The Perceived Mismatch between the Teaching of Christian Religious Education and Learner Acquisition of Spiritual Insights in Kenyan Secondary Schools

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Abstract

Previous research has consistently reported that Kenyan students’ moral standing and general conduct in the wider society reflects incompetence in spiritual insights. The scenario in which unspiritual behavior has dominated the character of the Kenyan youth has brought to contention whether the spiritual well being of the youth is on a downward trend suggesting that either the teaching of spiritual insights through C.R.E is defective or the Kenyan education system as a whole is defective. Another possibility is that the syllabus does not contain relevant elements that could enable students acquire and develop the needed spiritual insights. One other likelihood could be the existence of a discrepancy between the C.R.E program objectives and the instructional practices meant to achieve them. From the forgoing, it was evident that the nature of this discrepancy is yet to be established for effective intervention strategies to be put in place to arrest the apparent downward trend in the acquisition of spiritual insights. Specifically the study determined whether or not elements of spiritual insights are employed by teachers in their (teachers) instructional practices in Kisumu East district secondary schools. Four instruments used in collecting data included: a graphic-observation rating scale, a learners’ spiritual insights identification test, an in-depth interview schedule and documents analysis guide. The study population comprised 48 teachers and 3225 students. Out of the total population of 3273, 16 teachers and 343 learners were selected using simple random sampling technique. The obtained results suggested that teachers rarely used the elements of spiritual insights that could enable the learner make accurate moral decisions. Another notable finding was that the curriculum and the syllabus guides did not elaborate on the elements of spiritual insights that teachers ought to use during C.R.E content delivery.
Keywords: Objectives, Spiritual insights, Moral decisions.

Introduction

Spiritual education has been the concern of man from time immemorial (Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). This is because it enhances the relationship between man and his or her environment at both the vertical and horizontal levels. At the moment both the moralists and the secular anthropologists agree that through spiritual education man is able to attempt an explanation of both his concrete and abstract environment. Spiritual insights are normally provided to the youth or individuals in general through religious education. This is because as Boss (2001) states, it is in religion that spiritualism are found. On account of the forgoing when religion especially Christian Religious Education is not taught properly, it is not possible for one, especially the learner to gain a deeper understanding of the source of morality that protects him or her in the society.

The importance of spiritual insights gained from the lessons learnt through religion is obvious. This is due to the fact that when there is order in the society it is religion that is known to have brought it. Durkheim (1961) states that where there is religion in practice, morality abounds and this becomes the source of security for the members of that society. The need to keep this order whether social, economic or political is what has made every society to ensure that spiritual insights are developed in the youth. C.R.E has been seen as what forms and formats human character. Akech (2005) states that:

‘Wealth is not needful, power is not needful, cleverness is not needful, even health is not the one thing needful but character alone, and education must develop it through religion. Through the ages this has been the ultimate concern of many societies and great thinkers in every human race’. (p.20).

The statement above is a clear pointer to the fact that character development in an individual is the ultimate goal of religious education. This positive character can only be achieved by gaining spiritual insights from religious education.

An explanation of the phrase spiritual insight suffices at this stage in literature review. The phrase has two terms which are “spiritual” and “insight”. The term spiritual according to Thiessen & Doerksen (1989) has to do with the non physical part of human being that relates to character and emotion. It has variously been referred to by terms such as soul, the heart or the intuition by scholars as Gandhi (1979); Radhakrisnan (2002) and Grimmit (2005) it is the moral engine in the human being. Various education systems train this faculty in different ways but Lewis (2006) states that through the ages it has been offered in religious education based on the spiritual culture of every society. Christians, Hindus, Muslims and all religions will always offer this aspect of learning from their religious perspectives. An insight on the other hand will mean in depth understanding of an issue. According to Borusso (2001) it is the ability to connect ideas with one another and above all to life. Having shed light on the meanings of the
terms spiritual and insight, the two words combined – spiritual insight may be taken to mean the act of or an ability to have an in-depth understanding of the non physical part of man that relates to character and life issues in general. In educational terms Tagore (2006) states that spiritual insight means civilization of the soul so that it acquires enlightenment. It is the quality of the heart to influence positive character.

The need to provide spiritual education is a concern for all in the modern society. Boss (2001) and Blake (1997) observe that this is mentioned in nearly all the educational policy documents of nations the world over. In the United States of America, a nation which is believed to be highly secularized, it has been observed that currently state education highly emphasize on spiritual instruction. This is due to the fact that the discipline is seen as a means of enhancing positive character in the learner. Western European countries also emphasize the same with Britain maintaining that given the upsurge of vices brought about by modernity, the only way out of vicious tendencies is the spiritual education offered through Christianity in the education system. Grimmit (2005) states, Britain must embrace Christian Religious Education as a vehicle for spiritual education.

In the Muslim world, Mahmoud (2007) states that the way of the divine is true education and therefore, the learner must be provided with spiritual insight through Islamic Religious Education. The same sentiments are shared by Tagore (2006) who state that in India Hinduism or any other divinely inspired spirituality must be used as a vehicle for character development in a learner. In Africa nations are not left behind in keeping the policy of providing spiritual education. In Nigeria for example, Obasanjo (2002) states that, the only way by which corruption in government can be controlled is by offering solid spiritual education in schools or learning institutions that train Nigerian personnel for the job market. The Nigerian whether Muslim, Christian or Traditionalist is thus expected to ensure that spiritual education is offered to the youths. Ssekamwa (2006) in Uganda also made a call for stakeholders in the country’s education system to invigorate spiritual education as stipulated in the Ugandan education act.

In putting in place policies to enhance spiritual education, Kenya is not left out, and all the religions of the giant cultures have been put in the syllabus. These are Hindu Religious Education (H.R.E) Islamic Religious Education (I.R.E) and Christian Religious Education (C.R.E). This study lays emphasis on C.R.E. The Kenyan C.R.E Documents especially the R.O.K (1981) and the R.O.K (1988) education commission state that, the discipline is kept in the country’s curriculum as a means of enhancing moral growth of the learner. The subject was initially recommended by the Ominde (1964) education committee report to be learnt as an academic discipline. The knowledge is however not adequate to lead the learner to deeper spiritual commitments to enhance moral growth. A similar observation was made in the R.O.K (1976) education commission report. It is important to state that ever since the observations were made no research has been conducted to establish whether the teachers of secondary schools or primary schools teach C.R.E with the view of providing the learner with the necessary spiritual insights to live by. Moreover, the R.O.K (1999) education report stated that positive character whether individual or corporate can better be taught through C.R.E. The
commissioners in the panel therefore stated that the objectives of teaching this discipline must be reviewed to capture the aspect of providing spiritual insights to the learner. As a follow up to this recommendation the K.I.E (2002) reviewed the C.R.E curriculum objectives and included the aspect of providing spiritual insights to the learner. Since these changes were made in the C.R.E syllabus, moral challenges such as devil worship, incest, murder, kidnappings and many other vices still remain a problem. The school teaching system has been faulted in this case. Oyaro (2004) states that as far as moral education are concerned, our schools are doing very little. Mwalulu (2007) observed that the teaching of morals through C.R.E in Kenyan schools is impotent. The above remarks are views representing public opinion which are not based on solid and concrete scientific research. Besides the above, affective evaluation of the C.R.E curriculum has not been conducted to determine what ails moral education in Kenya. This study therefore, was designed to determine the shortcomings which might be inherent in the pedagogy of spiritual insights in secondary schools in Kisumu East district.

The literature above has delved into the importance of instilling spiritual insights in the development of values in the learner globally, in Africa and Kenya in particular. It has also looked at what the Kenyan school curriculum policy documents state in as far as the handling of this discipline in education is concerned. A question that needs an immediate answer is what are these spiritual insights that the learner should be endowed with through the teaching of C.R.E in schools? To answer this question, Groenewegen (1993) states that what is called spiritual insights with which the learner should be endowed emanate from the views of scholars who come from different quarters of the globe. To him one of the spiritual insights to be provided to the learner is spiritual sensitivity. Spiritual sensitivity means being aware that there is a spiritual issue or problem when it exists. In a C.R.E classroom, the learner should be made to show an emotionally intelligent awareness or sympathetic understanding of a spiritual issue as it emanates from the various lesson topics being covered by the teacher. In the process the general impact of such spiritual issues on the individual’s character formation should be exposed to the learner.

Tagore (2006) identifies spiritual judgment as another aspect of spiritual insight. This element involves considering through careful evaluation which action would be most justifiable in a spiritual sense. Geisler (2008) in his explanation of this spiritual insight states that, a spiritual individual does not take a spiritually superior position when challenged by a spiritual issue. He or she will first of all take spiritual data of the issues at hand before rushing to an action or conclusion. The individual will reflect on spiritual issues, consider their worthiness, their cause and effect on self and on others.

Devine, Favazza & McLain (2002) identifies spiritual motivation as another spiritual insight which the learner ought to be acquainted with by the teacher. Spiritual motivation is the degree of commitment to taking spiritual cause of action. In this instance, the trio state that upon learning and gaining full knowledge of what spirituality is one should show loyalty to spiritual ideals and base his actions upon them. The motivation to act on one’s spiritual decision is intrinsic and depends essentially on the degree to which being spiritual becomes a core part
of one’s identity. At some point not to act at all and not to act spiritually becomes a violation of one’s true self. In acquiring spiritual insight as such is not just a cognitive or an affective endeavor only, it is also an action oriented exercise. Learners should therefore be made to acquire the capacity to bridge the gulf between affect and action.

Added to the foregoing the R.O.K (1999) education commission report advocated for training the learner to acquire a spiritual character which is persistence in spiritual tasks. The document observes that aspects of spiritual insight such as spiritual sensitivity, spiritual judgment and spiritual commitment will not make sense in a learner’s life if they do not become part and parcel of the student’s habits. A spiritual insight in this case will imply behaviors that practically show divinely inspired virtues such as love and modesty in one’s moral dispensation. Moral reasoning, the ability to practically solve spiritual conflict will be the true manifestation of possessing this spiritual insight. Learners must therefore where possible be made to practice what they have learnt in class over time.

The above elements of spiritual insights have been advocated by the values educators as they allow the learner to acquire the following qualities (Taneja, 2007):

(i) A self-respect that derives a feeling of worth not only from competence in religion but also from social behavior towards others.
(ii) Social perspective-taking: how do other feel and think?
(iii) Moral reasoning: what is the right thing to do?
(iv) Knowledge of cultivating important values including providing values such as reasoned argument, tolerance of difference and democratic processes: and substantive values such as honesty, compassion and justice.
(v) The skills for example of communicating, problem solving and coordination of actions and cooperating with others towards a common goal.
(vi) Character traits: those habitual ways of responding such as fairness, kindness, truthfulness and a generalized respect for others.
(vii) Openness to the positive influence of adults as socializing agent.

Although attempts have been made at isolating those aspects of spiritual insight that the learner should be endowed with, approaches to be used in inculcating them in the learner are a subject of pedagogical controversy. Sindaazi (2003) advocates for a confessional approach in which teaching of values is seen as a calling to prepare learners not only for examination and character development but also for salvation. Barclay (1975) had earlier on championed this view by stating that, in a Christian society where C.R.E is taught in schools and the syllabus is also in tune with the faith of the society, teachers must remember that in school they are in “loco parentis” and must therefore match their teaching approaches to societal needs which is transforming the learner into a morally upright Christian. This view it is believed will enable the learner to realize that the C.R.E lesson episodes are a preparation for Christian righteousness necessary for solid character formation.
The foregoing position is also held by spiritual educators like Radhakrisnan (2002) and Frey (2006) who stress that the nobility of human character lies in his or her spiritual endowment. They state that education must be used as a tool for enhancing spiritual discernment in a learner. The views of the above according to Aldrich (1994) are reflective of the position held by the traditionalists of ancient times who believed and emphasized that religion must be taught to imbue the learner with those habits and attitudes that are desirable to the society.

Another school of thought represented by the progressivists such as Dewey (1916) and Kierkegaard (1954) take a different tangent in as far as provision of spiritual insight is concerned. They argue that society is quite diverse, people subscribe to different belief systems and though learners share education and schools with similar curriculums, they observe that spiritual insight should be provided to learners in such a way that they can make choices. The idea of teaching morals through religion is to enable the learner to live responsibly with the various belief systems that they encounter. Added to the forgoing, this school of thought is of the view that religion (C.R.E) should be taught as an anthropological discipline and not a spiritual one. That spiritual education should be used to give the learner hope in life here and now and not to make him or her subordinate to some invisible supernatural forms of life. In their view, gaining spiritual insight involves the ability to discuss how spirituality influences the outward behavior of the human being and not his or her future. Doll (1996) reiterates the progressivists’ position by stating that in providing spiritual insights the learners should be given tasks which relate to spiritual problems the society faces so that they solve them. He does not give examples of such problems or even offer ideas on how such tasks may be designed.

The above position has been criticized by those who subscribe to the moralists school of thought like Taneja (2007) and Lewis (2006) who maintain that, religious education offered on account of the hedonistic principles like the ones stated above loses its moral taste. This is because moral values come from God, there is nothing like human designed morality. Therefore, when morals are to be taught, divinely dispensed morality must be the main focus. Healy & Liddell (1998) support the aforesaid view by stating that spiritual insights have to do with spiritual powers which in actual sense reside in spiritual beings and not in material things. That it is spiritual beings, God or Allah who decides and prescribes what morality is. As such divinely dispensed spirituality is what educators must endow the learner with. The more balanced position should be that spiritual insights must be offered through C.R.E because it is essential in the lives of both the hedonist (atheist) and the spiritual moralist (theist) alike. The hedonists need morality for his or her own good because vices are condemned across all religions or cultures, (Boss, 2001) as values are held in high esteem. Therefore whether one is a theist or an atheist morality still counts in one way or the other. The only difference is that the theist’s morality emanates from God.

Grimmit (2005) emphasizes that spiritual insights emanate from religion (C.R.E) and can be taught the same way the subject is taught or can be taught in the subject and this can be done through certain pedagogical steps. In using the C.R.E syllabus, a topic can be identified, stated clearly to the learner, explained, and then followed by a discussion into the spiritual significance
of the lesson topic. The learner should be taken through valuing procedures in which issues that relate to spiritual sensitivity, judgment, motivation and spiritual character are identified and discussed. The learner should then be guided into stating how they apply to him or her as an individual and how they affect him in the corporate membership in the society. Through this Simons (1980) states the learner will be able to acquire the capacity to have a deeper understanding of spiritual issues being dealt with in class.

Bloom, Krathwohl & Masia (1996) give another way or approach to be used in teaching spiritual insights. They propose a strategy which follows the levels of the affective domain scheme. In this approach they propose that the learner should be taken through steps that will create an awareness of spiritual issues at hand. That this awareness should lead to paying attention to the spiritual issues, showing interest in them, accepting them and incorporating them into one’s value system and making it his or her way of life. In this approach, a learner may be made to focus on the affective aspects of learning C.R.E alongside the cognitive aspects.

Provision of spiritual insight in a C.R.E lesson as Ryan & Lickona (2006) state, can also be boosted by laying emphasis on spiritual equanimity. In this approach, the teacher should isolate those controversial issues in the C.R.E lesson, draw the learner’s attention to them and ask them how they as Christians would react to them. Their reactions should be accompanied by careful reflection on each issue jotted down in a diary. The idea is to enable the spiritual events and challenges have a better landing in the learner’s thought process. The learner should also be made to note and apply the values to self as they would affect him or her. What is cited above is what professionals in the pedagogical practices of C.R.E have proposed. One thing worth noting is that, they have been used exclusively in the Western World where they have been found to be both adequate and inadequate given the democratic nature of the Western society.

In Kenya and the continent of Africa in general, emphasis has been laid on religion as a vehicle for enhancing socio-cultural competencies. This makes the teaching of C.R.E in Africa complex. In Kenya for example the C.R.E syllabus has both the Christian and African religious beliefs included in it. Teaching C.R.E alongside African Traditional Religion (A.T.R) is challenging because the former condemns the latter as evil that should be abandoned altogether. The latter on the other hand, as Sifuna and Otiende (1994) state, is viewed as a foreign culture imposing itself on African religion and culture in general.

Once, the two religions were lumped together in one syllabus, it was assumed that the two will be taught together to achieve the same ends -viz enabling the learner to acquire spiritual insights (Groenewegen, 2007). A question that arises is whether African and Christian spirituality are the same so that they are taught together in one syllabus. With this arrangement chances are that confusion may arise because the teacher may end up teaching the ATR using Western scholarship and C.R.E using the indirect African approach. To make matters even more complex, no research has been done in Kenya to ascertain the teachability
of the two religions together and achieve the same desired objective as stipulated in the syllabus.

Looking at the policy documents that guide the teaching of C.R.E in Kenya, it is clearly stated that, the discipline is taught to enhance the moral development in the Kenyan citizen (R.O.K 1964). That it is also a means of enhancing national unity and the development of the rich and varied cultures of the Kenyan communities (R.O.K, 1981 and 1988). The R.O.K (1999) is even more elaborate in articulating the reasons for teaching C.R.E in the secondary schools in Kenya. That the discipline is taught to stem the problems of drug use and abuse, HIV and AIDS, tribalism and promote social mutual responsibility.

Despite the forgoing proposals, the R.O.K (1976) noted that even in the presence of C.R.E in the school curriculum, Kenya has become more morally corrupt than before. This may be an indication that Kenyans have not internalized spiritual insights taught in schools. Ngunyi (2009) states that whether the teaching of C.R.E has made Kenyans better morally is a question left to the church and the scholars to ascertain. Oyaro (2004) stated that it is like the Kenyan moral education is at crossroads and this is why corruption is at its all time high. Despite these observations, no research has been done to determine whether the Kenyan C.R.E teacher uses the professionally accepted strategies to provide spiritual insight to the learner as recommended in the syllabus. An attempt to conduct research in this area of moral education was made by Moya (1987). He looked at problems faced by the social education teachers in implementing the social education program in Siaya district. Thus the study did not address moral pedagogical issues relating to this discipline. Secondly, C.R.E was not addressed as a specific discipline. The findings of Moya’s (1987) research as such may not be of any help in this study because he also centered it in primary schools. Added to the forgoing, Malusu (1997) also did a study in the role of CISRET and CREATE in developing the C.R.E curriculum in Kenyan primary and secondary schools. Pedagogical issues in moral education using C.R.E were thus not addressed. This left a gap that this study comes in to fill. Masingule’s (1985) study was not different from the afore-cited studies as it did not address the issues of the gaps noted to have been left in moral education.

**Methodology**

This study adopted descriptive survey design to gather data from teachers of C.R.E and form two students of C.R.E in secondary schools in Kisumu East district. The form two classes were chosen because it is at this level of psycho-social development that using spiritual insights to make accurate moral decisions is perceived to be challenging (Lahey, 1995). It is also in this class that C.R.E is made compulsory in the Kenyan education system (R.O.K, 1999). The study population comprised of 3225 students and 48 C.R.E teachers. The study sampled a 1/3 of the population which comprised 16 C.R.E teachers by simple random sampling technique. Using the Fischer et al. (1995) method of determining sample size, a population of 343 form two students was randomly sampled for the study. The instruments used in the study included: a graphic observation rating scale which assessed the teacher’s attempt at providing spiritual insights to
the learner, a learner’s test which assessed learner competence in identifying spiritual insights, an in-depth interview schedule and a documents analysis guide which evaluated teacher knowledge and planning to inculcate spiritual insights in the learner. Piloting of the instruments was done in-order to determine both reliability and validity of the research instruments. Alpha coefficients of 0.76 and 0.77 were obtained for the teacher’s graphic observation rating scale and the leaner’s test respectively. Face validity of the instruments was attained by giving the instruments to four experts in the field of study for critique and review. The instruments were then reviewed to make them suitable for data collection. The quantitative data obtained from the graphic observation rating scale and the learner’s test were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency counts and percentages. The information was then presented in form of frequency distribution tables. The data gathered from the in-depth interviews and document analysis were transcribed and organized thematically before analyses and interpretation. The data was then reported in form of texts.

Results And Discussion

The study received back 96 and 343 duly scored observation rating scale and learners’ tests from teachers and students respectively. This was a 100% return rate for both categories of the respondents. The data gathered was organized according to the study objectives as presented below.

**Spiritual insights used by the C.R.E Teachers to enable Learners make Appropriate Moral Decisions**

The study aimed at establishing the spiritual insights that the C.R.E teachers use to enable learners make appropriate moral decisions. Data analysis and interpretation of responses from the teachers revealed that teachers could not isolate and use the spiritual insights to enable learners acquire the ability to make appropriate moral decisions, the study also revealed a lack of knowledge of the insights by a large number of teachers. The findings were as shown in Table 1 below:
Table 1: Teacher Provision of Spiritual Insights (n=96)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of spiritual sensitivity</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(9.4%)</td>
<td>(20.8%)</td>
<td>(69.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual judgment</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(3.1%)</td>
<td>(7.3%)</td>
<td>(89.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual motivation</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(14.6%)</td>
<td>(30.2%)</td>
<td>(55.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual character</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(20.8%)</td>
<td>(28.1%)</td>
<td>(51.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The instrument used in collecting data in this table was on a five point scale but areas that did not register scores were collapsed hence only three points remained. As shown in Table 1, the observations made on the lessons indicated that the CRE teachers always minimally provided the insight of spiritual sensitivity to their learners 20.8% of the lessons was dominated by occasional provision of the insight while in the larger part of the lesson presentation which is 69.8% this aspect of spiritual insight was never provided. There was almost a similar trend in the provision of the insight of spiritual judgment to the learner since it was never provided in 89.6% of the lesson. Further observation of the CRE classroom activities showed that the insight of spiritual motivation was equally minimally provided as can be seen in table 1, where in the majority of cases of the lesson episode which is 55.2%, it was never provided. Provision of insight on spiritual character formation was also found to be weak as shown in the table. However it was never offered in 51% of the lesson presentation which made a larger percentage of the lesson episode.

To make the study more conclusive in determining whether the teachers provided the learner with spiritual insights during the CRE teaching-learning exercises, more data was generated by the use of a test that was given to the learners. Information gathered using the instrument was as shown in Table 2:
Table 2: Scores obtained by the Learners in Comprehension of the spiritual insights (n=343)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Score Rating Range out of 100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner show of spiritual sensitivity</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner show of spiritual judgment</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner show of spiritual motivation</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner show of spiritual character</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 2, majority of the learners that is 174 of them scored between 0-15 marks on the same question, those students who scored 16-30 marks, 31-45 and 50-64 marks were 73, 66 and 21 respectively. This showed that the teachers did not provide the insight of spiritual sensitivity as expected of them or as indicated in the curriculum objectives. This was further evidenced by the fact that only a minority of the students scored 65 marks and above on the item in question. The learners were also tested to confirm whether the teachers provided them with the insight of spiritual judgment. In the question relating to this item the scores obtained from the learners showed the majority (160) scored marks below average, while only a negligible number obtained average and above average marks as can be seen from the table. This result revealed a consistent downward trend in the provision of spiritual judgment as an insight. The results further revealed that spiritual motivation as an insight is a challenge in as far as its provision is concerned. This is because in the test, 210 students who are a majority scored 0-15 marks, while only 05 students scored 65 marks and above. In the insight of spiritual character formation, 310 learners scored marks below average and 02 managed to garner 65 and above. These results confirm what the study observed in the classroom where over 60% of the teaching practice seemed not to provide the spiritual insights to the learner as expected. The inappropriate pedagogical practice has logically translated into the learner’s inability to exhibit competence in isolating spiritual insights during the time of examination.

More information concerning the teacher provision of spiritual insights was obtained through an in depth interview with them. This instrument’s results indicated that eleven teachers never specified the spiritual insights that they were to imbue the learner with. The remaining five teachers indicated that they did this only occasionally. This was as far as providing spiritual sensitivity was concerned. The teachers were also asked to state whether or not they imbued the learner with spiritual judgment as an insight. On this item thirteen teachers accepted never providing it at all while two accepted providing it occasionally and one admitted lack of knowledge of this aspect of spiritual insight. Interview on the insight of spiritual motivation revealed that twelve teachers never provided it while three provided it occasionally and one admitted providing it always. The teachers were further interviewed to determine whether
they imbued the learner with the insight of spiritual character formation, ten teachers revealed that they never did this, four did so occasionally and two always provided the insight.

The schemes of work and the lesson plans revealed that all the teachers did not plan for the provision of the insights of spiritual sensitivity and spiritual judgment. This almost confirms what the rating scale revealed where more than 60.0% of the observations made indicated failure by the teachers to provide the spiritual insights. Provision of the insights of spiritual motivation and spiritual character also indicated a downward trend where teachers on average never planned to provide these aspects of spiritual learning. The syllabus extract clearly indicated provision of spiritual insights as an objective of the CRE course and did not show how it is to be provided. The same applied to the curriculum guide being used by the teachers. The study in a bid to achieve its objectives went further to determine the strategies or approaches used by the teachers to imbue the learner with the spiritual insights needed for making sound moral judgments. Results were as shown in Table 3

**Table 3: Teacher Strategies in Providing Spiritual Insights (n=96)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Teacher emphasis on spiritual equanimity</td>
<td>05 (5.2%)</td>
<td>03 (3.1%)</td>
<td>88 (83.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Teacher use of spiritual reflection</td>
<td>05 (5.2%)</td>
<td>01 (1.0%)</td>
<td>90 (93.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Teacher use of spiritual diaries</td>
<td>01 (1.0%)</td>
<td>01 (1.0%)</td>
<td>94 (98.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Teacher use of spiritual giants as examples</td>
<td>01 (1.0%)</td>
<td>05 (5.2%)</td>
<td>90 (93.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Application of spiritual issues in human behavior</td>
<td>37 (38.6%)</td>
<td>35 (36.5%)</td>
<td>24 (25.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 3, in 83.7% of the lesson the strategy of spiritual equanimity was never used by the teachers in the course of their classroom presentations. However, to a very limited extent and only occasionally as seen in the table was it used. In their teaching, the teacher’s lessons were observed to ascertain whether use was made of spiritual reflection as an aspect of a strategy to provide spiritual insight. The information gathered showed that in 93.7% of the lesson the strategy was never used in teaching C.R.E. In providing spiritual insight during teaching, where possible the teacher should make use of spiritual diaries as this enables the learner to master them and use them when appropriate time comes. The results revealed that rarely was the approach used as in 98% of the lesson it was never used.

From the information in table 3, the teachers’ use of spiritual giants as examples when inculcating spiritual insights in the learner was inadequate since in 93.8% of the lesson it was never used. The study sought to determine whether or not the teachers used application of spiritual issues learned in C.R.E in human behavior. The classroom observation revealed that 38.6% always used this mode of inculcating spiritual insight, 36.5% used it occasionally and 25.0% never used it. This result could be attributed to the fact that application of spiritual
issues in Christian life is normally tested at the fourth form examination at national level hence teachers felt it should not be left out. Otherwise the results also show a lack of consistency in using this strategy.

In a bid to show the teachers, provision of spiritual insight to the learners, the latter were given a test so that they could manifest these skills in answering questions dealing with knowledge on acquisition of spiritual insights. The results were as shown in Table 4:

### Table 4: Learner Show of Spiritual insights in dealing with Spiritual Issues (n=343)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Score Rating</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>0-15</th>
<th>16-30</th>
<th>31-45</th>
<th>50-64</th>
<th>65 &amp; above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner show of spiritual equanimity</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner show of spiritual reflection</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner knowledge of spiritual diaries</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner ability in applying spiritual knowledge</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4, all the 343 learners scored between 0-15 marks when they answered the question which demanded that they show their knowledge in the skill of spiritual equanimity. The result was a clear indication of lack of this skill. The learner was further asked to show knowledge of spiritual reflection skill. In the test, 299 students scored between 0-15 marks, the other students who were a minority performed as shown in the table. This showed the teachers’ failure in providing this skill or where it was provided it was far below average. The results also indicated the learners lack of knowledge of spiritual diaries as all the 343 of them scored between 0-15 marks which are very low. When asked to show their competence in applying spiritual knowledge gained from studying C.R.E in their lives 324 learners scored below marks, Only 11 and 18 learners scored between 50-64 and 65 marks and above respectively. Since over 60% of the learners performed poorly in this skill, the observation is that teachers did not or do not adequately provide spiritual insights to the learners.

During the interviews with the C.R.E teachers, it was revealed that the teachers did not know what spiritual equanimity is. When they were asked to state whether in their teachings they trained learners on ways of exercising self control in occasions that are stressful, still, the answer from all the teachers indicated lack of skills or ways of emphasizing calmness in stressful situations. In addition, information gathered from in-depth interviews with teachers revealed that teachers provided this insight only occasionally. The sixteen teachers interviewed admitted that even though they were supposed to provide this aspect of spiritual insight they did not, because of inadequate time provided for syllabus coverage. In the in-depth interview, the sixteen teachers admitted lack of knowledge of spiritual diaries. When asked whether they had
ways of taking note of spiritual issues that learners were expected to identify and imbibe, the answer was negative.

The teachers were also asked during the interview whether they used the spiritual giants approach in providing spiritual insight. The information gathered was that they used it only occasionally. The teaching documents especially the notes and the schemes of work analyzed reflected a failure in the use of this approach in providing spiritual insights to the learner. The documents which were analyzed especially the past question papers, showed the teachers’ failure in testing learners on issues that required the use of spiritual equanimity in dealing with stressful situations. Apart from the forgoing, the teachers teaching notes were also looked at to determine whether or not spiritual equanimity was emphasized in their teaching. The result showed lack of emphasis of this aspect of spiritual insight.

Information concerning the teachers’ use of spiritual reflection was further sought for through documentary analysis. In this regard, the teachers’ schemes of work were critically looked at to determine whether they planned for skills that could be used in providing this insight. The result manifested lack of preparation in this effect. The past examination papers given to the form two students over the past five years revealed similar results. The K.C.S.E past papers indicated the same results too. The teachers’ notes were analyzed to determine whether they acquainted the learner with the skills necessary to determine how Christian spiritual issues can be applied by a Christian in his/her life. This was confirmed to be true, though consistency lacked as far as the handling of various topics was concerned. That is to say in some topics spiritual application of C.R.E episodes were indicated and provided to the learners, in other topics there was no evidence of this. There was also lack of consistency with individual teachers who handled the subject.

The above result reveals that with regard to provision of spiritual insights from Christian Religious Education (C.R.E), the teachers did not indicate which spiritual insights they intended to inculcate in the learner. Lesson topics were stated in their raw forms without interpretation in accordance with the curriculum objectives. What appears to be positive in as far as inculcating spiritual insight is concerned were cases of chance that even the interviews confirmed. On account of the findings curriculum intentions of inculcating spiritual insights or even the insights did not come out well. The teachers appeared not to have conceived the spiritual insights that they ought to imbue the learner with. This is evidenced by the results from the observations which indicates that on average over sixty percent of the teaching activities was void of clear statement of the spiritual insights to be taught by the teachers. The study observed that majority of the teachers faced serious problems interpreting the syllabus objectives and the lesson content to bring out the needed spiritual insights to be taught to the learner. Teachers seemed not to have conceptualized what spiritual insights are, and they seemed to have a narrow knowledge base of the forgoing. Due to this lack of information, they are unable to imbue the learner with the same hence the inability of the latter to identify and acquire spiritual insights for use in making moral decisions.
In any teaching episode, spiritual education activity included, specification or clear identification of the knowledge issue under consideration is very important. Where a teacher is to enhance learner acquisition of a specific spiritual insight such as spiritual sensitivity, the teacher in his or her teaching plan should specify the insight of which acquisition and development is to be enhanced. Making the learner conscious of the specific aspect of learning does not only enable him or her to put into account the importance of the item to be learnt but also enables him to be focused and be able to reflect on the values of having a deeper understanding of say, the insight under consideration. Obiero-Owino (1994) states that in formulating the teaching-learning objectives focus should be on the core areas of the curriculum which covers the main goals of the discipline. In teaching to enhance acquisition of a spiritual insight such as spiritual sensitivity for example, an objective like “by the end of the lesson the learner should be able to identify at least five habits which show spiritual sensitivity” is likely to give a clear direction to the course of learning.

On account of the forgoing objective, the teacher should in the course of instruction emphasize on those moral qualities that show spiritual sensitivity. These should be accompanied by clear illustrations on how those moral qualities should be practiced so that they become part and parcel of the learners’ spiritual character. Lewis (2000) suggests that the said illustrations should be followed by a discussion on the spiritual significance of such moral qualities. The discussions should be organized in such a way that they challenge the student to appreciate how the spiritual issues affect him or her as a Christian, how they influence his or her relationship with fellow human beings and God. The learner should be asked to explain how the spiritual issue can be applied to self and how the wider human society would benefit from it. Added to the forgoing the learner should be enabled through discussions to realize the dangers of spiritual insensitivity as this would empower him with the ability to make a balanced decision in as far as taking spiritual position is concerned.

Grudem (2007) suggests that to achieve learner acquisition of spiritual insights such as spiritual judgment, spiritual motivation, spiritual sensitivity and spiritual character formation, the teacher should make use of the value sensing modes such as the “point mode, the linear mode and the core construct mode. In the point mode the learner is made aware of the spiritual issues that emanate from the CRE topics and how they are directly experienced. Thus as the teacher gives an account of the CRE lesson, the learner should be made to notice how the insights influence one’s beliefs and behavior as they are directed by the ethics of Christianity. This is done by the teacher when discussing spiritual facts as they apply to the life of a Christian and specifically to the learner. The use of this approach has the power to stir the acquisition of the herein mentioned spiritual insights.

Another approach is called the linear mode. In this strategy of inculcating spiritual insights in the learner the teacher should enable the learner to locate his or her thinking and being in time and space. Thus the teacher in dealing the CRE topics should enable the learner to realize the facts of spiritual gains made in class and how they affect him or her as an individual now and also in future. The effect is both intellectual and emotional and as such will have an influence
on how one makes moral decisions in life and how one behaves. Therefore those spiritual attributes with moral inclinations should be carefully unveiled to the learner so as to make him be able to imbibe insights of spiritual sensitivity, spiritual judgment, spiritual motivation and spiritual character formation. Transition through the point mode and the linear modes in inculcating spiritual sensitivity should take the learner to the core construct mode. In this instance Blake (1992) states that the teaching-learning process should focus on somewhere, sometime, anywhere and anytime. That is generalization of spirituality is made to the learner and knowledge gained by the learner should be imbibed for use where it is needed. The teacher will enable the learner to acquire spiritual character that enhances sound moral decision and conduct. The above pedagogical strategies reinforced with emphasis on the fruits of the holy spirit as in the bible: Galatians 5:22-24 and also through encouraging the learner to practice meditation will enable the learner to make spiritual habits learnt in class to be part and parcel of his or her life practices.

In achieving the objective of developing spiritual insight in the learner the K.I.E (2006) curriculum guide suggests the use of spiritual equanimity as a strategy. In this strategy the teacher is supposed to guide the learner to realize that there is a higher reality which is right within him or herself. As such manifestation of spiritual insight is in the learners’ capacity to show calmness in dealing with all life experiences. Luther (2001) states that in using spiritual equanimity in developing spiritual insight in the learner, the teacher should bring those challenging episodes which will require the learner to show calmness or self control in stressful situations. During this period the learner should be subjected to those religiously challenging issues like the ones which Jesus mentioned as contained in (Luke 9: 51-56). According to the verse, Jesus faces opposition and His disciples condemn the city and calls for punishment but Jesus remains calm and advises them to be the same declines to destroy the city as advocated for by the disciples. Through spiritual equanimity strategy, Akech (2005) states that, the learner is advised to realize the importance of spiritual thinking, speaking and acting. Those who are calm in spirit will always exercise virtues in their society. As things stand in Kisumu East district public secondary schools and from the research findings the strategy of spiritual equanimity is not used by the teachers contrary to what the author proposes. Majority of the teachers accepted their ignorance of the strategy in teaching. The implication of the foregoing is that many of those who leave the secondary schools in Kisumu East district lack very important aspects of spiritual insights which could guide them in their daily living as professionals or as ordinary morally upright citizens. This has been shown by many emotional flare ups and appeals to violence whenever a stressful situation arises in the district.

The research may conclude that because teachers do not adequately employ the strategy of spiritual equanimity in their teachings, knowledge of spiritual insight as taught using C.R.E does not have a reflection in its practicality among those who receive it. It has fallen short of the legitimate status of pedagogical requirements that should be used in achieving the objective of developing spiritual insights in the learner. The transmission of these skills has lacked the commitment that it needs from teachers thereby rendering learners incapable of making sound moral judgment. The study found out that some teachers did not even know what spiritual...
equanimity is. Based on this, it may well be stated that teachers fall short in using the approach in value education because of lack of awareness which may steer them into using this strategy. Harries (2007) found out that lack of awareness in a given teaching strategy can also impede learning in a given discipline. As such inappropriate methodology has therefore made the spiritual insights as articulated in the C.R.E syllabus not to be realized by the learners. This has made learners not to act on moral issues due to lack sound and reflective value judgment ability. Besides, the study above also came to realize that although the teachers used learners’ experience in introducing their lessons and majority of the teachers logically arranged C.R.E content logically, use of spiritual reflection was given a raw deal. This is happening despite the fact that at training in any college of education this strategy is provided. Grimmit (2005), Bandiste (2007) and even Debeljuh (2008) all agree that this is a skill that is offered universally to those training to go and teach religion.

The use of spiritual reflection in inculcating spiritual insight requires that a learner is made to contemplate or focus on those issues of spiritual concern as religious events unfold in a learning process. Besides this, the fact is that the learner should be made to think carefully about the unfolding spiritual issues, how they affect him/her and other people. During this episode Groenewegen (2007) posits that the learner should be given an opportunity to give ideas on the spiritual issue at hand. It was observed during the study in the classroom that teachers of C.R.E rushed on the topics by only looking at the spiritual lessons learnt from the religious episodes under study. The learner was not given time to subject them to rare cerebration. Emphasis appeared to be more cognitive than affective. The learners were also told to take notes which seemed to daze them through dictation. In a nutshell, this was a fuzzy attempt at inculcating the ability to think reflectively on spiritual issues by the learner. The foregoing approach in teaching spiritual skills Ryan & Lickona (2006) state; will not give the learner a firm moral ground on which to stand. Such a learner, Mukongolo (2003) states will never be able to exhibit in his/her character spiritualism which governs his/her conduct. This suggests that apt provision of spiritual reflection skill should involve identification of spiritual episodes in a C.R.E topic this should proceed to mentioning spiritual lessons learnt from a religious episode. Added to the above, the learner should be trained on ways of experiencing what is spiritual. This approach Nyaundi (2006) states does not only enhance spiritual growth but also the skill of spiritual reflection. The teachers studied seemed not to use this strategy, hence the ugly moral situation in the society.

Sinawarta (2006) posits that in inculcating spiritual insight in the learner spiritual diaries should be made use of. In the diaries, Luther (2001) posits that virtues and areas that need spiritual attention should be noted down by the learner as they unfold during a C.R.E learning episode. In the diary, the learner should be guided by the teacher to jot down the said spiritual issues in the order in which they affect or appeal to his/her spirituality. Once noted down the teacher should engage the learner to explain how the spiritual issues in the diary impact on his/her spirituality and ways in which the spiritual insights can be practiced in daily living. The idea of asking the learner to state how what is in the diaries can be practiced is to enable the learner to realize that it is through spiritual practice that one becomes a master of his/her destiny. And for
that, the one thing that is absolutely essential is development of personal will-power to follow the chosen path. The study noted that this strategy in developing spiritual insight in the learner is not used by the teachers when teaching C.R.E. This is in spite of the fact that the syllabus clearly state that the need to inculcate spiritual insight in the learner is an important objective in moral education. Where spiritual diaries are not used in teaching morals, Masingule (1985) observes that the learner will not be able to acquire spiritual insights and will eventually not be able to make sound moral judgment in societal context. Failure to use the foregoing strategy, it was noted during the interview came as a result of teachers’ lack of knowledge not only in, it but also of it. Congruence as such does not exist between the stated C.R.E objectives and the teaching strategies meant to achieve them.

In character building through Christian religious education, Groenewegen (1993) suggests that use should be made of some biblical giants as examples that would act as role models to the learners. In this respect, in every C.R.E episode, spiritual giants such as Abraham, Moses, the prophets and Jesus himself should be used as examples to learners. White (1959) states that where possible Christ should be the standard example whose character should not only be learnt by the students, but the teacher of values should ensure that learners are made to imbibe the values of Jesus Christ. In cases where learners are acquainted with the habits of holy men both of old and present generation, they might be able to gain insights into the spiritual life of these characters. This may in turn influence their thinking, speech and action. Since these were men and women of great spiritual integrity, learning their characters and ways can impact positively on the morals of the learners. Even though use of spiritual giants is a powerful tool in inculcating spiritual insights in the learners, the study found out that it is not made use of effectively. The teachers had good knowledge of these characters, unfortunately their pedagogical insight failed to notice that use of spiritual giants in teaching religion was a powerful tool for developing in the learner greater spiritual insight that will enable them make sound moral judgment. The lesson observations revealed that this strategy was used minimally and the majority of the teachers ignored it altogether. Those teachers interviewed confirmed lack of consistency in using this strategy. The teachers even stated that at times this strategy was overlooked since learners are rarely asked about spiritual giants at the Kenya National Certificate of Secondary Examination (K.C.S.E). In a way, this strategy suffers a backwash effect as a result. Emphasis as such appears to be on knowledge of the spiritual giant (cognitive) as opposed to their character that may influence the morals of the learner (affective development).

Where learners are not acquainted with spiritual giants in as far as their character has or may influence the lives of individuals, the system of education ends up producing those who have very good grades in a discipline like C.R.E. On the other hand, when such people are rated morally, they would score very low marks or nothing at all. A situation like this might be very demoralizing to the society whose aim of teaching C.R.E is to enhance moral development in the learners. The foregoing has been the case of Kenya where the mass media is full of reports on vices that are committed by citizens both in high and low ranks in various sectors of the society. The most grieving thing Mwalulu (2007) observes, is that the corrupt and the evil are all
graduates of our education system where moral education is offered to all, at the basic and higher levels of learning.

For any teacher to teach using a certain strategy effectively Ayot & Patel (1992) and Aggarwal (2004) state that it has to be planned for in advance. This is when the teacher may not lose sight of the strategy as the plan which he/she made in advance will keep on guiding him/her on the method to be used in content delivery. The study established that teachers did not plan to use this skill in enabling the learners to acquire spiritual insights. This revealed lack of congruence between the C.R.E programme intents and the observed outcomes as far as C.R.E teaching is concerned.

Christian Religious Education must have a strong affective impact on the learner and for this to happen Fisher (2006) suggests that the teacher should guide the learner into seeing how spiritual issues that emerge from a religious lesson can be applied in human conduct. Akech (2005) states that where one is given spiritual insight and it is not reflected in his/her behavior, the whole exercise of spiritual education comes to naught. The study found out that in their content delivery, teachers rarely used this strategy. Inconsistency was evident with some teachers not using the strategy at all. Almost a similar result was shown by the learner performance in the test which they were given. The teachers’ documents especially the schemes of work, lesson plans and the lesson notes also lacked consistency in planning for this strategy in providing spiritual insight. Inconsistency in using a strategy in teaching in general will always lead to perfunctory content delivery; lack of teacher confidence and finally the learner will not be left in a position that is certain in as far as acquisition of a worthwhile skill in learning is concerned.

The study revealed some weaknesses in teaching the learner how spiritual insights can be applied in their own lives. The number of times teachers taught the learner how spiritual episodes apply to human behavior was almost similar to that of occasional use of this approach. The number of times when the strategy was never used was also almost similar to when it was always used and when it was used occasionally. The study further noted that teachers ignored bringing out application of spiritual lessons in an individual’s life in all the topics as suggested in the C.R.E curriculum guide. During the interview, the teachers admitted not using spiritual application of religious issues in human life consistently. They even asserted that it is not a must; Ocitti (1979) and Geisler (2006) also revealed this problem in their studies. The implication is that there is a major anomaly in using this approach in teaching C.R.E moral values through C.R.E. It would be safe to assume that the spiritual insight offered to the learner in secondary schools in Kisumu East district is less than wholly worthwhile. This would mean that the methodology of inculcating spiritual insight in the learner has failed to cultivate spiritual thinking and even spiritual way of acting in the learner. This is what has probably perpetuated vices in Kisumu East district.

Generally from the findings, it can be assumed that negligence of the right spiritual teaching approaches dominate the C.R.E classroom teaching. Secondly, a lot of journeyman approach in
teaching is a common feature in the spiritual insight/moral education classes. Incompetence in achieving the affective domain objectives clearly abound in the Kenyan education system (as reflected by the present study’s findings in Kisumu East district secondary schools) hence high grades in C.R.E as a subject with very low moral standards. Geisler (2008) confirms that, incompetence exhibited by the teacher in providing moral training will impact negatively on the learner. The teacher must consistently pursue the goal for enabling the learner to acquire spiritual insights. This is when the society can be socially & healthy.

Conclusion

The study made the following conclusion based on the findings:

The CRE teachers’ ability to identify and isolate the spiritual insights to inculcate in the learner in secondary schools in Kisumu East district seemed to be inadequate hence did not match the curriculum expectations.

Recommendation

The study recommends that the teachers should be assisted to acquire competence in correct CRE syllabus interpretation. This could be by means of workshops and seminars on pedagogical practices in CRE curriculum regarding inculcating in the learners those spiritual insights that will enable them to develop the ability to make appropriate moral decisions.

References


