

Enhancement of Secondary Schools Students' Moral Reasoning through the Christian Religious Education Curriculum in Nakuru County, Kenya

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Abstract

Moral reasoning is important as it equips students with skills to distinguish between right and wrong. It is taught in Kenyan secondary schools through Christian Religious Education (CRE) and other carrier subjects. Despite exposure to moral reasoning content, moral judgment of students is generally unsatisfactory. This suggests that moral education imparted through the CRE and other carrier subjects have not achieved their objectives. This study examined the role of CRE in enhancing moral reasoning of public secondary school students' in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised all secondary school students in the county while accessible population composed of 10,603 Form Four CRE students. A sample of 386 students was selected using stratified, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques. CRE Students' Moral Reasoning Test (CRESMRAT) was used to gather data. The face and content validity of CRESMRAT was examined by five research experts from the department of Curriculum Instruction and Educational Management of Egerton University. The instrument was also piloted for reliability and its coefficient estimated using the Kuder Richardson's formula (KR20). The reliability coefficient of the tool was 0.801. Qualitative data was described and summarised using frequencies and percentages while differences in moral reasoning by gender and school location were determined using the t-test. Role of CRE in enhancing students' moral reasoning was established using open ended items. The results of the study indicated that the students' moral reasoning level were average. The results also showed that difference in moral reasoning by gender was significant in favour of the females while the difference by school location was not. Majority of the respondent were of the view that CRE enhances moral reasoning. The results of the study can be used by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to enhance moral reasoning content of the CRE curriculum and other carrier subjects. Teacher training institutions can use also use the results to strengthen moral education and methodologies in their programmes. Lastly, the results can be used by the society to mold young people into responsible citizens.

Keywords: Enhancement, Moral Reasoning, Christian Religious Education, Curriculum

1.1 Main Question

Does the CRE curriculum enhance the moral reasoning of students in public secondary school?

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The basic aim of education is to equip students with the knowledge and skills which would enable them procure employment; adjust better to the society and acquire virtues so they could be responsible and moral citizens (Trurkkahraman, 2012). One of its components is moral education which aims at equipping learners with knowledge and skills of determining right and wrong in a given situation (You & Penny, 2011). Moral education is provided to the schools because it makes learners be aware of what is socially acceptable when dealing with other people and also provides them with a sense of politeness and lawfulness (Sober, 2009). A good moral reasoning education initiates students into cultural traditions that shape their moral identities (Nord & Haynes, 2013).

According to Myyry (2003) a morally mature and correct should possess four key moral components, namely; sensitivity, judgment, motivation and implementation. Moral sensitivity is concerned with what actions are possible in a situation while moral judgment focuses on what is morally right and fair. Moral motivation is the drive to do what is morally right while moral implementation is having courage and skills to carry out a line

of action even under pressure. All the four components work together to influence a person's moral behaviour (Gardiner, 2000). These key moral components form the basis for moral education among students. Those who have been exposed to moral education are thus expected to be industrious, courageous, have self-control, are honest, responsible and respect others (Turgeon, 2011).

In Kenya, moral education is provided in the secondary schools through carrier subjects such as Hindu Religious Education (HRE), Islamic Religious Education (IRE), Christian Religious Education (CRE) and other humanities (Kenya Institute of Education [KIE], 2002). The general objective of moral education is to produce responsible citizenry who can make informed and responsible judgments (Government of Kenya [GOK], 2016). Among the carrier subjects, CRE is richest in moral reasoning content (GOK, 2001). CRE was introduced in Kenya by the missionaries with the purpose to evangelise the local people. It was taught according to the religion of the group sponsoring the schools. After independence, the Ominde commission (RoK, 1964) recommended that CRE be treated as an academic subject and an ecumenical syllabus be applied during instruction. The recommendation was implemented in 1968 through an Act of Parliament. Since then, the CRE curriculum has been reviewed twice; in 1992 and 2002. The CRE curriculum aims at stimulating students' feelings which enables them to have good morals and ethical behaviour (KIE, 2002). Students who interact with its content should acquire social, spiritual and moral insights to think critically; make appropriate moral decisions in a rapidly changing society; appreciate and respect their own and other peoples' culture, promote international consciousness through the understanding of universal brotherhood and contribute positively to the transformation of self and society as a whole, among others.

CRE is a compulsory subject in the first two years of the Kenya secondary school education system and an elective in the third and fourth years (Kenya National Examination Council [KNEC], 2016). This means that all secondary school students have been exposed to some moral education through CRE. Despite exposure to CRE the moral reasoning level of students in Kenya is relatively low as reflected in their unbecoming behaviours observed in schools and society. Literature obtained from the County Government of Nakuru, (2014) shows that the county is also facing moral reasoning challenges experienced at the national level. The moral standing of students in Nakuru is wanting as evidenced by their frequent engagement in unbecoming behaviour. This is an indication that moral education provided to students has not achieved its objectives of assisting them make right choices. This study sought to examine the moral reasoning of secondary school students in Nakuru county. It also established the role of the CRE curriculum in enhancing students' moral reasoning.

2.2 Moral Reasoning Concept

The word moral comes from a Latin root, *mos or moris* and means standards, principles and habits of behaviour that are applicable to the distinction between what is right and wrong (Dimana, 2012). Morals are therefore regarded as desirable and held with high esteem by the society. They are codes or customs that define how individuals should live together. Morals are principles or standards of good behaviour. Morals such as industriousness, courage, self-control, honesty, responsibility and respect for others are moral virtues developed for one's personal interest (Turgeon, 2011). Kalsoom, Behlol, Kanyani and Kaini (2012) defines moral reasoning as the conscious effort to make informed and responsible judgments about matters of moral importance. Mensch (2009) provides a more detailed definition as the specific aspects of moral development that focuses on the cognitive ability of the individual to understand morality in the context of the situation. According to You and Penny (2011) moral reasoning is a process of determining right and wrong in a given situation.

Zhang (2013), stressed that morality which emanates from moral reasoning is an important part of human interaction because it maintains a relatively central aspect of the sense of self control which is referred to as moral competence. Moral competence is defined as the ability to solve conflicts on the basis of shared moral principles or ideals through thinking and discussion rather than through violence, deceit and power (Wachira, 2014). Spielthener (2007) claims that a moral reason is grounded in the valuations of others. That is, a practical reason becomes a moral reason if it can be shown that it is socially grounded. Schwit, Zgebel and Cushman (2012) argue that moral thinking is concerned with finding ways of acting that can be justified to others.

2.3 CRE Curriculum and Students Moral Reasoning

In Kenya, moral education is provided to secondary school students to equip them with moral reasoning skills to foster good morals (KIE, 2002). Major changes in the school curriculum in 2002 left CRE with almost the exclusive responsibility of promoting moral development among the youth which was effected following a recommendation by the Wangai commission on causes of indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya (GoK, 2001). The Basic Education Curriculum Framework in Kenya (GoK, 2016), also emphasise that moral and ethical values through Christian Religious Education be taught in a more detailed way both in junior and senior secondary school. Through this, learners will be provided with opportunities to practice their faith by applying Biblical principles to daily living, such as love for God, self and others. Consequently, the knowledge,

skills and attitudes gained here will help the learner to cope with the challenges of life.

The CRE curriculum stipulates that students who interact with CRE content should acquire social; spiritual and moral insights to think critically; and make appropriate moral decisions in a rapidly changing society, appreciate and respect their own; and other peoples' culture, promote international consciousness through the understanding of universal brotherhood and sisterhood; and contribute positively to the transformation of self and society as a whole. However, majority of secondary school students are teenagers and are at the stage of learning by experimenting and trying to seek freedom. This makes most of the students become victims of moral decadency. Some common immoral behaviour in secondary schools include; alcohol and drug abuse, bullying, cheating in examination, stealing, raping, among others. Kenya National Examination council [KNEC] (2014) reported that cheating and other examination irregularities during the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) increased significantly from 2,927 cases in 2011 to 5,101 in 2016. The KNEC report states that in 2016, there were numerous reported cases of examination cheating which led to the arrest of twenty university students and three principals in 2015. Ndarwa (2007), noted that there is little or no emphasis on moral education enhanced through CRE in most of the schools despite the moral role CRE as a subject is expected to play.

The CRE curriculum is expected to expose learners to critical thinking which is essential for moral reasoning. However, despite exposure to the curriculum, many secondary school graduates are still unable make responsible moral choices (Kowino, Agak and Kochung, 2012). Mwalulu (2007) noted that it is the school leavers who are normally used by politicians to cause mayhem in the society. Oyaro (2009) adds that Kenyan reform institutions are full of the students who should belong to secondary schools rather than penitentiary. Many problems in schools are therefore attributed to students' bad behaviour, negative attitudes and lack of moral (Ming'yue, 2013). The Wangai led commission of 2001 report on causes of indiscipline in schools in Kenya observed that problems plaguing schools were mainly due to lack of the teaching of moral reasoning skills. Sahu (2013) attributes lack of moral reasoning skills to poor instructional methods used in the teaching of moral education. Achola and Pillai (2001) observed that most students concentrate on CRE not because of moral benefits associated with it but to boost their overall performance in KCSE examination. Itolondo (2011) noted that ineffectiveness of moral education was due de-motivated teachers who felt that they are not given recognition by the government. The teachers accused the government of undermining implementation of the CRE curriculum and where responsible for the escalation of moral decadence in the country because it places more emphasis on and science subjects.

CRE is a compulsory subject in Christian Religious inclined public secondary schools in Kenya in the first two years and an elective in the third and fourth years (Kenya National Examination Council [KNEC], 2016). This means that all in Christian Religious inclined secondary school students have been exposed to some moral education. Despite this, the moral reasoning level of most students is relatively low which is reflected in the unbecoming behaviour observed in schools and society. The low moral reasoning level maybe due to inappropriate CRE curriculum, inadequate instructional materials and lack of qualified and experienced teachers (Sahu, 2013; Kowino, Agak & Kochung, 2012; Rao, 2008). Teaching methods may also be a possible cause as they affect learning outcomes. Felder, & Brent (2005), asserts that use of appropriate teaching methods assist learners develop their ability analyse issues and situations besides gathering knowledge and skills. Ming'yue (2013) demonstrated that moral education is influenced by the instructional methods used in the classrooms.

Moral and intercultural dilemmas are often inextricably entwined with one another during the teaching of moral reasoning (Cush, Man & Young, 2009). Cultures and ethics involve multidimensional frameworks of values, beliefs, epistemological orientations, and expectations (Vangronsvelt & Manchal, 2009). According to Corm et.al, (2012), intercultural moral reasoning skills help students to live and work with others who come from very different cultural backgrounds. Moral reasoning enables one to adjust behaviour as he/ she moves in and out of cultures in order to meet the implicit and explicit expectations of each culture's framework. Due to increasing cultural diversity within many countries, people are constantly called upon to make personal decisions on ethical issues that have the potential to harm or help others whether directly or indirectly. For example, the life-and-death encounters are typically considered to be moral dilemmas such as euthanasia and abortion among others (KIE, 2002; Endicott, Bock & Narvaez, 2003). Therefore, given the sensitivity of discussions in today's classrooms, teachers should be willing to invest time to train their students in discussion techniques and to encourage them to participate whenever needed so as to develop moral reasoning skills.

Awan (2014), states that in order to achieve a level of balanced participation during a lesson, it is necessary to actively draw all students into the discussion. A good way to promote discussion is to provide opportunities for various kinds of group discussions, such as pairs, conversation circles, panels, fishbowls and cooperative learning (Barton & Levstik, 2011). In teaching moral reasoning skills in students, discussion of controversial social issues arising from the topic being taught should be facilitated by the teacher. According to Kruger, (2012) a controversial issue is any topic of public debate about which there is an argument, agreement or disagreement, and in which values and emotions are invested. It creates reflective dialogue between students having opposing points of view. Controversial issues are highly disputable in nature as they are viewed as a vehicle for preparing

students to avoid and resolve conflict and in a peaceful manner (Hedley & Markowitz, 2001). However, Mikhail (2007), notes that differences may occur in moral grammar, that is, the framing of dilemmas which can lead to different moral evaluations by students.

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The design is primarily concerned with determining “what is” and the state of affairs as they exist without any manipulation of variables (Borg & Gall, 2007). The design involves gathering data from a population or a sample and describing the ‘who’, ‘when’ ‘where’ and ‘how’ of a situation, problem, phenomenon, service, opinions, habits or attitudes towards an issue (Shield & Rangarajan, 2013). The design was deemed appropriate because the study only examined the role of CRE curriculum in enhancing students moral reasoning and did not involve any manipulation of variables

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Nakuru County in Kenya. The target population of the study comprises of all secondary school CRE students in the county while the accessible population comprised of form four CRE students in public secondary schools. The accessible population was 10603 form four CRE students (Nakuru County Director of Education, 2014). Stratified, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the 386 students who participated in the study.

Data was collected using the CRE Students’ Moral Reasoning Achievement Test (CRESMRAT). The test had three sections; multiple choice, defining issues and open ended items. The multiple choice section contained seventeen (17) items which were developed by the researcher from topics in the secondary school CRE syllabus. They measured the students’ knowledgeability on moral issues. Response to a close-ended item was awarded 1 point for a correct answer and 0 for a wrong answer. The section with Defining Issue Test (DIT) measured how well a student could make a moral judgment in a given situation. The section comprised of fifteen (15) moral dilemma items. The responses to the items were awarded 2 points for a correct answer with a logical explanation, 1 point for an answer and a 0 for an incorrect answer or failure to respond to the item. The section that contained open ended items was used to gather data on the role of CRE curriculum in enhancing students moral reasoning.

The reliability of CRESMRAT was estimated using the Kuder Richardson (KR) 20 formula. The formula was selected because the items in the instrument did not have the same difficulty index. In addition, the data it generated was dichotomous, “right/wrong” type. The reliability of the instrument was .805. The data tool was deemed reliable as its reliability coefficient was above .7 level.

The students scores in the moral reasoning test was computed and difference in performance in the test by gender and school location conducted. The scores were also converted into percentages and then transformed into level using the scale; Low (33% and below), Average (Above 33% to 66%), High (Above 66%). The levels were summarised using frequencies, and percentages. The students response to the open ended item on the role of CRE curriculum in enhancing moral reasoning was described and summarized using frequencies and percentages.

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Secondary School Students Moral Reasoning

The study aimed at examining the level of secondary school students’ moral reasoning. The students’ moral reasoning was measured using CRESMAT. The test mean scores are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Moral Reasoning Test Means and Standard Deviations (SD)

Test	Maximum Score	N	Mean	SD
Multiple Choice 17		363	13.21	1.99
Defining Issues 30		362	16.26	6.22
Moral Reasoning Test Total 47		362	29.50	7.26

The results in Table 1 reveal that the students’ multiple choice test mean ($M = 13.21$, $SD = 1.99$) was fairly high given that it was marked out of 17. The mean ($M = 16.26$, $SD = 6.22$) score on the defining issue test was average as it was marked out of 30. The overall moral reasoning mean ($M = 29.50$, $SD = 7.26$) score was rated average given that it was measured out of 47. On the basis of the results, the students’ moral reasoning level was rated average.

The results observed in Table 1 showed that the students’ moral reasoning level was moderate despite exposure moral education curriculum. The average moral reasoning level observed from the study may be attributed to social norms, culture and traditions of the students. Herbutzki, (2014) support the social aspect by contending that moral reasoning is a process based on how people interact with the environment. Another possible contributing factor for the students average moral reasoning could be the teaching approach used in implementing the CRE in secondary schools. Ming’yue (2013) asserted that the methods used to teach moral reasoning influence the capacity of learner to reason.

Scholars (Zhang, 2013; Walker, Hennig & Krettenauer, 2000) have also identify peer interaction as a major

influences of students' moral development. The researchers contend that students who interact with peers are more likely to advance in their moral reasoning than those who do not. Haidt (2008) adds that moral reasoning is grounded on principals and beliefs that are universal or specific to a group. These factors could perhaps explain the average moral reasoning level of the students posted in Table 1.

4.2 Students Moral Reasoning and Gender

After the determination of the moral reasoning mean scores, the means were compared to establish whether there was a difference in the students' moral reasoning by gender. The comparison was done using the t-test (Table 2)

Table 2: Differences in Students' Moral Reasoning mean scores by Gender

Scale	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value
Multiple Choice maximum score = 17	Male	180	12.91	2.29	350	2.811	.005*
	Female	172	13.50	1.60			
Defining Issues maximum score = 30	Male	180	15.08	6.48	349	3.575	.000*
	Female	171	17.41	5.69			
Moral Reasoning maximum score = 47	Male	180	27.98	7.77	349	3.913	.000*
	Female	171	30.96	6.37			

*Significant at alpha $\alpha \leq .05$

The results in Table 2 indicated that the difference of the means scores of the section with multiple choice items, $t(350) = 2.811$, $p < .05$, and dilemma issue items, $t(349) = 3.575$, $p < .05$, by gender were statistically significant at .05 level in favour of the females. The results also indicate that the overall moral reasoning mean ($M = 30.96$, $SD = 6.37$) of the females was higher and significantly different from that ($M = 27.98$, $SD = 7.77$) of the males, $t(349) = 3.913$, $p < .05$. This is an indication that gender affects students' moral reasoning. The results support those of Ford and Richardson (1994), who observed that females are likely to act more ethically than males. The results in Table 2 are also in support of those of a study conducted by Ikwuji, (2010) who investigated the influence of age, gender and value orientation on adolescent students' moral judgments in conflict situations. Gilligan (1982) established that females are better at solving moral conflicts and attributes this to the fact that males use justice while females use a care perspective to make moral judgments.

4.3 Students Moral Reasoning and School Location

Further analysis was conducted to determine whether there were differences in moral reasoning mean scores with regard to location of the school. The results of the comparisons by school location are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Difference in Students Moral Reasoning mean scores by School Location

Scale	Location	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value
Multiple Choice Test (Maximum score = 17)	Urban	143	13.30	2.42	339	.357	.722
	Rural	197	13.18	1.97			
Defining Issues Test (Maximum score = 30)	Urban	144	15.60	6.54	338	.648	.517
	Rural	195	16.27	6.21			
Moral Reasoning Test (Maximum score = 47)	Urban	142	29.09	7.80	338	.293	.769
	Rural	194	29.44	7.27			

*Significant at alpha $\alpha \leq .05$.

The results in Table 3 indicate that the difference in the mean scores by location of the multiple choice, $t(339) = .357$, $p > .05$, and defining issue test items $t(338) = .648$, $p > .05$, were not statistically significant at the .05 level. The results further indicate that the difference in the overall moral reasoning by location was not statistically significant at the .05 level, $t(338) = .293$, $p > .05$. This is an indication that school location does not affect students' moral reasoning.

The results in Table 3 indicate that moral reasoning mean scores of students in schools located in rural and urban areas were comparable. This may perhaps be due to the fact that moral reasoning is taught through CRE which is a compulsory subject in form one and two in Kenya (KIE, 2002). This exposes students to basic moral education irrespective of the location of the school. The results in Table 3 do not support those of Host, Brugman, Tavecchio and Beem (1998) who examined students' perception of the moral atmosphere in secondary school. The results of the study indicated that there was significant difference in moral competence by school location in favour of those in urban settings.

4.4 Students Moral Reasoning Levels

The students' moral reasoning levels were established by converting the mean scores into percentages by multiplying them by 100 and dividing the product by 47 (maximum score). The percentage score was then transformed into moral reasoning level using a scale:

Low = Below (\leq) 33 %,

Average = Above (>) 33 % to 66 %

High = Above (>) 66 %.

The levels were then summarised as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Students' Moral Reasoning Levels (n = 352)

Level	Percentage
Low	5.2
Average	50.3
High	44.5

The results in Table 4 indicate that the moral reasoning level of majority (50.3%) of the students was average. The results support those of Gallagher, (2011) who conducted an assessment of moral reasoning of pharmacy students in United Kingdom. The study established that the moral reasoning level of students was average with a significant growth with increase in the number of years in the university. Kowino, Kochung and Agak, (2011) noted that CRE students in Kisumu district did not possess high levels of moral reasoning skills such as conflict resolution, consensus building and negotiating among others. This was evidenced by the poor performance of the learner in questions which demanded that they show competence in identifying social relating skills and explaining their usability in social interactions. However, the results do not support those of O'Flaherty and Gleeson (2017) who noted that Irish student teachers moral reasoning levels were high. They attributed the high moral reasoning level to transitions year programme which prepares students socially to fit in society and their strong Christian family backgrounds.

The relatively low moral reasoning level observed during this study can be attributed to several factors. It may be due to ineffectiveness of the curriculum and methods used to teach moral education (Ngunju & Wamukowa, 2013). Negative students' attitudes, peer pressure, family background and influence of an immorality society are also possible causes (Akaranga & Simiyu, 2016).

4.5 Christian Religious Education Curriculum and Enhancement of Students' Moral Reasoning

The students were also asked whether CRE curriculum enhances their moral reasoning knowledge and skills. They were also asked to give reasons why they were of the opinion that CRE enhances moral reasoning knowledge and skills. Data from the students showed that nearly all of them (93.4%) were of the view that exposure to the CRE curriculum equips them with knowledge and skills that help them make correct judgments in life. These results are in harmony with those of those of O'Flaherty and Gleeson (2017) who noted that exposure to moral education enhances Irish student teachers' capacity to make moral judgment. Maiyo (2015) and Wachira, (2015) also established that teachers were of the view that CRE helps in moral development of students in secondary schools.

The reasons advanced by the students why they were of the opinion that CRE enhances moral reasoning knowledge and skills are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: Reasons provided by Students why CRE equips them with Moral Reasoning Knowledge and Skills

Reason n = 364	Frequency	Percentage
Able to interrogate issues critically before making choices/judgments	6	1.6
Makes one emotionally stable (deal with low self-esteem, depression)	9	2.5
Develop capacity to handle issues (relationships, peer pressure, drugs)	94	25.8
Shapes ones' behaviour (morally upright)	97	26.6
Enhances relationship with God	48	13.2
An effective channel for learning (education) morals	17	4.7

Results in Table 5 indicate a wide range of reasons why students are of the opinion that CRE equips them with moral reasoning knowledge and skills. The major reasons advanced were; shapes ones' behaviour (26.6%), assists learners develop capacity to handle social issues (25.8%) and enhances ones' relationship with God (13.2%). The results show that majority of the students hold the view that CRE equips them with moral reasoning skills. The results are in harmony with the views of Harish (2011) who contended that CRE not only imparts knowledge but also inculcating moral values, spiritual attitude, and the righteousness in character in human beings. The results supports those of Ngussa and Role (2016) whose study in Tanzania showed that divinity inculcates moral values and prepares students to live peacefully with fellow students and other members of society. It makes them mature and responsible citizens before God and fellow human beings. The result also support those of Kidakwa and Obonyo (2014) observation that CRE enables learners to gain insight into the unfolding of God's self revelation to mankind and use acquired social, spiritual and moral insights to think critically and to make appropriate moral decisions in a rapid changing society.

A few (21) of the students who participated in the study were of the view that CRE does not equip them with knowledge and skills which enhance moral reasoning. This category were asked to give reasons why they

held that view. The reasons for holding that view are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Students Reasons why CRE does not equip them with Knowledge and Skills which enhance Moral Reasoning

Reason n = 21	Frequency	Percentage
Only considered as an examination subject	10	47.6
CRE alone cannot shape students moral reasoning as there are other parameters (society, family, church)	6	28.6
Concepts are abstract do not impact on students day to day lives	3	14.3

Table 6 shows that students who were of the view that CRE does not equip them with knowledge and skills which enhance moral reasoning provided 3 reasons to back their stand. The main ones were; only considered as an examination subject (47.6%), CRE alone cannot shape students moral reasoning as there are other parameters (28.6%) and Concepts are abstract do not impact on students day to day lives (14.3%). The results in Table 6 support those of Achola and Pillai (2001) who noted that the aim of teaching in schools is to enable learners pass national examination and those who do not are termed as failures by society. The findings are in harmony with those of Itolondo (2013) who noted that CRE hardly yields the expected learning outcomes. The study also attributed the ineffectiveness of the CRE curriculum to students' lack of keenness in studying the subject due to the low value given to it by the government and teachers in favour of sciences and other subjects

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

The results revealed that the students' multiple choice test mean was fairly high while that of defining issue test was average. The overall moral reasoning mean score was rated average. On the basis of the results, the students' moral reasoning level was rated average.

The moral reasoning mean scores were compared by gender and the results indicated that the difference was statistically significant at .05 level in favour of the females. On the basis of this observation it was concluded that gender affects students' moral reasoning. Differences in students moral reasoning was further compared by school location. The results indicated that the difference in the mean scores by location of the school were not statistically significant at the .05 level. This implies that school location does not affect students' moral reasoning.

The results revealed that nearly all (93.4%) students were of the view that exposure to the CRE curriculum equips them with knowledge and skills that help them make correct judgments. It was concluded that exposure to the CRE curriculum enhances students moral knowledge and skills.

5.2 Recommendation

The findings of the study indicated that secondary school students moral reasoning level is average. The results also showed that gender affects students moral reasoning while school location does not. The study further showed that students are of the view that exposure to the CRE curriculum enhanced their moral reasoning. The average level suggests that students moral reasoning is not well formed even after interaction with content in the CRE curriculum. This may be due to ineffectiveness of instructional methods used and inadequate moral reasoning content. There is therefore need for review of the CRE curriculum. CRE teacher also need to improve on content delivery through instructional methods mix which awaken the reasoning faculties in the student. This can be enhanced through regular in-service courses and workshops on moral reasoning content delivery and methodologies.

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