

Assessing the content of Sex Education in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract: This paper presents the situation of SE in secondary schools in Kenya. It is a product of documentary research whose main focus is on what is offered as aspects of SE in the Christian Religious Education (C.R.E) curriculum. It addresses the meaning of SE, what is entailed in SE and the traditional African way of imparting SE to show the existing gap between the past and present on the situation of youth. The Government policies and attempts to implement SE in secondary schools are highlighted together with the controversies and challenges in the implementation of SE in schools in Kenya. The most notable controversy stems from religious groups that are mainly nervous about the teaching of SE among youth in schools. There is also resistance from parents, many of who feel school is not the place to learn about sex. The paper concludes that in spite of all controversies and challenges, the Government of Kenya has made attempts to implement aspects of SE in secondary schools. However these aspects that are integrated in the C.R.E curriculum are not explicit, and hence there is need for more boldness in the teaching of SE.

Key words: Curriculum, Sex Education, secondary schools, youth, sexual behaviour

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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is basically a product of documentary research aimed at presenting the situation of Sex Education (SE) in secondary schools in Kenya. The main focus is on what is offered as aspects of SE in the Christian Religious Education (C.R.E) curriculum. Sex education refers to those aspects of sexual health associated with the achievement of outcomes that are generally seen as positive (respect for self and others, non-exploitative sexual satisfaction, rewarding human relationships, and planned parenthood) and the avoidance of negative outcomes (such as unintended pregnancy, and STI/HIV). Mosher *et al* define SE as a lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs, and values about one's identity, sexual development, reproductive health, interpersonal relationships, intimacy, body image, and gender roles (Mosher 2005).

Through SE, young people develop skills such as being able to communicate, listen, negotiate, ask for and identify sources of help and advice on matters of sexuality as it can be hard for them to act on the basis of only having information (Bandura 1992). More so, SE equips young people with the skills to enable them differentiate between accurate and inaccurate information, discuss a range of moral and social issues and perspectives on sexuality, including different cultural attitudes and sensitive issues like sex, pregnancy, abortion and contraception. Effective SE starts early, before young people reach puberty, and before they have developed established patterns of behaviour. It also depends on the context, manner of teaching, the person providing the content and the attitude of the youth towards what is offered.

Wojtyla (1981) notes that there is real need for Sex education, and it must be a continuous process. For him, the main objective of SE is to create the conviction that the other person is more important than I. SE is therefore seen as a discovery into the innermost being of a human being that runs through the entire life of a person. It is a lifelong process of discovery and growth. This education should be carried on at all moments of an individual's life and not limited to one period of one's life.

It is also worth noting that there should be a clear distinction between 'sex information' and 'sex education'. SE should not be reduced to 'sex instruction'. Whereas SE is concerned with the whole person; 'sex instruction' is interested with the erotic –physical part of sexuality. SE, the subject of this study, should therefore be understood in view of an ongoing formation in life and a willingness to grow in moral life. An authentic SE leads to maturity in sexuality.

In section 2, I present a brief evaluation of the Traditional African ways of imparting SE. Section 3 evaluates the situation of teaching SE in Kenyan secondary schools to show government policies, controversies and support that SE has received from the relevant stake holders in education. In section 4 I describe the C.R.E curriculum content with the aim of identifying the aspects of SE that are taught in the C.R.E curriculum. Section 5 concludes the paper.

II. TRADITIONAL AFRICAN WAYS OF IMPARTING SEX EDUCATION

Traditionally, SE was in the service of life. And, because of this philosophy of life, every traditional African community offered SE to its offspring, especially because of procreation, which was the central aspect of marriage and survival of the community (Tanui 2006). Africans affirm and celebrate life through varied practices such as rituals, festivals, rites and ceremonies as it unfolds itself in different stages in life. In view of this, Mbiti asserts that: they do not sit down meditating upon life. They dance life, they sing life, and they ritualise life... they ceremonise life, they festivise life....(Mbiti 1991:200).

It is in this sense that the criterion of African morality is the promotion of life. Sexuality is sacred owing to its power to transmit life. Given the philosophy of life and the value that life had to the traditional African, SE had to be a preparation to the participation and transmission of that life and every member had the role of making sure that life is

sustained and transmitted. This can be explained through the procreative emphasis in marriage that pervades the whole of the traditional African society. In fact it can be rightly put that life is the greatest gift that God has bestowed upon the people of Africa (Bujo 1992).

SE began at birth with rituals which continued through childhood, adolescence and adulthood. The child was exposed to SE throughout life from childhood to adulthood. Hence SE was an integral education in which all areas of life were so intertwined into each other that it was impossible to separate an aspect from others. Intensive SE was however conducted at puberty, especially during the initiation period which was used as gateway to marriage.

Initiation ceremonies are therefore occasions for in-depth teaching on sexual matters. During the ceremonies, rigorous sexual education is provided to young people. Initiates are born into full manhood or womanhood with all that this entails.

SE also prepares the youth for adult sex life within the context of the age group. This period provides socialization and the age group has control on each of its members so that individuals remain within the permitted boundaries. Measures are also put in place to ensure that youth do not engage in sex in the process of their interaction. Parents as well as other adults, for instance ensured that youth do not misbehave during important occasions such as feasts and dances and sexual immorality was condemned and severely punished. Since there was no formal education, marriage was not delayed. Hence cases of pre-marital sex and deviant behavior were rare (Taylor 1963).

Emphasis was put on SE through riddles, proverbs, folktales, myths, song and dance as well as through rituals, taboos and sanctions imposed at various stages in life. Because sex and sexuality was delicate and 'shameful', its features used coded language, but there is little doubt about its meaning: sexual enjoyment is good, but it must be accompanied by sexual responsibility (Magesa 1997).

SE was mostly undertaken as a communal affair where the grandparents and other members of the extended family such as aunts and uncles played a significant role in advising the youth on sex related issues. The extended family therefore was the most significant of these educators. This is because, they were considered to be experienced, and knowledgeable. In addition, cultural norms also allowed openness between them and the youth on sexual matters. Sex instruction did not often come from parents such that in the presence of their children, parents were expected to avoid any words, acts, or gestures that were sexual in nature.

Further, social roles and expectations were better defined and individuals appointed by the community taught the adolescent clear and unambiguous rules governing sexual conduct. Among the Nandi of Western Kenya for instance, it was the responsibility of the sponsors and elders to educate youth on marital affairs (Mbiti 1998).

However, young people are currently facing a culture radically different from the previous generations. Most youths do not live in rural areas and may not undergo traditional initiation hence chances of them being exposed to SE in the traditional setting are minimal, though there are some ongoing experiments in utilizing tradition for SE (Folke 2000). The increasing duration of schooling, later marriage, AIDS, and other STDs present youth with unique problems. It is not possible to protect youth from modern sexual influences to return to the good old days but it is vital that policy makers, parents, program planners and even the church become responsive to these changing circumstances, which have largely been created by the progress achieved by the Kenyan society. These challenges, demonstrate the serious need for an authentic SE among youth in schools.

III. THE SITUATION OF SEX EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

The decline in traditional African values, as earlier noted, has led to the creation of a permissive society with negative effects of modern communications and the mass media (Shorter 1998). Traditional sanctions against immorality do not function anymore and many adolescents are sent to boarding schools, where socialization is controlled by peers with little supervision. Detribalized youths experience considerable social pressure to become sexually active, without balancing social support that might make sexual abstinence a viable option. This has led to dehumanizing sexuality where 'sex revolution' has resulted to sex becoming a mere commodity in the market just like any other. For parents, the assumption is that the school is adequately preparing the youth in matters of sexuality. Such notions are however misplaced especially when one considers the situation of SE as it stands now in secondary schools in Kenya.

3.1 Government policies and attempts to implement Sex Education

The situation of teaching SE in schools in Kenya is confusing and is faced with a lot of controversies. At the initial stage, the government attempted to use television for SE in the late 1980s, developing a popular soap opera series in Swahili (Zabin 1992). After several episodes, the then president, Daniel Moi ordered the program stopped, endorsing instead traditional SE by tribal elders. Later, the Boy Scout movement, with the help of Pathfinder Funds, published a book on SE for youths. This book discussed topical issues in SE such as human anatomy, sex, pregnancy, and abortion. Subsequently, the Government used this book as the basis for a SE syllabus to be taught in schools (Koech 1997). Following much resistance and criticism from the religious groups and parents, President Moi again ordered the book's withdrawal from all bookshops.

Currently, SE in Kenya is focused on stemming the growing AIDS epidemic where HIV and AIDS education is an essential part of HIV prevention. The program is a product of the National AIDS Control Council (NACC) which was created by the Government to coordinate all HIV and AIDS activities in the country. Media such as television and comic books are used well in AIDS education, but this is the only topic systematically dealt with.

In 1999, the Government established a national curriculum on HIV and AIDS education which was developed with the assistance of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and was the outcome of an extensive consultation process within Kenyan society that included many stakeholders, including religious groups (Esther et al 2006).

Later, in 2000, the Government established AIDS education programs in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and international NGOs, particularly the National Christian Council of Kenya (NCCCK), the Kenya

Family Planning Association (FPAK), the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Kenya Catholic Secretariat (KCS), and the National Women's Federation (NWF) and AIDS education is part of the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools (UNGAS 2006).

One particularly successful initiative has been the Primary / Secondary School Action for Better Health Kenya (P/SSABH). This initiative began in October 2001 with the aim of creating positive behavior change among upper primary school pupils and secondary school youth to reduce their risk of exposure to HIV. With the aim of a national roll-out, around 11,000 out of 19,000 Kenyan schools had implemented P/SSABH by June 2006. Evaluations of the programme revealed positive results – an increase in condom use among boys was reported and girls were more likely to decrease or delay sexual activity. Topics that are covered include: Information on the routes of HIV transmission and prevention strategies; skill-building for resisting the social, cultural and interpersonal pressures to engage in sexual intercourse; adolescent health and sexuality; Issues related to HIV stigma and discrimination; the care of people living with AIDS

Besides, the Center for the Study of Adolescence (CSA) has been instrumental in the implementation of SE in schools in Kenya. The Centre launched a two-year, 2.3 billion shilling, SE program for secondary school students funded by the Dutch government in 2007 by the name "The World Starts With Me. The initiative aimed at equipping the youth with the right information about HIV and AIDS, drug abuse, alcohol, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among others. An evaluation of 2000 schools found that AIDS education in schools is effectively promoting healthy behaviors and reducing the risk of infection.

However, the controversies that surround SE have made this subject to be treated with great ambivalence in Kenya. Though the Ministry of Education has an AIDS education curriculum integrated in subjects at school, there is no specific time set aside for this, leaving teachers and school heads to fit in the subject at their discretion. In addition, schools are ill-equipped and unprepared to handle SE as many have not seen the government's curriculum. SE policy in Kenya therefore seems not explicit, resulting in different institutional and individual policies that cause confusion to the more vulnerable youth.

Other challenges that have contributed to inaccessibility to SE in Kenya include a predominant culture of silence with regard to matters of sexuality. For example, most parents do not discuss sexuality issues with their children, a role that has been left to schools already limited by the current debates on sex education (Kamau 1996). The strong influence of fundamentalist Christians in HIV funding to Kenya has also played a part in preventing SE from being taught in schools; and there is resistance from parents, many of whom feel school is not the place to learn about sex.

In this study, those who favored SE argued that it would provide knowledge to school children on the consequences and evils of irresponsible premarital sex as well as on the dangers of premarital pregnancies. Additionally, the group in favor of SE in schools reported that in most cases, the youth learn about sexuality from experiments, which sometimes result in pregnancy. Such experiments could be avoided if SE was taught in schools. SE would also help the youth to know more about the biological development of their bodies and the implications of the same. Primary school boys and girls are already engaged in sex and they are likely to continue to engage in premarital sex with or without SE.

Besides, the above mentioned controversies and challenges in the implementation of SE in Kenya are made complex by the conservative Christian perspective on one hand and the broadcast media, particularly situation comedies, talk shows and soap operas portraying unfettered and inconsequential sexuality and liberal sexual mores. On the other hand, many leading medical experts and doctors who deal with youth, along with some social workers, decry what they see as a denial of reality. For them, young people are having sex and need to be protected against pregnancy and disease by teaching them SE. At the centre stage is the Ministry of Education, playing the role of the honest broker where educational leaders ask for a consensus of strategies before the problem becomes uncontrollable. These challenges and controversies therefore demonstrate the serious need for an authentic SE.

However, as earlier noted, there are pockets of SE aspects in comprehension passages in English, Kiswahili and Biology. The curricula has been designed by the Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) in consultation with the major Education stake holders and are covered in the C.R.E textbooks that are approved by the Ministry of Education. One wonders whether these aspects are adequate for youth moral guidance. The following section presents a review of the C. R.E curriculum in secondary school in Kenya according to K.I.E syllabus in order to identify the various aspects of SE that have been integrated in the syllabus.

IV. THE C.R.E CURRICULUM IN KENYA

The C.R.E curriculum in secondary schools in Kenya focuses on enabling the learners to:

- a) Gain insights into the unfolding of God's self-revelation to human kind through their personal experience, the African Religious Heritage, the biblical relation as a whole and specifically in Jesus Christ, and the Christian community.
- b) Use the acquired social, spiritual and moral insights to think critically and make appropriate moral decisions in a rapidly changing society.
- c) Appreciate and respect their own and other people's cultural and Christian beliefs and practices.
- d) Acquire the basic principles of Christian living and develop a sense of self respect and respect for others.
- e) Promote international consciousness through the understanding of universal brotherhood and sisterhood.
- f) Contribute positively to the transformation of self and the society as a whole.
- g) Acquire knowledge for further studies in various career fields.

Since SE is aimed at social behavior change, it is addressed by objectives (b), (d) and (f). This is because SE seeks to assist students in having a positive view of sexuality, provide them with the skills about taking care of their sexual health and to help them to acquire skills to make decisions now and in the future. In SE, the moral dimension must be part of the explanations as a lifelong process of discovery and maturity in sexuality. It is the awareness of the dynamism of one's sexuality in a responsible manner.

According to these objectives, students are supposed to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in C.R.E to make appropriate moral decisions. They are expected to use the acquired skills to protect themselves against external pressures to engage in premarital sex and hence face modern challenges of life such as HIV and AIDS. The curriculum also aims at developing a positive attitude among students to respect themselves so as not to engage in premarital sex as they have been created in the image and likeness of God. They are also called upon to have respect for other people in society without discrimination. As a result, students are expected to have good morals which will eventually be reflected in their sexual behavior and their overall attitude to sexuality. In order to achieve these objectives, specific topics are clearly recommended in each class.

In Form one the following topics are taught: Introduction to Christian Religious Education; The Bible; Creation and the fall of man; Faith and God's promises: Abraham; Sinai Covenant: Moses; Leadership in Israel: David and Solomon; Loyalty to God: Elijah; Selected aspects in African religious heritage: African concept of God, spirits and ancestors; African moral and cultural values.

Note that, although the last topic in Form one deals with African moral values, there is no aspect of SE education that is taught under such values. What is taught includes values such as hospitality, honesty, courtesy, integrity, tolerance, loyalty and respect.

In Form two, the focus is on Jesus Christ in St. Luke's Gospel with specific attention to Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah; The infancy and early life of Jesus; The Galilean Ministry; The journey to Jerusalem; Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem and Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. None of these topics, however, has any direct teachings on sexuality.

The Form three syllabus focuses on selected teachings from the New and Old Testament which include; The Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Unity of Believers, Selected Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah and Nehemiah, and their teachings. Notice also that no aspects of SE are contained in the Form three syllabus.

Lastly, the Form four syllabus revolves around contemporary Christian living as instantiated in the following specific topics: Introduction to Christian ethics; Christian approaches to human sexuality, marriage and family; Christian teaching on irresponsible sexual behavior; Christian approaches to work; Christian approaches to leisure; Christian approaches to wealth, money and poverty; Christian approaches to law, order and justice; Christian approaches to selected issues related to modern science, technology and environment.

From this content outline, the topics suggest a focus on Christian aspects and it may therefore be difficult to tell whether they cover aspects of SE or not. This is because the aspects are silent from the way the titles are coated by the 'Christian' phrase. As earlier noted, the controversies in the implementation of SE coupled with the fact that the Ministry of Education is not clear on its stance on SE, may account for this scenario in schools in Kenya. However, a closer analysis of the content reveals that aspects of SE are generally integrated in the Form four C.R.E curriculum and will therefore be the basis of our subsequent discussion in the remainder of this chapter.

More so, the opinion of most C.R.E teachers was that SE is integrated in the form four syllabus but it is mainly taught for examination purposes and not in relation to the sexual behavior of the students. Teachers also acknowledge that they discuss the aspects at their discretion. Hence, the study views SE as too important to be left implicit and at the discretion of individual teachers.

4.1 Aspects of Sex Education in the Form Four syllabus

Aspects of SE underlie most of the topics in form four. The most notable being; Introduction to Christian ethics, Christian approaches to human sexuality, marriage and family and irresponsible sexual behavior. We discuss these in details next.

4.1.1 Introduction to Christian Ethics

This is the topic whose main purpose is to equip learners with the skills and knowledge that enable them make appropriate moral choices and decisions when they are faced with challenges in their lives. The choices and decisions are informed by a sound understanding of Christian values and life skills. It is pertinent to note that among these challenges, are those related to sex.

As part of this topic, key concepts are defined, including, but not limited to: ethics, morals, Christian ethics, conscience, knowledge and free will, intuition, and many more. Christian ethics is especially defined as the study of human conduct or behavior from a Christian point of view while ethics is defined as the study of human action to determine their rightness and wrongness. This implies that sexual behavior, the focus in this study, is included in ethics. Further, the topic examines the basis of Christian ethics which include human reason and experience (guided by conscience, knowledge and free will, intuition, and feelings), sacred scriptures, the Christian community, natural law which emphasizes the choice of 'good' over 'bad', and situation ethics whose basis is on the uniqueness of the prevailing circumstances. These in reference to the study theories, call for the students to understand that despite them being biological and social beings, they have a free will to apply reason in life to know and choose what is right and avoid wrong. In addition, they are also spiritual as they are made in the divine image of God which calls for purity of their bodies as the temple of the lord.

Moral issues are cited as examples using natural arguments on the ethics of abortion and homosexuality. Students are called upon to make moral choices when faced with challenges related with their sexuality, family, marriage, HIV/AIDS, gender based violence, use of leisure, drug and substance abuse among others. This topic forms the basis of the aspects of SE as it calls for control and good conduct. If Christian ethics is effectively applied, it can help address the problem of sexual immorality among youth in secondary schools.

The topic also discusses Christian values that enhance creation of a just society where there is peace and harmony, and people are governed by moral values and the rule of law. Some of the moral values examined include love (affection and tender devotion to something and a deep concern for the welfare of others), honesty/reliability/faithfulness, justice/fairness, respect, humility, perseverance/persistence, and chastity. The various types of love are discussed: Filia love (affectionate

love between children and parents), Eros love (passionate love expressed by lovers and sexual in nature), Fraternal love (affectionate relationship among people related by blood that lead to mutual understanding and helpfulness), and agape love (the self-giving and unconditional love that seeks the highest good for the other person).

Note that all these values discussed have implications to the learners' sexual behavior. For example, chastity requires one to be pure physically, spiritually and mentally. It implies having good sexual morals, avoiding sex before marriage, and remaining faithful in marriage. A chaste person respects his/her body and does not engage in risky behavior. The Bible is extensively cited to give support to the need for chastity. For example, the Old Testament condemns sexual sin such as adultery, fornication, rape, incest, bestiality and prostitution. Adultery was, for instance, punished by death through stoning. The seventh and the tenth commandments are against adultery. In addition, values like those of love and fairness stand against any act that may injure others, including acts of premarital sex and rape.

The last aspect discussed in the first topic is on development of life skills which are defined as abilities that help people to develop positive behavior that enables them deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life which include those challenges related to sexuality. Life skills have been categorized as skills of knowing and living with oneself, skills of knowing and living with others such as friendship, effective communication, and association and the skills of making effective decisions. Some of these skills include:

- a) **Critical thinking:** This is the ability to analyze and make value judgments about a situation. For example in determining what is true and false from the evidence given, challenging people who engage in unacceptable behavior, exposing all forms of injustices in society such as child abuse, rape and violence against women and refusing to be discouraged by life challenges.
- b) **Creative Thinking:** It involves coming up with new ways and ideas of dealing with situations or issues. It requires originality and imagination especially in dealing with people and what these people expect us to do. Students are encouraged to come up with new ideas and inventions that are aimed at the improvement of the quality of the human race.
- c) **Decision Making:** This is the process of making up one's mind in order to reach a conclusion or resolution. It involves making a choice between different options. In order to make the right decision one requires accurate information, knowledge and the will to take action. Among other situations, young people are often faced with the need to make a decision on whether or not they should give in to pressure to engage in sex. The skill highlights the question: Should I give in to pressure to engage in sex or should I wait until I am married? Students are warned that every decision made has positive or negative consequences. They are also asked to discuss the consequences of teenage sex and drug and alcohol abuse.
- d) **Self-Esteem:** This refers to the way we feel about ourselves. It is the awareness about individual attitudes and values. It also refers to how we respect and admire ourselves as individuals, and the confidence we have. Self-esteem therefore influences people's actions towards others and what such people achieve in life. Self-confidence makes one achieve more in life, and even decide on what is wrong and right. One of the things that students are advised to do in order to have self esteem is to develop close and healthy relationships with other people.
- e) **Assertiveness:** It is the way of expressing one's feelings and desires openly. It is knowing what you want and why. It is also taking the necessary steps to achieve what you want. Learners are made aware of the fact that people who are assertive are aware of their rights and demand them when they are violated. They are able to express their feelings, thoughts, and needs in an open and honest way. They have high levels of self-confidence, self-worth, and self-esteem. They are also honest with others and with themselves. Students are advised to be assertive by refusing to accept lifts and gifts from strangers whose motives are not known, refusing to bow down to peer-pressure and refusing to start a family before completing their education.

The content concludes with a summary of the importance of life skills to students. They include practicing healthy sexual behavior, recognizing and assessing risky behavior, avoiding risky situations and behavior and making informed choices and decisions. SE is expected to teach about the struggle of stress, peer pressure, drugs, relationships, and decision making. It also provides modeling and the practice of communication, negotiation, and refusal skills. Life skills are therefore considered as part of the aspects of SE. They teach students to take control and to be able to resist external pressures that may lead them to irresponsible sexual behavior. It is hoped for instance that if SE is effective in secondary school, students will apply the skills to enable them live morally upright lives.

4.1.2 Human Sexuality

Human sexuality as a topic deals with core aspects of SE. It is characterized by the biological or physiological differences associated with the state of being male or female. It determines the reproduction roles performed by male and female. It is the total make-up of a human being. Clarification is made that sexuality is not sex although sex is an integral component of sexuality.

The content highlights that different cultures view sexuality from different perspectives. For instance, the traditional African communities view sex with a lot of secrecy, the western culture promotes openness and permissiveness while the religious group is conservative in matters of sexuality. It is noted that individual learners have acquired information about their sexuality from divergent sources. Some of the information is incorrect, exaggerated, wrong, confusing and covered in myths and false beliefs. Learners are therefore guided to make wise decisions based on correct information. They are called upon to make sound moral judgments on their sexuality with the reason that sexuality is important in HIV and AIDS education, prevention and control.

The biological differences between women and men are also discussed. The differences for women include, having enlarged breasts, broad hips, smooth skin, menstruation, no beards, have the vagina and ovaries produce ova. On the other hand, men have the beard, rough skin, do not menstruate, and have the penis and testicles to produce sperms. Students are taught that the biological differences enable the male and female to play complementary roles such as in reproduction and

marriage. Gender is also explained as a social construct that refers to the non-biological differences between men and women which define their roles in society. Human sexuality is hence considered as part of the aspects of SE as it covers knowledge on critical issues related to sexuality such as intimacy, human relationships, sexual identity, gender roles, reproductive anatomy, body image and emotional aspects of maturation. Some of the concepts discussed include:

Marriage: This is defined as a binding or legal union between a man and a woman as husband and wife. It is a covenant in which the partners give themselves to one another in love. The reasons why people marry are given. They include the need to express love, promote social status, procreate and raise children, for personal fulfillment, and to promote family unity. Students are taught that sex is meant for married couples and that they are supposed to wait until marriage to practice sex.

The traditional African understanding of marriage is explained where marriage and procreation are intertwined. The content emphasizes marriage as an important phase in a person's life and that elaborate preparations are needed to enable youth carry out their marital duties as required later in life with the aim of equipping youth with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them lead successful marriage lives. The preparations involve choice of a partner, courtship, negotiations and preparation for the wedding. The content discusses the various qualities of a good wife and husband. For the wife they include especially hardworking, fertile, morally upright, a virgin, faithful, welcoming, generous, humble and beautiful while the man was expected to be aggressive, courageous, brave, wise and responsible with leadership skills. Virginity was highly valued and students are advised to lead morally upright lives. They are encouraged to uphold the traditional African values of being chaste by abstaining from sex until marriage.

On the other hand, the Christian view of marriage is presented which holds that marriage is divine, a remedy for sin, monogamous and permanent. The curriculum advises students on what needs to be done to ensure a successful marriage later in their lives right from choosing a partner through courtship ending with the actual marriage. Students are given guidelines on the choice of a partner; such as commitment to one's faith, moral uprightness, common interests, health status and the social economic status. Learners are advised for example that as Christians, they should marry fellow Christians in future, a view held by saint Paul that; "what does a believer have in common with a non believer?" (2 cor. 6; 15). In courtship, students are advised to remain chaste until marriage by avoiding visiting each other frequently and that they should commit themselves to prayer, and seek counsel on issues pertaining to marriage. Learners are advised to resist pressures to have sex. They are taught that sex is sacred as it is meant for procreation in the context of marriage and that pre-marital sex is sin before God.

Family: This is defined in the curriculum as a basic unit which consists of parents and children in the human society. Members are usually bound together through blood, marriage, and adoption. There are different types of families such as the nuclear family, the extended family, single-parent family, child-headed family, and grand-parent headed family. Both the traditional and Christian understanding of family are discussed. Students are taught that because of the impact of HIV and AIDS on the family, the child-headed and grand-parent headed families are becoming common. They are called upon to be sexually responsible to overcome the challenges of HIV and AIDS.

The various problems related to family life today are discussed. The most notable being HIV/ AIDS and STIs. It is stressed that the AIDS pandemic is a major threat to the family stability as financial resources are spent on medication and care of the infected. They are advised to approach the problems related to contemporary family life in a holistic way. They should employ moral, psychological, spiritual, legal, and practical approaches to the challenges associated with family life. They are warned that irresponsible sexual behavior has serious consequences to the individual, the family and society at large because our sexuality is our identity. This also forms an aspect of SE as it teaches knowledge, behaviors and attitudes that promote committed family relationships.

4.1.3 Traditional African Understanding of human sexuality

Under this topic, students are taught how matters related to sex and sexuality were handled in the traditional African societies. It is noted that in this setting, sex was considered to be sacred and a gift from God only to be used in the context of marriage for the purpose of procreation to enlarge the family. The sacredness of sexuality is related to its power to transmit life. Human sexuality is therefore highly valued as it is viewed as a product of God's creation. In many communities, it is a taboo to discuss sex matters freely hence SE was conducted by the grandparents who were considered experienced, knowledgeable and had ample time with their grandchildren.

Traditionally, the distinctive aspects of men and women are appreciated and emphasized right from birth. For example in some communities there is a difference between the announcement of birth for a boy and that of a girl. There is also a clear distinction of roles for boys and girls at different stages in their growth. In most cases responsibilities associated with female are largely domestic, while males go out in the field. Generally, the existence of taboos, rules and regulations encouraged women to be submissive.

Students are also taught about rules and regulations to safeguard sex. For example, during adolescence, boys and girls were not allowed to mix freely without supervision by adults. Matters concerning sex and marriage were introduced during initiation, and practiced soon after in the right environment. Young people are taught about sex, its secrets and mysteries of manhood and womanhood. Virginity was also preserved until marriage, and was highly valued and praised. At puberty, girls and boys are given special teaching which is meant to prepare them for adulthood. During this stage, girls, are taught how to relate to the opposite sex and their roles as wives and mothers. Boys on the other hand are taught how to handle sex, a marriage partner, how to relate with in-laws and how to protect families.

Irresponsible sexual relationships are discouraged, for example pre-marital sex, extra-marital affairs and incest and each community has its own rules and customs to determine the punishment to be given to sex offenders. This section therefore emphasizes that the main function of sexuality is for procreation. It observes that human sexuality in traditional African communities is an integral part of the meaning and wholeness of life.

4.1.4 Christian Teaching on Human Sexuality

The Christian view of sex and sexuality as derived from the Bible is the subject of this section of the syllabus. It is noted that God desired to have a clear distinction between male and female by creating Adam and Eve, as told in Genesis 1 and 2. According to the same story, God created woman to keep man company because 'He saw that it was not good for man to be alone' (Gen. 2:18). This companionship is an inseparable one. 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two shall become one flesh'. In addition, both man and woman are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27) implying that they are equal partners because they have the same basic human nature. The Bible also teaches that it is the intention of God that man and woman play complementary roles. Their sexual differences are divinely designed for purposes of reproduction and mutual sexual satisfaction (Cor. 7:3-5).

Learners are also made aware of the Bible teaching that human beings have the ability to control their sexual desires unlike animals. They are also told that sexual intercourse is sacred and life-giving as instantiated in God's command to Adam and Eve to be fruitful and fill the world (Gen.1:28). Man and woman become one in marriage. They enter into the most intimate sex union relationship. Finally, learners are taught that the Bible condemns all forms of irresponsible sex. That since the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 cor.6:19), sexual perversions are against Christian values of chastity, human dignity and respect for the body. Examples of sexual disorders listed include fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality/sodomy, lesbianism, bestiality, prostitution and sex during menstruation. Several ways of avoiding sex are mentioned: Pray for God's guidance; Avoid physical contact such as kissing and hugging; Avoid conversations on topics that are sexually suggestive; Study Bible teachings on sex; Seek guidance from Christian leaders and counselors on relationships; Dwell on positive thoughts about your special friend as a way of controlling your desires; Avoid meeting in lonely and isolated places; Avoid social functions such as discos and parties that may create room for sexual abuse; Avoid visiting each other frequently; Avoid pornographic literature, films and music.

Apart from these guidelines, students are made aware of the male/female relationships at various levels right from childhood through adolescent stage, marriage and in old age. This also forms an important aspect of SE since SE is considered as a lifelong process of sexual responsibility.

4.1.5 Forms of responsible sexual behavior

The curriculum further provides various forms of responsible sexual behavior as aspects of SE. All these are discussed in terms of definitions, causes, and effects. Sexual responsible behavior is defined as a healthy social relationship between boys and girls, men and women and husbands and wives. Students are told that it is quite natural for boys and girls to get attracted to one another as they grow but this attraction should not open room for sexual immorality. They are advised that because this attraction is part of one's growth and development, they should be responsible over their sexual feelings by respecting each other. They are advised to abstain from sexual relationships until when they are married.

The content further addresses the various forms of irresponsible sexual behavior and their effects. Irresponsible sex refers to the perversion, misuse and abuse of sex. The forms discussed include incest, rape, fornication, adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, divorce, abortion and the sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

Students are taught some of the preventive measures to take against rape at home, when walking/ travelling and what to do after rape. They are advised for example; never to open their doors to strangers even if the reason given seems legitimate especially when they are alone at home in their houses, never to walk alone in isolated or badly lit lanes or paths, never to allow anyone to intrude on their personal space, never to ask for lifts from strangers, to trust their instincts by listening to the sixth sense and to draw the attention of the public by screaming. Students are also given guidelines on what to do after rape such as seeking counseling services from a professional, to get medical attention to be treated for any injuries and get medical tests and to report the rape to the police.

The reasons that lead young people to engage in pre-marital sex are highlighted. They include, sexual curiosity, proving manhood, testing fertility, fear of being jilted, peer pressure, drug and alcohol abuse, to mention but a few. This aspect is also considered as an aspect of SE as it teaches about responsible sexual activities, the struggle of stress, peer pressure, drugs and relationships. It also looks at the various sexual orientations among people in society. The sexually transmitted infections are discussed including HIV and AIDS. The diseases include gonorrhoea, syphilis and AIDS. The symptoms, effects and challenges are made known to students together with the organizations, churches, and programmes that deal with the welfare of people living with HIV and AIDS. SE teaches about AIDS, HIV transmission, prevention, and care for people living with AIDS. It addresses issues related to HIV stigma and discrimination.

The psychological problems linked with irresponsible sexual behavior are also discussed. They include, stress, depression, self-pity, withdrawal, aggressiveness and violence. Students are taught on the various ways to deal with the problems. For example, they are advised that in case of stress, they should: Accept and acknowledge that one is stressed; Identify the sources of stress; Take rest and do exercises; Keep oneself busy in a positive way and avoid idleness which can lead to irresponsible sexual behavior; Communicate or talk about one's feelings to the party causing stress such as peers pressurizing to engage in pre-marital sex; Talk to a counselor.

The curriculum further discusses the aspect of contraception. Two methods of contraception are discussed: Natural and artificial contraception. The former relates to abstaining from sexual intercourse during certain periods of the month when the woman is fertile, while the latter deals with devices used to prevent fertilization such as diaphragm and cervical caps, condoms, spermicides, sprays, foaming tablets, pills and injections, intra-uterine devices, sterilization, vasectomy, and tubal-ligation. The divergent views of the church on contraception are highlighted. It should however be noted that on this section, knowledge is passed to students about contraception but they are not advised to apply contraceptives as it is expected in comprehensive SE. Instead they are advised to abstain from sex. It stresses abstinence as the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and infection of sexually transmitted diseases.

Likewise, the arguments in support of abortion and the Christian teaching on abortion are discussed. Pro- abortion arguments include economic constraints, medical grounds, to avoid giving birth to a child with serious deformities and the

fear of being a social misfit. Contrary, the Christian teaching on abortion is that life starts at conception and therefore abortion is murder. It teaches that God is the giver of life and He alone has the right to take it. It is emphasized that abortion is an abuse of the sanctity of human life as every child has a right to life. The unborn child should not be denied the right to life simply because it is helpless and cannot defend itself. They are also made aware that abortion is illegal in Kenya and a crime punishable by law.

4.1.6 Leisure

Leisure as a topic is not specific to SE but the content is aimed at enlightening the learners on how best to spend their free time without engaging in dangerous behavior such as sexual immorality. Leisure is defined as time when one is free from work or other duties, and is free to do whatever he likes without following any given schedule. It is understood as a time to relax. Different forms of leisure are extensively discussed. These are divided into passive and active leisure. Passive leisure is where physical activity is minimal. It includes activities such as watching movies or television, playing computer games, reading novels, magazines, and newspapers, listening to music and resting. The advantages and disadvantages of passive leisure are discussed, and the general advice to young people is for them to choose leisure activities that improve their knowledge and teach them appropriate moral, social and cultural values. They should not watch or read materials that promote violence and sexual immorality.

On the other hand, active leisure is defined as a situation where the whole body is involved in an activity. It includes activities such as playing games like netball, football and basketball, participating in athletics, boat rowing, and cycling, dancing, swimming, mountaineering and traveling. Such activities have several advantages like developing ones talent and hobby, building stamina, and developing relationships. Emphasis is put on the use of active leisure to expend youth energies as a way of avoiding pre-marital sex. Students are also warned of the disadvantages of leisure activities which include addiction and danger of physical harm.

4.1.6.1 Traditional African Understanding of Leisure

In traditional African communities leisure was part and parcel of a community's activities. Leisure time was seen as a time for creativity. The leisure activities were divided according to age, gender and social status. All leisure activities were supervised by adults, especially those of the young. This was with the main reason of ensuring that youth do not engage in immorality. The occasions which provided opportunities for leisure included:

- Initiation ceremonies where people sang, danced and rejoiced. The initiates were also told stories with moral teachings.
- Marriage ceremonies where singing and dancing were the main leisure activities.
- Naming ceremonies
- Thanksgiving ceremonies
- Organized events for young people such as dancing competitions, storytelling, riddles, and tongue-twisters
- Organized activities for the elderly that include beer drinking while singing and dancing, wrestling, weaving for women, visiting friends and relatives, bull fighting, and hunting.

4.1.6.2 Christian teachings on leisure

The Christian view of leisure is derived from the story of Creation in which God created the earth and everything in it for six days and rested on the seventh day. (Genesis 2:2). The curriculum further gives biblical illustrations of the genesis of leisure. For example in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8) the Bible teaches that there is time for everything. There is time for work and time for resting. The curriculum also highlights the different ways in which Christians use their leisure time. These include:

- Worshipping God by reading the Bible, singing, praying, listening to sermons, preaching, receiving Holy Communion and offering prayers of healing for the sick and those with problems.
- Visiting the sick to carry out evangelistic works following the examples of Jesus and His disciples.
- Caring for the needy
- Taking time to rest in order to regain lost energy and prepare to continue with work. This can be in the form of relaxing at home with family or visiting friends and relatives.
- Retreat to meditate on the word of God, pray and fellowship with one another.
- Reading Christian literature
- Listening to Christian music
- Watching Christian films and videos
- Cleaning the church and its compound
- Singing in the church choir
- Taking care of the environment
- Playing games such as soccer
- Attending Christian camps

4.1.6.3 Misuse of Leisure

The curriculum discusses different ways through which leisure is misused. These include:

- Spending too much time in passive activities such as watching films and videos, surfing the internet, playing computer games, listening to music and reading. When some of the materials are pornographic or violent, they destroy people's morality.
- Idle talk especially on things that are destructive and non-beneficial.
- Alcohol and drug taking which comes with a host of dangerous effects.
- Discos and night dancing which may lead to alcohol and drug taking or even pre-marital sex.

Students are also taught different types of drugs and their effects on the individual, families and communities with vulnerability to risk behaviors such as immorality leading to high risks of contracting HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancies featuring as the greatest risks. The reasons why people abuse alcohol and other drugs are clearly outlined in the curriculum together with the remedies. The reasons include: Frustration; Idleness; Having too much money; Financial stress; Bad examples from adults; Availability of the drugs; Negative peer pressure; Media influence; Parental neglect of children; Permissiveness and breakdown of traditional African values.

Leisure is covered with a lot of emphasis on its implications on the behavior of youth. Students are advised to exercise the life skills in order to make appropriate moral choices. They are warned that abuse of leisure has serious consequences. It makes people vulnerable to risky behavior which may lead to contracting HIV/AIDS by engaging in sexual immorality. Students are also taught the Christian criteria for evaluating the use of leisure such as avoiding leisure activities that lead to sin, are addictive and harmful to life. They are advised to engage in activities that promote their individual respect and dignity. Teachings on the criteria for choosing leisure activities can as well be an approach to solve the problem of immorality among youth in secondary schools. If well applied, cases of pre-marital sex will be a rare phenomenon among youth in schools.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper presents the situation of SE in secondary schools in Kenya. It addresses the meaning of SE, what is entailed in SE and the traditional African way of imparting SE to show the existing gap between the past and present on the situation of youth. The Government policies and attempts to implement SE in secondary schools are highlighted together with the controversies and challenges in the implementation of SE in schools in Kenya. The most notable controversy stems from religious groups that are mainly nervous about the teaching of SE among youth in schools. There is resistance from parents, many of who feel school is not the place to learn about sex and the predominant culture of silence with regard to matters of sexuality.

The bumpy road that the Government has travelled in seeking to introduce SE is presented with the indication that in spite of all controversies and challenges, the Government of Kenya has made attempts to implement aspects of SE in secondary schools. However these aspects that are integrated in the C.R.E curriculum are not explicit. Besides, the chapter addresses the fact that although there is no independent curriculum for SE in secondary schools in Kenya, the idea is endorsed and aspects of SE have been integrated into various curricula. For example, an AIDS education curriculum has been integrated in subjects in secondary schools. The most notable and holistic integration of the aspects of SE is in the C.R.E curriculum where these aspects are taught in the form four C.R.E syllabus content. The major conclusion therefore is that SE policy in Kenya is not explicit, resulting in different institutional and individual policies that cause confusion to the more vulnerable youth and there is no specific time set aside for this, leaving teachers and school heads to fit in the subject at their discretion.

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