



STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ACQUISITION OF MORAL VALUES IN NJORO SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Moral values are taught in Kenyan secondary schools through Christian Religious Education (CRE) and other subjects. Despite exposure to moral value content through CRE, students' moral values competencies is declining as revealed in acts of mayhem, unruliness, suicides, murder, destruction of properties among others. This implies that teaching of CRE may have failed to accomplish its intended objectives. This study investigated students' perceptions on the role of Christian Religious Education on secondary school students' moral value acquisition in Njoro Sub-County, Kenya. The study adopted *Ex- post facto* research design, the correlation type. A sample of 343 CRE students participated in the study. Stratified proportionate random sampling techniques was used. CRE Students' Moral values questionnaire (CRESMVQ) was used to gather data. Face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by experts from the Faculty of Education and Community Studies of Egerton University. The research instrument was piloted for reliability and its coefficient estimated using KR20. The reliability coefficients of were 0.901. Qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.0. The study results revealed that students acquired moral values through CRE. However, external factors which include community, parents among others contributed to the decadence of the already acquired moral values. The study findings can be of relevance to the curriculum developer such as Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in the designing and reviewing of the CRE syllabus. The study can also be of importance to the educational policy makers who are charged with the formulation of the CRE subject objectives. The Ministry of Education may also use the study findings during decisions making process on curriculum reforms as well as in strengthening the continuous professional development of teachers and providing the in-service programs pertaining moral values enhancement.

KEY WORDS. Christian Religious Education, Role, Acquisition, Perception, and Moral values.

INTRODUCTION

Morality is demarcated as a set of beliefs and principles of what is desirable or what is considered

undesirable in the society (Ellemers & Gilder, 2022) . According Abbott & Burkitt, (2023), morality can be described as the form of actions which entail issues of right or wrong. It is the code of conduct accepted in the society. Morality can also be termed as a set of guidelines and practices which specify proper acceptable behavior through which a person obtains respectable conduct and achieves goals that benefit the individual and society at large (Lembo et al., 2023).

According to Lilja & Osbeck, (2020) nurturing students with moral values competencies is very vital for it equips them with skills and acquaintances that facilitates them to make justifiable moral decisions in their endeavors. Gao et al., (2021) argues that moral value training offered in schools provides moral cognizance to students that determines the kind of responsibilities that particular individual will hold in families, community and nation at large. The rapid improvements in science and technology have however increased social complexities and threatens the importance of moral values and their benefits to societies (Danaher & Sætra, 2022). Further, various aspects in societies such as knowledge development and negative role of various cultures on own culture affect the moral systems of the society (Vitolla et al., 2021) .

Moral value education is taught in many countries like Iceland, Australia, China, Ukraine, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Europe, and Malaysia among many (Lopuha, 2022). For instance in Malaysia, moral value education was introduced in 1988 for the group of students who were non-Muslims and also taught in Islamic religion through madrasa (Balakrishnan, 2021). According to (Sabri & Mohamed, 2022), moral value education was incorporated in their education systems as early as the stage of early childhood all over the Malaysian country. The main objective of introducing moral value education in Malaysian schools was to create cognizance, confidence, gratitude and to cultivate the spirit of appreciating moral values (Ahmed, 2020). However, according to Wan- Husin et al., (2021), moral values are appreciated in the Malaysian school at a moderate level.

Religion is a broad system of belief and practices to sacred things which bind people into one single moral society (Bowie, 2021). Religion is a relationship with a supreme being that surpasses man and the world. Religion and moral value education are two elements which are always intertwined (Durkheim, 2018). According, Killen & Dahl, (2021) religion provides a foundation for moral value development and thus a society without religion lacks moral guidelines for young people. Religion is the strength and the pillar of moral value acquisition.

The origin of Religious education dates back in the 19th century (Maltese & Strube, 2021). For instance in Britain, it was known as religious instruction (RI) and was compulsory in all state-funded schools as per the education act of 1944 (Topidi, 2020). Later, the religious instruction was changed

to Religious Education (RE) after the education reform of 1988. This was to make it broader in the curriculum of the country. Religious education curriculum entailed diverse religions and moral value concepts, but Christianity took a large part of the content. Singapore which is a multi-ethnic, multi-national and a multi-beliefs country, offers different religions with an aim of building values of tolerance, indulgence and respect among people (Patras et al., 2022).

African religious education was taught through storytelling, legends, myths, riddles and also through observation and emulation (Wane, 2019). According to Wachege & Rugendo (2017), elders in African culture took the responsibility of instructing the youths during rites of passage like initiation and marriage among others. Rituals like the removal of teeth, piercing of ears and other initiations were meant to impart moral values like perseverance, endurance, and tolerance. George & Uyanga (2014) argues that the youths were taken through moral values lessons seriously as they were the basis of the growth of their societies. It was therefore important to support the youths towards the familiarity of the moral values to be able to uphold them throughout their life. This enhanced the way they behaved in their life's endeavor.

In Nigeria, religious education which was earlier referred to as Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) and later Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is offered in primary and secondary schools (Ezeobi, 2022). It is used as a tool which aids in attaining an inherent value designed at collective character development to students (Horowski, 2020). In Tanzanian, religious education is referred to as Bible Knowledge (BK) the objectives being preparing the youths into being morally upright citizens (Mgonda, 2019).

In the Kenyan education system, moral value education is propagated through Christian Religious Education (CRE), Hinduism Religious Education (HRE) and Islamic Religious Education (IRE) (Simiyu & Stephen, 2021). Objectives of learning religious education (RE) are to provide students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which contribute to their spiritual and moral values acquisition (Kondrla, 2023). Religious Education provides a foundation for morality and thus without it, societies will experience a corrupted environment (Hosseini, 2022). Religious education is the firm foundation of the moral system of any society; it is the pillar of the social existence of the society (Farisia, 2020). Kenyan education system offers three religious education syllabuses namely: Christian Religious Education (CRE), Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and Hindu Religious Education (HRE) to provide for the numerous religious groups of its people (Mwanzia, 2019). The main aim of the three syllabuses is the elevation of harmony coexistence and acknowledgment of human brotherhood (Japhet, 2020). However, Christian religious education takes the bigger ratio of the population in secondary school given that Kenyan country is predominantly Christians. CRE is one of subjects that

acts as a vehicle that carries moral value content in Kenya (Othoo & Aseu, 2022). The Kenya National Examinations council (KNEC) reports of the year 2017 and 2016 portrays the statistics of the secondary school students' enrolment per subject. The statistics shows that CRE has the highest enrolment as compared to the other religious subjects. This indication on its own implies that CRE is tasked with a greater responsibility in shaping the moral system of the Kenyan society. Table 1 indicates the enrolment of student in religious education subject.

Table 1:

Summary of the National Students' Enrolments for Religious Education

Code	Subjects	Year	Enrolled students	Female	Male
313	CRE	2017	473,944	260,875	213,069
314	IRE	2017	25,312	9,710	15,602
315	HRE	2017	1	0	1
313	CRE	2016	441335	239,434	201,923
314	IRE	2016	23,941	9,243	14,698
315	HRE	2016	0	0	0

Source: KNEC Report, (2016 -2017)

Table 1 represents the number of students who sat for national examination in Religious Education in Kenya. This is an indication that CRE has a higher students' enrollment compared to the other two RE subjects.

Christian Religious Education is mandated to foster sound morals and religious values amongst the students (Holt, 2022). The education Act of 1968 saw Ominde recommendations of 1964 implemented. Churches were given the capacity of preparing the CRE syllabi and the teaching materials. Koech report of 1999 recommended teaching of CRE as it promotes acquisition of religious, social and ethical values among young people. The Christian Religious Education major objectives as stated by KIE (2006) are to help the students attain intellectual and moral values development, generate a sense of self-respect and respect for others. CRE is to empower students obtain social, spiritual, and moral insight that enable them to reflect critically and hence make appropriate moral decisions in a swiftly changing society. CRE helps students appreciate and respect their religion and that of others and also promote international consciousness through universal brotherhood and sisterhood, making the learner to contribute positively to the transformation of self and society (Mohorić et al., 2023).

Moral values taught in secondary schools through CRE are to enable students gain moral and spiritual insights that heightens their moral competencies so that they may graduates as responsible members of the society (Song, 2023) . However, this is not the case in the dismal picture of the society as it is evident in cases of suicide, murder, alcoholism, drug & substance abuse and pornography watching which have significantly increased in all the learning institutions. For instance, a nineteen – year old girl was reported to have committed suicide in Butere girls' secondary school in Kakamega County (Silah, 2019). This could be an indicator of low moral values? Therefore, this study was intended to investigate students’ perception on the role of Christian Religious Education on secondary school students’ moral values acquisition.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the students’ perceptions on the role of Christian Religious Education on secondary school students’ moral values acquisition in Njoro Sub-County, Kenya.

Research Objective

The specific objective of the study was:

To determine Njoro Sub-County secondary school students’ perceptions on the role of CRE in their acquisition of moral values.

Research Question

The study provided answers to the following question:

What are the perceptions of secondary school CRE students’ on the role of CRE in their acquisition of moral values in Njoro Sub-County?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concepts of Moral Values

Moral values are essential elements in people's life since they form a foundation for development, sustainability and harmony in the society and world at large (Guerra et al., 2022). According to Lind (2017), moral values can be defined through the Kohlberg theory of moral development. The moral value development of Kohlberg theory is an improved work extended from that of a Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget of 1965, who in his study claimed that morality develops through constructive stages (Johnson, 2022). Kohlberg in his studies indicated that moral development follows a series of levels and stages that reflect the life of an individual. The first level of moral development according to Kohlberg theory is the Pre-conventional level, which is determined by its direct consequences. Here behavior of a child is externally controlled and monitored by external forces.

The second level is known as Conventional level where according to Kohlberg thinking advances, and morality at this level is estimated by comparing actions with the societal opinions and prospects. The post-conventional level of moral development is the last level according to Kohlberg which is attributed to the principled level that consists the 5th and 6th stages (Brown, 2017). Kohlberg indicated that, 5th stage is a Social orientation stage where morality is regarded as a social contracts (Lind, 2017). Here the world is perceived as having different opinions, rights and values. The 6th stage is where universal ethical principle orientation stages is located, whereby there is an increased consciousness that people are separate entities from society and that the individual's viewpoint may take preference over society's view; individuals may violate rules inconsistent with their principles (Hartounian, 2018).

Moral Values Acquisition in the Society

Moral values are the backbone of any society. They contribute fundamentally on how the beliefs and attitude of an individual are built (Nargiza, 2022). Moral value training has existed in society since existence. Moral value education can be reflected as character education which help in shaping the behavior of student. It is a universal approach bound for the benefits of cultivating and nurturing persons' character and the moral maturity of an individual (Langford, 2018). Over the years, moral value education has been offered in secondary school to help students acquire moral awareness and competencies that aid in enhancing their moral behaviors. It is a process that develops through the understanding of religious values, that guides the development of moral values of a person (Birhan et al., 2021). Moral value education fosters the sense of socialization amongst the youth equipping them with the capacity to own moral identity.

It is through moral value education that the students are acquainted with positive values such as,

respect of self, respect of human dignity, honesty, integrity, responsibility, citizenship, and many others (Ellemers, 2018). Moral values prepare the students ability to think critically over an action and its consequences. They enable students to develop qualities that make the transformative members of the society (Lopuha, 2022).

According to (Shutaleva et al., 2022), youths are the proponents of any development in any society at any given nation globally. There can be no stability in the society, if youths of such society are not morally nurtured as every society needs human mechanisms whereby the major workforce are the young people. Therefore, the youths need to be conscious of their relevance and usefulness in the society. Youth ought to be dedicated to absorbing moral values and safeguarding them in their life endeavors (Smith, 2017).

Currently this is not the situation in secondary school because youths involves themselves in unsatisfactorily conducts which is a misfortune in the society (Gachungi, 2018). To improve moral values acquisition, youths have to be well-organized and resist immoral behavior that will eventually end up in loss of moral competencies (Gibbs, 2019). The training of character education and moral values is the responsibility of the families, societies, government and religious institutions. Thus parents and guardians' together with the religious leaders should be concerned with the moral education of their children at home and in the society, as the continuity of what the students' have learned at school (Yusof et al., 2018).

According to Balakrishnan, (2021) , introduction of moral education at a tender age to children is very fundamental because it helps the young people to grow having the ability to differentiate amid right and wrong. The moral value orientation to the young people heavily depends on kind of moral choice made by the adult and peers in moral dilemma situation since the nature of choices may influence their way of decision-making (Small & Lew, 2021). Training of moral values requires effective intertwined efforts within the stakeholders

Development of CRE in Kenya

Christianity was first prefaced to East African people in the fifteenth century when Portuguese sailors crossed through the East African coast in their hunt for a sea route to India (Jedwab et al., 2022). Formal education in Kenya started through the coming of the missionaries who majored on the teaching of Religious Education. Their education system included reading, writing, and arithmetic only which were known as the four Rs, (Adhiambo et al., 2022). Reading the Bible, communally with religious songs and hymns, was also part of the curriculum. Jebungei, (2013) affirms that the Bible, which highlights the principles of the church, was the central theme for training Religious Education and used as a reference book.

The main objective of teaching by missionaries in Kenya was for the conversion of Africans to western religion. Christian Religious Education is mandated to foster sound morals and religious values amongst the students (KIE, 2006). The education Act of 1968 saw Ominde recommendations of 1964 implemented. Kenyan education system offers three religious education syllabuses namely: Christian Religious Education (CRE), Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and Hindu Religious Education (HRE) to provide for the numerous religious groups of its people. The main aim of the three syllabuses is the elevation of harmony coexistence and acknowledgment of human brotherhood.

CRE and Development of Moral Values among Students

According to Huda et al., (2020), Religious Education is an essential element in promoting a cohesive society. Holt, (2022), avers that religious education is believed to be the solution to the challenges related to moral disintegration. Holt further claim that, CRE give students capabilities to differentiate amid right and wrong hence enabling them to make the right choices in their lives. Githaiga (2018), referred Christian Religious Education as the strength and the pillar of moral values developments among the students. Christian Religious Education has been incorporated in school curriculums of many schools nationally and internationally due to its appreciated benefits.

Christian Religious Education is an integrated subject in the primary and secondary schools ROK (2006). It is one of the humanities taught in secondary school among them geography and history and government (KIE, 2002). Tandana et al., (2022), claims that Christian Religious Education help students to gain the appropriate attitudes, values and practices that give them a harmonious living. Through Christian Religious Education students acquire desired moral competencies simply because it holds various aspects such as moral and spiritual values that guide their daily life, (Rohmah et al., 2023). CRE contributes in enlightening the youths towards the respect of own beliefs and other people's beliefs leading to social cohesion. One of the objectives of Christian Religious Education in Kenya is to help students acquire social, spiritual and moral insights to help them make appropriate moral decisions in a rapidly changing society (KIE, 2006).

Students' Perceptions on the Role Christian Religious Education on the Moral Values Acquisition

Human beings are social beings who live in a society where one is brought up thus it is from the society that children are trained with moral competencies on how they should conduct themselves before they join any learning institution (Callero, 2023). Children's moral value acquisition depends on the societal environment that they live in (Zdanevych et al., 2020). Society entails group of people such as parents, friends and relatives in the surrounding who first interact with a child and they are very

influential to the behavior of that particular child (Hasanah & Deiniatur, 2018).

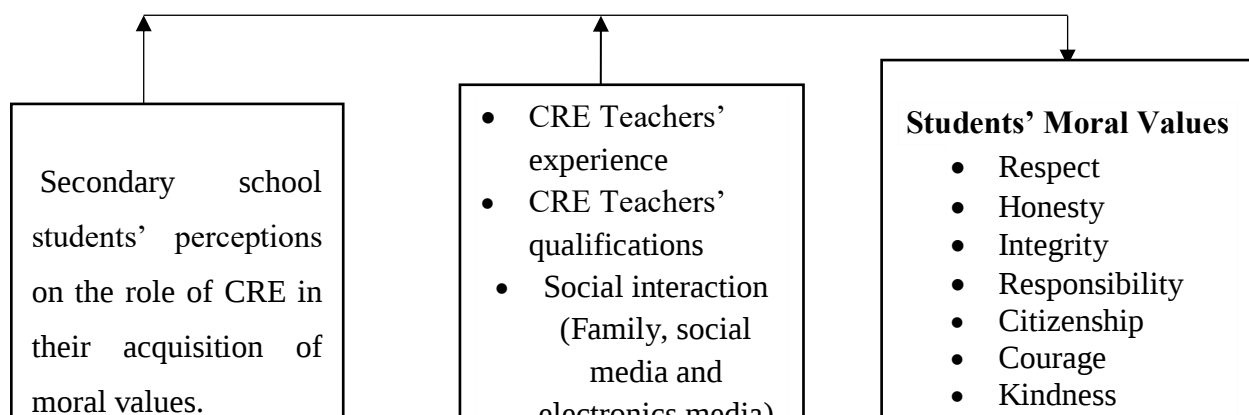
The fundamental role of the society is to transform child's moral ability by providing the moral guidance (Tan & Yasin, 2020). When children join school, school takes the role of continuing to nurture information already acquired from the society and at home. The community and the school are the stakeholders that has to work together in order to produce morally upright person and integrated citizens (Westheimer, 2024). Wachira, (2015) in a study on public secondary school students' attitude on the role of Christian religious education on social harmony established that CRE could be an important tool for promotion of social cohesion particularly if students who choose it voluntarily studied it and if appropriate approaches would be employed.

Wachira further found that in many instances, students were forced to take CRE as a way of enhancing their general performance simply because of the perception that CRE is easy to grasp and pass in examination. Wachira concluded that others students took CRE because it was routinely clustered with subjects that they wanted to take. She therefore recommended that, CRE being a religion based subject, it should only be taken by those students who are willing and contented to do it.

According to Venant et al., (2021), students have positive attitudes towards CRE subject and even those taking other subjects in humanities perceive CRE as an important subject in the curriculum. They further argue that, students that perceive the subject as a driver to their acquisition of knowledge and as a booster subject. Students no longer perceive CRE as a subject for those who want to be pastors rather it is for everybody. Students take CRE as a subject that build in them the moral values desired in the society such as honesty, love, reliability, humility, and also the value of self-worth and self-identity

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is the diagrammatical representation of how variables in a study interrelate (Chukwuedo & Uko-Aviomoh, 2015). The study intended to investigate the students' perceptions on the role of CRE in the acquisition of moral values among secondary school students. Figure 1 shows how the variables of this study relates on secondary school students' perceptions on the role of CRE in their acquisition of moral values.



Independent Variable Intervening Variables Dependent Variables

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on the students' perceptions on the role of CRE on secondary school students' moral values acquisition.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design is a set of methods used in collecting data to generate answers to hypothetical research questions (Mello, 2021). The study used the *Ex- post facto* research design, the correlational type. *Ex-post facto* research design, does not involve treatments or randomized assignments. It involves examining a phenomenon on its natural setting without the manipulation of the variables (Campbell & Stanley, 2015). This design was regarded appropriate for the study because CRE is part of the school curriculum and students have been studying the subject. The study was conducted on the students in their natural settings.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Sampling is a process of selecting a sub-group from a population to partake in the study (Pace, 2021). The researcher employed stratified proportionate sampling technique to sample CRE students and all participated in the study. Table 2 shows the proportionate distribution of samples.

Table 2:

The Distribution of the Sample Size by Divisions

Divisions	CRE Students
Lare	67
Kihingo	86
Njoro Central	110

Mauche	36
Mau-Narok	44
Totals	343

Source: Njoro Sub –County Education Office (2018)

Table 2 displays the statistical distribution of the sampled number of CRE teachers and Form Three CRE students in Njoro Sub-County. A sample size of 89 teachers and 343 students participated in the study. Simple Random Sampling was conducted to select the schools and the respondents. In a case where a school had more than one stream, an intact class was randomly selected.

Research Instrument

Data for this study was collected using Christian Religious Education Students' Perceptions Questionnaire (CRESMVQ). The questionnaire was used to collect data on the views of the students on whether CRE is influencing positively on their moral values as well as their views on what they think should be done to improve moral competencies. The items were close-ended with multiple choices. Moral value test Items were constructed by the researcher to measure the degree to which the students had acquired moral values. The items contained three parts namely: A, B, and C. Part A contained the preliminary students' data, part B consisted of close-ended questions of a 5point Likert scale. The items in the scale level were scored as Strongly Agreed 1, Agree 2, Not Sure 3, Disagree 4, and Strongly Disagree 5. Part C consisted of 10 items on moral values items that were scored as a response where a correct answer was awarded 1 mark while that with a wrong answer was awarded 0 marks. The items in the questionnaires were be constructed by the researcher.

Validity of Research Instrument

According Quintão et al., (2020) validity is the extent to which the outcomes found from the analysis can represent the authentic phenomena tackled in the study. Face validity was used to authenticate the presentation of the item. The face and content validity of the item was examined and judged by a panel of 5 experts from the Department of Curriculum Instruction and Educational Management of Egerton University. The experts checked the item for any weaknesses after which suggestions were incorporated and corrections were made before the instrument was used.

Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability is the magnitude to which results are dependable over time and consistently represent the features of the total population under a particular study (Riezler & Hagmann, 2024). A pilot study was conducted to scrutinize the suitability of items in the research tools. This was to help identify any vagueness and ambiguity in the data collection tools before the actual study was conducted. Piloting

was carried out in Rongai Sub-County in Nakuru County whereby 35 CRE students in each of 5 purposively selected secondary School participated in the pilot study but they were not included in the actual study. The reliability of the CRESMVQ was estimated using the Kuder Richardson (KR) 20.

Data Analysis

The collected data was coded, cleaned and keyed in file formed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 26.0 version. The students' scores in the moral value test were marked out of 10 and mean determined. The scores were also organized into ranges and summarized using frequencies, which were converted into percentages. CRE students' perceptions were categorized as; positive, neutral and negative. Perceptions of a respondent were categorized as positive when she/he agreed with the majority of the positive items but disagreed with the majority of the negative items. The perceptions of respondents were neutral when they agreed on the majority of the neutral items. Perceptions was however negative when a respondent disagreed with the majority of the positive items but agreed with the majority of the negative items.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Students' Characteristics

The participants of the study were Form Three CRE students. Their characteristics were examined to generate a base for further discussion and give an enhanced indulgence of the demographic setting of the study. Table 3 shows students' characteristics by gender, school category, school type and age.

Table 3:

Students' Characteristics

Scale	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender n=343	Male	129	37.6%
	Female	214	62.4%
School category	Boarding	81	23..6%
	Day	259	75.5%
	Boarding/day	3	0.9%
School type	Boys only	41	12.0%
	Girl only	1	0.9%
	Mixed	299	87.2%
Age	16- 18yrs	259	75.5%
	19-20yrs	77	22.4%
	21 and above	7	2.1%

Source: Researcher's data (2021)

The results in Table 3 shows students' characteristics by gender, school category, school type and age. The results show that majority of the students who responded were females at 62.6% while males were 37.6%. This implies that more female students opt to study CRE than their male counter parts.

Students' Perceptions on the Role of Christian Religious Education in enhancing their Moral Values Acquisition

Students' perceptions were categorized into three namely; positive, negative and neutral perceptions. Those respondents who agreed with the majority of positive items and disagreed with the majority of negative items were regarded positive while those who disagreed with majority of positive and agreed with the majority of negative statements were regarded negative. The respondents were regarded to have a neutral perception if they neither disagreed nor agreed with positive or negative items. Table 4 shows the students' responses on their perceptions on the role of Christian religious education in acquisition of moral values.

Table 4:

The summary of students' Perception on the Role of CRE (n=343)

Students perceptions	N	Percentages
Positive	249	72.6%
Negative	57	16.6%
Neutral	37	10.8%

Source Researcher's data (2021)

Results in Table 4 display students' perceptions on the role of Christian Religious Education in their acquisition of moral values. The results indicate that majority (72.6%) had positive perceptions towards CRE in enhancing their acquisition of moral values while 16.6% had negative perceptions. A minority at 10.8% had neutral perceptions. This implies that CRE students have a positive perception on the role of CRE as a subject that promotes acquisition of moral values. This is in line with Ngussa, (2018) who found that CRE helps students to be morally upright. Table 5 shows the frequencies and percentages of students' responses on the role of CRE in acquisition of moral values.

Table 5:

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Responses on the Role of CRE in Acquisition of their Moral Values (n=343)

Statements	N	S	A	A	U	D	S D
CRE helps me have respect for others.	343	49.1	43.1	2.9	3.8	0.9	

CRE boosts my honesty when dealing with my friends, teachers and parents.	343	44.2	38.5	6.4	7.3	2.9
It is through CRE that I became responsible in every action I undertake	343	31.5	39.7	9.6	13.7	5.0
CRE subject helps me acquire the desired characters in the society, like integrity.	343	49.6	35.9	6.7	6.1	1.7
I chose CRE because it boosts my ability of being kind to my peers.	343	29.2	44.6	13.1	9.0	4.1
It is through CRE that I have known how to act with humility.	343	36.2	44.3	9.6	6.4	3.5
CRE helps me acquire the quality of citizenship enabling me to do my duties.	343	30.3	36.7	14.6	13.1	5.2
I have learned how to be loyal to my friends through CRE	343	34.4	40.8	8.7	10.8	5.0
It is through CRE that students learn to forgive others.	343	45.5	35.0	7.6	7.6	4.1
CRE helps me to be courageous when facing daily challenges of life.	343	49.9	33.2	8.5	6.1	2.3
CRE boosts self-control through lessons that I learn in class.	343	36.4	37.0	10.2	9.6	6.7
CRE teacher does not contribute to my self-respect	343	12.0	13.4	13.4	25.9	35.3
CRE contributes to my spiritual well-being	343	51.6	39.7	4.1	2.6	2.0
CRE is my favorite subject.	343	32.4	35.6	11.7	13.7	6.7
CRE is my booster subject in my general performance.	343	37.9	31.2	10.5	11.4	8.7

Source: Researcher's data (2021)

The results in the Table 5 show that students were in concurrence with the majority of positive items and on the other hand disagreed with the negative statement

CRE students were further asked to express their opinions on what they like about CRE. The reasons are shown in Table 6.

Table 6:

Summary of Reasons Students like Christian Religious Education (n = 343)

Reasons for liking CRE	N	Percentage
Boost moral conduct	249	72.6%
Makes me disciplined	18	5.2%
Spiritual nourishment	65	19.0%
Boost performance	11	3.2%

Source: Researcher's data (2021)

Results in Table 6 demonstrate the reasons why students like CRE as a subject. Majority of the students (72.6%) agreed that CRE helped them boost their moral conduct. A small percentage of the students also agreed that CRE helps them gain spiritual nourishment (19.0%), make them disciplined (5.2%) and boost their performance (3.2%). This implies that students are aware of benefits of CRE subject to their moral values acquisition. This is in agreement with Ngussa (2018) whose study indicated that Christian Religious Education subject helps students gain moral values. The results are also in line with a study by (Otieno, 2019) which indicated that through Christian Religious Education, students acquired virtues of respect.

DISCUSSIONS

The study investigated the students' perceptions on the role of Christian Religious Education on secondary school students' moral values acquisition in Njoro Sub-County. The results revealed that the students' perception toward the role of CRE in the acquisition of moral values was positive with 72.6% agreeing with the majority of the positive items and 16.6% had neutral perceptions. 10.8% of the students had a negative perception. However, the students also gave reasons for choosing CRE against the other subjects. Respondents (72.6%) agreed that they elected it because it boosted their moral conduct. Other reasons that were given by the students included making them disciplined (5.2%), giving them spiritual nourishment (19.0%), and boosting their performance (3.2%) among others.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study.

Students' perception toward the role of CRE subject was positive. The results of the moral values test revealed that they had acquired the moral values. The results of the study indicated that despite the fact that CRE subject impacts positively toward the acquisition of moral values by students, there are challenges that act as barriers in practicing the already acquired moral values. The results it was concluded that there are some gaps that need to be filled to make sure that the acquired moral values through CRE subject are not derailed and wrecked. The results findings indicated the CRE subjects was understaffed and this made CRE to be optional and hence making it not availed to all the students. The findings also showed that apart from CRE subject being a moral value booster it was also considered to be an individual student results performance booster and easy to grasp. This hindered the actual set objectives of the subject. Through the findings, it was concluded that CRE subject could

not work alone to mold the moral values of the students. Other factors which essential need to be considered.

Recommendation

This study recommends the following:

- i. Christian religious education to be compulsory in every level of secondary education.
- ii. Teachers should ensure they employ different teaching strategies that will promote the acquisition of moral values by students.

Suggestions for Further Research

A study should be carried out to establish factors that can enhance the ability of students to sustain the acquired moral values through the learning of CRE.

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