ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS IN CHURCH-SPONSORED SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This paper assessed the role played by churches in the moral development of students in Church-sponsored schools in Kenya. A qualitative phenomenological design was adopted to achieve this objective. Participants were selected through purposive stratified sampling along denominational lines with six mainline churches that have sponsored schools for over five decades being considered. Each denomination purposely chose two of its sponsored secondary schools to participate in the study. Some churches opted to have a boy and a girl school, others an urban and a rural, or a school with the strong presence of the church, against another where the church was not strongly involved. Interviews, electronically recorded, manually transcribed, and finally analysed using the Nvivo qualitative data analysis software, were conducted with the school principals, denominational education secretaries, County education officers and in separate focus groups for teachers and for students, with each focus group session having between four to six participants. Five open-ended interview protocols were used in collecting data. Teachers and students with more than two years of stay in the schools were randomly selected. The study found that churches influenced students' morals in schools. Pseudonyms have been used in place of actual participants' names.

Keywords: Church-sponsored schools, Role, Students, Moral development, Behaviour.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The unbecoming behaviour witnessed time and again among adolescents in schools has sometimes been blamed on their developmental stages, peer influence and failed family

systems. Psychologists such as Erikson, hold that youth of ages 13-19 years are in a life stage called adolescence; a stage that is marked with the psychosocial crisis known as identity vs role confusion. This age is key because national demographics show that Kenya is largely youthful, with a broad-based pyramid formation. In the 2019 national population census, Kenyan youth aged 15-19 years accounted for 5,285,857 of the population (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). This age-range of the population is the centre of this study since it comprises the secondary school going category of youth.

Formative years of human development present the greatest opportunity for moulding and directing lives. A famous Swahili saying states, samaki mkunje angali mbichi, which in English can be interpreted, "bend the fish when it is still wet" (Murphy & Elizabeth, 1999). This saying carries nearly the very same meaning as the famous biblical direction to parents: "train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6 KJV). Religions, such as Christianity and Judaism have held the belief that positive moral upbringing of children is first and foremost the responsibility of parents, and thereafter, society (Proverbs 22: 6; I Corinthians 15: 33). Traditional African societies viewed children as belonging to the community, and so any adult could freely discipline a misbehaving child. In Europe and other western countries, good morals have been taught through schools and homes. Arab countries, on their part, have largely taught morality through strict religious teachings and rules.

The church, as a custodian of God's word, is faced with the enormous task of setting standards of morality in society. Not only should the church focus on periods when students are in schools but also, of necessity, address the society from which the students come from and to which they return on completion of school. An upright community has a higher likelihood of producing upright children. The opposite of this is also true. The Bible, in I Corinthians 15:33 says that "bad company corrupts good morals", implying transferability of community values. Kinai (2008) takes a similar view when he warns, "When schools decline in moral values, students' unrest and disturbance become inevitable" (p. 17). Therefore, when students' morals decline, the sanctity of human life, respect for other people's property, and wanton destruction, can go on in utter disregard of whether religious education was taught in class or not. Kenya's history shows that student unrest is not a recent development; the first case was reported in Maseno, in 1908 (Report of the Task force on student discipline and unrest in secondary schools, 2001). The church, therefore, as a sponsor of schools, has a critical role to play in the moral development of students. The message of sin, repentance and forgiveness ought to pervade the schools in Kenya and all outreach ministries of churches. As scripture shows, all people, including adolescents, are victims of sin and its effects (Romans. 3:23; I John. 1:8).

The church needs a deeper reflection and involvement if its schools are to develop students holistically. Njageh (2012), in discussing education for peace, makes five-strong proposals of things that the church must do: 1) reclaiming the church's moral power as the voice of reason in society; 2) mobilizing and equipping social institutions with the necessary knowledge, skills, and values; 3) collaborating and forging synergies with other churches; 4) starting the socialization and training from the earliest ages possible; 5) translating relevant literature and adopting appropriate methodologies and technologies. Since many believe that students taught in church-sponsored schools have a higher likelihood of being morally upright, this

study sought to find out the role played by the church in training students to become morally upright.

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Whenever and wherever people see religious institutions bringing up students, good character, sincerity, honesty, and other virtues are expected. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Fact Book, Kenya is largely a Christian dominated country (83% Christian). However, Kenya still faces a myriad of challenges including rampant corruption, anticipated examination fraud, widespread infidelity in marriage, and growing cases of drunkenness that are now becoming a lifestyle among the young. In view of this, there is a need for the church to ensure its programs are relevant enough to create a morally upright society. Fink (2004) shows that in education, there is need for significant learning, "learning that assists learners in Practical Thinking in which when related to the Kohlberg experiments, a learner is able to reason well on attaining certain age levels" (p. 42).

Njageh (2012) is of the view that the church has a greater potential than any other institution when it comes to providing the community with the kind of people that are desperately needed. When the church, therefore, fails in its mandate by letting non-believers have their way on matters of morals, values and adolescents' schooling, forces that corrupt youth morals will have a free hand in whatever they would want to do. In Kenya, drafters of the Education Act 2013 were cognizant of this fact and so accorded the church opportunities to participate in policymaking and implementation, in schools. A consistent feature of the church in Kenya is her involvement in the socialization of her members especially through the proclamation of the Word of God and being a voice of reason on various issues of human life (Njageh, 2012). An example can be given of the Roman Catholic Church's position on matters of reproductive health and peace. Where the church opts to remain silent on these concerns, society fails to get the positive contribution that would have come from their active participation.

Kinai (2008), while citing Moberg (1962) who says that religion is major prevention and cure for delinquency and crime, makes a strong argument for the critical role that the church needs to play in the moral development of students. He asserts that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs. 1:7). However, society can only attain this fear if the church purposively goes out to teach people what it means to honour and fear God.

The church has been called to nurture, disciple, equip, and show the way to the world. In line with this, the church informs, forms, and transforms persons so they can fit in society (Wanza 2012). Holistic education, by the church and school, calls for a multi-pronged approach to ministry, and the utilization of any available channels such as: use of church sanctuaries; school chapels; promoting of support programs such as bursaries and cheaper medication to mitigate students' distress; use of modern technology such as radio, television, internet, and mobile phone technologies; and, embracing literature that appeals to youth. In Kenya today, some churches have ventured into electronic media and are running radio and/or TV stations such as Radio Waumini by the Catholic Archdiocese of Nairobi, and Hope FM by Christ Is The Answer Ministries (Njageh, 2012).

A key initiative that the church can employ, in seeking to ensure moral development of students, is encouraging all students, regardless of their denominational affiliations, to participate in Christian Union meetings, and especially the Sunday services that may even be presided over by the sponsoring church. For Roman Catholics, the preaching of the Word and participation in the celebration of mass and sacraments is central in every service. Of the many approaches employed by the church to transform the youth, the preaching of the Word of God is the main strategy. It involves reading of the Word of God, and thereafter interpreting it in light of contemporary life while emphasizing the kind of lifestyles that Christians need to embrace (Njageh, 2012).

Some churches employ chaplains to counsel students, facilitate in morning devotions, run evening epilogues and hold prayer days, amongst other religious practices. As Christian professionals, chaplains are part of schools that embrace the Christian philosophy of education where God is viewed as the creator of all things, and the fountain of all knowledge (Wanza, 2012). The cardinal role of chaplains is the spiritual development of the school community and ensuring that students are shaped in line with Christian values and standards (Proverbs. 6:22). Among the critical roles of chaplains is helping students go through problems which arise from fears of success or failure in their studies, and from society's quickly changing attitudes and values (Nyamai, 2008).

The chaplaincy ministry, however, is not limited to the students' population. On the contrary, it is also expected to serve the teaching and non-teaching staff in schools. For instance, chaplains are expected to teach the school communities appropriate Christian values in matters of interpersonal relationships, love, work and holiness. They are also to offer professional guidance to members of the school community in times of grief, examination, career choice, and when faced with cases of indiscipline (Nyamai, 2008).

Chaplaincy services help in moulding school communities toward desired dispositions. Alavi and Rahimipoor (2010), while citing Audi (2001), outline the share of values that are intrinsically good and that should be formed in students. These include consciousness and flourishing life, knowledge and insight, moral virtue and virtuous deeds, friendship and shared warmth, beauty and aesthetic experience, a just distribution of goods, and self-expression. This is important because failure to manifest the anticipated transformation could be associated with negative stimuli such as "mental health and other health problems, violence, family breakup, poverty, materialism and social alienation" (Dobmeier, 2011, p. 317).

Chaplaincy that is reliable calls for qualified personnel. Professional chaplains can be able to unearth underlying factors, those that result in deviant behaviour, thereby leading to better performance of students. Schools that do not have chaplains often blame it on inadequate funds and/or fear of interferences from the sponsoring church. Some schools, however, avoid chaplaincy services because they would like to give priority to academics. It would suggest that spirituality is neglected so as to give more attention to academics. This is because religious and spiritual roles have been seen by some as controversial roles in schools (Onderi & Makori, 2013). Such notions have led some school administrators to blatantly declare that religion is an individual's choice, and so it should be left to churches and other places of worship, and, should not be brought to the school. But, failing to acknowledge the power of

the Word of God, while solely relying on human wisdom in school rules, can be construed to mean that school does not need God to succeed.

The ministry of these "spiritual" leaders has not been accepted by all. Nyamai (2008) observes that in some cases, "the administration fears that the existence of a school chaplain in the school would expose their works of darkness"(p. 19). Nyamai's observation is telling on the motivations that some school administrators have: the plunder and abuse of school privileges and resources. Pro-active schools that have a holistic ministry at heart, however, pick on volunteer teachers to serve as chaplains. Such schools use teachers to handle matters such as guiding and counselling, devotions, and in addressing storms of life such as sickness and death. It is worth noting that the, "effectiveness of a system of education in a given country is reflected in the type of people" (Wanza, 2012, p. 52). If the people churned out of an educational system are upright and good, then the system is good. If otherwise, then there are reasons to be wary of the education system.

Since chaplains are appointed by the sponsoring church in collaboration with school administrations, and, are supervised and paid by the sponsoring church it would imply that the sponsoring church needs to be very purposeful and considerate when selecting a chaplain (Nyamai, 2008; Education Act, 2013). By virtue of his/her place in the school, the chaplain may build or break the school. If he is not a sober and balanced minister, there is the danger of resistance arising from different quarters, whether directly or indirectly either from students or staff. For the effective running of school programs, the church needs to form a functional education secretariat that is well funded and staffed so as to coordinate, monitor and evaluate education programs in its sponsored schools (Masika & Simatwa, 2010).

In pursuit of ensuring moral development of students, there are schools where chaplains have been assigned to teach religious education classes so that they can bring in the affective dimension of the classes (Nyamai, 2008). Where this has not been done, Christian Religious Education classes have been taught just like any other examinable subject in the school curriculum. The benefit of learning religious education from a chaplain is that students are challenged to reflect inwardly, with the goal of changing behaviour and moral values. In view of this, churches need to benchmark and engage qualified chaplains that are also well trained. This may involve learning from others, in the same way, that iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17).

The church in Kenya has played a fundamental role as a school sponsor over the years. It has provided holistic Christian education in her schools, ensuring that the graduating students are not socially, spiritually, morally, physically, economically, emotionally, and intellectually disintegrated (Nyabwari et al., 2013). Holistic education has served to integrate what is taught in class with what is expected out there in life. It helps students develop acceptable relationships, different views to life, and ways of responsibly exercising their freedom, as they observe the law. Holistic Christian education helps students to develop their God-given abilities and their physical, social, spiritual, and mental capacities.

Church involvement in education can be clearly seen through denominational records. The Catholic Church, for instance, through its Commission for Education and Religious Education, runs 30% of all educational institutions in Kenya, including special education

facilities. The Church boasts of over 8,000 educational institutions, consisting of 5,600 Primary Schools, 1,900 Secondary Schools, five Colleges, and a University. These institutions offer holistic education designed to develop the moral and spiritual character of students (KCCB, 2013).

In view of the many schools, each of the participating churches has an extensive organizational structure that captures both the National and the Diocesan/regional levels of administration. Within that hierarchy of their educational structures, specific roles are assigned to the various levels of administration. For instance, at the national level, the Catholic church deals with issues such as liaising with the Ministry of Education in the formulation and implementation of educational policies; liaising with the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in the employment of teachers, appointment and deployment of deputies and headteachers; participating with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development in policy matters relating to curricula development of Christian Religious Education (CRE), Program of Pastoral Instruction (PPI), and so forth (KCCB, 2013). The Anglican, Friends, Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), and Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) also have similar arrangements, with slight variations in the roles assigned to the offices.

At the Diocesan/regional levels, the SDA and the Catholic churches have very elaborate structures, though the others also have well-established structures. At these levels, the offices largely implement policies directions given by the national offices, develop guidelines and policies to be implemented at the school levels, and monitor activities in the schools. It is from these offices that advice, concerns, and feedback are made back to the national offices. For the Catholics, this level of the structure also works to ensure that Catholic ethics are upheld (KCCB 2013).

In the SDA church schools, of Nyamira County, holistic development is ensured through traditions, groupings, and practices such as:

work program, nature walk, physical activities/games, Bible study groups, full-day Sabbath observance, Sabbath school discussions groups, mid-week prayers, week of prayer, annual camp meetings, talents afternoons, camping and campouts, pathfinders club, adventure's club, master guides drills, Adventist Youth Society (AYS), community service, outreach Sabbaths, home economics and cookery, choir practices, inter-house matches and youth rallies. (Nyabwari et al., 2013, p. 247)

In most of the church-sponsored schools, sponsoring denominations have worked with school administrators to ensure that school meetings and activities start with prayer and/or devotions of some sort. The churches also work to ensure godly school environments that make community members, within the school, exercise restraint in what they can or cannot do. With power given through the Education Act 2013, denominations appoint church representatives to seat on school Boards of Management to articulate concerns and views of the sponsoring denominations. School managements, like any other organizational management, go through the processes of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling, with the support of appropriate government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Service Commission. As part of the school's Boards of

Management, churches have the responsibility of ensuring that the following concerns are adequately addressed:

    a   Proper management of school funds.
    b   Proper management of discipline among staff and students. For instance, drunken teachers, absentee teachers, unqualified teachers, teachers who prey on students.
    c   Addressing sin firmly. For instance, sexual relations, abortions, homosexuality, drug abuse.
    d   Provision of necessary school facilities, and utilities such as water and power.
    e   Avoiding examination malpractices such as failing to register students for final examinations.
    f   Ensuring that the school is operating legally.

Each of the aspects listed above can have great ramifications on the moral behaviour of students in the school, while any mishandling of these aspects can result in the deterioration of the schools' moral fibre.

When denominations set up schools or choose to become school sponsors, various motivations underpin such decisions. These may range from spiritual, social, to economic. The 1970 Durham Report of England's education shows that the voluntary school had two roles: "general, and domestic; the general role was to serve the nation through its children, while the domestic was to equip children of the church so they could take their position in the Christian community" (Hand, 2012, p. 549). Across the Atlantic, in a study done in the USA, it was established that the level of religiosity of members of the Catholic Church had a direct relation to how parents sent their children to Catholic schools (Sander, 2005). This meant that the more spiritual the parents were, the higher the chances were for them to send their children to church-sponsored schools. This gives credence to the notion that the church should involve itself not just in the students' lives, but also in the families and communities from which the students come.

In the history of Kenya, the approach of the early missionaries was first to draw the communities as a whole, and the children would then be allowed to join the mission stations. Mabeya and Ndiku (2010), while referring to a 1992 government report, assert that "During the eighteenth century, the clergy managed education in Kenya. They built new schools, financed them, recruited and trained teachers, oversaw the implementation of the curriculum, taught catechism and approved new teaching approaches" (p. 31). From those early days, missionaries knew that many Africans had to be literate if they were to assist in the preaching of the Word of God. As Wanza (2012) puts it, "The early missionaries realized that in order to prepare people to read the Bible, Catechism, and Spiritual books, the best way was to build schools" (p. 59). Schools were, therefore, strategic in the fulfilment of the church's mandate of spreading the gospel.

Today, some church denominations still take school sponsorship as an evangelistic tool meant to convert young souls. Because of this, some sponsors have been accused of propagating confessional religious schools; schools that Hand (2012) considers as indoctrinatory and is-educational. In such schools, spiritual nourishment is preferred above the regular learning. This, as Carmody (2012) shows, is not always the perfect outcome. He

says, that in early years, when "confessional schools" were the only schools available, some parents would tell their children, "Suffer in silence, and when you finally leave school, choose to live by your own standards" (p. 249). This, even today, is true where students are enrolled in "good schools" that do not necessarily have the same beliefs and practices as the students. Worsley (2008) criticizes such a position because, in scenarios where schools are nothing but confessional schools, the sponsoring denominations exploit the vulnerability of those in their care to further their own (church) interests.

As a religious institution, and sponsor of schools, the church's role is seen in the expectation that the church would set standards for the moral development of students in secondary schools. From the earliest of times, therefore, the church, alongside government-sponsored schools, has keenly involved itself in the education of the citizenry. Through a spiritual sponsor, even in the fully sponsored schools, its role has over the years been affected or moderated through national legislation and policy shifts by the government. Today, as evidenced in the Education Act 2013, church sponsorship is recognized with roles clearly laid out. This study, therefore, examines some of the roles played by the church towards the moral development of students in church-sponsored schools.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted an exploratory qualitative research approach. The approach also referred to as a formative research approach, emphasizes the discovery of ideas and insights (Kothari, 2004). The qualitative approach is concerned with "phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind" and "assists when seeking to discover underlying motives and desires" (Kothari, 2004, p. 3). The study adopted a naturalistic qualitative method because the method allows for exploration and understanding of meanings that individuals or groups give to social or human problems and experiences (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2002). This enabled direct access to participants, and to collect data within the natural settings of the interviewees.

In this study, in-depth, open-ended interviews, direct observation, and written documents were employed in data collection. The use of open-ended questions aimed at creating room for respondents to express themselves without limitations, while observation and written documents served to clarify, confirm, and, or corroborate what was reported by the participants (Patton, 2002).

A Phenomenological Approach to research was adopted and since it is not theory-driven, no hypotheses (Creswell, 2014) were drawn. The main aim in phenomenological research is to discover the subjective perceptions and understandings of a particular people (Padilla-Díaz, 2015; Groenewald, 2004; Pathak, 2017). In view of the many churches and sponsored secondary schools, in Kenya, specific cases were considered in this multiple case approach. The approach helped to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the role played by the church in students' moral development in comparing the opinions of the respondents.

The study targeted denominational leaders who participate in the formulation and implementation of policies in their sponsored schools; school Principals, teachers and students in church-sponsored schools; and, county education officers were drawn from

counties hosting the selected sponsored schools. The inclusion of these various categories was aimed at triangulation in the data collection that was stratified along denominational lines. Considering the 47 Counties, tens or hundreds of sponsors, and approximately 5,000 sponsored secondary schools, and the limited time and resources at the researchers' disposal, this study adopted a stratified, purposive, and convenience sampling strategy. Stratified because there were six distinct denominational lines along which interviews were carried out; purposive because information-rich cases were preferred for the study; and convenience because persons delegated by designated officials, were considered good enough for the research purposes (Kothari, 2002; Pathak, 2017). Stratification was done along denominational lines of the Roman Catholic Church, Friends Church, Anglican Church, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Africa Inland Church (AIC), and Seventh Day Adventists (SDA). From each of these church denominations, two sponsored schools were identified in purposive sampling and included in the denominational stratum. Schools that the church considered to be best suited for the purpose of this study were identified by the church. The AIC Church, and its schools, were later dropped from the study because it became difficult to get appointments for interviews with designated church officials, and consequently with their schools. However, during the interviews, for the remaining five denominations, the very same questions were used across the strata. The five churches that were sampled comprised churches that have sponsored schools, in Kenya, for periods exceeding fifty years. The assumption therein was that these churches, through experience gained over time, had well established educational structures and policies, geared towards the moral development of students in their schools. Table 1 presents the sample size and distribution.

Table 1: Sample sizes and distribution

Denomination 1 Roman Catholic – Two schools	Denomination 2 Anglican Church – Two schools	Denomination 3 Friends Church in Kenya– Two schools	Denomination 4 Seventh Day Adventist–Two schools	Denomination 5 Presbyterian Church of East Africa–Two schools	5 County educ. officers
1 Church educ. Officer	1 Church educ. Officer	1 Church educ. Officer	1 Church educ. Officer	1 Church educ. Officer	
2 School Principals	2 School Principals	2 School Principals	2 School Principals	2 School Principals	
12 Teachers (6 from each school)	12 Teachers (6 from each school)	12 Teachers (6 from each school)	12 Teachers (6 from each school)	12 Teachers (6 from each school)	
12 Students (6 from each school)	12 Students (6 from each school)	12 Students (6 from each school)	12 Students (6 from each school)	12 Students (6 from each school)	
Total 27	Total 27	Total 27	Total 27	Total 27	Total 5

Source: Field Data, 2019

In this study, the choice of five cases, therefore, was purposeful for the study as it was the authors' conviction that a look at several school sponsors would facilitate a better conceptualization of the strategies employed, comparisons between cases, and an examination of similarities in strategies used by the churches toward the moral development of students in church-sponsored secondary schools. Although most head offices of these denominations are in Nairobi, most interactions with denominational education officers were

done outside Nairobi. This was as a result of denominational offices recommending schools that were in far-flung counties.

An interview protocol with eight semi-structured interview questions was developed to facilitate data collection. During the interview process, an electronic voice recorder was used to capture all discussions in the interviews for later transcription, with the researcher jotting snippets of the interviews in a diary.

Field data came in the form of audio recordings, the author's notes, photographs and written documents. The findings of this study are presented in a thick descriptive format that consists of words, pictures, and diagrams, as opposed to figures and numbers as it normally is with quantitative designs (Kim, Sefcik & Bradway, 2016). Consequently, a narrative text was used in the presentation of the findings. This involved a thick description of the participants' responses on the role of the church in students' moral development (Creswell, 2014).

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this paper was to explore the role of the church in the moral development of students in church-sponsored schools in Kenya. The authors, thus, focused on providing an assessment of how Kenyan churches have been purposely involved in instilling discipline among students under their sponsorship to ensure morally upright citizens. The findings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Strategy themes and snippets coded

Name	Description	Files	References
Active involvement of the church in schools	Strategy	27	286
Chaplains and pastors from church	Strategy	16	42
Financial and material support	Strategy	10	16
Involvement on boards of management	Strategy	22	41
Principal from sponsor church	Strategy	7	10
Programs and activities initiated by church	Strategy	24	79
School climate and environment as shaped by church	Strategy	23	79
Visits by church officials, sponsors, besides chaplains	Strategy	7	19

Source: Field Data (2019)

In Table 2 above, where 286 snippets relating to the church's involvement in secondary schools were identified. The major theme/ parent node, was, "active involvement of the church in schools." This theme had its own seven sub-themes. Looking at these seven sub-themes, in the codebook; sixteen cases had forty-two snippets showing the involvement of chaplains and pastors that were sent by the churches. In ten cases, there were sixteen snippets relating to the churches giving both material and financial support to schools. In twenty-two, out of twenty-seven cases, there were forty-one snippets where respondents said that the churches were involved in their school Boards of Management (BoM), in one or the other

way. In seven cases, out of the maximum of twenty-seven, there were ten snippets of responses relating to principals coming from the sponsoring denomination. As to whether the churches were involved in schools' programs and activities, twenty-four out of the twenty-seven cases showed that the churches were involved in one way or the other. A total of seventy-nine snippets were recorded for the churches' involvements in schools. A similar number of snippets were shared in twenty-four cases, pointing to the church participating in giving schools a school climate that was conducive for the moral development of students. Finally, there were nineteen snippets, in seven cases, that related to churches, as the sponsors of schools, sending church officials - besides the chaplains, to visit the schools. This is to say that in all the 27 sittings, which consisted of 12 one-on-one interviews with church education secretaries, school principals, and county education officers, and 15 focus group sessions with teachers and students, respondents made 286 remarks relating to how churches were involved in their sponsored schools. The 286 remarks, statements, or snippets, which were recorded during the interviews, were either positive, or negative. The contents of the snippets are discussed below to reveal the positive and the negative snippets

In analysing the theme, "active involvement of the church in schools", it was evident that schools had different experiences, and did not have a common experience that would be generalized to all. The study showed that some opinions were only true in some cases, while others had different experiences. In a number of cases, however, there were also areas of convergence, where respondents had the same sentiments to make of the sponsors.

Of the seven sub-themes that were generated under this theme, it was the involvement in school programs and activities that was commonly reported. Out of the possible twenty-seven cases, twenty-four cases had a response showing that churches were, in one way or the other, involved in school programs and activities. Second to it was the churches' involvement in creating school climates that were conducive to the moral development of students. Out of the twenty-seven cases, twenty-three cases gave responses showing that churches were involved in matters of school climate within the schools. These were then followed by churches' involvement in boards of management, at twenty-two cases; chaplains and pastors sent to the schools by the sponsors, at sixteen cases; financial and material support given to schools by the churches, at ten cases; visits to the school by church officials, who were not chaplains, at seven cases; and, last but not least the cases of principals of schools coming from the sponsoring church, at seven out of the possible twenty-seven cases.

The study showed that the church in Kenya has been actively involved in the education sector for about 100 years now. From the early days of the white missionaries, the church set up schools and other institutions of learning. As a voice of God, and a custodian of good morals, the church has endeavoured to transform society through God's word, and by several other means. In various sponsored schools, chaplains and pastors are the visible image of the sponsors and are the ones that are directly involved in the moral development of students. Sometimes, however, the Board of Management (BoM) members, who are seconded by the churches, are considered the accurate sponsors, and not the chaplains. To manage the schools well, the churches have set up hierarchical structures that run from church head offices to the schools. Within the education structures of the churches, various levels of education officials have been put in place to ensure efficiency in schools' management. With the Education Act 2013 giving room for sponsors to nominate three members to the BoMs, churches have

striven to carefully select their three representatives on schools' Boards of Management; representatives that they think would effectively steer the sponsor's agenda.

The schools, churches and school administrations have laboured to create school climates that are conducive for the moral development of the students. Among the things done to this end are: mounting of crucifixes around the schools, painting drawings and writing words of wisdom in various places in the school environment, having chaplains, and in some cases building chapels, or places of worship on the school compounds. Strategies such as using both the explicit, and the hidden curriculum, have been employed in shaping the moral development of students in the church-sponsored schools. Guiding and counselling have also been offered by pastors, chaplains, and selected teachers on Sundays, besides the other days of the week. Some sponsors have at times utilized school holidays and church programs, outside the schools, to touch the lives of students toward their positive moral development. Some sponsors even meet part of the financial needs of the institutions and students, giving them a vantage point from where they can push for moral dispositions in the schools and amongst students.

Other strategies that churches have employed toward the moral development of students were letting school administrations make decisions that were for the good of the school communities and allowing students from other denominations a weekly opportunity to go back to their denominational conclaves for fellowship. Besides these, churches have also worked at ensuring that the school principals or deputies come from their specific church denomination, as a way of ensuring a smooth flow between the school and the sponsor. In addition, the sponsors make visits to the schools and talk to the students, mainly during special occasions; but also, churches participate in the formulation or endorsing of the rules and regulations- the do's and the don'ts of the school.

This study showed that school sponsors were involved in their schools, in various ways, ranging from conducting Sunday services, having chaplaincy services, participating in schools, and in Boards of Management meetings. These are discussed below:

4.1 Sunday services

The sponsor's involvement, especially on Sundays, cut across all church-sponsored schools. For the Catholics and Protestants, masses and worship services, respectively, were held every Sunday. The Adventists, on their part, held their services on Saturday. In church 4 school, as Respondent 1 says, "some pastors, from the church, were sent to teach and preach to the students, telling them about their well-being as a youth" (Respondent 1, Personal communication, 2019). Respondent 2, from the same school, added that their sponsor also ensured that pastors were available to offer guidance and counselling, on Thursdays and Sundays.

Respondent 3, from church 3 school, made it clear that attending services on Sunday was a must in her school. In her words, "In this school, there is a rule that every Sunday all the Christians have to be in church to attend the service" (Respondent 3, Personal communication, 2019). The worship services in sponsored schools, though led by the specific

church sponsor, involved students from all the other denominations, whether Anglican, Roman Catholic, Friends, Presbyterian, or Adventists.

Respondent 5 from a church 1 sponsored school said that in her school, masses/worship services were held at least twice in a week. During those times, students were taught about God, and were given teachings that inspired them to live upright lives (Respondent 5, Personal communication, 2019). Respondent 4, a fellow student, revealed that church 1 normally organized an hour, on Saturdays, where representatives of the church came and talked to students about the church's doctrines, explaining how the doctrines came about and how they could be applied in society. For students who did not belong to church 1, that hour was used in Bible study (Respondent 4, Personal communication, 2019). In that school, according to Respondent 12, students that were to participate in the Sunday worship service were prepared on Saturdays. Representatives of the church guided the concerned students on how to run the mass/worship, and how they were to prepare the petitions (Respondent 12, Personal communication, 2019). This was so because, on a number of occasions, the students conducted, or actively participated in the Sunday masses/worship. Respondent 5, a church 1 school student, added that "some students served at the altar during mass/worship, and others were given the task of clearing the altar after the service" (Respondent 5, Personal communication, 2019). Other students, according to Respondent 4, were put in charge of singing during the mass/service (Respondent 4, Personal communication, 2019). Though the specific school sponsor may have been in charge of organizing and running the Sunday services, all the other denominations were also involved in the services. Teacher Rose added to the sentiments by saying that Sunday services, where preaching was done, was also part of the process of shaping students morally.

Respondent 3, a student from a school-sponsored by church 3, said that in her school, "…the Muslims also have their own place to worship" (Respondent 3, Personal communication, 2019). On the other hand, her colleague, Respondent 6, disclosed that as a students' fraternity, their chairlady was called a bishop. The bishop was charged with overseeing most of the spiritual matters of the school, and cases of bad behaviour, such as noise making. Normally, according to her, the bishop was drawn from the sponsoring church, so that, in a way, the bishop represented the church when carrying out her duties (Respondent 6, Personal communication, 2019).

4.2 Chaplains and pastors from the church

Chaplains were reported to have played a key role in the shaping of students' morals. The study showed that most of the sponsored schools had chaplains; and those that did not have, either had church representatives visiting the schools or that they made their own local arrangements within the schools.

According to Respondent 7, a church 3 sponsored school student, the sponsor had worked to ensure that they had a chaplain who could be there in case of any issue so that when students had problems, they could go and talk to her (Respondent 7, Personal communication, 2019). The chaplain was the outstanding mark of the sponsor. In acknowledging the work of the church, teacher Catherine, from a church 3 sponsored school said, "…in this school, we have a chaplain assigned by the church" (Teacher Catherine, Personal communication, 2019). On

his part, teacher David added that "… the spiritual services are run by the chaplain; and sometimes she invites other pastors from the sponsoring church" (Teacher David, Personal communication, 2019). For him, a good number of things related to the moral development of students revolved around the chapel and the activities of the chaplain. For teacher Joyce, from the same school, the school chaplain was the one charged with conducting counselling of students. Her opinion was informed by the fact that she had been referring students to the chaplain whenever the students had challenges (Teacher Joyce, Personal communication, 2019).

Some schools, because of their inability to get regular services of a chaplain, came up with their own solutions. Most schools had Christian Union patrons that coordinated spiritual matters within the schools. However, slight differences would be observed from school to school. Respondent 8, a church 4 school student, said that in his school there were two teachers who were in the guidance and counselling department; and were also in charge of the Christian Union (Respondent 8, Personal communication, 2019). This school initiative was to complement the work of the church, but more importantly, to ensure that the school did not miss out on services that were available on an occasional basis. Chaplain Leah, from a Church 4 school, gave an elaborate presentation on the work of the chaplain, while also reflecting on the effectiveness of the church. In her presentation, she says that,

> A Chaplain has to teach, give spiritual care to students, teachers and to the non-teaching staff. She gives moral support to students, teachers and the non-teaching staff. For example, if they have funerals we attend; when somebody is sick, we pray with the person and advise them. We also provide guiding and counselling to all students, teachers, and non-teaching staff. (Chaplain Leah, Personal communication, 2019)

Chaplain Leah went on to add that the services of the chaplain extended even to meetings where major school decisions were made. For her, "Indeed, the chaplain is everywhere to give direction. We are also allowed to advise the principal on moral and spiritual matters; even the Board. In the Board, we are supposed to go there and advise them for example on issues of devil worship, homosexuality and so forth" (Chaplain Leah, Personal communication, 2019). She then added that even in cases where students were facing discipline, and the student was to be suspended, the Chaplain was called upon to give advice and direction.

The position taken by Church 4 on involving the chaplain in disciplinary committees is contrary to that held by church 3, where the policy document expressly says that chaplains should not be engaged in disciplinary committees, where such decisions are made. For Church 3, their decision, not to involve the chaplain, was to protect the office of the chaplain from being viewed wrongly by the students. Church 3's understanding was that the chaplain's involvement would make students fear to visit his or her office in the event that she was involved in making significant disciplinary decisions.

Chaplain Leah, from Church 4, went on to say that, "According to the new circular, provided by the chaplains' board, the chaplain is supposed to sit on the school board. But because the schools are still using the old circular from the ministry, we are not supposed to be there.

Actually, we are not there" (Chaplain Leah, Personal communication, 2019). This would show that chaplains, up to that time, were not to be found in school board meetings. She also disclosed that in the past, various people from the sponsoring church visited the school time and again, but in the present time there has been a need for a chaplain to be within the school. She, however, posed a challenge asserting that "some sponsored schools have chaplains that were not seconded by the church. They just come because of their qualifications. They are doing the work of chaplaincy, but the church doesn't know. Even the three members of the board do not know that they have their own chaplain in that school," (Chaplain Leah, Personal communication, 2019). This concern was similar to others where schools engaged chaplains, whom they paid, without the express knowledge or involvement of the sponsors. In such cases, the chaplains could not purport to represent the church. Therefore, the rightful persons that could stand for the church were the representatives that the church sent to the Boards of Management. She made it personal by saying that, "…for me, I can say that those three people (church representatives on the school board) are the sponsors; but as for me, I come in as somebody who has been employed by the board to come and work in the school for them to pay me and to look after my welfare. But the church doesn't know that they have somebody" (Chaplain Leah, Personal communication, 2019).

This scenario can be contrasted with what Church 5 has, as a policy. According to Karanja, the church education secretary, Church 5 is purposeful about sending chaplains to its schools. He revealed their position by saying that, "…what we have done as a church is one: to provide Chaplains. We have chaplains. Each school has a chaplain. The chaplain is seconded there by the church. Actually, most of them are paid by the church and placed there in the schools" (Karanja, Personal communication, 2019). Karanja emphasizes that as a church they have not left it to chance; if there are 5 Church schools without a chaplain, those would be the minority. Besides, persons that eventually qualified to be seconded to the schools, as chaplains, had to be fully qualified people. He revealed that their chaplains were trained Pastors and graduates; and because of this, they were able to serve as pastors, and teachers, especially in Christian Religious Education (CRE). Karanja went on to say that the chaplains, "…are able to conduct programs, bible studies, and weekly prayers; and they (students) have what we call camp meetings; so, they are able to have those activities right in the schools under the supervision of the chaplain" (Chaplain Leah, Personal communication, 2019). As fully ordained pastors, the chaplains are, "…able to perform the rights of baptism and Holy Communion. We make sure our young people are nurtured and have the Holy Communion at the end of every quarter," (Karanja, Personal communication, 2019). In his view, therefore, through the classes held in preparation for baptism, and the guidance that the students receive from the chaplains, the students are drawn closer to God, the church, and to godly living.

4.3 Financial and material support

In this study, school sponsors are involved either financially, or materially, in their schools. Some sponsors contributed to school projects, some provided materials, and some even placed their representatives within the school. One of the churches, for instance, ensured that every room in the school had a crucifix on the walls; another church supplied hymn books and yet another supported students in paying fees.

According to the respondents, the involvement of sponsors had also been financial, or material. Respondent 9, a Church 3 school student, revealed that at some point, their sponsor donated books for the Bible study that students often held within the school (Respondent 9, Personal communication, 2019). Besides, and as Respondent 7 opined, the sponsor had also assisted the school in the construction of the chapel, so that students could be comfortable when worshipping the Lord (Respondent 7, Personal communication, 2019). One of the teachers from a Church 3 school, Teacher David, was convinced that school development projects ultimately had an impact on students. Therefore, when sponsors did projects in the schools, there was an indirect but positive impact that was left on the school community. In some schools, the school administrations, working with the parents and the community, had put up facilities for the wellbeing of the school community. In one instance, the students said that their chapel was built by the sponsor, with the help of the community. However, their school principal differed by saying that the project, though having the name of the sponsor put on it, was a project that was initiated and funded largely by the school and the community. The church was only brought in at the end.

Respondent 10, a student in a Church 1 sponsored school, acknowledged that the church representatives, in her school, had taken up a few students, for whom they paid school fees, and closely monitored and advised on behaviour. For students who had been selected and supported in this way, "there is no going home over the school holidays; or if they must go, then they must also return at some point so that they can continue interacting with the church representatives" (Respondent 10, Personal communication, 2019). Respondent 11, a Church 4 school student, talked also of the interest of the church in following up on some students over the holidays. He said, "During the long holidays, like December they (sponsor churches) support students to go and attend youth conferences of the church" (Respondent 11, Personal communication, 2019). The conferences have activities such as singing, praying, and receiving various forms of teachings. Church 5 has a similar arrangement to what Church 4 does.

Teacher James, acknowledged support from the Church 1 head offices, and said that the church office gave hymn books to all their girls in the school (Teacher James, Personal communication, 2019). The hymn books, according to teacher Hellen, were then used in the morning during the assemblies, and when the school community went for mass/worship services; every student had a hymn book (Teacher Hellen, Personal communication, 2019).
Some church representatives were said to have used all kinds of opportunities to shape the students. As Teacher Mzee, a Church 1 school teacher revealed, the church representatives in his school were in charge of running the school canteen. The church representatives in the school were not clergymen, but members from the church denomination. These representatives were approved by the church, and served different roles in the school, including that of running the school canteen. Through this, Teacher Mzee said, "from that canteen, they (church representatives) came up with ways of interacting with students and teaching the students socio-economic aspects of life. The church representatives teach them (students) values such as sincerity, and caring for the less fortunate members" (Teacher Mzee, Personal communication, 2019).

4.4 Involvement on boards of management

Respondents in the study indicated that churches have been given special consideration in the task of managing schools and contributing to what happens there. Boards of Management were cited as one of the key places through which the church could implement its agenda of shaping students into upright men and women. Respondents stated that the government, through the Education Act, had allowed churches to have three slots on the BoMs and that there was some leeway for the church to also have its representative as the chair of the BoM. Teacher Rose, a Church 5 school principal, cited the requirements stipulated in the Education Act, that school BoMs was to have a representative of the sponsor. Therefore, whoever the sponsor seconded to the board was expected to represent the interests of the sponsor. She also indicated that there was an expectation, that through the representatives, the church would participate in all activities, decisions, or policies made by the BoM, so that, by sitting on the board, those members could give input in the decisions made by the board, for the schools (Rose, Personal communication, 2019). For Hellen, another school principal in a Church 5 school, "The Board of Management (in her school) has the education secretary who represents the sponsor. So, as they are coming up with the ways of running the schools, he is part of this; and therefore, the church is part of this" (Hellen, Personal communication, 2019).

The study showed that the involvement of sponsors in school BoMs was true of most sponsored schools interviewed. However, the effectiveness, passion, and commitment of the representatives are what determined the power of the church's voice in the schools' BoMs. Nekesa and Nafula, teachers in a Church 4 sponsored school, agreed that in their school, the sponsor had representation on the school BoM; and that whenever they had meetings, the sponsor had always been involved. Besides, whenever there were issues such as indiscipline cases, the sponsor was usually called upon to be present, and to give input as well (Teacher Nekesa and Teacher Nafula, Personal communication, 2019). The physical and quality presentation of the sponsors was only seen in the calibre of the BoM representatives and chaplains that were sent to the schools.

4.5 Principal from sponsor church

In this study, some of the respondents said that it was often better, for the school, when the principal was from within the sponsoring church. The general feeling was that better working relation, coordination and reciprocity were achieved when there was congruence between the school and the sponsor. Cordial relations between the school principal and the sponsor were seen as a precursor to a positive influence on students.

In this study, the office held by the school principal was said to be one of the most influential positions that the church could hold in the school. The office of the principal was also said to be the one charged with implementing decisions of the board and overseeing the daily administration of the school. Respondents said that where the principal and the sponsor were from the same church denomination, understanding and implementing of church programs was not difficult. Teacher James emphasized, "In Church 1 sponsored schools, the church has a role to ensure that the one who becomes a Principal must be from Church 1. So, I think also that he is the person who needs to play the role of keeping the school as a Church 1 school" (Teacher James, Personal communication, 2019). Similar sentiments were shared by Karanja, the education secretary from Church 5, who also insisted that principals from their church

denomination were the ones to be given first priority in replacing any transferred principal (Karanja, Personal communication, 2019). On his part, Zadock, a Church 4 education secretary, while sharing similar sentiments emphasized that it was easier to reach down to schools where the principal was from the church denomination, as opposed to having principals who were not of the sponsor's denomination (Zadock, Personal communication, 2019). It was, therefore, their view (church education secretaries) that the church had a much easier time dealing with schools where principals were of the same denomination than it was in schools where principals came from elsewhere.

4.6 Programs and activities initiated by the church

The study showed that churches utilized their positions to come up with programs and activities for the sponsored schools. Though their involvement was largely peripheral in matters of school programs, the churches ensured that Sunday services were a must in their schools. Some churches, like Church 1 and Church 5 were very particular when it came to programs and activities in their schools. These churches also tried to ensure that as much as possible they had their representatives or chaplains within their schools.

Schools, therefore, with or without instruction from the sponsors, run a whole range of programs in the bid to direct students in the right path. Spirituality was one of the key avenues of ensuring that young people grow up in the right way. As Respondent 6 declared of her school, daily devotions, morning glory and evening devotions were a must for all students. "It is considered as a school program", (Respondent 6, Personal communication, 2019). As school programs, the devotion and prayer times were therefore timetabled. She also added that as much as students attend meetings coordinated by the sponsoring church, there was a day in the week when students could go for fellowship in their denominational groupings. She went on to say that through the church, or the chaplain, the school invited speakers to come and speak to the students on various life issues.

Teacher Wanjiru, of Church 1, while contributing to the discussion on programs and activities, said that the sponsor had often produced calendars which had daily Bible readings, and these were placed in every class. Besides, students were encouraged to pray before they went to sleep. And on certain arranged days, she added, the school would carry out community service, where the students would visit a site outside the school and do acts of service. At times, the students made contributions to support the less fortunate, a sentiment that was also corroborated by her students (Teacher Wanjiru, Personal communication, 2019).

4.7 School climate/ environment as shaped by church

School administrations, and churches, strove to make the school environments appealing to the eye by having inspiring phrases, pictures, and carvings in the school. The schools and churches also set up things that were prohibitive to deviant behaviour by having writings to show that evil will be punished or that God sees everything that happens in the school. Each church maintained its school image so that a Catholic-sponsored school was seen to have particular traits that would not be found in an Anglican, Friends, PCEA, or even SDA school. The same was largely true with the other churches. Significant deviations were seen in the

Catholic schools, where they held masses and put crucifixes all around their schools. The deviation was also evident in the SDA schools who observed their Sabbath on Saturdays and did not worship on Sundays like the rest. Most of the other traits showed levels of similarities because both the students and staff members were drawn from across denominational lines.

The kinds of school climates, in individual schools, were shaped by the particular churches, in collaboration with the school administrations. Respondent 13, a Church 3 school student said that the board at their school gate was clear in showing who the school sponsor was. She made it clearer by saying that, "if it could be sponsored by Church 1 you could have seen their marks everywhere; but you can't see them because it is Church 3 sponsored" (Respondent 13, Personal communication, 2019). Among the things that shaped their school climate was the presence of the Reverend, the chaplain, and the chapel itself. Teacher David, on his part, indicated that various services were conducted in the school chapel, and together with that, the observance of certain days of the Christian calendar. For instance, he said, "specific services like those happening in Church 3, such as Ash Wednesdays, also happen here; so some of these Christians days, calendar days, special days, like that, are also observed here" (Teacher David, Personal communication, 2019). Teacher Joyce added that "there are also declarations, like the Creeds, that the students are taught. Those are part of the things that one would see when they get into the school and it shows that the sponsor is actually involved" (Teacher Joyce, Personal communication, 2019). Church 1 also had traditions that were not far removed from Church 3, and so they would send their representatives to come and explain to students, the upcoming events, and why they would be celebrating those feasts.

One of the aspects that also defined the school climates was the presence of a spiritual figure or chaplain. Respondent 12, a Church 1 school student, revealed that since one of the church representatives was also a teacher in the school, whenever students had issues, they found it easy to go to her and share their problems. That she was always ready to guide and mentor the students, especially in matters concerning the church, and how they were to relate the church to the school (Respondent 12, Personal communication, 2019).

The environment of godliness, according to Respondent 14, a student from Church 1, was also seen in the crosses that were found in almost every room in her school, even in the hostels (Respondent 14, Personal communication, 2019). For the Catholics, the crosses were sculptures of Jesus on the cross. Teacher Wanjiru agreed with the sentiments by saying that crucifixes were everywhere in her school: "classes, dormitories, dining hall, every other place" (Teacher Wanjiru, Personal communication, 2019). The intention, she said, was partly to keep the school community reminded that God was with them everywhere and also that they could call on Him at any given time.

The study also showed that besides the crucifixes, schools also had writings that were strategically placed within the school compounds, and that was a constant reminder of the life that students were to yearn for (see Figure 1). Respondent 1, a Church 4 school student clarified by saying that, "Also, when you move around the school you will see some writings on the wall which encourage good morals of students; on our gate, for example, there is a bible verse John 15:14 saying, 'You are my friends if you do what I command" (Respondent 1, Personal communication, 2019).

Figure 1: Sample pictures of writings within the schools

Source: Field Data (2019)

Some schools, in this study, were sponsored by communities under the church umbrella. In these instances, members of the "church communities" also lived on the compound and ensured that there was a chapel on the school compound. Respondent 12, a student in such a school, said that having their chapel on the school compound, where students were free to go and pray, was very important. For her, the chapel on the school compound supplemented the Church sanctuary that was just outside the school compound because it offered, "…classes for baptism and confirmation. These classes are offered irrespective of whether one is a Church 1 member or not" (Respondent 12, Personal communication, 2019). The classes were given to anyone who wanted to reflect on Christian beliefs and practices and was open to those who would have wanted to know more about the Church 1 denomination. Teacher Hellen reminisced on the matter of church communities and said, "We have the presence of different religious groups of the church representatives in the houses. They are there because when the school was founded it had its own culture; they had their own intentions; they had their own values. So, they are there to ensure their values are perpetuated" (Teacher Hellen, Personal communication, 2019).

In line with this, Teacher Teresia highlighted the place of the hidden curriculum when she said, "From the entrance of the school you've got to know that it is not a Muslim school. . .;

it is a way of life; it is a way of doing like you have to, to be here. On Sunday you see almost the whole school on the road going to the mission church outside the school. So, service is a way of life; you have to be involved; to be there; in order to understand how the formation is going on" (Teacher Teresia, Personal communication, 2019). She built further on the thought of students going to the mission church, outside the school, by saying that the students would even step out of the school compound on certain days of the week, to go to the mission church, but it was still for the same goal of touching the lives of the students.

Respondent 11, a Church 4 school student, shared similar sentiments, to those by Teacher Teresia, by showing that the church in the neighbourhood involved the school in certain activities. She reported, "…whenever the sponsor has functions in the Church, they always invite the school to participate; like they have a dispensary sponsored by the church, and so, when they were welcoming the ambulance they involved us" (Respondent 11, Personal communication, 2019) Though this might not be a direct way of teaching morality, the gesture of people volunteering and doing something good, to the less fortunate, was still a lesson on its own.

For the Church 5 schools, Karanja said that "…we have put chaplains in most of the schools. That is a very visible mark put on personnel and the chaplain has an office" (Karanja, Personal communication, 2019). He stated clearly that the chaplain, and the chaplain's office, was a very clear indicator of the presence of the sponsor. He went on to declare that, "…for our case, because as Church 5 we believe in baptism by immersion, so you may find some pools; because we believe that once they have accepted Christ, the next thing is that they must be baptized. So, you may find those monuments of baptismal pools; it is a mark to show that we are here" (Karanja, Personal communication, 2019).

Besides the chaplains and the baptismal pools, Karanja, the Church 5 education secretary, stated that students were even enrolled into youth clubs. For instance, in Church 5, such clubs are age-related. Normally, those in the club would be adorned in garments that reflect who they are. Among the Adventists, those who enrol in such clubs are adorned in specific uniform and wore it when they were either going out for some activity or when there was a school activity such as during prize giving day. On such occasions, those in the special uniform were often mandated to bring order; welcoming guests; saluting them; mounting a kind of parade for the guest of honour to inspect; and so forth. For some respondents, those were part of the marks that identified Adventist schools (Karanja, Personal communication, 2019).

4.8 Visits by church officials, besides chaplains

Some schools view the chaplain as part of the school staff members. Therefore, the sponsor they know is the church representative on the school board or a high ranking official from the church. Respondent 1, a Church 4 school student reported, "When we have the main function here when the Board of Management comes to talk to students and teachers, you will also see that they do not walk alone; there will also be the sponsors, or otherwise the sponsor will send a representative" (Respondent 1, Personal communication, 2019). Kerubo, a Church 4 school teacher said, "At times they (sponsors) are welcomed during prayer day in school to encourage students in the preparations to the exams" (Teacher Kerubo, Personal

communication, 2019). Her colleague, Nekesa, added that they (sponsors) also offer prayers during Annual General Meetings; and some encouraging verses from the Bible (Teacher Nekesa, Personal communication, 2019). The overall responses seemed to suggest that sponsors did not visit schools regularly, especially in the smaller rural schools. However, they would often appear whenever there was a special school function, or on occasions when they were invited.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Churches in Kenya, according to the Education Act 2013, are empowered by law to sponsor public schools. As sponsors, churches are permitted to sit on school Boards of Management and to contribute to the spiritual, moral and social welfare of the schools. With many parents hoping that church-sponsored schools can assist in the formation of positive moral values in students, this study sought to establish, and describe the various strategies that the church was employed in the bid to ensure moral development of students within sponsored schools.

This paper shows that respondents appreciated the role of the church in the moulding of students into morally upright persons. Churches had directly or indirectly involved themselves in what transpired in the schools. Amongst the direct ways were sending of chaplains to the schools, and preferring, or insisting that school principals come from their church denominations. Some churches worked to create good school climates, conducive for the moral development of students, though all the churches encouraged activities such as prayer meetings and Bible studies, for the moulding of the young people. In a less direct way, the church influenced students through their school curriculum, and especially the CRE curriculum where churches made a contribution in the development or review of the curriculum, and in some case using chaplains to teach the CRE lessons.

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