Sub -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>No. of Schools</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>No. of Principals</th>
<th>No. of CRE Teachers</th>
<th>County Director of Education</th>
<th>Ministry of Education Official</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Schools</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Schools</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-County Schools</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Church sponsored</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Individual Schools</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-county Director of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Officer from the Ministry of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>112</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUM TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kiambu County Education Board (2019)

**Sampling Procedures and Techniques**

Sampling is the process of selecting a specific number of individuals from a target population as a representation of the entire population (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The researcher used both purposive and simple random sampling. The schools were selected using purposive sampling and the students were selected using simple random sampling.

Bryman (2012) suggests that a researcher can take a sample of 10% to 30% of the target population as a good representation of the population. Since Thika West Sub-County had 65 secondary schools which were both public and private, a sample of 10% which was 7 secondary schools was sampled in this study. The study also targeted various stakeholders in CRE which included the Sub County Director of Education, school principals and seven CRE teachers. The researcher sampled seven secondary schools who offered CRE as a teaching subject. The researcher targeted all the stakeholders in CRE. The students were the primary stakeholders in this study. Therefore, the researcher sampled 20% of the students to make the study more reliable. The study also sampled 10% of the target population of school Principals and CRE teachers because their number was lower than the students. The researcher also considered the Sub County Education Director and the Ministry of Education official because their contribution towards the study was very crucial for future enactment and implementation of the study recommendations.

The researcher sampled 7 secondary schools; One national school, one county school, three Sub-county schools, one private church sponsored school and one private individual schools who offered CRE as a teaching subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>No. of School</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>No. of Principals</th>
<th>No. of CRE Teachers</th>
<th>County Director of Education</th>
<th>Ministry of Education of official</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-county schools</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private church sponsored schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private individual schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-county director of education</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of education officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>163</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data collected was quantitative in nature and was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistical tools helped the researcher to describe the data. This included frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviations. In addition, advanced statistical techniques (inferential statistics) were also considered. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), Ms Excel were used in analyzing the data. This generated quantitative reports which were presented through tabulations, charts and graphs. The researcher also used content analysis to analyze qualitative data obtained from open ended questions. The data was then presented in a prose form.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Multiple Regression Analysis

The study undertook a multiple regression analysis to establish the association between the independent variables with the dependent one. The independent variables were development of CRE syllabus, Inculcation of ethical virtues, role of CRE teachers and methods of teaching CRE while the dependent variable was ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools. After running the selected data through SPSS, a statistical model was generated.

Table 3: Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.936</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>0.872</td>
<td>0.989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27 is a model fit which establish how fit the model equation fits the data. The adjusted R² was used to establish the predictive power of the study model and it was found to be 0.872 implying that 87.2% of the variations in ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools are explained by changes in development of CRE syllabus, inculcation of ethical virtues, role of CRE teachers and methods of teaching CRE.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>931.483</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>232.871</td>
<td>232.737</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Residual</td>
<td>132.076</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1063.559</td>
<td>136</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The p-value was 0.000 indicating that the regression model was highly significant in predicting the effect of development of CRE syllabus, Inculcation of ethical virtues, role of CRE teachers and methods of teaching CRE on ethical formation of students in secondary schools in Thika West Sub-County, Kenya. Further since F calculated at 5 per cent level of significance was 232.737 and greater than the F-critical (value = 2.4402), the overall regression model was significant.

The regression equation obtained from this outcome was:

\[ Y = 1.342 + 0.778 X_1 + 0.867 X_2 + 0.731 X_3 + 0.673 X_4 \]

From the findings the study found that if all independent variables were held constant at zero, then the ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools will be 1.342. From the findings the coefficient for Development of CRE syllabus is 0.778 which is significant since p=0.011 is less than 0.05, meaning that a unit change in development of CRE syllabus leads to a 0.778-unit change in ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools. The study also found that a unit change in Inculcation of ethical virtues changes would lead to 0.867 units change in ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools. The variable was significant since p-value=0.015<0.05.

The study also found out that a unit change in role of CRE teachers would lead to 0.731 unit change in ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools. The variable was significant since p-value=0.003<0.05. Finally, the study revealed that methods of teaching CRE would lead to 0.673 units change in ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools if all other variables are held constant and the variable was significant since p-value=0.019<0.05.

Finally, role of CRE teachers had the greatest effect on ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools followed by development of CRE syllabus then by Inculcation of ethical virtues while methods of teaching CRE had the least effect on ethical formation of students in Secondary Schools. All variables were significant since their p-values were less than 0.05.

V. SUMMARY

The study was to investigate the influence of Christian religious education on student’s ethical formation in secondary schools in Thika west sub-county, Kenya. In chapter one the background was well presented with a well stated statement of the problem. The study objectives were outlined well which included: to trace the development of C.R. E syllabus in relation to ethical formation of students, to
explore the extent to which C.R.E inculcates the ethical virtues to students in Secondary Schools, to assess the role of CRE teachers in imparting ethical values among students in Secondary schools and to suggest ways and means of enhancing ethical formation through the teaching of CRE in secondary schools in Kenya. The study was guided by Kohlberg theory of Moral development. The study used both purposive and simple random sampling. The sampled respondents included students, Principals, CRE teachers, Sub County Education Director as well as the Ministry of Education official.

Development of CRE Syllabus

The first objective was to trace the development of C.R.E syllabus in relation to ethical formation of students. The study revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that CRE is practical than other subjects. This shows that indeed CRE is practical than any other subject since there are real life applications of what is studied in CRE. The same results were realized in the thematic analysis where most of the respondents indicated that CRE helps the students relate what they do in life to biblical teachings hence build on good morals, shapes the character of the students in a positive way, to understand themselves better, that in CRE students are taught the meaning of ethics and sources of ethics and also to learn how to make ethical decisions using the basis of ethics taught in CRE they are able to embrace good behavior which is acceptable and recognized in the society and avoid bad behavior.

The findings also showed most respondents strongly agreed that CRE taught in Secondary school should be reviewed. The study sought to know whether development of C.R.E syllabus is relevant to ethical formation of students in secondary schools. This was echoed by the respondents who agreed that the syllabus should be reviewed. Further, most of the respondents strongly disagreed CRE subject should be abolished in secondary schools. This indicates that that CRE is a very relevant and essential subject because it helps in ethical formation of students in secondary schools. Topics taught in CRE in secondary schools contribute enormously to moral values of students as noted by most of the respondents. The findings also showed that topics taught in CRE touch contemporary issues affecting the students. These issues and challenges are adequately addressed in CRE, which gives the students a solid foundation to face them and find appropriate solutions and act accordingly.

Inculcation of Ethical Virtues to Students in Secondary Schools

The second objective was to explore the extent to which C.R.E inculcates the ethical virtues to students in Secondary Schools. The respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with statements on inculcation of ethical virtues in secondary schools in Thika West Sub- County. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Studying of CRE moulds the behavior of students and that Studying CRE reduces indiscipline in school. The same findings were realized from CRE teachers, Principals, Sub-County Director of Education and Ministry of Education responses on the same. They indicated that that some of the ethical values imparted by CRE were honesty, diligence, integrity, love, generosity, fear of God leads to positive moral values, obedience, respect, faithfulness, kindness, tolerance, self-control, hard work, purity of heart and mind. They also indicated that CRE helps them in making right decisions in life, teaches moral values which the students are able to apply in their day to day activities, that it encourages honesty, tolerance and perseverance. This enhances harmony and cohesion in school and out of school.

The study however indicated that studying CRE in Secondary school cannot necessarily reduce corruption in future since some student’s study to pass and not necessarily to gain ethical formation and that’s why it’s not a guarantee that it will reduce corruption in future. However, the data revealed that studying CRE may reduce corruption if the teachers instill in the students mind that CRE is not necessarily done for passing the examinations but it is a life skill subject which should have an effect on the life of the student. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed that Studying CRE enhances cohesion among students in school. CRE also addresses ethical issues in the society. On the same CRE teachers, Principals, CDE, MEO indicated that CRE encourages the students them to use their critical thinking before doing something. It teaches on various ethical values e.g. honesty, which will enable students to give true information, it makes students to be God fearing and people who are morally upright and it enables students to acquire core living values like patience, love, peace and above all service to others in the society.

Role of CRE Teachers in Imparting Ethical Values among Students in Secondary Schools

The third objective was to assess the role of CRE teachers in imparting ethical values among students in Secondary schools. Most of the respondents agreed that Secondary School students have a positive attitude towards CRE. They indicated that CRE class is the same as bible study in church and that Students choose CRE because it is easier than other subjects. The respondents also strongly agreed that CRE embraces traditional values of the students. CRE teachers and principals indicated that they guide and counsel the students and correct them when they make mistakes. They advise them on contemporary issues by giving them relevant examples. They progressively remind the students that education is for life, stress on importance of upholding moral values in the society. Further, the respondents indicated that they discuss behaviors from a biblical point of view. The teachers give the students opportunity to discuss different biblical characters and explain how they can emulate them in their life. The teachers should be role models by practicing what they teach in class.
The respondents further agreed that CRE enhances the values of the society. This was true because CRE topics taught touch issues faced in society. However, the study found that some students don’t practice ethical values taught in CRE because they study the subject to pass the exams. Further Teachers indicated that they are consistent in guidance, give hope to weak students, encourage the students to pray, encourage them to read bible and guide and counsel the students on different issues that they face in their daily lives. The teachers help the students to make right decisions and encourage them to lead good lives which will not only benefit them individually but will be of great service to the society.

The respondents also indicated that listening to student’s needs and concerns helps them in ethical formation. The data revealed that the teacher influences ethical formation by teaching concepts in the bible and teaching students what is expected of them and ensuring that they practice what they have been taught.

**Methods of Teaching CRE and Ethical Formation of Students in Secondary Schools**

The last objective of the study was to suggest ways and means of enhancing ethical formation through the teaching of CRE in secondary schools in Kenya. Most of the respondents indicated that CRE teaching methods are adequate but there is need to improve teaching methods. For instance the teachers should ensure there is question and answer session to enable all students understand. It was also agreed that Audio-visual teaching method in CRE is frequently used in class, that group work and discussion are encouraged in CRE class. Group work brings interaction with other students and consequently helps the students to learn from their fellow students. CRE textbooks are easily available in school. The teachers indicated that indicated bible reading, giving zeal examples, testimonies, discussion lecturing and role plays and ICT integration like are some of other methods that can be used in teaching CRE.

The results also showed that there was a consensus that CRE teacher should use bible in class for reference which implies that using bible in class for reference engages the students to read sections of the bible in relation to the topic they are studying. Similar findings were obtained from CRE teachers, Principals and CDE who indicated that CRE also addresses issues on earthly life and further explains expectations of the life to come. It was also found that Christian students want to identify with their religion and gain more knowledge on the same and therefore they opt for it.

**VI. CONCLUSIONS**

The study concludes that student’s ethical formation in secondary schools is a challenge that needs to be addressed urgently and soberly if we need to have a country with morally upright citizens. The secondary schools have the greatest percentage of upcoming generation that forms the future of any developing country and therefore ethical formation need to be addressed at this level with a lot of seriousness. For this to be successful, there must be a suitable development of CRE Syllabus, inculcation of right ethical Virtues to Students and the teachers will have to play their role effectively by employing the suitable methods of Teaching CRE and becoming role models of the students.

On the development of CRE syllabus, it emerged that CRE is more practical than any other subject since there are real life applications; it needs to be reviewed to help the students relate what they do in life. Good morals and ethics emerge from biblical teachings which mould the character of the students in a positive way to understand themselves better. CRE teaches students the meaning of ethics and sources of ethics and also they learn how to make ethical decisions using the basis of ethics as taught in CRE. This approach helps the students to embrace virtues and avoid vices. The respondents also echoed that topics taught in CRE touch contemporary issues affecting the student that makes CRE relevant in Secondary School hence suggesting that it should be compulsory in Secondary School. The respondents also indicated that students need to visit the communities and give charitable services and pray with them. It was also strongly suggested that the ministry of education should build chapels in all secondary schools where students can meet for worship and practice what they learn in class. The government should employ chaplains in all schools to give the students counseling and spiritual nourishment.

Moreover, on inculcation of ethical virtues to students in secondary schools, it was clear that studying of CRE moulds the behavior of students, reduces indiscipline in school and imparts ethical values such as honesty, diligence, integrity, love, generosity, obedience, respect, faithfulness, kindness, tolerance, self-control, hard work, purity of heart and mind. CRE was also found to help the students in making right decisions in life. It enhances moral values which the students are able to apply in their day to day activities. CRE encourages students to practice honesty, tolerance and perseverance. This enhances harmony in school and out of school. CRE was also found to minimize cases of indiscipline in school. The students apply the moral values they learn in class and this gives them a serene environment to study peacefully and improve their performance in examinations. The respondents also indicated that students are taught life skills and assertiveness which empowers them to make appropriate decisions that will not lead them to indiscipline. CRE teaches students ethics of school rules and supports their moral formation in dealing with different issues affecting them and teaches them different methods of conflict resolution.

The research revealed that teachers play a pivot role in ethical formation of students in secondary schools. The respondents indicated that teachers guide and counsel students and correct them when they make mistakes them on contemporary issues. The teachers advise the students to uphold moral values. The respondents retaliated that the students discuss different topics affecting their lives from a biblical point of view. The teachers...
encourage students by giving them hope especially when they are discouraged. They become good models to students by their way of life.

Finally, on the methods of teaching CRE, it was clear that Audio-visual teaching method in CRE is frequently used in class, that Group work and discussion are encouraged in CRE class where the students are tasked with a topic based on the bible and through discussion they are able to interact with one another. It was also noted that CRE texts books are easily available in school. The respondents indicated that other methods of teaching that can help in ethical formation of students are bible reading, giving zeal examples and role plays can be used in Teaching CRE.

**Recommendations for Practice**

To ensure student’s ethical formation in secondary schools, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. **The findings established that CRE could be an important tool for promotion of ethical formation especially if it was studied by people who chose to for the right reasons and if relevant methodologies were used. In many cases, students were almost forced to take CRE as a way of encouraging them to do well because of the perception that CRE is easy to pass in the examination. Others opted for CRE because it was automatically grouped with subjects that they wanted to take. As a result of CRE being a religion based subject, it is recommended that it should only be taken by people who are willing and happy to do it. In this way, the expected impact of the subject would be reflected in the students’ attitude to the subject and its application to daily living.**

2. **It was established that methods such as role play and field trip were very rarely used in the teaching of the subject although they are the most appropriate methods of exposing students to diverse situations and people. This was reflected in both the students’ and teachers’ responses regarding methods used in the teaching of the subject. In this regard, the Ministry of Education should encourage CRE teachers to use such methods as a way of enhancing virtues such as tolerance, respect for diversity, cooperation and nationalism which are important for social cohesion. In general, there is need to use more interactive methods of teaching in order to enhance internalization of values taught through CRE. The Ministry of Education can use the CRE subject inspectors to ensure use of these guidelines.**

3. **There is a need for effective induction of Form One students to be carried out by attaching them to older students belonging to different ethnic groups to look after them and help them settle in school. The students should be helped in exposure and acceptance of people who are different. This in turn is likely to influence students’ outlook on diversity at a national level. In view of this, the Ministry of Education should give uniform admission and induction guidelines across all categories of schools to encourage inter-ethnic relationships in the early years of schooling. This would be most appropriate especially to National and County schools where students come from different ethnic groups. This will help in ethical formation to students since they will be assisted and required to be good and treat form one as their brothers and sisters.**

4. **It was found that religious institutions play an important role in ethical formation and therefore should be strengthened. In the school situation this could be done by encouraging religious practices such as regular prayers, liturgical services and scripture reading as well as strengthening various pastoral programs. However, the Ministry of Education needs to give clear guidelines on how this is to be done to avoid extremism and conflicts between various stakeholders. These guidelines should clearly indicate the role of the sponsor in instilling the expected morals for the benefit of the wider community. This approach to issues relating to social cohesion would be appropriate because the total school community would be involved.**

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The following areas are recommended for further study:

1. **This study covered only one sub-county in Kenya that is Thika West Sub-County. Therefore, the study could be replicated in other sub-counties in order to get a clearer reflection of influence of Christian Religious Education on student’s ethical formation in secondary schools.**

2. **A study could also be carried out to find out the actual role of CRE as a discipline in the promotion of social cohesion in comparison with social sciences and natural sciences in the Kenyan schools.**

3. **Another relevant study would be a comparison of the behavior of students who study CRE and those who don’t study CRE in secondary schools in Kenya.**

4. **Research can also be undertaken to investigate the role of chaplaincy services among students in selected Universities in Kenya.**

**REFERENCES**


