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CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NAIROBI:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO

The School of Education and Allied Professions

THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for

The Degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership

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UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

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APPROVED BY:

Thomas Lasley, Ph.D. Dean Date 10/22/06

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NAIROBI:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

By

Charles M Kanai Ph.D.

University of Dayton, 2006

Thomas C. Hunt, Ph.D.

It is important that Catholic schools in the 21st century determine the degree of their Catholic identity. This exploratory study examines the voices of stakeholders of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi (CASAN) namely: students, parents, teachers, principals, professionals and the Archbishop of Nairobi's understanding of how far their schools fulfill the three goals of education, that is the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education. Almost 50 years after achieving its political independence from the British, Kenya as a nation is now faced with the serious decision of whether to continue with the cultural and pedagogical heritage it inherited from its colonial past or to change the course of direction in order to provide Kenyan students with the kind of education relevant to the needs of the country and students in the 21st century.

Four interventions have been proposed as being helpful in helping CASAN achieve this vision. First, there is a need for the schools to use liberation theology as the language of critique of the Eurocentric pedagogy. Secondly, there is need to ensure that this education is dialogical in nature. Third, that a cultural

change needs to be effected and finally, that the education ought to be culturally relevant to African students.

Eight focus group interviews, two mini-focus groups and two individual interviews were conducted to obtain data. Twenty three schools of the 24 schools identified for this study were recruited. All in all, 53 participants: that is 18 students, 12 professionals, 13 teachers, 5 principals, 4 parents and the Archbishop of Nairobi were interviewed.

Among some of the major findings in this study are that participants were in agreement that a majority of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi had failed their students. This was felt more in areas such as equity of resources distribution, curriculum taught in schools, taking of national examinations, and so forth. A majority of participants believed that Kenyan schools in general and more particularly Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi emphasized the teaching of sciences at the expense of humanities, or the cognitive dimension of education at the expense of critical, dialogical and normative dimensions.

For these reasons, the study makes a number of serious recommendations. Among these are that the Archdiocese of Nairobi needs to set up a diocesan synod or education commission to study the issue of what type of schools the Archdiocese needs to set up or emphasize in the 21st century. The study also made recommendations related to new ways of funding an authentically Catholic education, the need for separation of church and state in the field of education, and the use of *Jumuiya* as the praxis method for dialogical education. This study

finally recommends that for Catholic schools to become “great” schools of the 21st century, there is a need to have visionary leadership.

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PROLOGUE

Decisions, decisions! Decision making is not easy as this researcher found out 6 years ago. It is a long and tedious process that involves reflection, consultation, getting the facts right, choosing the best alternative, and following through. In short, it is a process that requires one to have the virtue of patience, which is often in short supply in many people. This researcher stumbled into this fact a few days before beginning his graduate studies at the University of Dayton. After meeting the Archbishop in his office to talk about what he was to study in America, he briefly stepped out of the office to make that decision. He soon discovered that decision making was not easy, especially if the decision had the potential to drastically alter one's life, and also if that decision were to be made within an hour and without consultation. After some prayers in the nearby church, the researcher turned to the university catalog to provide him with the only crucial information he needed to make the decision.

Why was making this decision tough, one would ask? Was he not used to making tough decisions? In any case, how could a decision made 6 years ago be related today to Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi (CASAN), the main focus of this study? As will be explained shortly, critical or reflective thinking (which is a necessary ingredient in decision making) is something years of schooling in Kenya did not provide students, as the bulk of this research will argue. Thus, what the Archbishop was asking the researcher to do was something many students in Kenya would not have found it easy to do because often they deferred such decisions to parents, elders, teachers or administrators. This was

one of those rare opportunities in life that the researcher alone was making an important decision concerning his life. Freire (1970) describes the kind of education the researcher went through in his schooling as “an act of depositing in which the students are the depositories and the teacher the depositor” (p. 72), that is, a “banking concept” of education. It does not permit students to become creative in expressing their deep longings but instead, it makes them submissive to the all-knowing teachers and superiors. Bassey (1999) argues about this more lucidly:

Education of most worth for Africans in the twenty-first century would be the type of education that produces informed citizens who are capable of making intelligent decisions about everyday problems. This type of education must make a person think for him/herself. This is the type of education that Paulo Freire calls education for critical consciousness. (p. 115)

In so saying, Bassey explains the anxiety that confronted this researcher that morning when he was faced with that tough decision. In his mind was a wish that someone else would make this decision for him but “fortunately,” none was around that morning and the “buck” stopped with him. He had no other choice but to decide.

The university catalog to which he turned, though helpful in many ways, could not help him make up his mind on what career to study. Was he going to study theology, philosophy, law or education? At this point, images of great African scholars, theologians, and philosophers such as Ngugi wa Thiong’o,

Charles Nyamiti, John Mbiti, among others, flashed by in his mind as he finally chose a career in education. But again, on close scrutiny of the catalog, he realized that a number of educational related alternatives existed. He had to decide whether his studies were to be in: special education, teacher education, educational administration, or educational counseling.

The 4 years spent working within the Catholic school system in Nairobi had left him with no shred of doubt that something ominous and possibly dangerous was happening within the educational scene in Nairobi. He suspected that the close-knit relationship existing between the church and state did not portend well for the future of church related schools. In his opinion, although many people including politicians, clergy and parents, called for the strengthening of the relationship between the church and state in schools, such a fortified relationship had frightening implications. For instance, would such a relationship be advantageous to Catholic schools wishing to maintain their Catholic identity? Or would the relationship lead to the watering down of religious instruction in Catholic schools now that the church had given the government the upper hand in determining what was to be or not to be taught in schools? According to the church's educational handbook *Whither and How* of 1982, the church as the sponsor of Catholic schools had given to the government its responsibility of running schools:

As a sponsor, the church can participate effectively in the affairs of running the school. She sees that the religious education programs are carried out according to the syllabuses prepared and recommended by the

sponsors and approved by the minister. (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 1982, p. 14)

To the researcher, handing over to the government the responsibility to determine what is to be taught or not to be taught in religion was very suspect. According to him, even well meaning democratic governments ought not to be entrusted with the responsibility of determining what religious values are to be taught in schools. That role squarely falls first on parents and only in loco parentis to the church and its schools. The researcher considers it very possible that the minister of education or other officials acting on his behalf could be anti-Church and anti its school system. Granting this final decision and authority to a government official on what to teach or not to teach in religion can seriously curtail religious instruction since the minister or official could decide to reject, ignore, manipulate or stubbornly refuse to follow the recommendations made by the church.

These 4 years spent as a teacher and administrator handling matters connected with Catholic schools allowed the researcher to closely observe something else that was going on within the four walls of all classrooms in Kenya. He began to hypothesize that what teachers did inside these four walls was directly related to the economic development of the country. It occurred to him as he walked between the school and the rectory where he lived that the sizeable group of unemployed youth he saw hanging around the shopping centers, seemingly wasting time, was one of the by-products of poor teaching going on in many Kenyan schools. Though this problem was more commonly noticeable in

rural centers throughout the country, it struck him powerfully that teachers throughout the country held the keys that could easily break or make the country. Teaching is art and when done properly, it has the potential to affect the lives of students and the country positively.

He believed that, if teachers were effective in forming students to acquire critical thinking skills, values, habits, and attitudes necessary for them to function in the 21st century, such students would ultimately become successful in life. However, the fact that about 50% of the youth in the country remained unemployed or underemployed or that 60% of 13 and 14-year-old examination candidates could not find a place in secondary schools in the country (Njoroge, 1999, p. 236); or that only 10,000 students out of the possible 222,505 students who wrote their examination papers in the year 2004, had an opportunity to join the public universities in the country (Makokha, 2004), pointed out to the possibility that a major systemic failure had occurred within the educational field in the country. Such failure could unravel the social and economic fabric of the country, creating serious social breakdowns.

Under such circumstances, it is possible to conclude that the only available recourse left for the country to take is to create a new educational paradigm suitable for its people. Years of colonial rule and of using Eurocentric pedagogical goals and methods of education had not only imposed an education system that continued to destroy and distort many students' dreams in life, but had continued to reinforce the Eurocentric way of life to Kenyan students. The researcher hypothesized that teachers had unknowingly become cogs of a wheel

that continued to churn out a by-product that was completely unrelated to the needs and aspirations of the country. Emenyonu speaks about such an education that has gone wrong in a country:

Education can also mar a nation if it is poorly construed. As an investment in human capital, its end products determine the nature and quality of life in the society, but if it is poorly construed the system will produce weaklings and individuals without solid roots...if education at the top is purposeless, so will the learner, at the end of the educational process, become a nuisance to the society and a liability even to himself. (as cited in Bassey, 1999, p. 113)

Two other experiences continued to shape the construction of this research. The first one was the 2-year teaching experience at Kairitu High School (pseudonym). Kairitu High School, which is one of the Catholic sponsored schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi (see the definition section for the explanation of sponsored schools, p. 24), is found in Lari division of Kiambu District in Central Kenya. In earlier colonial times, this part of the country formerly known by European settlers to Kenya as the 'White highlands,' had erroneously been assumed by the settlers that it would belong to them for eternity. Ogot and Ochieng' (2000) among many other historians document this fact by stating that "after all, the presence of European settlers is an existing reality which cannot be gone back upon even if it were desirable to do so" (p. 57).

Lari division is one of the most scenic and beautiful countrysides in Kenya. It sits at the edge of the expansive Afro-Arabian Rift Valley system that

extends North - South from Turkey to Mozambique covering a distance of about 6,500km/ 4,000mi (Baker, Mohr, & Williams, 1972). Its high altitude (about 5,000ft/1,500m above sea level) ensures that the area has a favorable climate as it receives enough rainfall throughout the year. The division has in recent years grown to become the breadbasket of Kenya's capital city of Nairobi by providing it with fresh vegetables. All this is mentioned for a purpose; that amidst such beauty and potential for growth in the agricultural and tourism industries, many high school graduates from this division remain idle and unemployed. To the researcher, this indicated that a serious disconnect existed between the kinds of jobs students finishing schools expected, and the ones readily available in the job market.

The second experience, which is probably the most defining one and that influenced the design and purpose of this study, was the one and a half year period spent by this researcher working in the Archdiocese of Nairobi as the Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools. It is noteworthy that the Archdiocese of Nairobi has over 100 high schools and 400 elementary schools. Most of the time spent by this researcher in office at this time involved dealing with policy and supervisory issues related to Catholic schools. From his vast interactions with parents, teachers, school board members, and ministry of education officials, having a strong Catholic identity was singled out by all these stakeholders to be the most important variable that made parents enroll their children in Catholic schools.

However, because four types of Catholic schools; namely, sponsored, parochial, private, and informal, do exist in Nairobi, several nagging questions concerning parental expectations of these schools remained at the back of this researcher's mind. For instance, he wondered whether these schools did fulfill parents' expectations of them, or whether they had the capacity to meet such expectations. He also wondered whether it was sound for parents to assume that such schools operated under the same rule of life. According to the researcher, CASAN as a school system, could not achieve the above parental expectations because it operated along a wide continuum of governance structures. This is because some of the schools were public while others were unaided; while others were national and others district schools. His quick answer to the above questions was therefore, No! These schools could not meet the said expectations. This was because besides their sharing of a common curriculum that was strictly enforced by the central government, these schools had nothing else in common. Their organizational structures differ, but the schools were also different in type and purpose. Making this distinction concerning the degree of "Catholicity" of schools in Nairobi is important because it is misleading to assume that Catholic schools in Nairobi are of a single nature.

One other lesson learned during this time was that even though the *Education Act of 1968* allowed the Church's voice on certain matters concerning education to be heard, that voice was often ignored by the ministry of education officials. Many were the times when sponsors were not consulted on important matters such as the appointment of school principals in Catholic schools. Even

worse, non Catholic principals and departmental heads who were sometimes openly hostile to the church and its teachings were at times appointed without the sponsor's awareness. Though such appointments required agreement and consultation with the church as the Education Act mandated, the government often felt not obliged to consult because, after all, it was the final appointing authority. With these kinds of questions and insights, the researcher began this journey of decision making on the kind of Catholic schools the Archdiocese of Nairobi needs in the 21st century.

CHAPTER 1

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

Such a journey as this one, that seeks to present a new educational paradigm for Catholic schools in Nairobi, must endeavor to remain grounded on authentic Christian and African values. This means that, the study must take the African philosophy: *I am because We are, and We are because I am* as the bedrock of its foundation. Such a philosophical foundation acknowledges the value and importance of the “I” and the “thou” in community building. CASAN as a particular school system enters into a relationship with other Catholic school systems throughout the world to teach and learn from each other’s vast experiences. In this way, CASAN can expect to learn something of value from other school systems with a longer history of Catholic education such as the American one while at the same time, it can expect to be teaching these others its newer perspectives of being. This give and take spirit both the old and the young benefit from each other since in age is found wisdom, while in youth is found zeal.

Educational leadership is a profession obligated to continual vigilance on the mission of schools and on the ways in which schools play an integral, positive and productive role in the lives of children and families. Examining the Catholicity of schools in Nairobi can contribute to that vigilance – an intended outcome of this study. This chapter presents a description of the governance of schools in Kenya. This structure sets the stage for further investigation by

defining the parameters within which policy decisions and procedural activities should take place.

The researcher's experience at Kairitu High School helps to put this governance structure into context. Next, the statement of the problem is presented and in this, the governance structure of Kenyan schools is juxtaposed with contemporary culture. (These ideas are further explored in chapter 2). Next is presented the research question, assumptions underlying the study, and definitions of constructs necessary for the reader to understand this study.

Governance Structure of Kenyan Schools

It is important to understand the governance structure of Kenyan schools in order to set the stage for this study on Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi (CASAN). The organizational chart (Figure 1) helps to visualize and explain the structure of Kenya's education system. This structure has been derived by the researcher from the official ministry of education document that guides all educational matters and policies in the country, the *Education Act of 1968*, as well as from the researcher's own experience within that structure.

At the top of this organizational chart is the ministry of education headed by a cabinet minister who is in charge of all matters pertaining to education in the country. The minister oversees all policies in both public and unaided schools (public school means a school that is maintained or assisted out of public funds while an unaided school means a school that does not receive any public funds).

The level of financial assistance determines whether a school is merely assisted or fully maintained by the government (Education Act, 1968).

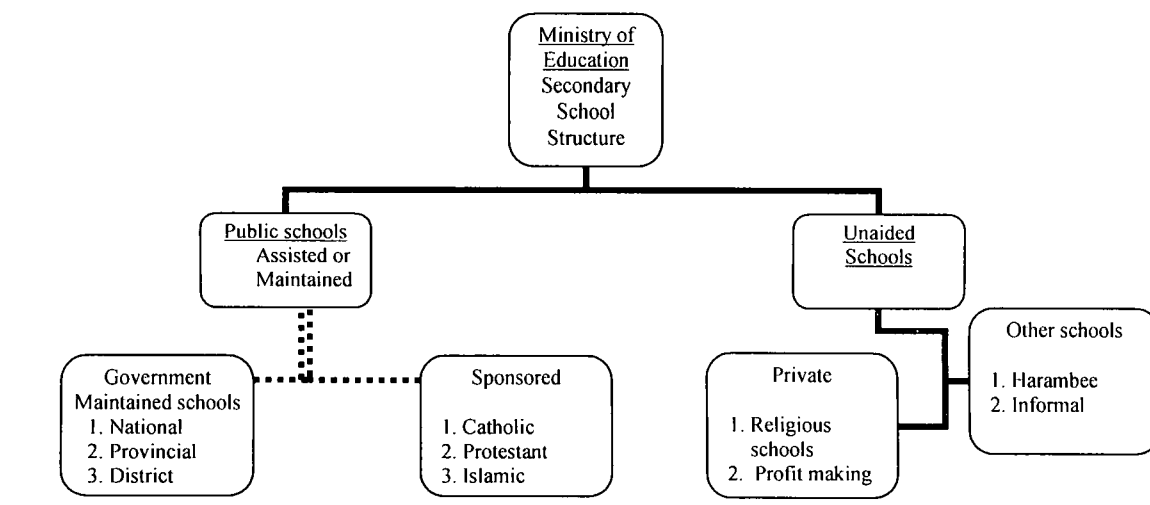


Figure 1 Structure of the Education System in Kenya

Government maintained schools are further classified into: National, Provincial, and District schools. Some of the public schools are also sponsored by religious organizations. A dotted line is used to indicate that the distinction being made here is only conceptual since distinguishing government maintained schools is not as easy or as black and white as indicated here. However, it is helpful to note that all sponsored schools are public schools, but not all public schools are sponsored schools. The list of religious sponsors provided is not exhaustive as other possible sponsors such as the Hindu and African independent churches do exist. However, the three sponsors named are considered the main ones (see definition section for a description of these schools, pp. 24-28).

According to the *Education Act of 1968*, the Minister of Education is at the same time the overall manager of unaided schools. The act states clearly that: where the application is made for the registration of an unaided school, the minister shall cause the school to be provisionally registered for a period of 18 months. He must be satisfied that: (a) the establishment of the school is consistent with the needs of Kenya and the economical and efficient use of public education; (b) the premises are suitable and adequate, having regard to the number, ages and sex of the pupils who are to attend the school; and (c) the manager is a suitable and proper person to be the manager of the school (Education Act, 1968, p. 11).

This group of unaided schools can further be classified into Harambee and Informal schools. Harambee is a Swahili word for “pulling together.” This means that after identifying its greatest needs, be it in putting up a school, a hospital or a cattle dip the community comes together to mobilize its financial, technical, and moral energies to put up the desired project. Informal schools on the other hand are schools mainly started by religious congregations such as Salesians, and Brothers of Mercy aimed at teaching a non-formal curriculum such as technical training.

Statement of the Problem

This search for a new paradigm for CASAN as they step into the 21st century cannot afford to wish away daunting challenges appearing on the horizon. Future planning and development of a school system such as CASAN must be cognizant of challenges appearing on the horizon if it is to be successfully

managed. The challenges include addressing issues such as: what role CASAN should play in helping to spur Kenya's economic growth. What policies should institutions that were inherited from colonial and missionary times undertake in order to reform? Should the schools continue to keep the same policies they have had 50 years after independence, or should they be compelled to change? How should African countries and school systems deal with international funding agencies that prescribe certain conditionalities that do not allow investment in education to happen? These are contemporary issues that Catholic schools in Kenya must deal with today. The following commentary from one of Kenya's leading daily newspapers highlights this further:

Now we have it on the authority of the Minister for Education, Prof. George Saitoti that the government is broke and cannot, therefore, give lecturers and professors at the country's public universities a pay increase.... Saitoti had not been candid and sincere in his handling of the strike by lecturers and professors....In our view, Saitoti should have from the beginning told the lecturers and professors that there is a World Bank conditionality which ties the hands of the government when it comes to the matter of increasing the salaries of public service personnel. That is the bitter and naked truth...*the* government either complies with that condition or goes against it and faces sanctions. ("What Saitoti Should Have Told Lecturers," 2004)

Catholic schools cannot avoid dealing with such issues since they, too, have financial and curricula responsibilities in education. To go back to the

discussion on CASAN, it can be argued that within the history of Catholic education in Kenya are two images: that of success, and that of failure. The success image is seen at the beginning of every school year when happy faces of school administrators, students, and parents from Catholic schools appear in newspapers and on television stations throughout the country as schools celebrate their success in examinations. Success in most Catholic schools is usually attributed to strong discipline and religious traditions of these schools.

The second image is that of failure. This image is scandalous since “year-in, year-out, after four years of teaching and training, less than 10 per cent of those who go through Kenya’s education system ‘pass’ sufficiently to make their school days count in future” (Makokha, 2004). Failure in examinations often carries with it the added burden of locking students out of well paying jobs as students carry with them, this failure tag for the rest of their lives. According to the Koech Education Commission (Koech, 1999) that had been constituted to evaluate the country’s educational system:

The current curriculum has not fully achieved the objectives of education as it has failed to provide sufficient knowledge and skills for the learners to be self-reliant and employable. It has failed to inculcate values and ethics, and the capacity for critical thinking and innovation. It has also not succeeded in fully addressing the developmental needs of the country. (p. 25)

These two images create some ripple effects on the Catholic school system. Success on one hand creates an insatiable demand for vacancies in

Catholic schools from both Catholic and non-Catholic families. While talking about this scramble for available space in Catholic schools, Giardino (2000) reports on his travels to Africa that, "I noted that a significant issue for teachers in their relationship with the school and its administrators is asking for help in getting relatives placed in the school" (pp. 25-26). As a former Catholic school educator, the researcher can confirm that student placement within CASAN is a constant problem that administrators have to face because of this perceived success.

Failure, on the other hand, leads schools including Catholic ones to entropy. The tragic events of July 13, 1991, at St. Kizito mixed boarding high school reported below explains this context more clearly. On that day, 19 girls were burned to death while 17 others were left for dead by a group of marauding boys from the same school. The task force on student discipline documents this and reports that:

Lately the concern has been changing in nature, characteristics and increase of the number of schools experiencing students' unrest....

Between 1980 and 1990, the number of schools experiencing student unrest had increased tremendously from 22 (0.9%) to 187 (7.2%). These figures comprised the known and the recorded cases and perhaps the number of schools that had experienced unrest could have been higher.

Tragically, the nature of student unrest took a new dimension as happened at St. Kizito Mixed secondary school...to address this national tragedy

H.E (*His Excellency*) the President Daniel Arap Moi, appointed the

Presidential Committee on Student Unrest and Indiscipline in Kenyan Secondary Schools. (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001, p. 6)

It is clear that Catholic educators will need to deal with this ugly image of schools that breeds the cycle of violence and decay. It seems that these leaders have no choice but to decide to break away from past colonial and missionary pedagogies that have led to the existence of an elitist education where a few students succeed in life while the majority are classified as failures. A search for a new education paradigm that could minimize the negatives and increase the positives in an age where the culture of violence and destruction has had a foothold among the youth is a necessity today. This is why the late Pope John Paul II's (1995) exhortation to Africans that they must look inside their continent for the traditions and values that can help liberate Africa is considered a timely call.

Such incidents of violence were not only destructive but were also premeditated and planned to cause maximum harm to human life (Ministry of Education and Science and Technology, 2001). It seems therefore that Catholic educators in Nairobi have no choice but to take St. Kizito's traumatic case as a wake up call. They must no longer remain ambivalent to new ideas with the potential to change the failing school systems into becoming models of excellence. It is hoped that this research will awaken policymakers and stakeholders in Catholic education: students, teachers, parents, administrators to

strive to become communities of collaborative workers who desire to achieve the goals of Catholic education.

Buetow (1988) distinguishes two goals of Catholic education, proximate and ultimate. He describes ultimate goals to be the goals that remain constant and unchanging and are at the center of a person's union with God. Proximate goals, on the other hand, are those goals that hold true for all students regardless of race, culture or religious affiliation. These are more flexible and usually reflect the changing needs and demands of society (p.78). It is these latter goals in Catholic education that educators can change as they reform their educational systems, for doing so does not essentially alter authentic Catholic doctrine.

According to Zukowski (1997), the purpose of education especially in a Catholic school, is not to transfer knowledge but to create environments and experiences that bring students to discover and construct knowledge for themselves, to make students members of communities of learners who make discoveries and solve problems. Njoroge (1999), on the other hand, questions contemporary Catholic schools in Kenya and in this case, those in the Archdiocese of Nairobi on whether they fulfill the goals of Catholic education. He asserts that "The Catholic school system is now being tested on how effectively it has achieved the critical and dialogical aims of evangelization" (p. 251). It is no longer tenable for schools to call themselves Catholic since "it is important to determine the degree of Catholicity of each 'Catholic' school. One can no longer take for granted that schools called St. John or St. Mary's are Catholic" (Buetow, 1985, p. 67).

Taking a cue from these three scholars, the researcher used a focus group interview method to test Njoroge's theory as extrapolated from his book; *A Century of Catholic Endeavor* (1999, p. 254). Njoroge's theory postulates that Catholic Christians in Kenya are abandoning the Catholic Church in large numbers in order to join charismatic assemblies, yet a majority of them have been educated in Catholic schools. If such a claim is true, then the Catholic school system in Kenya stands indicted for not doing its job. It has not only let itself down by not educating and training students to become critical thinkers, but it has also let down the Church in its evangelization mission. This failure by CASAN to achieve the desired goals of Catholic education is considered to be the core research problem of this study.

The rest of the study is devoted to achieving two things. First, to investigate the cause(s) of this failure and thereafter, to provide a thick description of the condition of Catholic high schools in Nairobi. The knowledge base created after listening to the "voices" of stakeholders of Catholic education in Nairobi is reported in chapters 4 to 6. Second, it is hoped that policymakers and stakeholders such as bishops, priests, parents, principals, students, and members of school boards in Nairobi will make good use of the findings, implications, and recommendations found in chapter 7. When this knowledge is used with caution, it has the potential to empower policy shapers to make informed decisions concerning the type of Catholic schools to emphasize in the Archdiocese of Nairobi in the 21st century.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following three research questions:

1. What do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya?
2. What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical, and evangelization goals of education?
3. What do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals of education?

The above three questions provide the general themes around which eight focus group type of questions were derived. These other eight questions were helpful in breaking down the research questions into simpler and understandable forms that could be used by participants in the focus group dialogues. Listening to the voices of stakeholders in Catholic schools in Nairobi helped the researcher to gather the relevant data that helped to compile the reports and implications found in chapters 4 through 7. It is this researcher's hope that readers of this study will be more empowered to plan for an educational system that befits Catholic students in the 21st century in Nairobi.

These focus group questions were designed to help the researcher discern from the shared meanings held by stakeholders in Nairobi, the type of Catholic school system(s) that the Archdiocese would need in the 21st century. From participants' responses, the researcher expected to find which of the three main

types of Catholic schools namely: sponsored, parochial and private, fulfilled best not only the cognitive and normative goals of education, but also the dialogical and evangelization goals as well (Njoroge, 1999).

Answering these questions was crucial to finding out whether the overarching educational concerns on whether African schools including Kenyan ones be they be private or public, were providing students with an education that was relevant to the needs of African youth in the 21st century. Because of this concern, it was necessary to use postmodern discourses of critical pedagogy and liberation theology in this study in order to evaluate whether CASAN was indeed helping students to navigate the complex moral world in which they lived. Bassey (1999) poignantly states the need to do this in his book *Western Education and Political Domination in Africa: A Study in Critical and Dialogical Pedagogy*. He states that:

Education of most worth for Africans in the twenty-first century would be the type of education that produces informed citizens who are capable of making intelligent decisions about everyday problems. This type of education must make a person think for him/herself. This is the type of education Paulo Freire calls education for critical consciousness. (Bassey, 1999, p. 115)

Significance of the Problem

From all the aforementioned the researcher asks, why should anyone care about this study and the implications it will provide? Many reasons abound as to why this kind of study on CASAN is so important today. First, it is now generally

accepted that we live in a complex moral world where things are no longer black and white but they exist in a fluid state. Against a backdrop of the results of the year 2004 K.C.S.E (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education) examination that will shortly be discussed, Catholic schools need to ask themselves hard questions about the long-term implications of their existence. A complacent contentment with that year's and other years' academic results would be a fatal mistake for them since the researcher believes that at the moment, these results provide more questions than answers to Catholic educators (see chapter 2 for a fuller discussion of these results).

Avoiding, resisting, or postponing change or reform in organizations; whether in business or in religiously affiliated institutions such as Catholic schools, invites decay or entropy that is a complete disintegration of these organizations. Though change is often a slow and painful process, it is always preferable that educators should allow this process of change to take place because only then can something beautiful be born. So, instead of running away from the problems, or passing the "buck" to others, or procrastinating and wishing that the problem would go away, Catholic educators need to embrace the reform process more vigorously. This is because becoming proactive rather than reactive to change forces ensures that unforeseen difficulties are handled in a timely fashion before they become major problems (Fullan, 1999).

Unfortunately, most organizations including those in the Catholic Church are guided by classical theory which promotes a top-to-bottom decision-making process (Hanson, 2003). The researcher uses the term unfortunate because this

hierarchical model is based on an assumption that subordinates have little to offer to their supervisors. As such, it is difficult for leaders at the top of the hierarchy to gain new knowledge, or insights, from other organizational members, especially those in low-level positions. The continued deployment of a classical communication model should be challenged in Catholic schools because collaborative decision-making strategies are generally preferred in modern organizations.

While it is understandable that Catholic school leaders in Nairobi might fear to institute deep changes in their school system(s), these fears must first be confronted. The researcher acknowledges that a genuine concern in instituting structural, pedagogical and cultural changes in schools does exist. This is because such changes could cause Catholic schools to lose the financial support previously received from the government. However, as this study will reveal, such fears and concerns, though real, must not be allowed to cloud the leaders' vision to initiate authentic Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. Catholic leaders can take consolation from Franklin Roosevelt's words that there is nothing to fear other than fear itself. Furthermore, leadership can be taken as the art of overcoming the fear to take risks (Quinn, 1996).

Heft (2000) recognizes the dilemmas that Catholic school leaders continue to confront when they are faced with the choice between traveling the old road(s) using old maps, and traveling the same road(s) using new ones. His question, "How could I emphasize the value of tradition without seeming to impose from the past ideas that appear irrelevant to the present?" (p. 204), is an old question

that educational leaders including those in Nairobi must continue grappling with today. This is a question that seeks understanding because educators must ask themselves whether a point of intersection does exist between the old and the new practice. That is, whether there was room for schools to keep some or all the old ways and traditions of the past; while on the other hand, the schools would need to discard the old as they adapted new ways and traditions. In other words, this age-old question wishes to find out whether the shedding off of some of the past values, norms and cultures could end up destroying the essential identity of Catholic schools in Nairobi today. For this matter, it is important, for Catholic educators to discern what is essential in Catholic schools and could be changed and that which is not so essential and can be discarded without necessarily causing major upsets within CASAN.

This study is not meant to extol Africa's past as though the researcher wishes to return Africa to its "good old days" for indeed, such a return is neither desirable nor feasible. However, the researcher believes that Africa's future is inextricably connected to its past and present conditions and until such a time when this connection will be adequately understood, all efforts to bring the continent on the same page with the rest of the world will falter. Though it is still unclear how this vision for Africa can be achieved, the researcher postulates that one way of doing this is through schools and this is where Catholic schools come in. At the moment, this school system seems to be the only clear and most capable socializing agent that can offer a window of opportunity to do the kinds of things that need to be done to change Kenya's society for the better.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, because the research data were collected within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Nairobi, it can be expected that the findings will be more applicable or meaningful to policymakers in Nairobi. The need to analyze the three types of Catholic schools in Nairobi in order to determine which one of them best fulfills the goals of Catholic education, has indeed been a discussion that policymakers in Nairobi needed to engage in. As Ryan (2003) pointed out, “postcolonial period [especially in Africa] still maintains forms of exploitation and manipulation. Anti-imperialism continues to characterize the twenty-first century activist movements against global economic systems” (p. 23). It was necessary that Catholic educators in the 21st century become activists to advocate a new education paradigm in Nairobi that is free from colonial and imperialist ties such as the one in place.

Assumptions and Limitations Underlying the Study

Having worked for 4 years within the Catholic school system in Kenya, first, as a counselor and as a teacher in a Catholic sponsored girls’ high school, and later on as the Assistant Catholic School Superintendent in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, this researcher brings some unique insights and experiences concerning Catholic education in Nairobi to this study. However, critics may choose to see these experiences as being a major handicap of this study since they can claim that the researcher is one sided and hence is unable to be as objective as would have been expected of him. The researcher accepts the fact that even though he continuously labored to remain as objective as he possibly could, such a critique

that his familiarity with the Catholic school system prevents him from seeing the bigger picture of schools in Kenya could have some validity. From upfront, the researcher would however wish to state at this point that he continuously endeavored to challenge these taken-for-granted assumptions on public and Catholic schools. After all, he himself is a graduate of both public and private schools.

Another major assumption he makes which may also be seen as a limitation in this study, is that he assumes that no significant educational reforms in Kenya have been made within the last 7 years he has been out of the country that could threaten to make his findings obsolete. This is a big assumption to make since a newly elected and more democratic government that potentially desires to change things for the better, has since been elected in Kenya over 4 years ago. The fear that the findings of this study will soon become obsolete need not to be felt. This is because recent comments by education critics such as Barrack Muluka who has been in the country all this time that the researcher has been away, do support the major propositions of this study. Muluka for instance wonders why “forty-one years after independence, education remains firmly under foreign control, irrelevant to national aspirations and without liberating value?” (Muluka, 2004).

Definitions

1. Sponsored school: The 1968 Education Act explains that sponsored schools, are those schools that were formerly managed by a church, or by

an organization of churches. Because of the wish of the communities served by such schools that the religious traditions of the said schools be respected, the former manager(s) have now been appointed by the local authorities to become sponsor(s) of the schools. Together with that:

- a) The Teacher Service Commission (TSC), or any agent of the Teacher Service Commission which is responsible for the assignment of teachers to schools, shall assign teachers to the school after consultation with and, so far as educational standards at the school and the economical use of public funds, in agreement with the sponsor.
- b) The sponsor shall have the right to use the school buildings free of charge, when the buildings are not in use for school purposes, after giving reasonable notice of his intention to do so to the principal of the school; provided that any additional expenses and the cost of making good any damage incurred during or in consequence of the sponsor using the buildings shall be defrayed by the sponsor.
- c) Religious instruction shall be given at the school in conformity with a syllabus prepared or approved under regulation made under section 19 after consultation with the sponsor.

- Section 19 states that, the minister may make regulations with respect to the conduct and management of schools and such regulations may: provide for the preparation and approval of

curricula, syllabuses, books and other educational materials.

(Education Act, 1968, pp. 4-14)

2. Assisted school: A school other than a maintained school. This school receives financial assistance from the ministry or from the TSC.
3. Maintained school: A school for which the ministry or a local authority accepts general financial responsibility for maintenance.
4. School: An institution in which not less than 10 pupils receive regular instruction.
5. K.C.S.E: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education is a terminal national examination taken by all secondary school students at the end of their 4 years of high school education. It determines the selection of students for the next level of education in college or university and is regulated by an external national examination board: Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC).
6. Development: Development and learning are intertwined (Collins & O'Brien, 2003, p. 103). This term as commonly used in this study expresses a series of interconnected relationships such as: industrial, social, cultural, as well as economic. The researcher argues that these two concepts must "conspire" and work together in order for the integral development of the human being to be achieved; in mind, soul and body. This understanding of development is closely related to the "development contextualism theory" described by Frabutt (2004). Development contextualism theory posits that human development results from

changing relations between organismic (biological) and environmental (contextual) levels of organization. Developmental contextualism has three key themes. First, individuals are the producers of their own development. Second, development is a lifespan phenomenon and finally, development must be focused on the context (pp. 213-214).

7. Focus groups: Carefully planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. The discussions are relaxed, comfortable, and often enjoyable for participants as they share their ideas and perceptions (Krueger, 1988, p. 18).
8. Paradigm: According to Kuhn, the term paradigm draws attention to what can be described as “revolutionary changes.” The term paradigm refers to our total view of a problem. It refers to a total outlook, not just a problem in isolation (Hills, 1982, p. 213). A paradigm according to Collins and O’Brien (2003) is a set of beliefs accepted without question and used as a frame of seeing the world. It dictates one’s reasons for doing research because essentially, a paradigm reflects a particular way of viewing the world that includes what one believes are reality, knowledge, inquiry, truth, and relationships.
9. Paradigm shift: This occurs when one way of looking at the world is replaced rapidly by another, a decision made outside the bounds of evidence (Collins & O’Brien, 2003, p. 257).

10. Dialogue: Is the examination of collective thinking. It moves upstream to where belief systems reside so that people explore what is important and what needs the focus of our attention.

The crisis of meaning we experience in organizations today is becoming a strong catalyst for searching out new ways we can infuse our places of work with vitality. Dialogue at essence is about the search for new meaning. It meets the call of our times and is a powerful process of change. (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998, p. 7)

11. Critical and dialogical goals of education: Education that is of most worth must be such that it is able to produce students who are active inquirers capable of making intelligent decisions about their everyday problems. This type of education must make students become thinkers. Though grounded on liberal education, such an education must be accompanied by the development of critical thinking skills. A critical thinker is one who is willing to explore, take risks, invent, invest, and create opportunities for others who are less fortunate. Dialogue on the other hand is constructive. It enables students to construct knowledge for themselves, to transform social relations in the classroom, and raise awareness. It teaches students inquiry skills so that they gain self-awareness of their condition while also empowering them at the same time (Bassey, 1999, pp. 116-117).
12. School prefects or captains: These are students who have either been elected by other students or selected by the school's administrators to help in the administration of the school. Captains typically help to maintain the

discipline and cleanliness within the dormitories and also organize their dormitories for athletic or games competitions. Prefects on the other hand are often in charge of the overall discipline and organization of the entire student body. According to Okumbe (1998), students do “form an integral part of the human resource development program” in a school. As such, it is important that “a number of students should be appointed to positions of leadership such as prefect and captain” (p. 237). Captains and prefects provide educational managers and students with an important link. The presidential task force appointed to study the question of student indiscipline and unrest in secondary schools in Kenya in the year 2001, observed that students were often not involved in the selection of these prefects and captains and this created the possibility of the appointment of unpopular students, hence rendering them ineffective. “In some cases the students appointed as prefects were academically weak and were therefore unable to cope with added responsibility.” This task force recommended that students being considered for this appointment should be: academically above average, be honest, fair, respectful, obedient, firm and consistent, be active in co-curricular activities and should exhibit leadership qualities (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 40).

13. Polytechnics: These are technical colleges that were started in the early 1960s and 1970s by the government in order to provide professional and technical training to young high school graduates in order to make them useful citizens. These were also aimed at helping the young people fill the

manpower gap in both public and private sectors (Eshiwani, 1993).

According to Bogonko (1992), it was felt that it was necessary that a second level of education for high school students be provided so that the country could produce enough middle and high level manpower to serve the needs of industry and commerce.

14. C.U: Christian Union is a club or organization that brings together high school and college students usually from Evangelical and other Protestant denominations to evangelize within and sometimes outside the school.
15. Y.C.S: Young Christian Students is a movement founded in 1920. It is found in many Catholic schools internationally and it uses the method of “seeing, judging and acting” to provide students with an opportunity to critically and creatively deal with contemporary issues affecting their communities.
16. Legionaries: The Legion of Mary or “legionaries” is a Catholic lay movement founded in 1921. It aims at developing the spiritual life of students and others.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review chapter is divided into three parts. Part one discusses the historical journey that Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi (CASAN) have traveled from traditional education to the present. Part two deals with what some of the researchers and Church documents have said about the identity of Catholic schools and its goals of education. Part three describes the researcher's considered reflections on four possible interventions that if adopted, have the potential to make Catholic education in Nairobi not only unique, but also relevant and enjoyable to its student population in the 21st century.

PART I

From Past to the Present History of Education in Kenya

Three research questions guide the writing of this section of the literature review. These are: what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical, and evangelization goals of education? What do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals of education? To provide comprehensive answers to these research questions concerning CASAN, it is important to retell in some ways, the story of education in Nairobi, Kenya, and Africa in general. In hindsight, however, it must be understood that Africa is a large continent with diverse cultures, religions, educational philosophies, social lifestyles, and economic and political systems. As

such, making general statements about Africa is therefore problematic. However, historical similarities about the general trends of education in Africa and how they affect the continent exist. These provide a rich background sufficient for this researcher to make general remarks concerning the state of African education. Nairobi's relationship to Africa has been likened to that of a part to the whole.

For that matter, part one of this literature review discusses how Catholic schools have gradually evolved from traditional education to their present state. This first part is divided into five sections. The first section discusses traditional education in Africa. In this part, the philosophical arguments on whether the future of African education should take a backward or forward-looking strategy is discussed. The second section, "False Steps Made by Colonialists and Missionaries in Kenya," traces the genesis of five false steps identified by the researcher that these two groups of "visitors" to Africa made. In the third part, the researcher discusses the long and winding journey towards the establishment of the first Catholic mission school(s) in Nairobi or Kenya. The researcher revisits the issue of Catholicity of Catholic schools in Kenya in part four; he makes the fourth part the necessary connection between what has so far been said and the three research questions. In the fifth part, the researcher analyses the dual nature/images of Catholic education in Kenya today; the implications of the academic results for the year 2004 at best show some mixed blessings for Catholic schools in the country.

Traditional Education in Africa

“It takes a village” to raise a child is a slogan that has now been popularized by Hillary Rodham Clinton in her book by the same title. This ancient pedagogic method of raising and educating young people into becoming responsible citizens of their countries has been practiced for generations in Africa. In their handbook *Whither and How* of 1982, the Catholic bishops of Kenya express the various agencies that were used in traditional education to raise the young:

The traditional school in Africa was the home, the village meeting, puberty initiation groups, ceremonies and major social functions. In each of these, religion was a natural component. Beliefs in God, ancestral spirits, the living and the living dead, the unborn ethics, morality and so forth were dealt with as important elements of social life. The modern school can do no less. (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 1982, pp. 23-24)

According to the above quotation from the bishops, young people received information and formation relevant to a harmonious living with sometimes very harsh environments from adults. Rites of passage and ceremonies were not only used to teach and learn ethical and moral issues, but were also used to teach and learn the necessary skills needed in order to survive the harsh elements of life. Traditional education played the role of socializing individuals so that they could fit and participate adequately in the development of society (Eshiwani, 1993). This is what the bishops yearn that contemporary schools should continue doing for the young people in Kenya.

Though informal in nature, traditional education was at the same time holistic in its approach, for it did not compartmentalize young people's life into school and general life outside the school. This education was at the same time functional, egalitarian and all-inclusive (Bassey, 1999), for the young learned in unrestricted environments. As the young people advanced on the ladder towards mature adult life, they received a more personalized education that allowed them to learn appropriate skills necessary in adult life (Sicherman, 1995).

Because traditional education was holistic in nature, the teaching of religion and culture went hand in hand. Such traditional African values must not be seen as being outmoded but rather as important building blocks towards having a modern African life (Olupona, 1991). However, Africa is caught between two worlds. On one hand it must discern whether to go back to its good old past as suggested by the Swahili proverb, "mwacha mila ni mtumwa" which translates into, abandoning one's culture makes one a slave; or to follow what Friedman (2004) calls "Glocalization." That is, taking the best global innovations, styles, and practices and melding them with their culture, so that communities or nations do not feel overwhelmed by what needs to be done to become developed.

Africa, like other continents such as Asia, would do well to strike the balance between its old and new ways if it is to avoid being left behind by the rest of the world. A rhetorical question may be asked: how much of its past can Africa afford to lose in order to become "developed" according to the western standards before losing her humanity? Ehusani (1991) provides a succinct position on this issue:

We have noted how the forces of Western Civilization are conquering Africa and practically overturning the values without which the people of the continent could not have survived past ages...the African tradition is characterized by an emphasis on community, family and progeny, and that wholesome human relations and hospitality are distinctive marks of the traditional African... however, in their cultural contact with the West, westernized Africans have been too quick to throw away all that was African... this trend must be reversed: Africa must search for its roots as a matter of urgency; Africa must resurrect its humanity...Kenneth Kaunda exclaimed that "the way things are going, Africa may be the last place where man can still be man"! He said that the west may have its technology, and the East its spiritualism, but Africa must rediscover its humanism and cherish it. (pp. 22-23)

Remaining committed to this ideal is a tall order for Africa to fulfill. The researcher believes that while it is true that Africa now has an urgent need to regain its humanism, that call must be balanced by a realism that demands that the continent should on the other hand regain its rightful position in the global village. Finding the right formula to balance these two forces is an on-going project.

Many young people in Africa are today caught in between the two worlds; of the global village, and of the village that raises a child that Hillary Clinton wrote about. Because many of them now live in environments where a multiplicity of languages and cultures is prevalent, especially in the urban centers, it is becoming an urgent call that something be done to arrest the rate of cultural

erosion that many youth experience. This study sees great potential in the kind of education it proposes for schools. It proposes an education that provides students with skills that will make them savvy in meeting the challenges of the new global order.

For this matter, the researcher appreciates the fact that because mass media and technology are now a fact of life to most youth in urban life, this proximity has created room for them to question some of the traditional values. Many of them have today abandoned traditional lifestyles and have adapted the western one. Though their counterparts in the rural areas still retain a lot of respect for the traditional way of life because a majority of them have remained untouched or unspoiled by the western way of life, this situation cannot be expected to last very long. In Kenya for instance, a typical day for an urban teen is very similar to that of an American teen:

He or she might wake up in the morning, put on a school uniform, eat breakfast with the family, and walk or ride to school. After school, an urban teen might change into jeans and a comfortable shirt, eat dinner with the family, and then spend the evening studying, watching TV, or hanging out with friends. For this student's rural counterpart, the day would be similar, except that the community social life still predominates where televisions are scarce, and some days might be spent working in the fields or pastures rather than attending school. (Jennings, 2004, p. 118)

It can be argued that unless some stopgap measures are taken to halt this cultural erosion, the present generation of young Africans risks losing its cultural

capital and identity. As the following recent telephone conversation between the researcher and his mother on the topic of “naming” a yet to be born child indicates, there is much that remains to be done to bring lessons learned in traditional education to our youth in Africa:

Mother: Son, what am I hearing from your Auntie in the city about your advice to your cousin?

Researcher: Mom, I don’t understand what you are asking me, could you please tell me more about what you heard?

Mother: I was told that you have advised her not to name her yet to be born child after your grandfather but to name him after you instead?

Researcher: Mom, I didn’t tell her to do that, she only asked me my opinion on whether it was right for her to name him after me. To which I said that as far as I was concerned, she had every right to name her child whichever way she preferred. It was her choice and not mine to name him this way and whatever her choice, I will respect it as long as it has nothing against Christian or African values.

Mother: Son, you know that you have to talk her out of that. Your grandmother is not going to be happy about it and it is not for your cousin to make her feel sad as though the family did not respect her and our late grandfather.

Researcher: I know that mom. But don’t you think it is about time that we accepted that some of our cultures need to change with time? I know that naming is one of our core cultural norms, but for our young people who are increasingly marrying people from different cultures, isn’t it about

time we allowed them to choose the names they preferred for their children?... I will see what I can do about changing her mind, but I don't promise that she will change it.

To a person living in the western world, the above conversation seems to be an innocuous one and there should be no *shauri*/problem here. After all, one would ask, what is in a name? In any case aren't parents expected to pick the names of their children depending on how sweet the names sounded rather than on philosophical reasons? Not so according to most traditional African communities I know of. For most of them, "a name means much more than an identification mark, and serves more purposes than a baggage tag. The African name is an important vehicle of cultural identity" (Ehusani, 1991, p. 124).

A name for most African communities confers a personality, an identity, one's destiny and status in society. "An indigenous African name defines the bearer, tells some story about the family of the bearer, carries the parents' aspirations for the future of the bearer, and points to the values of the society into which the bearer is born." (Ehusani, 1991, p. 124). Our analysis of this partial telephone conversation is that, while it is important on one hand to respect traditional community wisdom such as the naming system and what it stood for in Africa, one cannot help but empathize with young people who no longer feel that they must geographically and historically be bound by cultural norms of yesteryear. Future scholars must conduct further studies on these and similar issues so that traditional norms and values such as the African respect for progeny

and family that have been the hallmark of the African way of life do not become extinct as a result of acquiescing to western cultural norms and values.

The present condition of the African youth can only be described as being enigmatic. At this point, it would be good to recall the distinction that Banks and Banks (2001) make concerning cultural boundaries and borders. These two scholars suggest that people should treat cultural differences as cultural borders and not as cultural boundaries. "The presence of conflict depends on whether cultural difference is being treated as a boundary or as a border... a cultural boundary refers to the presence of some kind of cultural difference while a border is a social construct that is political in origin" (Banks & Banks, 2001, p. 40). When culture is treated as a cultural border, it becomes a point of contact but when seen as a boundary, it becomes a point of demarcation where no one can cross his or her line. This study will explore curricula proposals that have the potential to give students within CASAN, necessary cultural capital to help them function adequately on the national and global platforms in their future.

The next section grapples further with the issue of why the colonial era despite its numerous "progressive changes" still remains the single most important variable that explains the massive systemic failures that prevent Africa and for that matter Kenya to progress. Through a series of missed opportunities, the researcher explains the hidden layers of false steps that provide the *raison d'être* of this failure to bring "development." This section establishes the background and the context of the study essential to explaining the need for educational reform in Kenya or Nairobi today.

False Steps Made by Colonialists and Missionaries in Kenya

Had the missionaries who came to settle in Africa entertained the notion that a harmonious coexistence between African cultures and Christianity was possible; much progress beneficial to establishing authentic African and Christian communities would have been made (Eshiwani, 1993; Nelson, 1983). Instead, most missionaries chose to regard African cultures as obstacles to Christianity though many similarities existed between the two ways of life. For instance, the Christian rites of initiation such as baptism and confirmation closely resembled at least in intention, traditional rituals and rites of passage among Africans. This failure to recognize the presence of a form of worship that would have greatly assisted in missionary evangelizing efforts led to an unfair branding of African beliefs and practices as evil (Mutua, 1975). This to the researcher was the first false step that was made by missionaries in Africa.

While Christianity taught about the existence of the spiritual world and the communion of saints in heaven on one hand, Africans, on the other, believed in a spiritual world. Missionaries chose to see this nebulous world of spirits as the source of magic and divination, witchcraft and sorcery which according to them, had to give way to the God of Jesus Christ who operated through his Holy Spirit (Njoroge, 1999, p. 54). Jomo Kenyatta, among others, has argued that missionaries and colonialists who came to Africa, came with the wrong motives and methods (Nelson, 1983). This researcher briefly revisits the history of where

things began to go wrong in Africa, for he believes that in delineating those false steps, tentative solutions that may resolve the African dilemma may be found.

When the history of East Africa is revisited, a surprising thing is discovered. By the time European missionaries came to Africa around the 15th century, a sophisticated group of Africans was already living in African cities along the East African coast and were conducting trade with other nations of the world, especially the Arabs from Oman (Baur, 1994). Though the Arabs were the first to establish trading with Africans and hence should take the first blame for making the African cities gaze towards the Indian Ocean rather than the interior of Africa to do business, European colonialists and missionaries coming much later encouraged them and therefore, take culpability, too. This is because rather than discouraging this outside gaze for help and encouraging intra-African trade as part of the solution to African problems, Europeans accelerated this gaze not only to the Indian Ocean but also to Europe; hence creating a burdensome dependence on outsiders for development (Baur, 1994).

The European missionaries and colonialists take blame, too, because their policies were not only geared towards enriching Europe at the expense of Africa, but they introduced a form of "monoculture trade," that is, a trade that encouraged dependence on one cash crop for export. This again perpetuated Africa's dependence on outside markets for the creation of wealth despite the fact that the continent had vast natural resources it could tap to develop itself (Rodney, 1982). Africans became producers of raw products for export to metropolitan cities in

Europe while they themselves became recipients of finished products processed in Europe and often sold to them at higher prices (Baur, 1994).

The British colonial office was not only indifferent to the development of the manufacturing industries in the colonies but was also hostile to such requests. For instance, wealthy Asians in Kenya wishing to establish textile factories in the country were repeatedly denied this right by the colonial office in London. This was because Britain considered the development of colonial manufacturing capabilities a significant threat to British products in the home market (Ochieng', 1990). Europe refused adamantly to transfer technology to Africa even when Africans specifically asked for that transfer (Rodney, 1982).

A second false step made at this time was the pressure applied on African leaders by Europe and America in order to continue dominating and underdeveloping Africa. African leaders resisting or rejecting the unfavorable policies made on them were either enticed with material goods or threatened with numerous sanctions. Many of them were also wrongly used by the powers that be in Europe and America to send cheap labor in the form of slaves to their countries in order to generate wealth. Such wrong arm-twisting tactics practiced around the 17th, 18th and part of the 19th centuries (Rodney, 1982), are surprisingly still being used in Kenya today.

Eric Williams makes this connection between slavery, capitalism and Africa's underdevelopment by identifying some of the beneficiaries of this tragic human trade. He presents David and Alexander Barclay as examples of people who were involved in slave trade in 1756. These two later used their monetary

gains to set up Barclay's Bank (as cited in Rodney, 1982, p. 85) which has today become one of the most powerful banking institutions in Africa. The researcher believes that this bank, among many others, continues to be part of the African problem because of its unfair banking practices. Besides keeping its lending and banking rates high, hence pushing the poor farmers and small business people out of its banking halls, this bank's lending rates ensure that the poor never have the opportunity to have a good credit history that would allow them to borrow money to improve their farming or businesses.

It has been claimed that the scramble for Africa was due to racist attitudes that Europeans had about Africans. These attitudes prevented many Europeans from working with Africans as development partners since to them, Africans were inferior human beings needing to be civilized (Nkrumah, 1963; Rodney, 1982). Such a poor perception of a group of people and their continent was another false move. Some historians agree that the only noticeable difference between Africa and Europe at this time was that Europe had become more individualistic while Africa still operated under the communal lifestyle (Ehusani, 1991; Rodney, 1982).

Rodney (1982) in his book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* provides a piercing critique of this dominant relationship between Europe and Africa. According to Rodney, many historians who had surveyed Africa's and Europe's developed areas in the 15th century report that the differences in these continents were in no way to Africa's discredit. The minor distinctions that existed between African kingdoms and those in Europe were differences in developmental stages. Africa was still in the transition stage from traditional to feudal states while

Europe had just left this feudal state and was entering the industrial age. European society had only become “more aggressive, more expansionist and more dynamic in producing new forms” (p. 70) than Africa. It goes beyond the scope of this study to explain the details of how and why the African continent which was the cradle of all humanity, and which had the oldest university even predating Europe, came to lag behind Europe (Rodney, 1982).

The Portuguese missionaries committed the third false step. When these Christians failed to distinguish themselves from the enslaving mistakes committed earlier by the Arabs, their religion lost credibility to propose the gospel of Jesus Christ as containing the message of salvation and liberation of the African people (Njoroge, 1999). The brute force employed by the Portuguese to hold the coastal lands ensured a worsening of their relationship with the local people to a point whereby the locals requested Sultan Sayyid bin Seif of Oman to help them get rid of the Portuguese. After a 33-month siege of Fort Jesus by the proud Oman seafarers, the city of Mombassa fell for the second time to the Arabs on December 13, 1698 (Baur, 1994; Njoroge, 1999).

A more positive and lasting Christian contact that would bring success to missionary efforts in East Africa had to wait until the 18th and 19th centuries when missionaries became aligned with the slaves rather than with the slave owners/traders. The anti-slavery movement was also gaining strength in distant lands so that by 1772, Britain had abolished slavery. Through the efforts of William Wilberforce and the British navy, the African waters were patrolled to ensure that the law against trafficking in slaves was enforced. In the meantime,

Britain continued to exert more pressure on the Sultan of Zanzibar to severely restrict this trade in slaves but the Sultan became reluctant to outlaw the lucrative trade. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Holy Ghost Missions (HGM) used this reluctance as their excuse for beginning missionary work in East Africa. It was now possible for them to claim that they had come to rescue slaves from bondage (Baur, 1994).

This third false step was followed much later by yet another false move by the second group of missionaries to East Africa. This second group established what can be called a “pie in the sky” or otherwise called “spiritualism” religion in Africa. This type of religion aimed at soothing Africans while at the same time destroying their humanity. The acquisition of western civilization including western Christianity became its value trade off for many Africans (Ehusani, 1991). Many Africans, as a result of this, came to lose the taste for locally produced goods and instead acquired new tastes for things produced in Europe.

The fifth and perhaps the most serious false step made by both the colonialists and their missionary agents was felt in the field of education. Though each African region had different colonial administrators and therefore different colonial education policies, this researcher believes that, overall, none of these policies can be said to have been good for Africa. The British with all their variations of colonialism were only slightly better than the French, Belgians, Italians, or Germans in their governance policies. British colonial education goals did not anywhere near provide an education that would allow Africans to challenge traditional or colonial authority (Uchendu, 1979). France, on the other

hand, with the largest colonial territory under its sphere, had policies whose main agenda was to civilize Africans. Civilizing according to the French meant assimilating the Africans under their control to the point where they became more French than Africans, while at the same time creating an African elite class (Nkrumah, 1963; Rodney, 1982).

As for the British, one of their educational goals in Kenya was to educate only a few sons of traditional chiefs and elders so as to safeguard their interests. Another British educational policy at this time was to implant an education system that would provide differentiated educational goals to the various racial groups in the country. This type of education ensured that Africans were allocated subordinate roles in the colonial system. Lord Lugard had stated that, "the education of sons of native rulers is particularly desirable in order to avoid the present danger of a separate educated class in rivalry with accepted rulers of the people" (Uchendu, 1979, pp. 2-3).

These kinds of education policies planted the seeds of present day difficulties found within the Kenyan education system. It is noted that right from the beginning, the British colonial education intended to play favorites among Africans. It ensured that only a selected number of students from the ruling families in Africa would continue with schooling while the remaining large masses of people were educated to do menial work (Bassey, 1999; Uchendu, 1979) such as that of clerks, interpreters, catechists and other junior fellows (Muluka, 2004). These kinds of policies are the genesis of the elitist education system that continues to be implanted among Catholic schools in Kenya today.

From all the above, it can be concluded that colonial governments in Africa had only one desire; namely, to enrich themselves at the expense of their colonies (Nkrumah, 1963, p.18).

According to Kenyatta (1938), missionaries took for granted the genuine African hospitality they received. They came with an attitude that believed that Africans were “*tabula rasa*” or clean slates on which new values could be written. “Many white men especially missionaries, landed in Africa with preconceived ideas for what they would find there and how they would deal with the situation” (Kenyatta, 1938, p. 269). As for the Africans who were meeting the Whites for the first time, a great sense of wonder and intrigue surrounded the encounters. Different ethnic groups reacted differently. Among the Kikuyu people, their prophets such as Mugo wa Kiburu, had prepared them for what was about to happen. Mugo had warned them to receive the “strangers” with guarded indifference that would allow them to learn the “White man’s” secret knowledge. Unfortunately, by the time Africans realized what the Whites were doing or looking for in their country, it was too late for, “the white man had imperceptibly acquired more land to meet the growing needs of his position” (Ngugi, 1966, p. 12). By the time the Africans lifted their eyes from prayers, they suddenly saw a long line of “red faced” strangers who carried not the bible but the sword because while they were busy praying, the white man as busy taking his land away (Ngugi, 1966).

The combined effects of these false steps in colonial and missionary education continue to be felt in most of Africa today, especially as traditional

values and cultures continue to be destroyed. Colonial and missionary schools educated students to be dissatisfied with their way of life and to believe that good students were recognized by their quiet voice as they spoke gently like priests in the church. Students were forcefully discouraged from expressing their inner true feelings (Odinga, 1967). Ngugi (1986) calls this impact of colonial education on Africans a cultural bomb. He believes this bomb was the root cause of Africa's myriad problems of devaluation:

The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves; for instance, with other people's languages rather than their own. (p. 3)

In short, Africans, as individuals and as communities, quickly began to give up their way of life and to take up foreign lifestyles. Because many of them were denied the knowledge of their past and they were informed that they had no present, many Africans came to regard their culture and traditions as barbarous and primitive (Nkrumah, 1963). Africa, in short, was taught to regard everything African as bad and everything European as good. In this way, schools were used as tools of subversion of the African minds in this attempt to Europeanize Africans.

European educators had made elaborate steps to “Europeanize” African students. Through the high schools and universities they established, African students became indoctrinated to become ashamed of their tribes and where they came from. At Alliance High School – the premier high school in Kenya for a long time, boys were systematically conditioned to disassociate themselves from the very people who had brought them up and who were now sacrificing on their home farms to earn their school fees (Sicherman, 1995). On completing high school education at Alliance High School, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, the most renowned literature scholar from Kenya, went to college at Makerere University in Uganda. When later on in life he reviewed the effect this college education had on him, Ngugi lamented that college education in Africa taught students like him to regard “agricultural work-in fact, anything indigenous, native vocational-as shameful activity or an attempt to keep them subservient” (p. 25).

Various extenuating factors prevented the newly independent African countries from changing the consequences of such false steps in educational policies. For instance, the two neighboring countries of Kenya and Tanzania, which had near or similar colonial experiences, found themselves acting differently to correct problems of this oppressive education. These two countries like many other newly independent ones, needed to demonstrate to their citizens that the new African leadership was equally efficient if not better than the past colonial administration. For this matter, the first leaders of independent African countries struggled not only to maintain the institutions they had inherited but also to improve them. Their African subjects were now thirsting for more education

since they had seen the rewards education brought to those who had had access to it, especially in improving their economic realities (Uchendu, 1979).

Most African countries found themselves in a Catch-22 situation whereby they now had to decide whether to provide mass education or selective education. Neither of these two options was easy to carry out since mass education was handicapped by a general lack of resources while selective education was elitist and therefore problematic. Providing mass education created another problem because instead of helping Africa to develop, mass education became the catalyst responsible for the progressive underdevelopment of the continent. In light of the above, critical questions such as, what kind of education should students be provided with? were now being asked. The irony of the matter according to Uchendu (1979) was that the more the money being spent in education was increased, the less it was doing good to improve education or Africa.

Breaking away from colonial educational structures inherited from the past was an option most newly independent African governments feared to take. This was because there was a general fear to destroy people's faith in the process of education already existing. Tanzania however was able to slightly tinker with its inherited educational system. It was able to incorporate some unique features such as nationalizing the content of its education so that students would find it relevant to their own backgrounds. Tanzania was also able to develop textbooks that had a Tanzanian flavor rather than a British framework. Kenya was not as lucky as Tanzania in breaking away from its past colonial education objectives. Kenya's education was still concerned with academic credentials such as students

performing well on the Cambridge examination. To this day, Kenya still uses this and other similar examinations to determine which students would enter secondary or university colleges for further education. This dependence on national examination in Kenya continues to perpetuate the false steps of colonial and missionary education because the content and orientation of these examinations disproportionately tends to favor students from better endowed schools than those from rural or poor urban areas (Uchendu, 1979).

It is important to mention here that there were some success stories of countries in Africa that were able to break away from their colonial past. Mali and Guinea stand out in this regard. Mali's education reform aimed at offering "an education which decolonizes the mind and rehabilitates Africa and its own values" (Uchendu, 1979, p. 8). Guinea, on the other hand, had an education policy that tried to make all levels of education as practical as possible. On attaining its independence, Ghana examined its education system and found that it needed to plan for a new educational system that would be in keeping with its needs. According to Nkrumah (1963) the colonial education Ghanaians received had trained them to become inferior copies of Englishmen and this made them neither "fish nor fowl." This had to change.

Had the Kikuyu people and their neighboring communities paid more attention to the words of prophet Mugo who had advised that they ought to have received the "strangers" with guarded indifference, perhaps a more equitable distribution of educational resources in Kenyan schools would be experienced today. The researcher suspects that this would be the case because of the weight

that Mugo's words seem to carry if applied today. According to the researcher, it seems that what Mugo was telling his people was that they needed to be receptive of all the new ideas from across the ocean rather than being hostile to them, but they would need to be skeptical about them. He seems to have recognized that there was more to be gained by having positive rather than negative engagements with foreigners from other countries. If this is a true reading of this prophet's message, then it is reasonable to conclude that, accepting the western formal education was part of this ancient prophecy, but the inequalities it breeds was not part of what Africans should have accepted. The next section discusses the long and winding road leading towards establishing the first Catholic school(s) in Kenya. This section discusses some of the joys and hardships experienced by the missionaries in their battle to win the minds and hearts of their hosts.

Journey Towards Establishing the First Catholic High School(s) in Kenya

It is important to understand the structure of this part of the dissertation. This is because the journey towards establishing the first Catholic high school in Kenya is long and winding. Three periods of time can be delineated to explain this journey and why Catholic Christians succeeded or failed to supplant a strong Catholic school system in Kenya. The first phase of the Catholic Christian contact with East Africa miserably failed to entrench Christianity in East Africa due to the fact that Portuguese Catholic Christians were closely identified with slavery. In the next few paragraphs, the researcher discusses the second phase of this Christian contact which happened around the 17th and 18th centuries. This is the

period of time that it became possible to establish Catholic schools. The third phase of Roman Catholic Christian contact with Kenyan culture began in 1965, when the Second Vatican Council opened its doors to new ways of being Church in Africa. Through the process of inculturation, the Catholic Church in Kenya has today experienced exponential growth in terms of numbers of believers joining the church as well as the number of schools identified with the Church. Within this period of time, African Christians have taken great pride in their faith as they now regard themselves as being truly African and truly Christian at the same time.

This second period of Christian contact with East Africa has also been broken down into three missionary journeys towards the Galla people. The first and second missionary journeys towards the Galla were conducted by a Swedish missionary society whose established base was at Kulesa on the Tana River. After making little educational impact in their area of operation, the missionaries decided to give up this effort and therefore, they handed over their work to a German missionary group – the United Methodist Free Church. It is this second group of missionaries who conducted the third journey towards the Galla. This mission coincided with the “Golden period of missionary activity in Africa” in the years 1880 to 1920.

This golden period originated with the industrial revolution and the evangelical revival movement in Europe and America. The industrial revolution created its own social problems, but there was also a greater and more widespread awareness of these problems (Njoroge, 1999). In England, an upsurge in the foundation of missionary bodies, such as the Church Missionary Society (CMS)

was experienced. This London based society sent its lay secretary in 1836 to the Basel Missionary College, a Lutheran institution in Germany, to request missionary workers. There he found a 26-year-old young man named Johann Ludwig Krapf who gladly accepted an appointment to the vacant post on the staff of the Abyssinian mission (Muhoho, 1970).

Krapf worked among the northern Galla tribesmen in Abyssinia (modern Ethiopia) until 1843 when his mission had to close down due to the hostility of the rulers in that country. His Roman Catholic co-workers initiated this hostility out of jealousy. He also believed that French political designs were in the background. Krapf decided to try getting to the Galla another time, but this time from the south. After being granted permission by his superiors in London, he proceeded to the East African coast and arrived in Zanzibar on February 7, 1844. Soon thereafter, he was well received in Mombasa. Unfortunately, his wife and daughter died soon after arriving there (Muhoho 1970), probably after encountering tropical diseases such as malaria.

Another man very important in this endeavor for Catholic schools but who never set his feet in East Africa was David Livingstone, who was born in 1813 to poor and pious parents. Though he studied medicine with the intention of becoming a missionary doctor in China, he ended up coming to Africa instead of going to China. China's loss would soon become Africa's gain. On his journey through Central Africa he observed that intertribal warfare was still being waged to procure slaves. He saw that the Portuguese and Arab slave traders along the coast were still very active in this trade. He came face to face with the misery and

naked cruelty that slavery was inflicting, or rather had inflicted on Africa.

Livingstone was not so naïve as to suppose that it was the Arabs alone who were to blame for this trade. Whenever and wherever he went, he was careful to explain to the local chiefs and the people that the guilt lay as much on the sellers as upon the buyers. He decided to adopt a proactive policy toward this evil if he was to ever succeed in having it abolished at all. He decided to found mission stations that would also be centers for farmers and traders. According to Livingstone, the greatest obstacle to Christianity among Africans was the poverty and ignorance which surrounded them with fear (Muhoho, 1970).

Though Livingstone never set his feet in Kenya, his interest in the African condition in the middle of the 19th century had far reaching implications for missionary policy and practice on the Eastern coast. His legacy was his thinking about Africa's future. When addressing the Senate House at Cambridge in 1857, he put forward the view that Africa's salvation lay in the trinity of Christianity, commerce and civilization (Njoroge, 1999). Livingstone's idea of establishing mission centers for farmers eventually became a good model for early missionaries to copy as they created mission centers in places such as Bagamoyo in Tanzania and Rabai in Kenya.

The establishment of a mission station in Rabai by Krapf and his colleagues did not go well right from the beginning as a result of Krapf's imposition of heavy discipline on the residents there. This caused the situation there to precariously deteriorate to a point whereby the freed slaves decided to hatch and execute a rebellion in the mission station. This was because the freed

slaves saw no difference between their old condition under their former masters and their new condition under the missionaries. At the very same time, Arab Moslems became angry with the few CMS missionaries who were preaching against both Islam and slavery (Njoroge, 1999).

Rabai became the center for the first mission school, which was established in 1846. This first mission school had the training of the African clergy and the spread of the word of God as its main goals. Africans were taught how to read and write so that they could communicate easily with the missionaries and colonial administrators whenever it was found necessary to have interpreters (Eshiwani, 1993).

For the Catholic missionaries, coming to the interior of Kenya was a long journey that began around 1858. This was the year when the idea of establishing a Catholic mission in East Africa came to Leon des Avanchers. Avanchers was a diocesan priest from the island of Reunion and he served many long years in Abyssinia. His missionary zeal made him unpopular because he denounced the Islamic religion. His buying of a slave girl whom he wanted to send back to Reunion to be educated did not go well with people since it made the work of Catholics vulnerable to charges of encouraging slavery (Baur, 1994).

A new priest by the name of Abbe Armand Joseph Fava was sent to Zanzibar to replace Avanchers. He reported to his bishop, who in turn wrote to the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith, that whenever the Suez Canal was going to be opened, East Africa would attract interest from Europe. He advised that a foundation be laid in preparation for that moment. The bishop mentioned to

the Congregation that the Holy Ghost missionaries who possessed a large institution in Reunion were a suitable body to do this kind of work. In reply, the Sacred Congregation granted authority to the bishop to begin missionary work in East Africa and when he had firmly established it, to hand over work to the missionary order (Baur, 1994).

The Holy Ghost Fathers came to succeed the diocesan missionary priests from Reunion. The Holy Ghost Fathers realized immediately the danger of dealing exclusively with the closed African society of freed slaves. They decided to extend their activities to the conversion of more Africans in the open society. According to Mutua (1975), "they hoped to achieve through local evangelism and consequently they set up simple village schools outside their main stations while the mission stations themselves began to admit pupils from their neighborhoods" (p. 21).

As the Catholic and Protestant missionaries began moving their contests for the control of land and people from the coastland into the hinterland, the rivalry reached the Kikuyu people in central Kenya, some 350 miles from the coast. The Islamized coast had been exposed to the Christian message for centuries, first by the Portuguese missionaries and later on by the French Spiritans, and the English CMS, and it was beginning to lose its charm. The missionary future lay in the hinterland, and this would be greatly aided by the completion of the Kenya-Uganda railway in 1901 (Njoroge, 1999). This railway line marked the beginning of a new missionary period that had unbridled

competition in the winning of souls. These competitions among missionaries eventually became unhealthy.

The scramble among these many missionary bodies for supreme influence in different parts of Kenya did not take long before its folly was realized (Eshiwani, 1993). For instance, catechists began to capitalize on these weaknesses by shifting their allegiance from one missionary group to another whenever the need arose; for example, when one was dismissed from employment (Mutua, 1975). Over time, these missionary suspicions of each other's intentions, jealousies, as well as their interdenominational rivalries led the missionaries to fierce competitions that soon outstripped their available resources. As each religious order saw itself in competition with the other for converts, it began to use education unscrupulously in order to advance its interests. Consequently, schools were set up wherever it was thought that a rival denomination was planning to adopt its own system of schools or where Islam was thought to be advancing. Locally trained catechists were recruited to become missionary agents and their presence in a particular area precluded or at least discouraged other orders from settling in that area (Mutua, 1975).

Despite the false steps earlier mentioned, many African communities by this time began to value western education for reasons other than those intended by their educators. After observing their friends and neighbors advancing socially due to the fact that their children had received western education, many Africans began to yearn for the same western education so as to also climb the social ladder as well as migrate from the rural areas to the new urban centers. Many saw

in western education, the secret power to live a White-man's lifestyle (Eshiwani, 1993).

Despite their numerous divisions, the Protestants were forced by circumstances to coordinate and cooperate among themselves in order to achieve their missionary goals. As for the Catholics, despite the fact that they were more united in faith than the rest, they did not see the need to come together to formulate common or national goals. This inaction can partially be explained by the fact that the three Catholic religious communities involved in missionary work at this time; that is, the Holy Ghosts, Consolata, and the Mill Hill Missionaries, had been granted vast territories by a decree from Rome. The Holy Ghosts had been sent to the East, the Mill Hill missionaries to the West, and the Consolata to the Central parts of Kenya. Catholics unlike the Protestants therefore, had no room for conflicts among themselves since their territories were already too vast for the limited personnel. Such limitations made it impossible for the Catholic missionaries to show a lot of interest in what others were doing. Secondly, the national identities of these religious congregations ensured that very little communication went on amongst them; this naturally ensured that they all kept apart of each other (Muhoho, 1970).

Often, the missionaries preferred a policy of positive non-involvement. Such a policy allowed them to remain independent and uninvolved in anything political. They realized that their views on education were different from those of secular government officials. Their fear to join hands with others was natural since they felt that a coordinated effort in education would mean a level of

government control, a restriction many were not ready to accept easily. For these missionaries, "Independence from government control, independence to preserve their rights as missionaries, independence to develop a system with Catholic religious character for Catholic schools was the policy followed in these early years" (Muhoho, 1970, p. 140).

Such independence left the missionaries free to "educate the natives at their own pace and speed" as the introduction to the *Education Syllabus of the Catholic Missions in Kenya Colony* submitted to the Education Department in 1927 suggested. The syllabus written in answer to the question, "What do we mean by the education of the natives?" had stated, "we have expressly avoided putting before the natives book learning as an ideal, for experience has taught us that this would produce a people who despise manual work especially in the field where it is most needed" (as cited in Muhoho, 1970, p. 142). The African people's reaction to this provision that supported substandard education of the "natives" was to start their own independent schools.

The pioneer of Catholic higher education in Kenya was a Dutch priest named Fr. Witte. This priest first started a central training school in Kabaa in 1924, and later on in the same compound started a high school. Kabaa, which later transferred to the present site of Mang'u High School, became the first Catholic high school for African students while St. Mary's School in Nairobi catered to non-African students. The choice to have or not to have a segregated school system was not for the missionaries to make but was a strict requirement enforced by the colonial government. For the Loreto Sisters, their response was to

offer separate girls' high schools for European, Indian, and African students. The Marianist religious congregation took over the running of Mang'u High School in 1961, and after 2 years, started their own high school known as Aquinas High School. Today, the Marianists have disengaged themselves from the management of these two institutions. Why they lost interest in the management of these two schools is something worth finding out. This researcher suspects that this had something to do with the dual nature of the church and state relationship existing within the Catholic school system in Kenya.

From the mission towards the Galla in the 1840s to the establishment of the first Catholic high school at Kabaa in the 1920s, the missionary endeavors explored are replete with stories of great sacrifices, failures and successes. By the time Kenya became independent in the 1960s much had happened that had already begun to change the face of Kenyan education as the following section tries to capture.

Revisiting the Issue of Catholicity of Catholic Schools in Nairobi

It is now important to make a connection between what has so far been discussed and the three research questions: what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical, and evangelization goals of education? What do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals of education? So far, the discussion has revealed that the story of Catholic schools in Nairobi is closely tied to that of public schools in

Kenya. That such a relationship between public and private schools exists may sound strange to the ears of some scholars in western countries. In America for example, the separation of church and state is not only jealously guarded but is also constitutionally mandated.

This researcher's work experience as an administrator and as a teacher in the Catholic school system in Kenya a number of years ago, allows him to conclude that time has come for the separation of church and state at least in the education arena to happen. This conclusion is partially based on his own evaluation of the recent 8-4-4 educational reforms in the country. These reforms in the 1980s to 1990s, which were forced on both public and private schools by the government, have been blamed by the Koech Education Commission of 1999 for their failure to ensure that the country attains its industrial and economic development in the projected time. These reforms revealed that an urgent need for Catholic educators to demand for the separation of church and state in schools had arrived. Unless such independence is achieved, it is difficult to envision a Catholic school system in Nairobi or anywhere else in the country for that matter, that could provide the formation of a student population needed to become the conscience of the society later on in adult life.

Competition among the missionaries in the early years of the 18th century made the scarce resources available to do a good job in the schools thinly overstretched. Since too many schools which should not have been established in the first place were begun, the quality of education was sacrificed on the altar of quantity by both Catholic and Protestant missionaries. These two groups of

missionaries invested heavily in schools for they knew that schools were the most effective means of evangelization. It is noteworthy that “over 90% of the secondary schools in Kenya had been founded by missionaries, mostly Catholic, before independence, and over 60% of the primary schools had church connections” (Njoroge, 1999, p. 233). Such a massive number of schools owned or associated with the church prior to independence ignited a fierce battle between the church and the state in the mid 1960s for their control.

Meanwhile, as this battle raged on, the change from foreign missionary control to local leadership in the schools was causing a major crisis in secondary education in Kenya. Dioceses that were now expected by the Education Act of 1968 to play a major role in equipping schools and colleges associated with them were finding it extremely difficult to fulfill this function in the new environment. While this was going on, religious congregations were also going through a major identity crisis as some of their members were leaving the religious life, which was also causing a major staffing problem in Catholic schools.

The words of Papal Legate Archbishop Arthur Hinsley to African bishops meeting in Dar es Salaam are worth noting, “where it is possible for you to carry on both the immediate task of evangelization and your educational work, neglect your churches in order to perfect your schools.” This counsel to the bishops needs to be revisited again and again in Nairobi since his suggestion that “whoever owns the schools will own Africa” (as cited in Njoroge, 1999, pp. 233-234), would be called prophetic words. This is because schools, especially Catholic

schools, will continue being the principal means of evangelization in the Kenyan society for generations to come.

Because of the scarce numbers of trained personnel available to teach or work in Catholic schools, most religious communities in Nairobi today have disengaged themselves from working in schools. These have chosen to concentrate their work on other pressing pastoral and liturgical functions within the Church believing that the fruits of their labor would be diffused within the ordinary members of society who in turn, will come forward to take up the running of Catholic schools (Njoroge, 1999). Though this is a sad fact of history, the researcher believes that the Church now has a rare window of opportunity to give room to its lay faculty to run some of its institutions such as Catholic schools on its behalf. In order to successfully do that, the Church needs to work extra hard to ensure that this lay faculty gets sufficient education and training. The next section further highlights one of the main problems that CASAN as a school system needs to reflect and deal with if its students are to acquire the evangelical goals of education so that justice and peace for all in their communities will be achieved.

The Dual Images of Catholic Education in Kenya Today

The good and bad news to a cross section of Kenyans every year around the month of March is that the results of the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) do come out. This was the case for many students, parents, teachers and principals on March 1, 2004. Many of them were exhilarated with the good news that their students had passed the previous year's national

examination. However, to many others considered to have failed, the results of this national examination had now become a nightmare to thousands of them and their parents. This was because many of them were now faced with the dilemma that they now had to make new decisions concerning what to do with their lives. Successful students and their parents were now assured of a new beginning in a stress free world since new educational opportunities that would not be available to the “failed” students would soon open in the horizon.

Unsuccessful students and their parents on the other hand had to brace themselves for the bad news. “Out of the 207,000 students who sat the KCSE examinations, only 20,000 *would* be admitted into all the country’s universities yet 50,000 *had* attained the minimum university admission requirement” (“What Saitoti Should Have Told Lecturers,” 2004). These figures raise a number of serious moral questions for educators in Kenya. For instance, educators must be able to answer the question whether these figures (20,000 and 50,000) represent the “real” intelligence of the students or whether they represented the quota that the education system “had to pass” since only a limited number of places were available in the universities and post secondary school colleges.

Secondly, it is important for them to ask themselves what prevents them from expanding university and college level education to match the expansion rate at the secondary level. Finally, since 100,000 plus number of students every year do not get grades that qualify them to join university and other higher education colleges, how do educators account for these numbers? What can they do to prevent such large numbers of students from falling through the cracks?

These are moral questions for which educational leaders in Nairobi today can no longer blame the colonial administrators, 40 years after independence.

For all the stakeholders in education: teachers, principals, school board members, Catholic school superintendents, Provincial Education officers, Ministry of Education officials and even Bishops, these results present yet another chance for some stocktaking on what to do next. As Table 1 disturbingly reveals, these results depict a picture that requires urgent attention. Out of the top 20 best performing schools in the year 2004, 11 (marked by the (✓) sign) were Catholic schools. That is, they were either sponsored, private or parochial schools; three others were associated with religious organizations other than the Catholics.

Something else revealed in these results is that in a country with eight administrative provinces in a unitary system of government, 7 out of the top 10 schools came from two provinces that border each other: Nairobi and Central Provinces. In reality, this is more or less one geographical region since one ethnic group is predominant in this area in a country with more than 40 other ethnic communities.

To the researcher, this shows that this region continues to receive the lion's share of quality education and schools, 50 years after the phase of colonial education and its regional imbalance was supposed to have ended. To think that all this is possible courtesy of the government and the church, makes it reasonable to conclude that a serious flaw exists in Kenya's educational system.

Table 1

Top 20 Performing Schools

Top 20 schools Countrywide	Catholic schools	Other religious schools.	Mean
Precious Blood	√		10.76
Starehe Boys Center			10.54
Kianda School	√		10.51
Strathmore School	√		10.25
Alliance High School		√	10.2
Bahati Girls	√		9.92
Friends School Kamusinga		√	9.9
Mang'u High School	√		9.77
Precious Blood Kilungu	√		9.74
Sunshine Secondary			9.56
Moi Girls' High School			9.54
Pangani Girls High School			9.53
Nguvu Boys High Schools	√		9.44
Lugulu Girl's High School			9.42
Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed		√	9.41
Mary Mother of Grace Boys	√		9.4
Bishop Gatimu Ngandu Girls	√		9.35
Mary Mount Sec. School	√		9.34
Kenya High School			9.24
St. Joseph Seminary	√		9.23

Data Obtained from the *East African Standard Newspaper*: Tuesday March 2, 2004

This flaw is uniquely critical as serious implications can be drawn out of these numbers. For instance, since five out of the top seven schools in this list are Catholic, one could easily infer from these figures that Catholic schools have not only outperformed public schools in national examinations, but possibly too, they have outperformed them in creating an elitist educational structure in Kenya. Thus it would not be farfetched to imagine that only children from wealthy families would be enrolled in these few top schools. Havelock (2003) could not have been more right in saying that, "all civilization has from time to time become a thin crust over a volcano of revolution."

An elitist education ensures that only students from the well-to-do families or regions advance to higher education. In this way, a small group of people accumulates knowledge and power, making it more likely that they will ultimately control and dominate the rest of the poorly educated community. Such power inequity appears to have been one of the goals of missionary and colonial education, and as already noted, these two agencies right from the beginning, sought to provide an elitist education only to a few sons of the powerful in Kenya.

Furthermore, if a mean score of the top three students in each of the eight provinces were computed for the purpose of finding out how each province fared in that examination, the results in Table 2 would be obtained. These reveal that, the further one moves away from the city or other major towns in the country, the worse the results tend to become. This relationship might explain why a region such as North Eastern Province, which is in the Northern most part of the country,

and therefore, furthest from the capital city of Nairobi, has the poorest examination results in the country. Perhaps the little investment in educational opportunities in this region as provided by both the church and state have made it impossible for students from this region to make it to the list of the best performing students or schools in the country.

Table 2

Provincial Ranking

Region	Mean	Position
Nairobi	82.523	1
Coast	81.142	2
Central	80.338	3
R. Valley	80.143	4
Nyanza	79.475	5
Eastern	79.380	6
Western	78.428	7
N. Eastern	* 68.952	8

* Note: No student from this province made it to the list of the top 100 students in the country. The last candidate in that list of the top 100 students had a mean score of 78.857 points while the top student from N. Eastern province had a mean score of 69.714 points

Though it is not intrinsically wrong to congratulate schools that do well in national examinations or to encourage those that do not perform well, to do so in order to improve their lot, stakeholders in education must be careful on the kind of messages they send to such schools. They must ask themselves the hard

questions such as, is it morally right to demand from students in regions that are differently endowed to sit for the same examination? In all fairness, can students in Nairobi and those in Garisa in N. Eastern province sit for the same examination and be expected to perform equally? Is it possible to establish “objective” examinations that will measure each student’s knowledge or capability in such diversified circumstances? Whose problem is it when students fail in such examinations? Do we blame students or the adults who design the curriculum and the tests? And if it is an adult problem, why then, should students suffer for it?

By asking themselves such questions, stakeholders of Catholic education interrogate their motives and objectives on whether or not they promote healthy educational values within their school system. This researcher dares to further state that; these examination results could actually be indicative of how far Catholic schools in Kenya have deviated from their norm. Most likely, these schools have perfected the art of competition to a high degree that other schools such as public ones can only “hope to catch up with” them someday. Evidently, these results provide more questions than answers at this point. Section two provides a snapshot of what scholars and the Church documents have said about Catholic schools.

PART II

What Research and Church Documents Say about the Identity of Catholic Schools

The research questions motivating this study: what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical, and evangelization goals of education? And what do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals of education? can be linked to a wide range of research and other writings on Catholic schools. This section of the study is only interested in identifying key elements that have been reported by other researchers and the Church concerning the unique identity of its schools. For this reason, part two of this literature review is divided into two sections.

Section one summarizes nine research studies that have been identified by the researcher as offering significant information concerning certain aspects of Catholic identity in Catholic schools. Eight of these studies come from the United States while one is from Kenya. Incidentally, this can metaphorically be used to explain the situation on the ground concerning the availability of research material on Catholic schools in these two countries. While one has an abundance of such works readily available for analysis, the other region's database on such studies is still undetermined. Section two deals with five church documents that are related to Catholic schools. Three of those documents are presented by the Roman Catholic Church and apply to the universal church while the other two are

documents presented by one particular church – the American Catholic Church.

All have practical significance to CASAN since they describe principles that apply to Catholic school systems all over the world.

Research on Identity of Catholic Schools

How do Catholic schools justify their existence in the world today? Do they have unique and distinct functions that other schools such as public ones do not have? One can ask these questions in another way. Can other religious programs within the parishes do what Catholic schools do so that resources used in maintaining Catholic schools can be better utilized elsewhere? To answer these and other related questions on Catholic schools, the following nine studies have been identified by this researcher as being most helpful in assisting CASAN to reflect on what kind of Catholic schools Kenya needs in the 21st century.

The first study, conducted by Reginald A. Neuwien in 1966, known by the title *Catholic Schools in Action* aimed at finding out how a Catholic school carries out the mandate to provide religious training, while at the same time serving the purposes of education for life in the United States. The findings indicate that both Catholic elementary and secondary students' scores on standardized academic achievement tests were higher than respective national averages. Relevant to this researcher's study were findings concerning the "Inventory of Catholic School Outcomes." First, the inventory revealed that, even though a difference between the eighth and 12th grade students on their understanding of religion existed, this difference was not statistically significant as was expected, especially among

secondary students. Secondly, as a group, girls in all-girl schools showed the best understanding of their religion. Thirdly, on the issue of endorsing Catholic values, almost without exception, girls accepted the Catholic position more readily than boys.

On the issue of attitudes toward minority groups such as Jews and Blacks, the study revealed that a relationship existed between children's attitudes and parental education. The most highly educated parents had the least biased children. This implies that children of highly educated parents benefit by having a broader understanding of human relations (Neuwien, 1966, p. 224). Despite the fact that this study was criticized for being disappointing and popular rather than scholarly, it is still a valuable study because it became a pioneering one especially in terms of studying students' religious understanding and attitudes (Convey, 1992).

The next two studies, *Education of Catholic Americans* (Greeley & Rossi, 1966) and *Catholic Schools in a Declining Church* (Greeley, McCready & McCourt, 1976) provided a further glimpse into the effectiveness of Catholic schools. In *Education of Catholic Americans*, Greeley and Rossi went a step further than Neuwien (1966) in his *Catholic Schools in Action Study*. Greeley and Rossi wanted to study a number of things. First, they wished to find out whether Catholics who attended Catholic schools were better Catholics; that is, more tolerant, good, and economically successful, than those who did not attend Catholic schools. Second, they intended to study whether Catholic schools were divisive because some critics argued that Catholic schools created barriers to

cooperation between Catholics, Jews, and Protestants. Third, they wished to also know what part Catholic education played in preparing individuals for economic success (Greeley & Rossi, 1966).

Greeley and Rossi found that an association between Catholic education and adult behavior is strongest for those who went to Catholic colleges. Also, the study did not support the impression that sending children to Catholic schools promoted a ghetto mentality (that Catholic educated students alienated themselves from students not educated in similar environments). On the issue of economics, the researchers found that Catholics who attended Catholic schools experienced no economic or occupational disadvantage. On the contrary, Catholics attending these schools were more successful than those who did not (Greeley & Rossi, 1966).

The second study, *Catholic Schools in a Declining Church* (1976) by Greeley, McCready, and McCourt intended to find out if the conclusions of the 1966 study still held. This study that addressed the issue of effectiveness of Catholic schools was also interested in value-oriented education and social change. Greeley et al. found that Catholic schools were still as important this time as they were a decade before. Despite the changes in liturgical and disciplinary regulations occasioned by the Second Vatican Council and the changes in Catholic attitudes toward birth control and abortion, the sexual revolution, and declining numbers of priests and nuns, Catholics still held the view that Catholic schools were as important to Catholics as they were a decade earlier.

They also found that the number of years spent in Catholic schools had a positive relationship with the financial contribution to the church, in participation in church functions, and having a favorable attitude towards church leaders. This research, however, also discovered that there was a general decline in Mass attendance, the reception of sacraments, and respect for the teaching authority of the church. It appeared that two forces were at work among the American Catholics in the decade following 1963. A positive force linked to the Second Vatican Council and a negative force linked to the birth control encyclical *Humane Vitae* were at work in the American church (Greeley, McCready, & McCourt, 1976).

Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore (1981) conducted research on public and private high schools in order to find out which of the two types of schools provided the best educational opportunities for high school aged students. This study became controversial. Its findings were termed inaccurate and misleading by Michael Kirst, professor of education and business administration at Stanford University (as cited in Coleman et al., 1981). The findings were greatly challenged for their methodology and policy implications (Convey, 1992, p. 17). This study is still considered a landmark study of the importance of Catholic education.

The Coleman et al. (1981) study found that private schools produce better cognitive outcomes among students than public schools. When family background and other factors that are correlated with achievement are controlled, students in both Catholic and other private schools achieve at higher levels than students in

public schools. According to the researchers, this is partly explained by parental orientations, events that occur within the school itself, high expectations of teachers, and the stronger discipline that private schools demand and get from students regardless of their background. At the same time, they found that schools provided better character and personality development than public schools. School environments were safer, more disciplined and orderly. Catholic students had higher rates of attendance, did more homework and generally took more rigorous academic subjects than students in public schools did.

Bryk, Holland, Lee, and Carriedo in their research on *Effective Catholic Schools: An Exploration* (1984) sought to identify factors associated with the effectiveness of Catholic schools, especially in terms of academic and social skills achieved by students. They confirmed the findings of Coleman (Coleman et al, 1981, 1982) and Greeley (1982). These latter studies dealt with the communal nature of Catholic schools as well as benefits of schools for disadvantaged students. Bryk et al. found that, generally speaking, the small size of most Catholic schools allowed most students to know something positive about other students. Smaller schools facilitate extensive social interactions among students, parents, and faculty through the sharing of values among students. At the same time, smaller schools tended to work in the principals' favor. In larger organizations, principals are responsible for chairing committees, recruiting students, directing parents' clubs, in addition to other administrative duties such as classroom supervision, and team leading.

Through statistical analysis, this study revealed that the variable of family background, social class, and degree of parental education had a substantial effect on the child's academic attitude and achievement. Students in Catholic schools rated their teachers high in being interested in students both inside and outside the class. At the same time, nearly 90% of the parents in the study characterized teachers' interest in students as either "good" or "excellent." Sixty percent of the parents agreed that teachers support students from troubled families (Bry et al., 1984, p. 36). On the question of the teaching of religion, a minor difference was noted between parents' and teachers' perceptions. Parents saw religion as primarily being a relationship with God while teachers emphasized the care of others and concern for social justice as more closely related to religion. Teachers saw their work as a form of ministry since they played the role of shaping students to become young adults.

O'Brien's (1987) study *Mixed Messages* surveyed bishops' and priests' perceptions of the value, effectiveness, funding practices and the future structure of Catholic schools nationwide. O'Brien wished to find out whether the findings reported by Greeley et al. (1976), that some pastors and future pastors were not supportive of Catholic schools still held true 10 years afterwards.

His survey questionnaire was sent to 273 bishops and he received an 80% response rate among bishops while 52% of the 660 priests responded. O'Brien found that more Bishops (93%) than priests (73%) believed that Catholic schools played an important mission in the Church today and hence had almost unanimous support for starting Catholic schools. Another important finding in this

research was that the number of years a priest had been ordained was closely related to how positive that individual priest perceived Catholic schools. Those who had been ordained for over 30 years were the most positive, while those ordained 11 to 20 years were the least positive (O'Brien, 1987).

On the question of funding, 91% of bishops and 66% of priests believed that supporting Catholic schools was an effective way of using the Church's financial resources. On regionalization of schools, that is, sponsoring of one school by several parishes, bishops were less supportive of establishing regional schools since such school structures removed the school from direct contact with a sponsoring parish or parishes. If financial or other such reasons showed a need to close down some schools, bishops were in agreement that secondary schools should close down first, before elementary ones. Bishops more than priests were more willing to let lay faculty take charge of Catholic schools. Priests may have been hesitant in this because after all, they were the ones expected to fund such schools and pay the lay faculty. Bishops were significantly more in favor of schools assisting the economically and culturally deprived than were priests. According to bishops, schools did well to emphasize the issue of justice and authentic liberation (O'Brien, 1987).

Charron, in her dissertation *Parental Perceptions of the Unique Qualities of Catholic Schools: An Exploratory Study, with Implications for Teacher Education* (1980), had two purposes: first, to identify the specific unique and desirable qualities of Catholic schools as perceived by parents, and second, to identify the implications these qualities propose for the formation of teachers for

Catholic schools. The teaching of religion was also identified to be the main function of Catholic schools. Past popes, as well as major Church documents referenced in this study reveal the fact that the teaching of religion in Catholic schools was very important. The popes had declared that without this teaching of religion, the true character of Christian education was not achievable in Catholic schools (Charron, 1980). Such findings have important implications for Catholic school communities in other dioceses such as Nairobi.

Charron cited Church documents such as the old Code of Canon Law No. 1113 in her study. According to this canon, parents have an obligation to give their children a Catholic education that goes beyond religious and moral education. At the same time, Article 26 of the United Nations charter gives weight to this by declaring that education is part of human rights. It states that, "parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children" (as cited in Charron, 1980, p. 44). The *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church* (Paul VI, 1965), too, declares that the family is the domestic church; however, Pope Pius XI in his encyclical the *Christian Education of the Youth*, restates that the family does not possess exclusive rights to educate because "familial society is not self sufficient but must achieve its temporal development in civil society in union with other family units" (as cited in Charron, 1980, p. 45). In all these, it is clear that neither the school nor parents, can fully educate their children. They need each other.

Charron (1980) had other findings in her study such as parents expressed the pervasive religious character of Catholic schools. Parental expressions such

as: a loving, sharing atmosphere; and opportunity to live one's faith, the experience and participation in liturgical and paraliturgical celebrations; the comfortable permeation of all school happenings by religion, all express the fact that the religious trait would seem to be indigenous to Catholic schools. To help correct inaccurate notions about church and schools, dioceses need to send their qualified officials or experienced Catholic teachers to visit and talk to parents on issues related to Catholic schools.

Bryk, Lee, & Holland's study on *Catholic Schools and the Common Good* (1993), was conducted with the goal to understand contemporary American Catholic high schools. The study provides a detailed historical analysis of the process through which Catholic high schools have had to go to become assimilated within mainstream American life. Two forces of change help to explain this process in contemporary Catholic high schools: the democratization of the church, and the Vatican Council II. These two processes provide kaleidoscopic lenses through which the modern American Catholic Church and its institutions can be viewed today. These processes in turn help to explain the shift in the Church's perception of its image from that of the "Shepherd" to that of the "People of God." This changed tone and language in the way the Church sees and speaks of itself in the contemporary world ensures that the Church and its institutions such as schools, now have a more open public function to play in society. This function sharply contrasts the austere and doctrinaire tone of earlier years as it now has revised and revitalized the Church's social mission.

For this matter, public schools can draw some useful lessons from this study on Catholic schools on how to remain effective schools. Bryk et al (1993). identified four functions that help to create this conducive environment in schools. These are:

- (a) Having a delimited technical core curriculum. Effective Catholic schools teach a core curriculum to all students regardless of their personal background or future educational plans.
- (b) Communal organization. Besides the shared academic experiences, Catholic schools engender a sense of community to their students. Through informal events such as: athletics, drama, liturgy, and retreats, students and adults find time to enhance the school's community life.
- (c) Decentralized governance. Governance in Catholic schools is varied for it depends on ownership of the school (Catholic schools could be parochially, diocesan, or privately owned). Whatever their structure of governance, decision making within these schools is often made at individual school sites unlike in public school systems.
- (d) Inspirational ideology. Since the Second Vatican Council, the character of Catholic schools has shifted from protecting the faithful from a hostile Protestant environment, to pursuing issues related to peace and social justice within an ecumenical and multicultural world.

The study also revealed that Catholic schools work best not because they attract better students – which they also do, or because they have more qualified faculty, but because they act as “voluntary communities” rather than “market

responsive firms.” Membership within voluntary organizations depends on the exercise of individual free will which allows individuals to identify with their school as they usually have a sense of personal ownership. Such feelings engender a sense of trust among school participants since students, parents and faculty choose to belong to this community.

Catholic schools have the “philosophy of a bridging school.” This philosophy creates opportunities for Catholic schools to succeed since it is within the school’s jurisdiction and authority to shape and defend particular lifestyles that participants consciously choose. This philosophy which is dialogical in nature, aims at developing within the student body the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and habits necessary to function effectively in a modern democratic society. Catholic schools take the cue from the teachings of the Second Vatican Council as expounded in documents such as the *Pastoral Constitution of the Church on the Modern World* (Paul VI, 1965) in order to achieve that. The modern Church neither denies modernity as the Neo-Scholastic church once did, nor automatically affirms existing arrangements. Rather it allows the schools to operate “on a principle of critical engagement with society and seeks to form such capacities and dispositions in its students” (Paul VI, 1965, p. 317).

However, care must be taken to avoid the erosion of the progressive steps already achieved within the Church and its school systems since Vatican II. Many critics fear that the sense of collegiality, decentralized decision making, and having postmodern church and schools envisaged in this discussion, is after all

difficult to achieve because of the impositions made by the Roman Church on the American Church and its schools:

Decisions in the past few years... have provoked considerable controversy. The broad lay participations and sense of collegiality that had grown since Vatican II were seemingly set aside in favor of centralized decision making. Such incidents mark a continuing disquiet with the American Catholic Church.... Although the content and pedagogy of the Universal Catechism are still under development, there is great concern in the United States that the Roman Church officials will seek to impose on the American institutions their conception of a postmodern Church, which many lay and religious Catholics view as more compatible with the nineteenth rather than the twenty-first century. To them, a cold wind is again blowing in the church, one that threatens to subvert the important purposes now served by Catholic schools. (Buetow, 1985, p. 334)

Added onto such fear is the uncertainty that the increased number of non-Catholic faculty within Catholic schools portends for the future of such schools. An increase in the non-Catholic faculty numbers within Catholic schools creates an understandable fear that a powerful secularizing force within the Catholic schools exists. Though it is acknowledged that such individuals do bring valued expertise in certain subject matters within Catholic schools, a genuine concern exists that such groups often express somewhat different motives of why they teach in Catholic schools and may introduce different conceptions of "good

schools” into conversations concerning the future directions Catholic schools should take.

Finally, though Catholic schools ought to emphasize more the education of disadvantaged students, the Bryk et al. study provides an important argument why Catholic educators must not shy from also educating the more advantaged in the society. The authors argue that, since many of the advantaged students are more likely to move into powerful positions in society as adults, this may result in their having a disproportionate influence in the shaping of the American culture. Educators need to provide such students with necessary social capital in order to fulfill their responsibilities well. How such students think, feel, and behave is central to the kind of society the United States is likely to become in the future. The Catholic school emphasizes the value of leadership in social justice; it is hoped and intended that this message becomes internalized by its students and into adulthood.

Lackner’s (1997) dissertation *Components of Marianist Educational Culture: In a Content Analysis of Published Works of William Joseph Chaminade and in Phenomenological Interview* invites Catholic educators to reflect about one specific type of Catholic school system associated with the Marianist religious order. This researcher believes that the findings of this research are very close to his understanding of what Catholic schools ought to look like. A detailed analysis of this study is made because first, the Marianists have been associated with two Catholic schools in Nairobi in the past; this dissertation therefore provides

important clues on why the Marianists may have decided to disengage from these schools.

This dissertation also delineates some basic elements that could be helpful to researchers wishing to find out whether Catholic schools do provide students with their unique identity. Third, since the dissertation is written against a background of changes happening within the larger Catholic community soon after the Second Vatican Council, the researcher believes that the decline in the number of religious men and women serving within the Catholic school community had similar effects on Catholic schools in Nairobi just as it had on American ones.

This decline began the long process of radical changes that have since become part of what is going on in Catholic schools as total lay faculties with a new mindset on how to manage the schools took over their management. These changes, according to Lackner, raised important questions. Should Catholic leaders think about the continuation of the Catholic character of these institutions, as well as the preservation of the educational climate of the religious orders that founded them? It cannot be assumed that the special identity of a school will simply be maintained because of the presence of a Catholic lay faculty, staff and administrators. In any case, new members need to be socialized into appropriating new meanings of the schools they immerse themselves into (Lackner, 1997, pp. 7-8).

Three research questions guided Lackner's (1997) research: (1) What are the principal elements of Marianist educational culture expressed in the writings

of the founder of the Society of Mary of Paris, William Joseph Chaminade? (2) What are the elements of Marianist educational culture as expressed in the lived experiences of Marianists today? And, (3) how are the expressions of Marianist educational culture manifested in the published writings of Chaminade and in the lived experiences of Marianists today similar and dissimilar?

On question one, Lackner's (1997) findings indicate that Marianist schools offered a type of education that was interested in changing society through a regeneration of the Catholic faith. For Chaminade, teaching and Christian education can never be separated. He was never satisfied with simply founding good schools but in whether those schools did provide a Christian education aimed at raising the minds and hearts of students in a fervent faithful profession of a true Christianity. Lackner claims that it would be a great blunder if instruction in human learning would only produce scholars and not Christians. Chaminade firmly believed that the future of Catholicism during the period after the French Revolution was going to be fought in Catholic schools.

According to Chaminade, Catholicism in France had been attacked in all sectors of society by a rationalism of enlightenment and Protestantism. According to Lackner, Chaminade did not wish to create a society that conformed in any way to ancient Catholicism; rather, he intended to engage his contemporary society in a manner adapted to the times staunchly upholding what he considered the eternal realities of Catholicism. The most real way of sustaining such a mission for Chaminade was through the development of a common method of pedagogy to be implemented in all the schools conducted by the Society of Mary (Lackner, 1997).

In answering question two concerning the major characteristic of Marianist education, Lackner (1997) states that Marianist education aims for the social transformation of society through social and moral reconstruction. This was achieved through the forming of persons or groups of persons who can make a difference, and who can move in the modern world (p. 475). This finding was in congruence with Chaminade's belief that if anyone wanted to accomplish anything in the world, schools were the place where that was going to happen. Cultures can be infiltrated through an educational process which starts as a small community such as a school system (p. 477). For a school to be a means of evangelization, all participants must agree to form an environment or atmosphere that enables members of that school community to grow in faith.

On curriculum, Lackner (1997) concluded that Marianist schools must be integrated so that all students and teachers may see the connections among the disciplines. A Marianist curriculum helped students acquire habits of reflection. It should incorporate service so that the connections between study and activity, theory and practice, are made. Such a service that went beyond the school involved learning about problems and ways they could be approached, by putting students to work with people who were actually solving problems, and later reflecting back at schools what the student were taught – a form of service-learning.

The findings of question three were obtained after combining the results of the content analysis and the interview responses. These suggest a number of key points that CASAN might want to address in order to enhance its identity. First,

the school population should not be composed of an elite group of students only but should serve all types of students just as Chaminade had focused his energy on the common people. Secondly, the interviewees expressed the need that Chaminade's desire that teachers in the normal schools be thoroughly prepared through retreats be concretely expressed through program development. The interviewees felt that this was the only way that lay teachers could be socialized into the Marianist educational culture (Lackner, 1997).

On curriculum, the comments were more detailed in interviews than in content analysis. Respondents emphasized the development of the whole person, integration of the domains of knowledge and learning through experience. Integration of knowledge, the moral realm (intellectual competence and character) were found in the content analysis. Respondents stressed the importance of justice and participation in community service as integral parts of the curriculum. Nowhere did content analysis reveal that this kind of education in justice and service as cited in the interviews formed part of the prospectus of schools in Chaminade's day. For that matter, justice education and inclusion of service as an explicit element in school programs represent a new development since Chaminade's time (Lackner, 1997).

The teaching of religion was central in the curriculum of a Marianist school. Both content analysis and interviewees contended that to be effective, the teaching of religion had to be both intellectually sound and affectively oriented. In this connection, the campus ministry program was found to be a contemporary development that was not in practice during Chaminade's time. Both agreed that

the role the educator played was central to Christian education. Teachers should appropriate certain dispensations or attitudes, and regularly display and center them by a deliberate intention so as to nurture a Christian spirit in the student (Lackner, 1997).

In his groundbreaking dissertation on *The Church's Role in the Development of Educational Policy in Pluralistic Society in Kenya*, Muhoho (1970) argues for the formation of a multi-racial and pluralistic society in Kenya. He concludes that the days of having merely "Catholic Schools" were over. According to Muhoho, the Church must redeploy its personnel to the best advantage so that a fair and more potent Christian witness could be formed. Muhoho's call suggests that an alternative means of evangelization in Kenya other than Catholic schools be found. This call coming soon after the country attained its independence on December 12, 1963, and close after the Second Vatican Council in 1965 requires updating.

Muhoho (1970) called for this reduction in the Church's commitment to Catholic schools because of the reduced number of religious men and women teaching in such schools. This scarcity, according to him, called for an educational reform that would urge the Church not to concentrate all its priests, brothers and sisters in individual Catholic schools at the expense of other Catholic students in public schools throughout the country. Secondly, the Church was finding itself on uncharted grounds since its predominantly White hierarchy had to change its attitude now that it dealt with an all African government. Certainly, those were changed times politically. The previously happy coexistence between

the Church and the colonial administration which had created friendly relations was now increasingly being viewed as being detrimental to enacting needed educational policies and principles due to new suspicions.

Meanwhile, the newly independent government was working hard to wrestle control of schools from the churches that had long dominated the education scene. The new Kenyan government, being a secular one, had no desire to entrench a privileged religion and as a result of such cross movements within the church and state, the church felt at a loss on what to do, whether to demand more rights for the education of Africans or just to fight the battles that were brought to her doors.

At independence in 1963, the new government that took control from colonial administrators thought that it knew exactly what policies to enact in education. Things turned out differently. Despite the energy of its newly appointed ministry of education officials and the wonderful policies written on paper, it soon became clear that these could not be put into practical use immediately. For instance, Catholic leaders felt that their church had been treated unfairly and that they had not been sufficiently consulted. Because of this, Catholics quickly rejected the new education act signed by the president on February 6, 1964. For its part, the government claimed, "religious education would remain part of the curriculum" and that "detailed discussions and negotiations between the various church leaders and the ministry had taken place" (Muhoho, 1970, p. 242). The newly formed Catholic lay association, National Lay Council, issued its first public statement affirming

the rights of all religious communities to see their own faith taught freely in ways of their own choosing. Parents in particular have a right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children. This is most of all true of teaching of that faith which is their deepest possession. (p. 242)

This statement by the lay council was very similar to the one earlier issued by the Catholic Bishops on January 21, 1964, asking for three guarantees, namely, (a) that they and not the Minister would decide on the religious books and curricula ...[to be] used for religious instructions; (b) that they have the right of entry into a school to inspect the teaching of religion, and (c) that they have a say in the appointment of the headmaster and a majority of the teaching staff in the schools sponsored by the church so that the religious tradition of the school would be maintained (Muhoho, 1970, p. 243). Meanwhile, the Protestant churches felt that they had now reached a stage where they could hand over the management of missionary related schools to the government. The Catholics carried on the battle until new negotiations were opened with the Minister of Education and finally an agreement was reached.

Thirty-five years have passed since Muhoho wrote the words “a reassessment is needed – indeed a reform. This reform must begin with the Episcopal Conference itself. The bishops must assess the existential situation and lay down a clear-cut policy in regard to education” (1970, p. 257). These are words that the researcher fully identifies with, because he too, argues that, Kenya must not take another 50 years in order to correct the false steps made in the last

50 years. Muhoho further asserts that Catholic bishops must not remain silent while women and men out in the field look in vain for guidance.

The researcher's own critique of Muhoho's groundbreaking research on Catholic schools is that, 35 years after his study, it is no longer necessary to ask the religious men and women to disengage from their work in Catholic schools. Since those who were to leave have already left and the few who remained are still keeping at it, it is time for all who still keep at it to come together with their diocesan counterparts to sit at a round table and begin to forge a common educational philosophy for the diocese. The fact that a few trained religious men and women continue working within the Catholic school system in Nairobi, attests to the fact that a window of opportunity to do good for the education of the young people in Nairobi still exists. What the Church needs to do is to tap into this accumulated wisdom and experiences of its sons and daughters to help it formulate its future educational goals. As the next section on the Church's position on what Catholic education ought to be will indicate, enough room exists for stakeholders on Catholic education to ensure that an education system worthy its name still remains a viable option for the future.

Church Documents on Identity of Catholic Schools

Through its Catholic schools, the Church has found a means by which to dialogically engage itself in resolving some of the critical issues of the modern world. Though these schools are not a panacea to all the educational and social crises we face in our world today, it is important to note that some of these

problems have multiple causes and hence will require multiple solutions.

Evangelii Nuntiandi (Paul VI, 1996) concedes this point saying that, even though evangelization is one of the main purposes of Catholic schools, there are many uncertainties in this mission.

It is certainly not easy to express in a complete synthesis the meaning, the content and modes of evangelization as Jesus conceived it and put it into practice. In any case the attempt to make such a synthesis will never end.

Let it suffice for us to recall a few essential aspects. (Paul VI, 1996, # 7)

This quote implies that multiple ways of evangelizing within the Church do exist. One such response would be evangelization through the Catholic schools. But a proper understanding of what this means is needed. At the heart of the teaching of the Church is the message concerning the "Kingdom," for only the Kingdom is absolute as everything else is relative (Paul VI, 1996). Jesus Christ in his entire sojourn on earth desired to make known to the world this message of the Kingdom. He delighted in describing in many ways the happiness of belonging to his Kingdom, which when explained is the paradoxical happiness which is made up of things that the world rejects (Paul VI, 1996).

The kernel and center of this Good News of the Kingdom is the proclamation of salvation. This is God's great gift of liberation to all mankind from sin and everything that oppresses humanity (Paul VI, 1996). The Church, which picks up the mandate to evangelize from Christ, continues that mission to this day. She sees herself as the depository of the good news entrusted to her by her Master. The Church subsequently sends out others with this same message to

evangelize all peoples. "She explains to them the message of which she herself is the depository, she gives them the mandate which she herself has received and she sends them out to preach" (Paul VI, 1996 # 15).

Gravissimum Educationis highlights this mandate to evangelize.

According to this document, the Church receives this mandate from her Divine Founder, who intends for her to proclaim this mystery of salvation and restoration of all things to Christ. The Church must not only become interested in its own affairs, but must also be interested in the affairs of the whole of man's life. This also includes the secular part of it insofar as it has a bearing to his heavenly calling (Paul VI, 1966). The document on *The Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* helps connect this mandate of the church to evangelize with the mission of Catholic schools. It calls for Catholic schools throughout the world to express this ecclesial connection between the school and the local church. This connection needs to be there if the two are to work as part of an organic pastoral team in one local area. This prevents the students from becoming alienated from their own communities, which is one goal of Catholic education (Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 1998).

At the heart of the Catholic school is the need to provide an environment conducive to the establishment of its unique Catholic identity. The only way schools can do this is by letting themselves become ecclesial communities that teach Christian faith and morals.

It is from its Catholic identity that the school derives its original characteristics and its "structure" as a genuine instrument of the Church, a

place of real and specific pastoral ministry. The Catholic school participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. (CCE, 1998, # 11)

For this reason, Catholic schools ought to provide the unique and evangelical environment that motivates students to become active agents in the local environments. That is certainly a paradigmatic shift in the way schools are conceptualized. This is because schools are now expected to fulfill the threefold purposes of Christian education, namely: to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve (National Conference of Catholic Bishops [NCCB], 1996b). Together with that, the Holy Father reminds the Church that Catholic schools can only find their justification in the mission of the church when they fulfill their “double objective” in community. This means that their true nature can be found in their guiding “men and women to human and Christian perfection, and at the same time helps them to become mature in their faith” (CCE, 1996, # 34). For those who believe in Christ, these two objectives are the same facets of a singular reality.

From the very moment students set their feet into the school compound until they graduate, their experience of the school environment should be one that is filled with the Christian spirit. Each of the students ought to have the impression he or she has entered a new environment that is dominated by the light of faith that has its own unique characteristics. Jesus Christ must become real to the students as the whole of the school environment should contain artifacts that point students to Christ. Religious and liturgical symbols, as well as other

celebrations, become part of the school's culture so that "having crucifixes in the school will remind everyone, teachers and students alike, of this familiar and moving presence of Jesus" (CCE, 1996, #25). It is with this emphasis on having a conducive environment for the formation of the youth that Catholic schools provide opportunities through which the celebration of Christian values in word and in sacraments is practiced by the students. Without these, little can be called Catholic in such schools (CCE, 1996).

Catholic schools at the same time are described as schools that strive to build communities. From the context of the Second Vatican Council, this "community dimension is primarily a theological concept rather than a sociological category" (CCE, 1996, #31). It involves creating a special atmosphere animated by the gospel spirit of freedom and charity (Paul VI, 1966). In their document the *Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education* (NCCB, 1996a) the Catholic bishops of the United States of America provide some basic principles concerning such Christian communities. These are broken down into three themes of: prayer, liturgy, and Bible and later on to 25 subheadings. All these are considered important aspects in the building of strong Christian communities of faith whether at home, in Catholic schools, in programs of the confraternity of Christian doctrine, and in courses of adult education.

The document provides the rationale for teaching, through use of various pedagogic styles, the content of that message. To this researcher, the list of topics covered by the document is not conclusive and teachers should supplement these basic teachings with other readings. Topics such as multiculturalism, justice and

peace, critical thinking, gender issues, and cultural liberation narratives ought to be included. This document serves one useful purpose, though. It provides all those involved in catechesis with a valuable tool that can be used in teaching the Catholic faith.

In this document, the bishops express their yearning for the formation of a laity that has been transformed by the Gospel message and its values. Their position is based on the fact that once the people have a faith that goes beyond mere rote memorization of statements of faith, they can be transformed. Only then will Christians, young and old, become agents of evangelization within their communities.

A century later, the bishops want all this. But they ask and pray for much more- for a laity transformed by the Gospel message, who put the Gospel to work in every action of their daily lives, whose joy and simplicity and concern for others are so radiant that all men recognize them as Christ's disciples by the love they have for one another. (NCCB, 1996a, p. 125)

Stakeholders of Catholic Education

One of the best models of the Church to have come out of the Second Vatican Council that helps in the reflection of the different roles stakeholders in education play within Catholic schools is the model that looks at the Church as the "People of God." As quoted in its document *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, the Church exhorts the people of God to take up the challenges of the Gospel message and to make them alive in their own lives as well as in the lives of others. Pope Paul VI

prayed that the words of the synod would be meditated upon and hence succeed in inviting the whole people of God to give a fresh impulse to evangelization throughout the world (Paul VI, 1996).

Speaking this way concerning the people of God uses a positive language. The Holy Father's language is beneficial to all since it recognizes the fact that all the people of God have some energy that can be harnessed into bringing positive changes in the Church and its schools. Indeed all people have a part to play in making Catholic schools successful starting from the top with the Holy Father in Rome, then to the bishops, parents, teachers, administrators, and finally the students.

Parents

Contrary to the popular view that teachers are the main educators of the young people, the Church considers parents to be the primary educators of their children as the following statement declares, "the first and primary educators of children are their parents. The school is aware of this fact but, unfortunately, the same is not always true of the families themselves" (CCE, 1996, #43). This is the parents' natural right since they have given birth to these children and hence have a serious obligation to educate them. Parents are therefore recognized as the primary and principal educators of their children (Paul VI, 1966a). They undertake this responsibility also on behalf of their communities; however, there is a widespread tendency to delegate this responsibility to school personnel (CCE, 1996).

Parents' voice on how they want their children to be educated needs to be heard. Through their participation in representative bodies such as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) and board meetings, this parental voice can be expressed. Through their use of representative structures and processes which are normative, parents can address some of the fundamental questions of the educational needs of the Catholic community (CCE, 1996). Above all, families have the freedom and the right to see to it that their children do receive the kind of education they wish for them (CCE, 1998).

Bishops, Priests and Religious Men and Women

In the hierarchy of who is who in the education of young people, Bishops come second to the pope in the order of significance after the parents. This is because they have been given the mandate to proclaim or refuse to proclaim schools to be Catholic. According to *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, this responsibility is only granted to the competent ecclesiastical authority (CCE, 1996). In this case, that authority in a diocese lies with the bishop.

Besides offering the three broad goals of Catholic education; namely, to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve, the Church does not prescribe strict rules and regulations on how to run Catholic schools. That role is left to the bishops who try to adapt these universal rules to their own particular situations (NCCB, 1996b). The planning and implementing of the diocesan educational

mission is therefore the bishop's responsibility. He is assisted in doing this by priests, religious/lay men and women (NCCB, 1996b).

All priests, and more so the pastor, have a very special place in this mission of forming young men and women according to the will of Jesus' heart. Pastors of souls have a most serious obligation to see to it that the youth who are the hope of the church do enjoy this Christian education (Paul VI, 1966a). In these times when a serious shortage of men and women in religious life is being experienced, and when even the few remaining in the teaching profession keep withdrawing from this apostolate, the Church takes its time to thank all the religious men and women who have given and continue to give their lives to the service of others. It thanks them for living dedicated lives in the service of students without thought for personal gain because of their conviction in the Lord whom they serve (CCE, 1996). Even when doubts and tough times come, they are encouraged not to give up this work which involves so much self giving. They need to recall the nature of their consecration at all such times; which is a type of a holocaust offered in the perfection of love (CCE, 1996)

These religious institutes have their own unique charisms and specific apostolate. These religious institutes are described as being "indispensable, since 'consecrated,' ... men and women religious, side by side with priests and lay teachers, afford pupils a 'vivid image of the Church and makes recognition of its riches easier'" (CCE, 1998, #13).

Teachers

Teaching is a vocation in that only those called to it can remain effective. The Church invites those who feel called to this kind of life to come forward and offer their competence as teachers of faith. It also invites those who would like to become involved in the administrative work in Catholic schools to come forward, too, since the Church relies on them in order to fulfill its educational mission. These lay teachers are ideally concrete witnesses to the students of this lay vocation to which most of the students are called (CCE, 1996). The Catholic Church acknowledges that success in running programs in the Catholic schools is not possible without the teachers. It therefore accepts and appreciates teachers' role knowing very well that it relies entirely on them for the accomplishment of its goals in education (Paul VI, 1996).

Teaching is not amoral. Teachers bring their beliefs, values and spirituality to the classroom whether they know it or not. In one sense, this indicates that teaching carries with it an extraordinary moral depth. Because of this, teachers have been called upon to conduct their affairs with diligence and honor since they do not deal with inanimate objects but with human beings created in the image and likeness of God (CCE, 1998). Because of this central role that they play in the formation of the young people, the sacred synod of bishops meeting in Rome in 1973 called for the creation of proper structures that would facilitate an enhancement of the teachers' spirituality (Paul VI, 1966).

Students

Though students come first in the intention when planning for schools, in reality, they come last in the execution of those plans; they are unfortunately the last to be consulted. Very little input is solicited from students and even when that happens, students end up not being fulfilled even though that is why schools are established in the first place. The Church recognizes these shortcomings and suggests ways of making sure that students are at the center of their learning.

Creation of environments that put students at the center of their own learning is an important aspect of this process. Catholic schools must therefore endeavor to meet young people in environments that favor Christian formation (CCE, 1998). These environments should be fertile grounds for providing a solid formation in Christian faith to students who soon become active in the society that is increasingly characterized by technical and scientific skills. In forming this kind of student, teachers need to realize that the students they see in front of them do bring a wealth of information into the classrooms. Good teachers show their respect for the students by tapping into this vast knowledge base (CCE, 1998).

Teachers therefore must guard themselves against the danger of assuming that knowledge is only one-way directed because that is not true. Knowledge does not flow only from top to bottom, but is two-way directed. Teachers, too, do learn from their students when the necessary rapport has been created. Where such a warm and trusting rapport has been established, the students are able to raise various questions and even when teachers do not have immediate answers to all of these, it is important to know that a "response with patience and humility and

[not] in peremptory statements that can be so easily contradicted” would be an appropriate way of responding to the students’ questions (CCE, 1996, #72).

Young people are constantly searching for understanding. They seek to know the deep meaning to life, religion, and how these relate to modern value systems. Because of that, many young people appear to have many questions, which they sometimes get answers to, including from the Bible. However, more often than not, students do not get answers they need at all (CCE, 1996, #7-12). This in turn leads many of them to experience moments of crisis or indifference and doubt in their lives:

Not a few young people, unable to find any meaning in life or trying to find an escape from loneliness, turn to alcohol, drugs, the erotic, the exotic, etc. Christian education is faced with the huge challenge of helping these young people discover something of value in their lives. (CCE, #13)

Unfortunately for many others, the number of years spent in Catholic schools at times seems to scarcely affect them (CCE, 1996, #19). Modern civilization and its values that lead to the flooding of the world with material goods may lead many young people to wonder whether the purpose of life is really to possess many things or to pursue other goals of far greater value (#20). And when they see the great injustices which divide the rich from the poor and the oppressed, they can become greatly depressed (CCE, 1996).

Because of all these issues that affect the young people, educators would do well to understand that young people need to be handled with care. They are at an age that on one hand, they can easily be guided towards adopting positive

attitudes toward life but at the same time, this is a time of experimenting with many new ideas, lifestyles and so forth and therefore, they are at an age that is susceptible to adopting negative attitudes towards life.

Boards of Education

As already noted, although the responsibility of coordinating the pastoral programs in the diocese has been given to bishops, bishops have a right to share some of those responsibilities with their diocesan boards of education. These boards have the added advantage of bringing different opinions to the table, which allows for the creation of better diocesan education policies and vision. These board members are brought together not for their own personal concerns but to serve the concerns of the entire local Church. They, therefore, are expected to provide the bishop with an honest and objective view of what Catholic education should look like. Decisions in such boards are arrived at through use of participatory methods of decision making (NCCB, 1996b).

When a board is empowered to carry out its obligation and it shows some willingness on the part of its members to collaborate, it becomes very easy for it to achieve some of the common goals of Catholic education. At the same time, collaboration ensures that daily problems of the school life can be overcome. Daily conflicts which are sometimes aggravated by misunderstandings can lead to the building of more tensions in the school (CCE, 1996). In the *Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education* (NCCB, 1996a), a suggestion is given to those involved in the planning of Catholic education to be aware that:

The most effective methodology is expected in teaching these basic beliefs. Due consideration should be shown for the listener's level of maturity and understanding. In this instruction a proper sequence should be observed, as well as a method appropriate to the matter that is being treated, and to the natural disposition, ability, age and circumstance of life of the listener. (p. 125)

Finally, it is hoped that through the efforts of all stakeholders such as board members and knowledgeable teachers, Catholic schools will be committed to the development of programs that overcome problems of a fragmented and insufficient curriculum. Teachers and all those concerned with Catholic education would have an opportunity to present a complete picture of the human person (CCE, 1996).

Catholic Curriculum: Planning, Content and Implementation

How can Catholic schools truly express their Catholic identity in the midst of all these complexities? Short of a miracle, only a paradigmatic shift can help them become the kind of schools that they profess to be. This section on church documents and Catholic identity seeks to further discuss the gradual shift from the traditional way some Catholic schools have remained for a long time, to the new modern Catholic school of the 21st century that reflects both aspects of learning and teaching communities.

Their first agenda would be to define what it means to be a Catholic school in the new age. Are they schools that express a true diversity in methods,

contents and cultures? Are they inclusive enough since the true meaning of being a Catholic school means that they must be universal; that is, accommodate everyone and everything? In terms of curricula, this means that Catholic schools need to incorporate the different voices of stakeholders as they try to answer for themselves the question, what knowledge is worth knowing?

These core issues of any curriculum planning and implementation worth its name, are acknowledged for their worth in this study. However, this study will not focus on these questions though they are important. Instead, it will focus on the structural and procedural process of implementing a truly Catholic curriculum that expresses its Catholic identity in a hierarchically structured Church.

The researcher posits that one of the big dilemmas that Catholic schools experience as they attempt to inculcate a curriculum that expresses this Catholic identity is the hierarchical structure of governance. Hierarchical organizations usually follow a classical style of administration. This style normally has a top-bottom, boss-servant relationship in its chain of command. "Authority in hierarchical organizations is distributed in a pyramidal configuration: each official is responsible for his or her subordinates' actions or decisions.... Official decisions and actions are directed by codified rules thus assuring uniformity, predictability and stability" (Hanson, 2003, p. 16).

For instance, *Gravissimum Educationis* sees the Church as having both local and universal dimensions. This universality is only experienced locally and hence there is ample room for local leaders in Catholic school systems to try and apply these universals into their own particular situations. This invitation to think

universally but to act locally has been specially extended to the episcopal conferences in all countries (Paul VI, 1966). At the same time, modern advances in science and the teaching of arts have been developed and, recognizing that we live in a changed world requires that new answers to new situations be found (Paul VI, 1996). These needs include the need to have new contents, new capabilities and educational models besides those that have been followed traditionally (CCE, 1998)

PART III

Whither and how to get there

So far, the research questions: what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education? And what do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals of education? Have led this study to discuss two broad positions. In part one of this literature review, the discussion focused on some general points in the history of education in Africa with special reference placed on Nairobi, Kenya. That section aimed at exposing some of the hidden layers or false steps that colonialists and the missionaries made as they introduced formal education in Africa. Part two of the literature review used some scholarly works and Church documents to delineate the key elements that all Catholic schools need to have if they are to be called Catholic.

The third part now turns to the final and perhaps the most important section in this literature review. Since it is not enough to criticize others without offering one's own suggestions, the researcher in this section proposes some structural and theoretical frameworks that he believes must be put in place if a new educational paradigm is to be achieved. If Catholic schools in Nairobi are to become relevant to the needs of Catholic students in the 21st century, then the following four interventions are prerequisite to that education. These are: the proper place of liberation theology in Catholic schools, what a dialogical

education could mean to Catholic schools in Nairobi, what must be considered before changing the culture of CASAN, and finally, why the next education paradigm must provide a culturally relevant education to African students.

The Place of Liberation Theology in Catholic Schools

Is there a connection between liberation theology and Catholic schools? According to this researcher, there is not only a relationship between the two, but it is a tight one. Contemporary Christians live in a complex moral and ethical world. Often, Christians are left groping for solutions to certain dilemmas in life. For instance, what should Christians or even non-Christians think about critics who claim that Christianity is an oppressive religion? This dilemma is compounded by the fact that, in many circumstances, Christians are confronted by numerous examples of injustices committed by fellow Christians throughout the world; yet the Christian faith believes in a God of Justice, Love, and Mercy.

To sample some of the cases that invite Christians to examine their role in the world and the questions therein, are examples such as: how could Christians be silent at the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which has caused untold suffering to millions of people in these two cities to this day; or how can Christians explain their silence during the Jewish holocaust, or the lack of concern by the international community during the Rwandan genocide 10 years ago, the silence of Christians who refuse to condemn nations that stock nuclear armaments, yet these have the potential to annihilate all human beings from the face of the earth; or to come even closer to our own times, how could Christians support a war that has been declared unjust by major church organizations

including the United Nations? This is why such critics have gone further to ask, “if Christians of Germany could not stop Hitler, and if the Christians of the United States cannot stop what may be the ultimate holocaust – nuclear war – then, of what value is Christianity?” (Welch, 1985, p. 6).

There is hope in Christianity. According to Welch (1985), despite this sad connection between Christian apathy and world problems, there is a new theology and a new way of doing theology that is capable of authentically liberating Christians from all that dehumanizes people. This new theology, otherwise called liberation theology, is part of a radical revolutionary strand within the Christian tradition that is interested in the truth and in doing something about it.

“Christianity contains something of a truth not because of its origin but because it liberates people from specific forms of oppression” (Welch, 1985, p. 53). In his opening speech at the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII reminded his audience that the changed world required a better understanding of doctrine guided by scripture. It is “not that the Gospel has changed: it is that we have begun to understand it better” (as cited in Gutierrez, 1988, p. xiv).

Liberation theology is different from other traditional and classical methods of research, education, and philosophy. These traditional methods were not interested in inclusiveness, but were formalized systems that conducted research in a language that correlated God to ontological structures. Even though traditional theology has done a magnificent job in the past by making faith intelligible, the biggest challenge it faces today is the need to provide modern Christians with a renewed hope; that the poverty and oppression they see every

day are a phenomena that they can address. Liberation theology must go beyond this narrow path (Welch, 1985). Boff and Boff (2001) were optimistic that when all strands of theology connect with the social-liberative dimension of faith, then the name "liberation theology" can be eliminated because by then, all theologies will be liberative theologies in their own way.

Liberation theology has grown out of the frustration inspired by voicelessness in the church. Its primary source has not been the intellectual or scholarly theological tradition, but the experiences of all who have been excluded from structures of power within the society and within the Church. It is for this reason that Cone quoted in Welch (1985), denounces such correlation between theological positions and racism. To him, liberal and conservative theologians have missed the decisive ingredient of the gospel message – the liberation of the oppressed from sociopolitical humiliation for a new freedom in Christ. According to Oldenski (1997), liberation theology rejects the dominant Eurocentric theological, historical and cultural discourses that attempt to reconstruct theological and religious practices for all. "Liberation theology criticizes how the Eurocentric churches historically used and currently use power. It sees how history can perpetuate the oppression and marginalization of those who have been excluded from the Eurocentric metanarratives" (p. 79).

With this understanding of liberation theology in mind, it becomes possible to see how this critical theological language of discourse can be applied in areas that need empowering in the developing countries of Latin America, Asia, and Africa. It has become a religious language of critical reflection of

humankind, society, the Church and so forth where it interprets historical events with the intention of revealing and proclaiming their profound meaning. When poor countries examine their state of "development," they come to recognize that the state of their "underdevelopment" is a by-product of the development of other countries, which is created by the existing strong relationship between the rich and poor countries. For this reason, Gutierrez (1988) suggests that in order for such countries to experience real development, they must do two things.

First, they need to break from the domination of the rich countries, and secondly, to attack the problem of development from its root causes. Gutierrez (1988) closely connects development and the liberation process asserting that: "development does in fact find its true place in the more universal, profound, and radical perspective of liberation" (p. 25). This was a profound statement to make because it links the two concepts of liberation and development to the integral development of society. For humanity to aspire to develop its full potential, it must first aspire to be freed from all that oppresses it. This is a consciousness with responsibility for it is guided by biblical reflections for Christians (Gutierrez).

For liberation theologians, this link between freedom and development invites Catholic educators to become creative in their approaches as schools are now provided with immense possibilities. Liberation theology as a language of critique presents a context to Catholic schools that allows them to have their unique and differing lifestyles put into use. Since it is recognized that education is the process through which individuals are helped to understand themselves and

their role in the transformation of the world, Catholic schools have limitless ways of achieving such goals in a liberating education.

Catholic schools seeking the integral education and development of students and their communities need to implement a curriculum that prepares present day students for a future world. Forming students to become critical thinkers today can help schools educate students for the yet undetermined future. A Catholic school curriculum must not only ensure that "students are freed from those practices that now oppress them in their schooling" (Oldenski, 1997, p. 83), but it must also ensure that its students have acquired reflective habits and skills such as dialogical ones, so that they can become proactive in resolving their own present problems as well as those that they must face in the future.

Instituting radical educational reforms can halt the negative impact that an inherited colonial education that impoverishes Africa continues to do to this day. To get to the point that this can be done, African policymakers must not only rely on their gut feelings that something wrong is going on in Africa and thus institute half measures into this effort, but they must be willing to be open minded enough in order to learn from others what can be done to change this. They must be ready to learn from other peoples and cultures such as those found in Latin America and Asia who have now been able to turn their misery of poverty and miseducation into some of the greatest stories of success in the 21st century. Educators and church leaders from these two lands have at times had to risk their careers and lives in order to bring the changes that are now slowly but gradually beginning to change these countries into becoming powerful nations in the new century.

From Latin America, the African continent can learn how to apply the educational method of critical consciousness proposed by Paulo Freire, otherwise known as dialogical pedagogy into their school systems. Njoroge (1999) alludes to this need in his writings:

The Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire has achieved international renown in his work emphasizing the critical role of education. He defines education as the intersubjective process of becoming aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it. R.J. Njoroge and Bennars accept this definition but add the social dimension. Finding Freire's definition too biased in the direction of the individual, they stress the social dimension and view education as the intersubjective process of learning to be a self-reliant person in society. (Njoroge, 1999, p. 251)

From Asia, African policymakers can learn from the Catholic bishops that Asia is an emerging economic giant today because it has rediscovered its youth. Asian bishops today recognize that the future success of its people lies in providing the youth with necessary skills to help them succeed in life. In this recognition, they have realized the need to empower their youth who are the silent majority and who have been marginalized in order to wake themselves from their economic and spiritual slumber. These bishops now acknowledge that the only feasible way out of their misery is through listening to the voice of the young people. By attentive listening, they are capable of learning what the young seek from them and hence tap into their tremendous power to change their world. "There is a new recognition of the tremendous 'youth power' in Asia because of

their sheer number that could be tapped and channeled to liberate society, from oppressive and destructive forces” (Eilers, 2003, p. 190).

This is a lesson Africa would do well to learn from Asia if it too is to liberate itself. In their *Final Statement of the Bishops' Institute for Lay Apostolate (BILA) on Youth* (1997) released in Tagaytay City that is quoted extensively below, Asian Catholic bishops make a series of bold statements concerning their new vision for the youth of Asia:

The tenth World Youth Day, celebrated with so much joy in Manila, Philippines with its theme of “As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you” (Jn: 20:21), challenges Asian youth to work for the transformation of self and society.... The Asian Church seizes this opportune time to witness to Christ anew to the peoples of Asia, especially the youth....the bishops gathered in Manila described the Asian Church as the “Church of the Poor and the Young”.... In Manila (1995) the youth were identified as one of the five areas of pastoral concern....We see the ill effects of modernization on the lives of the young people, who are driven to materialism, consumerism and careerism.... Some young people grow up in dysfunctional and broken families, with no real concern for their well-being, of proper guidance and companionship....In many other ways, youth are victims of unjust structures and sinful situations which they inherit from their elders, and from which they cannot escape. These include unsustainable models of development, drug cartels, government corruption, violence, ethnic warfare, militarism, the degradation of

environment, the often false values promoted in the mass media, religious intolerance and fundamentalism....Paradoxically, 60% of Asia's population is below 35 years old. In spite of this, the youth generally do not have a voice by which their genuine concerns and aspirations may be heard. They are the unrecognized and silent majority. (as cited in Eilers, 2003, pp. 178-180)

The bishop's statement does a number of things. First, it recognizes that ministry to the youth is central to their evangelization mission and hence, there is a need to ensure that it is placed on the front burners of their work. Second, that even though the young people are the majority in the society, they still remain voiceless and this is something the Church and other institutions must desire to change. This is why the bishops have expressed their desire to listen and learn from young people. Third, young people in Asia just like in Africa, experience social, economic, cultural as well as global hardships often without desiring to do so; these difficulties force them to make choices in life that are usually not very wise. In all these, the bishops have shown a willingness to be open to the Spirit of God to guide them in their work with the youth.

Perhaps African bishops too, can come together and provide their continent with a similar vision on how to liberate the African youth who toil for long hours in sometimes unproductive jobs for a meager pay that is usually worth less than one dollar a day. This is a serious moral, economic, social and educational issue that only their type of leadership can provide. Meanwhile, part of what the bishops individually or as a group could do in their dioceses is to

revitalize youth programs in their parishes, dioceses, and at a national, regional as well as continental level. Youth programs at all these levels need to be reprogrammed so that they may become useful in providing the youth with the skills they need in order to enter the available job market. The second part of this process will require them to make a thorough evaluation of their education philosophies, mission statements, visions and so forth, in order to ensure that these do achieve the desired goals they state they want to achieve. It is possible that some of the dioceses do not even have an educational mission statement or philosophy to guide the work of lay and clerical men and women involved in ministry to Catholic schools.

Even though doing all these may mean that bishops may have to invest more of their limited financial resources into the re-education programs of the youth, the price of failure to invest in the youth today is too heavy to burden future generations with. It is reasonable to expect that such an evaluation may reveal the need for bishops to either restructure or completely overhaul the educational structures that their dioceses inherited from colonial times. As was explained elsewhere, the education that most African countries received during the colonial times was not so endearing to Africans since it had pedagogic and philosophical goals that were not favorable to Africans. This education system left behind a structure and pedagogy that continue to oppress the African student because it gives him a substandard education.

These kinds of agenda that are deeply embedded in the hidden curricula offered in African schools need not be there anymore. It is important to remember

that such structures and pedagogies were rationally supported by a theological discourse and a language that were alien to Africa. These in turn ensured that the new political, philosophical, spiritual, and educational dispensations bequeathed to Africa would cause it to fail for many decades. Ngugi (1986) speaks eloquently on this point:

How did we arrive at this acceptance of the fatalistic logic of unassailable position of English in our literature, in our culture, in our politics *and religion*....Berlin of 1884 was affected through the sword and the bullet. But the night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom. Where the former was visibly brutal, the latter was visibly gentle....in my view language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner... language was the means of the spiritual subjugation. (p. 9)

It is no longer tenable that this dominance of the African mind should remain an extra day. This is something that must be rejected. Bishops must now take the mantle and lead from the front if Africa is to acquire a new educational paradigm that is relevant to the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of its youth. Such an education will have to be based on a new theological education that “seeks to develop the capacity in pastoral persons to see, with the Christian community, what God is calling the community to do in a given context” (White, 2003, p. 26). It is this researcher’s hope that this new theological discourse will open wide the

doors of dialogue so that from traditional African religions, lessons can be drawn that will assist modern Africans to remain authentically African and Christian at the same time. In the words of the African theologian Wachege (2000) who wishes the same for Africa, Africans must be

equipped with such understanding and knowledge, *so that* one is better able to examine and to test the hypotheses that African traditional religiosity and worldview properly explored, critically investigated and authentically integrated is fundamental in enhancing inculturation, liberation, ecumenism and useful inter-disciplinary dialogue. (p. 76)

Liberation theology like all other theologies springs from a spirituality that has its foundation in faith and history, in God and in man. This is a spirituality that is born when faith meets the injustice done to the poor who include Karl Marx's "proletariat," poor workers exploited by the capitalist system, the underemployed, and those pushed aside by the production process. All these form a mass of the socially and historically oppressed on which Christians ought to see the face of the Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ (Boff & Boff, 2001). From the aforementioned, it can be concluded that liberation theology is not concerned anymore with abstract issues but rather with concrete realities. Liberation theology is not concerned with just intellectual problems but with addressing problems of human suffering. In this way, it helps give birth to a new community of humanity since all people become interested in each other's problems. We indeed become our brothers' and sisters' keepers

This definitive change in the way the world is perceived is now possible because of a paradigmatic shift. This change allows the world to be perceived not as being dominated by a linear concept of time but by a changing cyclical movement of time (Slattery, 1995). Thus, a postmodern period which goes beyond the materialist philosophy of modernity, and that challenges modernity's long held views that were held sacred now exists. Critics such as Jencks have claimed that the modern world is coming to an end and must be replaced by something else. "The forces of the modern movement...have not ended. Indeed, they are often the goals of the second and third world... but the uncontested dominance of the modern world view has definitely ended" (as cited in Slattery, 1995, pp. 16-17). Havel on the other hand, beseeches educators in the field of curriculum theory to envision a new world with possible multiple solutions to problems, since according to him, no universal rules exist anymore for the modern age as a whole has come to an end (as cited in Slattery, 1995).

Some of the language and ideas borrowed from the industrial revolution period in the early 1800s has begun to give way to the postmodernist language and life; for instance, the language and techniques of "quality control," "accountability," and "the bottom line." Along with its logical positivist perception that the educational process must be "divided and broken down into constituent, observable, measurable parts which are used as the criteria for selecting techniques and methods, as well as a basis for evaluation" has changed (Purpel, 1989, p. 18), this empiricist period had attempted to remove religion and theology from public schooling and from the universities which advocated the

teaching of hard sciences only. Postmodern vision of education on the other hand, sees curriculum as a theological text (Slattery, 1995).

Because schools since the 1990s can now traverse the complex postmodern curriculum discourse in a manner that allows them to explore curriculum as a theological text, this decade has now been called groundbreaking. This is because it now allows curriculum to promote the exploration of ultimate goals and the mystery of eternity; hence allowing the return of theology to its authentic place as the queen of the sciences. Dewey's challenge to the churches that they had lost their prophetic voice and therefore were now impotent in addressing the needs for social change, can now be disputed since such a curriculum has taken roots (Slattery, 1995). A reconceptualized theological curriculum uncovers the wisdom lost in the previous modernist era of education where schools were preoccupied with discreet parcels of knowledge and standardized testing. The challenge of postmodern schooling, therefore, is to recover the fuller meaning of wisdom, which leads to an exploration of the importance of *sophia* or wisdom as recovered from studying the wisdom literature in the Bible (Slattery, 1995).

A reconceptualized curriculum, at the same time, helps teachers to recover their prophetic voice. From biblical prophecy, intriguing educational frameworks are now opened. For instance, from Old Testament prophecy, teachers learn to become social critics who castigate, judge, and also bring a message of hope and doom to society just like the prophets did. They learn to build and destroy, wound and heal, utilizing society's highest goals and values. They also begin to speak

directly about issues of justice, as theirs is a critical voice of love, mercy, and a forgiveness that transforms (Purpel, 1989).

Moses, the prophet, demonstrated that criticism was not only an obligation, but also that prophetic imagination which brings forth a new vision of the world, was equally important. Through such imagination and in a process similar to Freire's idea of conscientization, prophets became dreamers who presented to people their dreams, which eventually came true. Moses came to imagine what had hitherto been thought of as impossible, a vision of liberation. His inspired and highly imaginative conception literally created a new world (Purpel, 1989). So besides sharing a people's deficiencies, prophets provided hope and possibilities by the force of their authority. Teachers who are called to become today's prophets are expected to provide this vision of hope and possibility. The next section discusses an ancillary point in this discussion on providing a liberating education in Catholic schools. Such an education must also be dialogical.

Providing a Dialogical Education in Catholic Schools

Curriculum theorists in postmodern times now have to deal with the challenges brought by classical education. They must ask themselves questions such as: what is the purpose of education? What knowledge is worth knowing? What is the value of education? What is the nature of knowledge? What can be taught and what should be left out? When these and other questions are asked in open and free societies, communities of learners join hands together to form

meaning and understanding of their shared reality. Their coming together helps them discern the problems that ail their part of the world; in doing this, hope survives that something can still be done to heal it.

We can no longer afford to point a finger to forces outside ourselves for addressing what ails us. What is “lost and rotting” in organizations cannot be blamed on corrupt leaders or on those in power over us. Scapegoats will no longer serve as catharsis for the common problems and dilemmas of our times. It is to ourselves that we must look and to what resides in our shared mind-sets and what is found in our shared culture. The crisis of meaning we experience is rooted on our unconscious holding of outdated patterns of social behavior. (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998, p. 6)

Dialogical education as envisioned in this study presumes that the images, understanding, and educational structures handed down from the 17th to the 20th century have performed their function and even possibly outlived their usefulness. Because of this changed worldview, educationists from Africa must now urgently find solutions to the above questions if new meanings of the human origin and destiny for Africa are to be sought. The search for a new educational paradigm is therefore guided by the knowledge that:

First of all, goals should not be set as in concrete stone, rather they should be presented and posed in such a manner that they invite continuous examination, reflection, and criticism... second, educational goals are to be seen not as finite problems that have a definite solution, similar to an engineer's responsibility to figure out a way to build a bridge given a

particular terrain, climate, budget, etc., but as inherently elusive since they should represent what we believe to be essences of the true, the good, and the beautiful. (Purpel, 1989, p. 124)

If Purpel is correct, educators will definitely have to decide what values and skills schools need to impart. This means that at times, they will be forced to make choices between legitimate and attractive values, which are values that at times conflict and contradict with one another. For instance, the choices they will have to make must deal with both individual or communal worth or achievement, equality or competition, control or democracy, and faith or reason (Purpel, 1989).

In their book *Dialogue: Rediscover the Transforming Power of Conversation*, Ellinor and Gerard (1998) describe several qualities that must be included in dialogic conversation if meanings to new life are to be created. These qualities include: the suspension of judgment, the suspension of assumptions, deep listening, inquiry, and reflection. In order to have successful dialogic conversations, these qualities must be maintained by all who participate in the conversations at all times. This must similarly be the case with the stakeholders of CASAN if the search for a new educational paradigm for the archdiocese is to be attained.

For instance, in the suspension of our judgments, all participants must be willing to develop “the ability to observe judgments, your own and those of others, from a neutral position, remaining detached and unreactive.” It is very important that this quality be respected in the conversations since “no one likes to feel judged [because] judgments shut down conversations and send creative

thinking into hiding” (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998, p. 66). Similarly, participants in dialogical conversations must be willing to suspend their assumptions.

Assumptions are often at the root of the snap evaluations that people make when we judge. “Assumptions are the products of years of past experiences and teachings layered with judgments. They are the building blocks we assemble to make sense of our world and support the mental models, or paradigms, we live within” (p. 78). The problem with assumptions is that often they take the status of facts and truths and when this happens, listening and learning suffer.

Dialogic conversations also demand that participants enter into deep listening. Only through this type of listening which does not resist change or being influenced by others can individuals allow other people’s worldview to enter them. Only then are they able to listen and search for the collective meaning of the world. “If you listen to the group’s conversation and behaviors over time, you will begin to get a picture of the worldview or thinking that sits beneath the surface and drives the group’s strategies and results” (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998, p. 108). Finally, in inquiry and reflection, participants learn the skill of asking questions and holding the attitude of curiosity while opening the door long enough for new insights and perceptions to emerge. Inquiry intends to lead us to places that we have not been before by way of asking questions. Questions that take us to such “*places tend to be the how, when, where and what* questions. They are questions that open the field of conversation and encourage us to focus attention on relationships and interdynamics among parts and whole systems” (p. 113). Finally, dialogical conversations must be followed by a period of silence or

solitude. Such slow moments have been found to be necessary “for [if] learning [is] to occur, new information must be processed” slowly (p. 118).

When such goals in dialogical communication have been achieved, the process of attaining a dialogical education as proposed in this study and by many postmodern curricula theorists can become achievable. This is because it can be assumed that all stakeholders in education would form a community of learners whereby every member of the community has something of value to offer in every step of the curricula decision-making process. Since in dialogical communication all barriers to communication are broken down, educationists can find in this dialogical method, a “bridge between where we are now and where we want to go” and as they learn to do this, deeper and newer ways of thinking and operating become the natural outgrowth of such a dialogue (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998, p. 7).

Purpel (1989) underscores this desire for openness to new insights in dialogic processes. He states that:

it is imperative that planning not be reduced to the implementation of an already decided set of objectives, but exist as an opportunity for teachers, students, administrators, and community, to participate in praxis – namely, in the dialectic of emerging theory and practice. (p. 145)

In this way, the whole community of learners contributes positively to the creation of the kind of schools needed.

Teachers become energized to utilize their prophetic voices as they make moral, intellectual and professional choices that end up influencing others. This

exercise of their prophetic role must not be done in a manner that would make teachers appear as though they were imposing their will on others, for this would create a negative force that would affect their competency. All stakeholders in education are therefore invited to appreciate the kind of work teachers do and to understand that teachers are much more than mere high-level clerks whose job is to implement orders from above. This kind of appreciation goes a long way in helping create the kind of conducive environment that would allow teachers to resurrect their prophetic roles. This is because their reflective imagination would then be awakened and this empowers teachers to develop a set of principles from which they can raise their voices as social critics (Purpel, 1989).

As for the students, a dialogical pedagogy helps them become active rather than passive learners in the classroom. The vast experiences students bring to classroom become the starting point of their learning as Shor and Freire (1987) observe:

When I insist on dialogical education starting from the students' comprehension of their daily life experiences, no matter if they are students of the university or kids in primary school or workers in a neighborhood or peasants in the countryside, my insistence on starting from their description of their daily life experiences is based in the possibility of starting from concreteness, from common sense to reach a rigorous understanding of reality. (p. 106)

In this recorded conversation between Shor and Freire in their book *A Pedagogy For Liberation: Dialogues On Transforming Education* (1987), Freire

reiterates his position on the nature of a dialogic pedagogy which sharply contrasts that of traditional pedagogies of education described in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). He admonishes schools that continue using the banking methodology of education because to him, such an education is problematic since it does not employ teaching and learning approaches that incorporate problem-solving skills. At the root of dialogic pedagogy is a desire that education be capable of liberating the marginalized and the oppressed. Whether one is a leader, an administrator or a teacher, it is pertinent that one believes in other people's potential to become their best. As such, leaders must never treat others as mere objects of their own action but as followers capable of their own liberation (Freire, 1970, p. 169). True liberators must be servant leaders, too; for unless one has that special love for the city and the marginalized, it is impossible for that person to provide a true liberation (Freire, 1970).

We simply cannot go to the laborers - urban or peasant - in the banking style, to give them *knowledge* or to impose upon them the model of the *good man* contained in a program whose content we have ourselves organized. Many political and educational plans have failed because their authors designed them according to their own personal views of reality, never once taking account of the men-in -a -situation to whom their program was ostensibly directed. (Freire, 1970, p. 94)

Freire warns humanist educators as well as authentic revolutionaries whose goal in education is to transform the society, to guard themselves against the inherent dangers of becoming oppressors rather than liberators. Liberators are

people who help others recover their stolen humanity. They do not wish to win people over to their side as oppressors tend to do (Freire, 1970). Since students are the center of education, a dialogical education must therefore assist them to navigate the complex and sometimes inconsistent social milieu they live in. Such a help must aim at awakening within students the ethic of critique and of care that lies buried within as a result of their value system having been modified and corrupted by their oppressors (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001). This is what the community of learners in CASAN must strive to achieve by awakening within its student population the desire to not only describe what oppresses them, but to dialogically do something about it. In the next section on changing the culture of CASAN, some cogent notions that policymakers in Nairobi need to be aware of as they develop a plan of action to reform their school system are identified.

Changing the Culture of CASAN

To reform a school system in order to stop it from operating in a colonial mindset and to acquire a postcolonial one, or from being classical and didactic in its teaching methods to using postmodern and liberating models, requires educators to have a thorough understanding of some of the pertinent issues informing organizational change. This part of the literature review will provide salient remarks concerning what is involved in this process of changing or reforming school cultures. It offers policymakers in Nairobi some background information on some of the cultural interactions that they need to be aware of if changes are to be implemented successfully.

It is important to understand that a clear distinction between a school's culture and its climate exists. Though explaining this distinction is not easy, nevertheless, it is important to do so since these two concepts describe two phenomena very similar to each other. First, it is important to note that both are abstractions that deal with the behavior of persons in organizations. According to Owens (2004), culture typically concerns itself with behavioral norms, assumptions and beliefs within an organization. Climate, on the other hand, deals with the perception that people have of their organization and how it reflects those norms and assumptions (p. 183). Culture refers to shared organizational philosophies that describe the way things are done in an organization, because this is what people believe. Climate, on the other hand, studies individual perceptions of various aspects of the environment in an organization. This distinction helps in providing a theoretical and practical framework that is necessary in understanding organizations and school systems such as CASAN.

Studying organizational climates and cultures became popular in the 1960s. Such studies were often concerned with finding the total characteristics of an organization's environment. Climate was associated with the personality of the school. What personality was to an individual is similarly what climate was to an organization (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). Climate is composed of four different dimensions namely: ecology, milieu, social system, and culture (Kowalski, 2003; Owens, 2004).

Most early researchers on climate collected data from adults who were teachers and occasionally from principals. Recently, the trend has been to

examine perceptions of students rather than adults. Through the use of anthropological and sociological studies, a better understanding of school climates has now become possible since such studies have provided a thick description of basic assumptions as well as common values of the cultures of such schools (Owens, 2004). For Catholic educators, Oldenski's (1994) study of a Catholic school in East St. Louis is a good example of how such methodologies can be used to listen to the students' voice on what Catholic education means to them. Studying a school's climate entails understanding the following four categories:

1. Ecology. This is the easiest category in a school's climate to change. It deals with the physical attributes of the organization such as the age of the school building, its size, design, equipment, technology, and so on. Some schools are new, therefore welcoming, while others are old and dilapidated and they detract from a change friendly climate. It is because things and not people are involved in ecology that this is the easiest thing to change in a school (Kowalski, 2003; Owens, 2004).
2. Milieu. Is the social dimension of the schools. Because of legal and political reasons, this category of school climate is a little difficult to change. This has everything to do with people and the way they relate with each other: How many they are, their race or ethnicity, salary level of teachers, morale and motivation of adults, and level of job satisfaction. Each individual brings a unique set of needs and wants to the school (Kowalski, 2003; Owens, 2004).
3. Social system (Organization). This involves political and economic considerations and because of this, it is perhaps the second easiest part in a

school's climate to change or to tinker with. This refers to the organization's structural elements. Change in administrative styles, arrangement of the school's: curriculum, calendar and scheduling can be done without incurring a lot of negative feelings (Kowalski, 2003; Owens, 2004).

4. Culture. Is the hardest part of a school's climate to change. This is because underlying beliefs and assumptions often exist at the subconscious level. The values, beliefs, norms and ways of thinking in the organization shape the character and the way people think. This is the most critical element of climate as it consists of the organization's symbolic dimension (Kowalski, 2003; Owens, 2004).

Within a school's culture will be found other subcultures interacting with one another. Figure 2 provides a graphic presentation of possible cultural interactions within Catholic schools in Nairobi. Such schools have cultural interactions that include: the national culture, the culture and traditions of the Catholic Church, the school's religious department, and the culture of the ministry of education.

Since society does change schools, it is expected that the greatest influence in Catholic schools in Nairobi will be from the Kenyan national culture. It is from this wider community that the young people attending schools gain their social capital. The fact that most Catholic schools in Kenya are sponsored schools also means that the traditions and rituals of the Catholic Church will in one way or another be part of what influences these schools. The government, through the ministry of education also does exercise

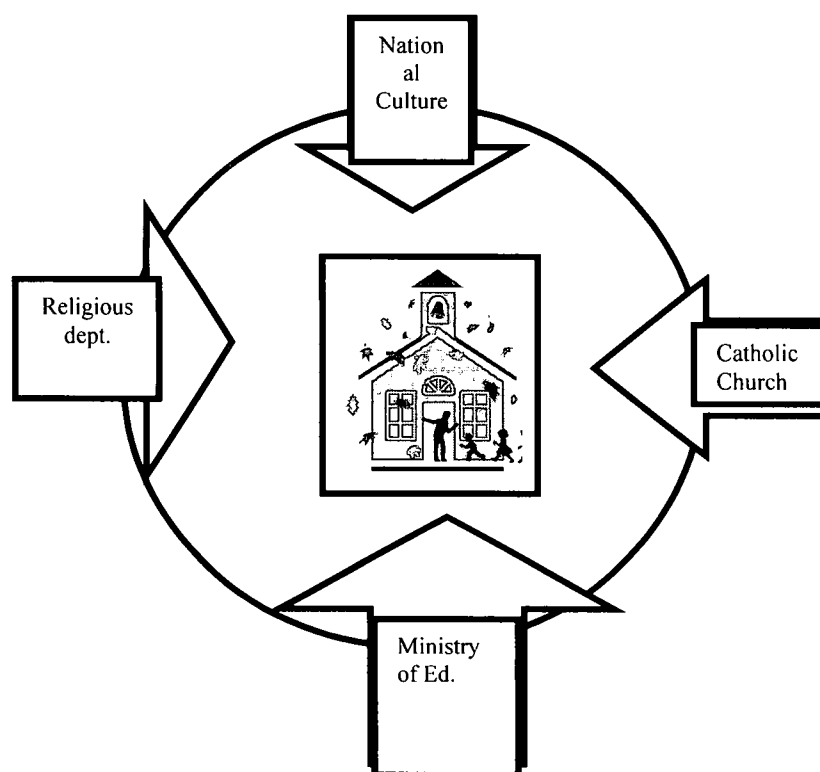


Figure 2. Possible cultural interactions in all types of schools including Catholic sponsored schools in Nairobi

some measure of influence in the way these formerly religious schools are run. Other minor subcultures such as the Mathematics, English and Religious departments within a school also do affect the school's identity in some ways. Since no two schools or school districts or dioceses have identical cultures, it is still important for researchers to investigate what it is that makes Catholic schools in each diocese unique. They must seek to get the feel, sense, atmosphere, character, or image of that organization (Hoy & Miskel, 1996).

Even though individual schools including diocesan schools have their distinct identities, Hoy and Miskel (1996) point out that organizations that have

shared a culture also share certain orientations in order for the units to hold this distinctiveness together. Changing the organizational culture has been said to be the most difficult thing to do in any organization. This is because the culture of an organization is the most powerful vehicle for determining the course of change in that organization (Owens, 2004). Many administrators hired to reform organizations have been surprised when instead of reforming them, have found themselves forced out of the organization that had hired them to bring reforms because its culture was too strong for them. Greenleaf (1995) draws leaders' attention to the fact that before they attempt to resolve the urgent problems of the world, they must first desire to change themselves before attempting to change others. Successful change begins and ends at the individual level since any organizations cannot change until all members have changed (Hall & Hord, 2001).

Change or school reform is a long-term process and no known magic or silver bullet for change exists. Real change takes anywhere between 3 to 5 years (Hall & Hord, 2001). This idea discards the notion that change is an event that can happen instantly or through a one-time announcement by the chief executive or school principal, or by a team of teachers after attending a 2-day training workshop on a certain program (Hall & Hord, 2001). The bottom line for CASAN is to plan for change in order to avoid courting institutional entropy. Quinn (1996) says that deep change differs from incremental change and it requires leaders to take risks. Slow death, according to him, begins when someone confronting the dilemma of having to make deep organizational changes accepts the status quo

and rejects the option of change. Such a decision results in the gradual and occasional disintegration of an organization.

The writing on the wall is clear that organizations that resist change will sooner rather than later find themselves irrelevant to the needs of the 21st century society. The 4 years of leadership at the helm of the Catholic Church by Pope John XXIII, are perhaps the most memorable years in the history of the modern Catholic Church. These were the years when a new wind of change blew inside the church. That moment of change continues to influence and invite the Catholic Church and its institutions such as Catholic schools to become the cutting edge institutions of this century. Greenleaf (1977) points out that they can only do this by becoming welcoming institutions that allow all people to grow into their full potential:

Churches and schools, using initiatives now available to them, must make of themselves exceptional institutions in which all of the people participating in them in all roles (and this includes everybody from the janitor to the most esoteric scholar) can find in their participation conditions that favor fulfillment of their potentialities as persons. (p. 251)

Catholic schools must begin to form new innovators who will develop a new theory of education and action. A theory of action develops a set of strategies that addresses local conditions while the theory of education expresses how those ideas for change will flourish (Fullan, 1999). Such innovators will have to determine the needs of the communities they live in and also whether the kind of resources they have are adequate to achieve the goals they wish to attain. Albert

Camus in his last lecture as quoted by Greenleaf (1977) said that, "Great ideas it has been said come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then if we listen attentively, we shall hear amid the uproar of empires and nations, the faint flutter of wings, gentle stirring of life and hope" (p. 235). CASAN needs to attentively listen to the voice of its prophets as represented in the teachers, students, parents, and administrators who are its innovators and who keep calling upon the school system to resurrect the great ideas that will benefit it.

History reminds reformers of the need to be careful about implementing large-scale school reforms. Well planned out school reforms such as those of the 1950s and 1960s failed to take root because of the absence of creativity by the reformers. Many reformers have been let down because of erroneously assuming that transferring past successful programs from one community to another would work for them too. A serious reflection on the complexity of change is necessary. Fullan (1999) explains that, just as students have to construct their own meaning in order to learn, reformers too must allow the local situation to construct new meanings on what needs to be reformed or changed.

Because countries need to achieve national development, there are times when national planning becomes necessary. Such planning, however, must not be seen to be an affront to the valued capitalistic way of life, which abhors the national planning of resources. Even though market forces ought to be allowed to determine the kind of national goals to be achieved, they alone cannot make present day society achieve its future long-term plans. Getting there will require that strategic plans that provide the roadmap to this desired future growth be

made. The church, government, industry, and labor will have to come together in order to find solutions to common problems facing communities and nations (Iacocca, 1984).

The old must give way to the new and therefore CASAN must also strive to work hard to become schools of the 21st century. One way to do this would be for schools to excel in internal and external relationships (Fullan, 1999). They will do this by becoming open systems that seek to embrace rather than resist changes. Heft (2000), a Catholic theologian and educator, while writing on this subject of the old giving way to the new in Catholic higher education asks, “how can I emphasize the value of tradition without seeming to impose from the past ideas that appear irrelevant to the present?” (p. 204). This is a core question in Catholic school reform because it touches the very heart of Catholic education all over the world. I suspect that this question does not have easy answers since it demands that educators and reformers should determine in their reform agenda what is fundamental and hence unchangeable in Catholic education and what is not fundamental and is changeable. Heft further suggests that even though ecclesial institutions must remain distinct from public institutions by virtue of their rich religious heritage, such a heritage must not hinder these institutions from becoming more integrated.

Greenleaf's (1977) contribution to this debate was that the Church and the institutions affiliated with it can choose to become exceptional institutions or not. According to Greenleaf, two major traditions on organizational structure exist. The church must decide whether or not to remain held in the old tradition or to

adopt new ones. The first tradition coming down from the time of Moses in the Old Testament has been dominant and hence has come to be taken as a self-evident truth for a long time. It is a hierarchical tradition as it places one person at the top of the pyramid structure of the organization where such a person becomes the lone chief in charge of the organization. The second tradition comes from the Roman times. This has been tried minimally but is highly recommended throughout Greenleaf's book – *Servant Leadership*. In this tradition, the principal is the leader of the organization but acts as *primus inter pares*. Though this tradition still has a leader, that leader acts only as first among equals. The leader is not considered the chief in the organization since in this type of leadership structure, leadership is expressed among a group of able peers.

What Greenleaf suggests here, ties well with the African traditional decision-making process. Africans made decisions after thorough discussions that culminated in a consensus. Kenyatta (1938) restates this process among the Kikuyu people of Kenya:

The two contesting parties were invited into the circle to state their case to the assembly... two elders were appointed to conduct the proceedings on behalf of the whole council...any member of the council had the right to intervene and ask questions or make a statement...anyone in the assembly could stand up and express his opinion. In this way the young people were given an opportunity to develop and improve their talent in legal matters... at the conclusion of the general discussion a committee of judges was appointed; both parties were allowed to choose two elders each

to represent them in the committee... the committee retired alone to discuss the matter in private... then the ndundu [committee] having agreed as to the judgment of the case, cut the twigs and arranged them according to their finding. The presiding elder of the ndundu recites what each twig represents in a ritual tone... after the meat was eaten, the court reassembled and the committee of the judges gave their decision. (pp. 220-222)

The above scenario from one particular community in Kenya, depicts a highly skilled decision-making process. This reinforces some of the traditional African leadership practices that were for thousands of generations common in Africa. Unfortunately, Africans were forced to discard them and revert to less noble styles (Greenleaf, 1977). It also shows that in that traditional process, both the young and the old learned from each other as the community spoke with one voice on issues affecting its day-to-day life. As this discussion on changing the culture of Catholic schools in Nairobi ends, one final point in this reflection is that Africa needs not to look beyond its borders for a reform formula to use, part of the solution lies within itself. Education reformers within CASAN need to encourage the existence of a diversity of ideas so that neither Eurocentric nor Afrocentric notions completely dominate the running of schools in Africa.

Providing a Culturally Relevant Education to African Students

Black people throughout the world face similar or near similar educational experiences. From Africa to other countries of their diaspora in Europe and

America, Black people have been going through an education system that has had little regard for their cherished way of life. A revisiting of this historical phenomenon reveals that, even though there are some positive things that can be directly attributed to the colonial and slavery periods,

the bondage of the Negro brought captive from Africa is one of the greatest dramas in history, and the writer who merely sees in that ordeal something to approve or condemn fails to understand the evolution of the human race. (Woodson, 1990, p. 139)

As Woodson (1990) suggests here, there may be many positive things to be learned about this evolution of the human race as a result of the Black man's encounter with colonialism and slavery. Despite that fact, this researcher believes that the negative impact these two experiences had on the African people far outweigh the positive contributions such encounters may have had on general human development. The Black race has been mis-educated and dominated for a long time and unless an educational paradigm with a capacity to provide some degree of self worth to them is established, a far worse discrimination than the cultural or political domination now experienced can be expected (Woodson, 1990). As other historians such as Manning Marable have suggested (in his public lecture delivered at the University of Dayton, 2003) the next phase of discrimination will be an economic one whereby the Blacks will remain dependent financially on other races for many years to come.

A newspaper article from the *East African Standard* daily magazine lucidly captures this problem of mis-educating African students in a postmodern society in Kenya:

The Marakwet District Education Officer (*DEO*), Mr. Richard Cheror, has banned the use of vernacular in all learning institutions in the area. Cheror expressed outrage at the poor performance by local schools and blamed it on the use of vernacular among teachers and pupils...Cheror said:

“teachers should set a good example to be emulated by students by strictly discouraging the use of mother tongue in school compounds.” (“No Mother Tongue Here,” 2003)

This example, though an isolated one, reveals a profound deficiency within the Kenyan educational system today. It reveals that 40 years of political independence have not been successful in reducing the negative settler community’s educational and cultural influence on African education. Ngugi’s prison memoirs “Detained: A Writer’s Prison Diary” (1997), shockingly describes this preference for European languages over African ones by educated Kenyans this way:

The settler despised peasant languages which he termed vernacular, meaning the languages of slaves, and believed that the English language was holy. Their pupils carry this contempt a stage further: some of their early educational acts on receiving the flag were to ban African languages in schools and to elevate English as the medium of instruction from primary to secondary stages.... Men at the top will fume in fury at fellow

Africans who mispronounce English but will laugh with pride at their own inability to speak a single correct sentence of their own African languages. (pp. 620-621)

What to make of all this? It can be said that for the sake of achieving national and international goals of education, it may be necessary to include within the curriculum the teaching of some national and international discourses to African students. There is room to teach other foreign languages to African students; however, this does not mean that educators must reject the teaching of local languages and culture to African students. Furthermore, doing that is not reflective of current practices in early childhood education. Hale (1982) for instance, advocates for preschool environments that reflect as much as possible, homelike environments of Black or other minority children. She supports the bringing to school of some of the key features these children experience in their homes. At the same time, she reminds teachers that they have a responsibility to create learning environments that complement the students' home culture.

Most African communities educated their children informally. Such informal settings ensured that children learned what was relevant and applicable in their adult life right from childhood. This is what Dewey had recommended that schools should do; that they make the experiences students underwent in school aligned to real life occupational and democratic experiences surrounding the country (Urban & Wagoner, 2000). To Dewey, educators had a responsibility to work hard to remove learning from abstract theories; so that whatever students learned in school became meaningful and contextual and therefore applicable in

their adult life (Dewey, 1988). Without necessarily extolling the virtues of traditional education in African communities, it can be accepted that this informal education allowed children to learn and play in unrestricted environments; thereby giving them a chance to begin early to imitate adult roles they would play in the future. As the young people advanced in maturity, their education became more personalized and specialized as skills relevant in adult life for men and women were taught.

Delpit (1995) in her book *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*, warns teachers not to attempt to change the homes of the poor and non-White children to match those in the powerful and dominant culture. Doing that, she argues, is tantamount to causing a cultural genocide. She cautions teachers of minority students against speaking in any manner that undermines the community the student comes from. It is wrong to do that since this says to minority students that their community is wrong. It is doubtful that teachers would want to impart such negative attitudes to their students; instead, it is hoped that teachers would wish to encourage their students to use such languages while at the same time providing them with additional codes that enable them to use the new codes in non threatening ways (p. 53).

To achieve a culturally relevant education, society must ensure that schools are provided with teachers who are culturally conscious of themselves first, and the environment they teach in. Even though it is impossible for any one teacher to study and understand all the cultural, social, and economic ties of all the students in their classes in order to incorporate these diverse backgrounds into

their teaching, Ogbu (2003) recommends that teachers should at least have some minimal degree of multicultural appreciation. He argues that without such cultural capital, it is impossible for teachers to teach a dominant discourse without having to belittle the minority discourse. Good teachers must first acknowledge and validate students' home language without necessarily limiting their potential. They seek to help students to add "other voices and discourses to their repertoires" (Delpit, 1995, p. 163).

Rather than advising teachers to stop students from speaking their mother tongue in schools, it probably would have been better if the DEO had encouraged teachers to find alternate ways of assisting their students to advance their cultural and linguistic repertoire from the known to the unknown. Ogbu's (2003) findings that the mistreatment of Black people as recorded in history often affected Black students who internalize the belief that White students are better than they are in academic achievement has relevance to CASAN. Just as little confidence and expectations shown to minority students by teachers ends up causing students to poorly perform in school and in life after school, it can be postulated that a similar low expectation by Kenyan teachers on students contributes significantly to the poor performance of students in life after high school. Repeated failures were seen earlier where every year, only about 20,000 out of a possible 200,000 students registered for national examinations in Kenya have a chance to proceed further in education, has evidently had a serious socioeconomic impact on the life of the students, their families, and the country.

Ogbu's (2003) findings which seem meaningful to education systems in Africa, make a strong connection between education and a student's future economic well-being. His claim that the Black community had failed to see education as an equal opportunity creator; hence, the reason why most Black students never hope to achieve the American dream through education, provides an interesting angle on which to evaluate Kenyan education. His discovery that because Black students had failed to see education as having a pay off benefit for them and hence the reason why most Black students never pursued education beyond the legal age requirement, gives credence to our own suspicions. A postcolonial education that continues to promote an elitist social structure and that creates a community with dual images must be redressed if social breakdown is to be avoided. This is the dilemma that 21st century educationists in Kenya must help society resolve. The provision of a culturally relevant education to Black students, in Africa and those in diaspora, in order to help this race become self-actualizing, helps to reduce some of the negative influences that the miseducation of the Black race has experienced over the years. This is not just a good idea for academic debates, but one whose time for implementation has arrived.

Conclusion

A good storyteller always has a keen eye on how to end the story. The narrator must always discern at what point the story must end since good stories never get concluded, for listeners must always be left savoring the sweetness of the story long after the narrator is gone. This researcher hopes that the story of

CASAN so far narrated, has provided the reader with the *raison d'être* why Catholic schools in Nairobi must be reformed, for in the final analysis, this is the goal that this study seeks to achieve.

The historical part reviewed in this study provided readers with a snapshot of the genesis and nature of the education crisis in Nairobi. Though the researcher resisted apportioning blame to any quarter unless it was clearly necessary, the researcher has deliberately opted to light a candle rather than curse the darkness. For that matter, readers of this study have been provided with a rich description of possible pathways that schools in Nairobi, both public and private, can choose to follow should they decide to minimize or to end the damage that an unequal and often hegemonic education system imposes on its beloved people of God in Nairobi, Kenya and Africa.

It is not enough for schools to be called "Catholic." That title must be carried with honor and therefore, it must be earned. The only way Catholic schools will earn this is by first recognizing that students are their main business. They are the reason why they exist and for that matter, providing Catholic students with an education relevant to their needs in the 21st century is their primary duty. This is why part of the literature review did analyze some research studies and Church documents that helped to delineate the most essential elements common in authentic Catholic schools. It was noted that even though the spirit of the Second Vatican Council still lingers and continues to illuminate the path that Catholic education must follow, forces of resistance are now threatening the progressive efforts already achieved. To balance these forces that call for change

and those that resist change, the Church must continuously seek ways that will empower the “People of God” to constantly make informed moral decisions as they navigate their complex world in an effort to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth.

The 1980s-to the present, are unique times that require unique solutions to existing problems. These times have been called postmodern times and schools have now been reconceptualized and teachers have rediscovered their prophetic voice. Postmodern times are also “grace-filled” moments as schools continue to provide their students with dialogical skills in order to help students acquire habits of reflection and action if they are to become agents of social change. To produce this change, schools must produce a critical mass of people who have acquired both an ethic of justice and of care (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001). These are calls that Catholic schools in Nairobi cannot afford to ignore or to lose sight of, for change is inevitable. With a proper plan of action that affirms the *I- Thou* African experience, the next phase in the plan of action for CASAN promises to be an exciting one. This is because the liberation of the Africans from all that has enslaved them culturally, economically, politically, pedagogically and so forth, can only mean that at last, the long awaited renaissance of the African continent will have haltingly but unstoppably begun.

Finally, it is clear that a new educational paradigm is needed for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. Oldenski (1997) acknowledges that movements such as critical pedagogy and liberation theology have scriptures and the teachings of Jesus as their starting point. In his reflection on the Church

documents since Vatican II, he sees a sense of community as not being “per se the Kingdom of God, but rather a means to the Kingdom.” He believes that a paradigm shift in Catholic schools has occurred so that, “the Catholic Church now finds the Kingdom of God wherever there is peace, justice, freedom and love” (p. 99). This sense of community, he says, must become part of the climate and identity of Catholic schools (Joseph, 2001).

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

Restating the Problem and the Research Questions

What is the purpose of education in a country? Would that purpose be the education and training of students to work for the industrial and technological development of the country? What kind of school system best meets the goals of national development, public or private? Scholars such as Coleman et al. (1981) and Bryk, Holland, Lee, and Carriedo (1984) have studied both public and private school systems in America to find out which of the two school systems provides students with the best educational opportunities. Their conclusion, though controversial and hotly debated, has been that Catholic schools have consistently demonstrated higher cognitive and affective achievements than public schools.

In Kenya, historical, cultural, and pedagogical barriers have prevented Catholic schools from making similar achievements. While examining the symbiotic relationship existing between the Church and state in Kenya elsewhere in this study, the researcher argued that this status quo needs to change. Bassey's (1999) critique of African countries' educational systems appears correct as he claims that these systems have been characterized by layers of domination and hegemony. He asserts that students are often "compelled to sit in rows and columns in classrooms listening to teachers recite notes for endless hours" (p. 114). In contrast, the Brazilian educator Freire has called for a dialogical form of education.

Freire's dialogical education stands in direct contrast to the "banking concept" of education practiced in many schools throughout the world, including

those in Kenya. Freire declared that “leaders who do not act dialogically, but insist on imposing their decisions, do not organize the people – they manipulate them. They do not liberate, nor are they liberated: they oppress” (1970, p. 178). With this in mind, this third chapter now turns to the important process that was used by the researcher to collect and analyze the data that generated the report found in chapters four, five and six, concerning Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

That report is ultimately expected to provide policymakers in the Archdiocese of Nairobi with useful information that would help them make bold decisions regarding the type(s) of Catholic schools the Archdiocese should emphasize in the 21st century. As always, the research design is driven by the purpose of the study and in this case, the purpose was to answer three research questions namely: (a) what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? (b) What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education? And (c) What do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals?

Two research methods of data collection exist: they are qualitative and quantitative. As Krueger (1998) says, “the goal of qualitative research is to understand and communicate, not to control or replicate a study” as quantitative methods do (p. 64). The qualitative model has been selected as the research

methodology to be used in this study. Newman and Benz (1998) clarify the goals of these two methods further by saying that:

the qualitative, naturalistic approach is used when observing and interpreting reality with the aim of developing a theory that will explain what was experienced. The quantitative approach is used when one begins with a theory (or hypothesis) and tests for confirmations or disconfirmation of that hypothesis. (p. 3)

Many researchers have a bias towards the quantitative method and they believe the method is more “objective” because its data are quantifiable and measurable, unlike the qualitative method which is thought to be more “subjective.” In reality, this dichotomy of methods is only ontological. These two methods exist in an interactive continuum and neither of them according to this researcher is better than the other. Newman and Benz (1998) support this view:

When faced with the, “question which is better?” we would refuse to answer; indeed, we would be unable to answer, given the choices presented. There is no such answer. The better paradigm (qualitative or quantitative) is the one that serves to answer the specific research question. (p. 11)

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) declare that the qualitative method is most suitable for research work that intends to study reality in its natural setting. This method of study attempts to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them. Within the qualitative research methodology are several data collection techniques. These include: case studies, ethnography,

phenomenology, oral history, focus groups, interviews, and so forth. In this study, the focus group interview technique was chosen as the method of study to collect data concerning Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi today.

The researcher believes that this interview methodology/technique was not only helpful in studying the reality of Catholic schools in Nairobi in their most natural settings, but that this technique also had the special quality of assisting the researcher to actively “listen to the voices” of all stakeholders. Listening to the voices of students, teachers, parents, administrators and others as they gave meaning to their experiences within Catholic schools of Nairobi did provide the researcher with useful insights on the past and the present conditions of Catholic school systems in Nairobi. These insights have in turn helped the researcher to offer policymakers within the Catholic school system some considered implications and recommendations concerning Catholic schools of the 21st century in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, in chapter seven.

What are Focus Groups and Why was This Technique Used in This Study

What are focus groups and why use them in this study? According to Litoselliti (2003), “focus groups are small structured groups with selected participants, normally led by a moderator. They are set up in order to explore specific topics and individual views and experiences” (p. 1). Lederman (1990) further describes this technique of data collection as involving the use of in-depth, group interviews in which participants are selected because they are purposive.

The above description provides an important distinction between focus group interviews and other research methods such as individual interviews.

First, focus groups are described as being structured. This means that the groups are carefully planned and have specific formats to be followed while conducting interviews. Secondly, they are called “focus groups” because they deal with specific topics organized around the moderator’s topic/views in order to clarify it/them. Thirdly, because of the existing interactions between participants in the focus groups, this technique is distinctively different from other individual or group interview techniques (Large & Beheshti, 2001).

Focus group interview technique has also been called purposive. This means that decisions concerning its conduct are always carefully and creatively determined right from the beginning by the researcher in order that useful answers from the participants may be obtained (Fern, 2001; Jayanthi & Nelson, 2002). Despite its deceptively simple appearance, this method is “profound in its potential for revealing socially constructed meaning and underlying attitudes” (Kleiber, 2004, p. 89). The technique is based on a number of assumptions:

(1) That people themselves are a valuable source of information, including information about themselves; (2) that people can report on and about themselves, and that they are articulate enough to put into words their thoughts, feelings and behaviors; (3) that people need help in “mining” that information, a role served by the interviewer, or researcher, who “focuses” the interview in the focus group interview; (4) that the dynamics of the group can be used to surface genuine information rather than

creating a “group think” phenomenon; and (5) that the interview of the group is superior to the interview of an individual. (Lederman, 1990, p. 118)

Though these assumptions may not be peculiar to focus group studies alone, their value in this method is immeasurable. They provide a strong base to researchers using them to produce new knowledge through their in-depth interviews. Kleiber (2004) asserts that whatever the research problem, “focus groups are most useful when employed with the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and where the reality of interest is the result of social interaction” (p. 89). It is imperative that if new knowledge is to be gained, researchers must endeavor to provide a suitable environment conducive to holding candid discussions by participants.

Focus groups provide researchers with numerous advantages. Researchers, including those in developing countries such as Kenya, can use them in conjunction with other inquiry methods such as the “dialogical one,” to obtain maximum advantage in listening to the “voices” of participants. Lederman’s 1983 study found that groups composed of people with high levels of anxiety who were reluctant to talk in most circumstances found focus groups a safe research method that allowed them to talk freely. He explained that such people usually found it easy to self-disclose in such situations because they found security in numbers. Lederman also explained that this method was relatively cheaper and faster and hence more useful to researchers than other interview methods, especially if one

put into consideration the amount of data to be collected (as cited in Lederman, 1990).

Focus groups have in the past been found to be an important research methodology that empowers participants. While this is not the main function of focus groups, they provide this critical function while still fulfilling their main function, which is to collect data. When focus group interview methodology is used in conjunction with other inquiry methods such as the dialogical one, participants are helped by the group discussions to make connections between their personal stories and the social structures they live within. Even though it is difficult to make all participants, especially high school students, fully dialogical because some of them tend to speak more than others and therefore end up dominating the discussions, using this dialogical technique can be helpful to participants as it helps their voices to be heard. Focus groups do help participants become aware of the sociopolitical, cultural, as well as oppressive structures that prevent them from experiencing integral development within their communities. Focus groups therefore, create an interest within participants to change the circumstances of their oppression (Padilla, 1993). Even when taking action may not be the main purpose of focus groups interviews, Kleiber (2004) insists that "the impact of focus groups on the participants when they are discussing issues of importance to them, suggests that it may be more than a method of inquiry; it may have the effect of intervention" (p. 96).

Focus groups do provide researchers with a unique opportunity to listen actively to subjugated voices (Morgan, 1988). Researchers using this method

strive at the same time to ensure that it is the participant's and not the researcher's voice that is heard. This changed understanding on what to focus on in return, allows researchers to become more interested in observing participants' interactions (Madriz, 2000). Such research techniques that offer the capacity to actively listen to stakeholders of CASAN voices, without necessarily imposing outside dominant voices on them, endeared itself to the stated intentions of this study.

Because this method of study has advantages such as economizing on time and money than other methods such as individual interviews, it continues to become popular among social scientists today. For instance, Morgan (1988) saw this advantage clearly when he stated that "the same number of people can be interviewed in much less time in a group format and with further savings in analysis time because fewer transcripts are required" (p. 19). Saying this does not imply that the quality of the data collected is diminished, though it can be argued that this method proportionately produces less data than individual interviews. Kleiber (2004), on the other hand, cautions that care must always be taken not to misuse this research method. Taking shortcuts in order to save money raises some concerns; this could easily open the research design to failure since little useful outcomes can be expected from the data obtained, Kleiber warns.

Within the social sciences, this method is now popular in advertising, political campaigns, and policymaking in schools. Other users of this research method include feminist, African American, African, Latino researchers and liberation theologians. All these have found this method useful. Liberation

theologians for example, have shown interest in this inquiry technique because most of them believe that traditional methods of inquiry have alienated the marginalized groups of people in the past. Traditional research methodologies in the past were associated with the imposition of thoughts and feelings from the dominant classes, races, and socio-economic groups upon the minority populations (Madriz, 2000). Through the use of focus groups, it has now become possible for such researchers to walk the journey of resurrecting their subjugated voices successfully.

Focus Group Design

The purpose of the focus group interviews determines the design of the study. Maximum flexibility in the design is required since the precise number of groups to be held and the characteristics of the population to be targeted are decided in a stepwise fashion as the fieldwork progresses (Knodel, 1993). This means that the moderator needs to decide such mundane things as whether to have structured or less structured interview questions for the groups. Moderators do this knowing very clearly that “the more structured the approach, the less opportunity for discovery and the less ‘chaotic’ the data. Less-structured questioning usually produces more discovery and proves more challenging to analyze” (Kleiber, 2004, p. 91).

Since a partial purpose of this study was to elicit views and feelings from stakeholders in CASAN; in lieu of presenting a report that would help decision makers in Nairobi make informed decisions concerning the type(s) of Catholic

school(s) to emphasize in Nairobi in the 21st century, it was necessary to construct questions that would aid in that regard. It had been planned that generic or other less structured questions that were open ended, would be used in this study in order for the researcher to establish an open and hospitable climate that would encourage listening to participants' voices.

It was also presumed that the researcher had, through study, personal reflections, and interactions with focus group researchers, acquired moderating skills that would have enabled him to conduct such group processes with minimum difficulties. Kleiber (2004) underlines the need to have such skills saying that "the moderator needs to encourage participants to express their points of view in an atmosphere of mutual respect and to facilitate interaction among the participants in order to understand underlying attitudes and beliefs" (p. 91). No undue pressure was to be exerted on participants to reach consensus. Instead, attention was to be "placed on understanding the feelings, comments, and thought processes of participants as they discuss the issues" (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 12).

To assist reticent participants to answer questions, many scholars advise that the moderator should have a structured interview guide with some introductory remarks and other general questions that deal with participants' opinions concerning the topic. Such prior preparations are considered important because they help researchers in their effort to jumpstart focus groups. Madriz (2000), for instance, notes that doing this is helpful when researchers are working with groups of people from lower-socioeconomic conditions, or even women who

have been socialized to reserve their opinions. The researcher's overall goal should be to help such groups needing assistance to open up; this researcher was keen to avoid having a domineering relationship with participants that would reproduce colonial and postcolonial structures as Madriz (2000) warns.

For these reasons, the researcher who has a good command of both Swahili and Kikuyu languages proposed to use these two languages as a way of avoiding disenfranchising voices that could not speak English fluently. The findings presented in chapters four, five, and six make a generous use of these two languages as they are spoken and understood by the participants. However, "grand tour" types of questions were also used in certain focus groups. This depended on whether participants had begun engaging in discussions freely since as Ridenour, Demmitt, & Lindsey-North. (1999) suggest, these questions can also be used as the main inquiry method:

A researcher led off with an initial inquiry... "grand tour" question about life in the school; and, for the most part, the participants carried it from there. When dialogue did not flow naturally from the group, the researcher directed the conversation with a set of prescribed questions. (p. 413)

In this study, the structured questions and probe guidelines prepared earlier were used by the researcher as a fall back plan. These questions and their probe guidelines had been generated from the original three research questions as a way of breaking down the big picture into smaller and easy questions that could be answered by all. From the first research question, what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? two discussion questions had been

formulated: (1) What is your view of high school education in the country? What dream(s) or vision(s) do you have for this country and how can schools help achieve them? (2) From your experience of the education system in the country, are there subjects that have been more emphasized than others in the high school curricula? What other subjects should be included in the high school curricula but are currently not?

From question two, what do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education? three discussion level questions had been developed. These were: (1) what is your concept of Catholic school/education? (2) In general, does CASAN meet your concept of Catholic education? (3) What does CASAN need to do to improve?

Finally from question three, What do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals of education? the researcher was able to generate three discussion level questions. These were: (1) Do you think the school with which you are affiliated meets the concept of Catholic education you described earlier? (2) To what extent do members of the school community: administrators, teachers, students, parents and others interact with each other? In your opinion, do you think the level of interaction among the people in the school needs to be improved? (3) Do you think Catholic schools have had a positive or a negative impact on students who attend them?

The next task for the researcher was to identify areas that needed further probing during the focus group dialogues. According to Jayanthi and Nelson (2002), moderators need to identify other ways of asking the same thing so as to get the same information. Key words and phrases that could trigger additional comments were helpful in this regard. From the eight delineated discussion level questions, the following probe guidelines had been identified as being helpful in providing clues to gather further information (Table 3). As Willert and Lenhardt (2003) suggest, researchers should feel free to use such guided questions and probes or scripts for specific groups. “Some questions in the script were asked across all groups, while other questions were especially designed for the group at hand” (p. 112).

- A small team of “co-moderators” composed of four other people was put together to help the researcher plan the work before and after the interviews. Included in this team were Rev. Dr. Lawrence Njoroge – professor of developmental studies and ethics at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Rev. Francis Murira, a doctoral student majoring in education at the Kenyatta University, Rev. Lawrence Kamere – the Archdiocese of Nairobi Education Secretary/Superintendent of Catholic schools, and Grace Munene, an undergraduate student from Nairobi University who served as the research assistant. These co-moderators were all given an opportunity to read the research proposal and thereafter, to ask questions as well as offer suggestions on how best to

Table 3

Examples of Focus Group Questions and Probe Guidelines used in this Study

General education in the country

1. What is your view of high school education in the country? What dream(s) or vision(s) do you have for this country and how can schools help achieve them?
(Probe: The role played by missionaries and colonialists in Kenya's education, weaknesses and strengths of general education in Kenya)
2. From your experience of the education system in the country, are there subjects that have been more emphasized than others in the high school curricula? What other subjects should be included in the high school curricula but are currently not?
(Probe: subjects taught and those not taught, liberal arts education vs. science education, hidden and unhidden curricula, banking vs. critical thinking education)

Catholic schools in general

3. What in your opinion should a Catholic school/education be?
(Probe: Philosophy, goals and visions of Catholic schools).
4. In general, do CASAN meet your concept of Catholic education?
(Probe: whether thoughts on Catholic education are sacrosanct to their experience of the same)

Questions to respondents concerning their home schools (schools they are affiliated with)

5. Do you think the school with which you are affiliated meets the concept of Catholic education you described earlier?
(Probe: how teachers teach, strengths and weaknesses of each school system, banking vs. critical)
 6. To what extent do members of the school community: administrators, teachers, students, parents and others interact with each other? In your opinion, do you think the level of interaction among the people in the school needs to be improved?
(Probe: inter-personal relationships, whether these interactions are characterized by domineering or stimulating engagements that foster learning within and outside the school)
 7. Do you think Catholic schools have had a positive or a negative impact on students who attend them?
(Probe: whether Catholic schools are a real need or a felt need in the Archdiocese, in the development of ethical, moral and cultural values in the country, justice, peace and environmental issues)
 8. To conclude and in the light of all that has been said today, what do the CASAN need to do to improve?
(Probe: Separation of church and state in Catholic schools, leadership and change process in hierarchical organizations)
-

implement the research design. Each of them played a key role in enhancing the validity of this study. Though most of these co-moderators were not able to join the researcher in the actual focus group interviews, their prior input was invaluable to this study.

- The research assistant who had some prior experiences with focus group interviews, and who was re-trained to observe and carry out the duties allocated to her accurately and consistently was present throughout the study period. A checklist detailing the tasks that needed to be accomplished before, during and after the discussion was provided to the research assistant just as Jayanthi and Nelson (2002) had recommended (Appendix A).
- Ten moderately sized focus groups of between 6-12 people had been envisaged. These were to be composed of: students, teachers, parents, and professionals (see Figure 3). The proposed size of each group had been specifically kept low to ensure that each participant had an opportunity to express his/her opinions fully. The actual sizes and number of focus groups held in this study are discussed in the introduction to chapter four. It had also been planned that each focus group session would have lasted 2 hours. The following criteria were used to select the participants.
- Out of the 100 or so Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, the co-moderators helped in identifying 24 schools instead of 12 as had originally been intended. This change was considered precautionary if at least 12 participants were to be expected at each interview session.

- From the 24 students, two focus groups were expected to be formed; one for boys and the other for girls. In reality, the two focus groups formed were more heterogeneous than homogeneous, as had been expected. Not all students were honors students or from the highly performing schools.

To satisfy the minimum requirement that each focus group should have at least five to six participants, it had been planned that at least six students would be invited from each of the three main categories of Catholic schools. This meant that a minimum of two students from the parochial, private and public-sponsored schools were to be invited; in reality, most participating students came from public-sponsored schools.

- Where possible, half the number of students were to come from rural schools while the other half were to come from urban schools.

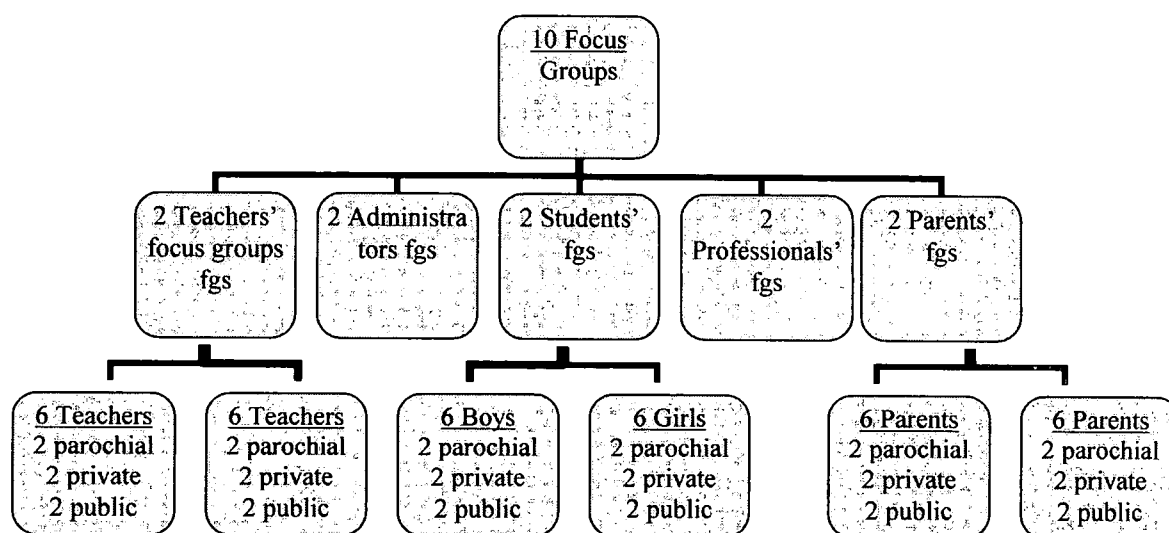


Figure 3 *Focus groups*

- Though the original plan had been that principals would nominate a number of suitable candidates from among the students, teachers and parents whom the moderator(s) would randomly select one participant from each of the 24 schools, because of the limited time available to conduct this study, this was not possible. The moderator decided to adapt a plan B.
- Plan B allowed principals to do the selection of participants for the interviews. The researcher explains some of the consequences of this choice in the introduction of chapters four, five and six (p. 165). Eight other focus groups: two for parents, two for teachers, two for administrators and two for professionals were to be composed.
- As for the professionals' focus groups, participants were to be randomly selected from among the following diocesan and national organizations: National Organization of Catholic School Superintendents, Ministry of Education officials, National Examination Council, history professors (specializing in church and post independence Kenya history) from Kenyan universities. The introduction to chapter four through six discusses this briefly.

Though focus groups should ideally be composed of homogeneous or like minded people since as some scholars argue, individuals tend to open up more to people of the same gender, ethnic, sexual, economic or cultural background, this study preferred to use heterogeneous groups instead. The researcher made this decision because he believes that people with diverse backgrounds and outlooks

on the other hand, do tend to have broader perspectives on issues. Litosseliti (2003) supports this by arguing that heterogeneous focus groups do maximize the possibility of exploring subjects from different perspectives. Krueger and Casey (2000) on the other hand, support only the use of homogeneous focus groups since they believe that this is more helpful when it comes to analysis. At the same time, they believe that such focus groups do increase the degree of comfort with one another among participants.

Identity and Location of the Researcher

The researcher entered this study as a learner, with both insider (emic) and outsider (etic) perspectives. After attending a public school and later on a diocesan/ parochial Catholic high school for his secondary education, the researcher returned to work as a teacher and an administrator within the Catholic school system in Nairobi for a number of years. It is this rich insider perspective that allowed him to have a degree of "objectivity" in understanding and evaluating what participants were saying about public and Catholic school systems in Nairobi. However, because the researcher has now spent the last 6 years outside his country studying and reflecting on this question of the identity of Catholic schools, it is possible to see how the researcher now approaches this study with an outsider attitude that is willing to learn what has been going on since he left. With this kind of attitude, the researcher did expect to learn new information in this study and for that matter, he was prepared to be surprised or even be disappointed by the new knowledge he would gain. The researcher was

also prepared to change some of his perspectives because he was aware that the information he would unearth had the potential to either reinforce or challenge some of his stated views.

From the aforementioned, the researcher came into the study with a desire to maintain a neutral level of involvement throughout the entire research period. This meant that he had to seek and maintain the middle ground between the low and the high ends of involvement in the focus group management continuum. It was also necessary for him to strike the balance between having a completely non directed study on one hand, and, having one over which he exercised too much control on both the topic and group he was facilitating on the other hand (Morgan, 1988). At the same time, the researcher had to ensure that he continued to improve his moderating skills throughout the period of study. Thus, he needed to develop: good personal, interpersonal, communication and management skills, remain neutral, opinion-free, non judgmental, confident, and in control of himself and the groups he was monitoring at all times (Litosseliti, 2003).

It was also necessary for him to remain sensitive to Morgan's (1988) warning that "it is not a productive use of focus groups to ask people to discuss topics about which they are not used to expressing their thoughts in public or to ask them to do so with discussion partners with whom they are not comfortable " (pp. 38-39). The moderator endeavored to maintain a healthy balance between asking participants questions that invaded their privacy on one hand, and accepting answers that suggested "groupthink" on the other. This concern was realistic because as has been noted elsewhere, certain categories of people have in

the past been socialized not to express their independent thinking. Barker and Brooks summarize the moderator's responsibilities very succinctly:

The focus group... should be... focused yet casual, moderated by the researcher who guides but does not lead, controls but does not inhibit the conversation, and who (among other things) ensures everyone has equal opportunity to express their natural [sic] vocabulary: in short, the researcher is a perfect combination of understanding empathy and disciplined detachment, while the respondents are orderly, natural, interactive and utterly self revealing. In other words, impossible. (as cited in Litosseliti, 2004, pp. 45-46)

Since the original goal of the researcher was to listen to the "voices" of all stakeholders of Catholic schools in Nairobi, he had planned to conduct 10 undirected focus group interviews. However, just as the Heraclitus story will describe later on, reality is always in constant flux and for that matter, the researcher ended up conducting not 10 but eight focus groups, two mini focus groups and two individual interviews. This means that in the end, this study did make use of the mixed methodology in data collection since both individual and group interviews were conducted. To the researcher, the use of these two methods did not compromise the validity of this study because he believes that both methods have their peculiar strengths and weaknesses. Morgan clarifies this position by stating that "there is a gap in the basic knowledge that would predict whether a researcher might hear one thing in group interviews and another thing from individuals" (2002, p. 152). With this kind of reasoning at the back of his

mind, the researcher concludes that the individual interviews did not compromise this study but did in fact add value to it.

However, because this was essentially a focus group type of study and participants tend to debate, dialogue, share ideas, feelings and experiences with each other more than they would in individual interviews, this focus group method was more emphasized. Finally, the researcher agrees with other scholars that indeed, it is possible to have focus groups without an interview guide. This helps researchers eliminate their prejudices from the interaction (Madriz, 2000; Morgan, 1988).

Enhancing the Validity of the Study

The researcher has taken care to ensure that the validity of this study will be maximized. According to Newman and Benz (1998), validity is closely identified with legitimation. "Validity has traditionally meant an estimate of the extent to which the data measure (or the design measures) what is intended to be measured" (p. 29). Krueger (1988) says that validity can be assessed in several ways. The most basic is face validity, which asks, do the results look valid? Typically, focus groups have high face validity due to the fact that in a large part, there is a great believability in the comments made by participants.

Validity in qualitative studies is interested in the notion of truth (Linclon & Guba, 1985; Newman & Benz, 1998). However, this notion of truth is problematic since truth is socially constructed and as many scholars have argued, there is no such thing as universal truth. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) beautifully

explain this relationship between truth and naturalistic studies using the Heraclitus problem:

Unique situations cannot be reconstructed precisely; even the most exact replication of research methods may fail to produce identical results. Like Heraclitus, who could not step into the same river twice, researchers cannot duplicate exactly a naturally occurring event studied previously. (p. 211)

Although qualitative researchers are constantly bombarded with notions that their studies are not objective, especially by cynics and critics who are at times correct to challenge the face validity of focus group studies, this technique is still useful to researchers. Even though human beings are not always truthful and sometimes they give answers depending on the situation at hand, naturalistic researchers are particularly reassured by Kvale's words (as cited in Newman & Benz, 1998) that, "we *must* assume *that* no objective unitary truth about research methods and truth" exists out there. Furthermore, Kvale argues that the most meaningful validity is "*action validity*" because it is interested in whether the truth of the research is working or not. The "test of credibility of an evaluation report is whether or not it is used by decision makers" for truth according to Kvale, "is whatever is helpful in taking action to get desired results" (p. 50).

In the final analysis, decision makers must seek the middle ground when using the results of this research technique. The middle ground holds the position that participants in focus groups do share insights that are often not easily shared by other interview methods such as individual interviews, or questionnaires.

Furthermore, decision makers need to realize that the findings from focus group studies are only indicative and not prescriptive (Krueger, 1988)

Among quantitative researchers, external validity is concerned with the generalizability of research findings across target populations, settings, times and the like (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). However, among naturalistic/qualitative researchers external validity is more interested with the user of the research findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that “one must consider the situation from the perspective of the user of the generalization” (p. 120). In other words, it is the user of the research findings who determines what is applicable in his/her particular context. However, when it comes to the use of focus group results, Litosseliti (2003) makes cautionary comment that “while it is sometimes useful to use focus groups... it is crucial to acknowledge that results may not be generalizable or representative, but indicative” (p. 22). This is a point that policymakers desiring to implement findings obtained from focus group studies need to constantly remember. That focus group studies are only useful in as far as they help them gain understanding on a particular topic so that they can make informed decisions (Krueger & Casey, 2000). As such, even when findings such as those found in this study may be thought to be relevant and applicable to other particular countries or dioceses outside the intended region, users of such information must be extremely careful on how they go about implementing such findings. This is because the nuances and implications of much of the report would typically have meaning only in the intended region and in this case, the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

The following strategies which had early on been identified as being important in enhancing the validity of naturalistic studies were fulfilled in one way or another:

- Three activities that increase the probability of getting credible findings namely: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation were tried at different levels.
- Peer debriefing. This is the process whereby the investigator becomes exposed to a group of colleagues who are neither below nor above him or her in order to help in analyzing the study.
- Negative case studies: where one keeps revising hypotheses with hindsight until all accounts of the known facts can be accounted for.
- Referential adequacy: through use of written critiques or evaluations, videotape recordings, the researcher is able to capture episodes that can later on be used to analyze and interpret the data.
- Member checking. The data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally obtained. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 301-327)

All these techniques were applied in some ways in this study. For instance, the researcher was able to use the eight focus groups, two mini focus groups and two individual interviews for triangulation purposes as Arksey and Knight (1990) explain:

Data triangulation means the use of a research design involving diverse data sources to explore the same phenomenon. The data sources can be varied, or triangulated, in terms of persons, time and space. So, for example, data might be collected from different comparison groups, or different points in time or from a range of settings. (p. 23)

This explanation is helpful in making the research design of this study understandable. Secondly, the use of other co-moderators with vast and diverse experiences within the Catholic school system in the Archdiocese of Nairobi was very helpful in enhancing the validity of this study. The co-moderators ensured that the research design was not only critiqued and evaluated in the context in which it would eventually be applied, but also that it was improved. Though having a full peer debriefing session at the end of each interview session was not possible, the reviews that this researcher and the research assistant held at the end of each interview were helpful in understanding what had happened in the interview sessions. The research assistant had some prior experience in the past that was very helpful.

Among the many important uses of debriefing, three critical ones can be highlighted. First, it helps the researcher to identify some of the most cogent issues that have been discussed in the just concluded interview. Second, it also helps to evaluate whether sessions have gone as per the original plan and if not so, why. This in turn helps to identify the areas that need to be changed, which is something that happened all through this study. Third, debriefing helps the team

to share information learned in the interview session while it is still fresh in the mind (Jayanthi & Nelson, 2002; Krueger, 1988).

Finally, in order to improve his moderating skills, the researcher conducted two pilot focus group interviews in Kenya before embarking on real focus group interviews. Conducting such pilot interviews has been found to have a number of beneficial qualities. First, the researcher learns the things that need to be added or changed in order to conduct successful focus group interviews. In this study's pilot interviews, the researcher for instance did discover that there was need to either drop a part of question one or combine it with question eight since this part was repetitive. Second, these pilot interviews were helpful in giving the researcher an opportunity to practice his probing skills. At the same time, this was an opportunity to find out whether the numbering, sequencing, and wording of questions were appropriate for the desired information to be obtained (Jayanthi & Nelson, 2002).

Data Analysis and Reporting

This part is considered by researchers to be the most difficult stage in focus group research because it involves making a number of key decisions such as: who will be involved in the analysis of data, what methods of analysis will be used, and the depth of analysis required. In this study, making such decisions has not been easy since the researcher had to grapple with the problem of covering long distances; for he had to travel to Nairobi, Kenya, to collect data, and then come back to America to analyze them. It logically followed that the moderator

should have retained this role of being the chief analyst if costs were to be kept at their minimum. This kind of arrangement had the added advantage of enhancing the results of the study because as Litosseliti (2003) argues, it is good for the researcher to take this role for he gains "more insight and in-context knowledge about the research overall, and so being able to establish a variety of important links between the research questions/aims and the data gathered" (p. 85).

Several means of analyzing and reporting the data are available but always the purpose of the research determines the method(s) to be used. Several factors do influence such decisions. For instance, the decision whether or not to attach a lot of weight on the findings of focus groups does determine whether the researcher should transcribe all the group discussions or to just use abridged transcripts in the analysis. Other options include the fact that, if one is short of money and manpower, the use of audiotapes as the only method of collecting data could be recommended. While analysis in such a case would be less detailed, one could still have a more detailed outcome than if one had notes only or the notes plus audio tapes only (Jayanthi & Nelson, 2002; Litosseliti, 2003). Lederman (1990) provides a list of different analytic strategies that focus group researchers can use:

One approach is to code the data into pre-determined categories. A second approach is to use the data as the basis of categories which emerge from them. A third approach is to use the data as the basis for summary statements which attempt to capture the essence of the interviewees' responses. A fourth approach is to interpret the data through some

intensive analytic technique.... In all these, the goal is to provide a sense of the discussion of the group, as well as the information provided by the group. (p. 124)

In this particular study, the researcher had planned to transcribe all the audiotapes, which was achieved. He also had hoped to make a detailed examination of one or two groups where he would develop codes of information that could be applied to the remainder of the groups (Morgan, 1988, p. 64). After deriving categories of meaning from the coded information, the researcher had then planned to move to the next level of analysis, which was interpretation (Ridenour et al., 1999, p. 414), after which he would then write a detailed report of his findings about CASAN. It is this researcher's hope that the research findings and implications reported in chapters four, five, and six do capture in some sense most of the discussions held in the focus groups. The report must provide an effective as well as an informational tone of the interview; it may also include the interviewer's insights (Lederman, 1990).

It is important to appreciate that the report in the next three chapters is a summary of data obtained from the eight focus groups, two mini focus groups and two individual interviews held. Each focus group was able to generate about 30 to 40 pages of transcripts which means that a minimum of 300 pages of data were collected. This process of transcribing and then breaking down this large quantity of textual data to meaningful statements was a long and tedious process that took the researcher well over 6 months to accomplish. Throughout the report, the researcher endeavors to compare and to contrast different groups of stakeholders

who sometimes viewed things in the same way and sometimes very differently. In doing all this, his greatest motivation was to allow the different voices represented in this study to speak for themselves. His main job was merely to connect the dots on what stakeholders had shared, thus creating new meaning to the reality of CASAN.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS FOUR, FIVE AND SIX

To answer the three research questions guiding this study, namely: (1) what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? (2) What do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education? And (3) what do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the aforementioned three goals, it was necessary to break down these three research questions into eight other easier ones in order to facilitate the intended dialogue.

The result of the analysis of these eight questions is what is reported in chapters four, five and six that follow. This report is a description of the reality of the educational endeavor on the Kenyan scene. It is broken down into a number of themes that were of significant importance to the major stakeholders of education in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. This report is not only meant to be just informative reading, but it is also a deliberate attempt at reconstructing the educational scene in the Archdiocese of Nairobi as was reported by the eight focus groups, two mini focus groups and two individual interviews conducted in May 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya. My work as a researcher would be incomplete if I would not accurately represent to the best of my knowledge and capability, all the sentiments that the participants made.

All in all, 23 of the 24 schools identified by co-moderators were visited. All the schools except four, namely: St Mary's, Strathmore, Kianda and Queen of

Apostles were Catholic sponsored schools. These four schools could be regarded as either being diocesan/parochial schools or private religiously owned. However, according to the chaplain of Strathmore School, this characterization of Strathmore School is not correct. In a note I wrote soon after meeting the chaplain after being directed to do so by the School's board of trustees, the chaplain explained this non-Catholic identity of the school. "Strathmore is not a Catholic school but only the chaplaincy is Catholic." For this reason, the school declined to participate in this study as it felt that it was not a Catholic school as the moderator(s) had assumed.

However, Strathmore did send its chaplain to one of the professional focus group interviews. Kianda School and Queen of Apostles did not send any participant or even an apology note saying they would not be able to participate despite the numerous attempts to get the schools involved. St Mary's, on the other hand, did send an apology the following day after the students' focus groups were over. The school also made sure that it sent one teacher to each of the focus groups and this was very helpful to the study as it ensured that the voice of private Catholic schools was also heard. However, there were no voices of students from private and parochial schools in the two students' focus groups. Similarly, there were no parents or principals from these private and religious schools in the parents' and principals' focus groups. What remained constant throughout the duration of the focus groups were voices of students, parents, principals and professionals that expressed some degree of knowledge and experience with the situation in religious or private schools.

Other comments noted by the researcher during the course of this study were that; should it be necessary to conduct a similar study, the researcher would make a more deliberate effort to recruit participants of the study in a different way. Despite the fact that giving the principals of selected schools the gatekeeping responsibility of selecting participants was initially thought to have been helpful because this was a faster way of selecting participants; in the end, this method of selecting participants had some serious setbacks. For instance, the researcher did notice that most principals chose their school prefects and captains to represent their schools in this study. Though this in itself was not wrong, the danger that it posed was that principals could end up selecting the students or parents that were friendly to them and who would not therefore be critical of the school or the principal. When the researcher noted such a tendency in one of the student focus groups, he was prompted to find out how many students were school prefects or captains and by a show of hands, about three quarters of the students confirmed that they were either school captains or prefects (see definition of school captains and prefects p. 28).

This certainly was a concern because if such students choose not to be critical of their school, the report from their dialogue would not represent those who might have criticisms. Fortunately, the researcher was able to note these group dynamic issues and deal with them in a congenial way as the dialogues went on. Having said that, it was also noted in the debriefing that happened soon after the students' focus groups that students seemed to have enjoyed the discussions thoroughly. Many found this to be a great opportunity for them to

speak about what was in their hearts concerning education in Kenya in general and Catholic schools in Nairobi in particular.

In other focus groups such as those for professionals, teachers and principals, the researcher found that participants seemed able to speak their minds freely. Most of them expressed deep feelings and views on the issues being discussed; most of the participants did express their joy at having been involved in the study. One professional participant said at the end of the study, "I have learned a lot and thank you very much for inviting me." Another participant said:

Thank you too... I think it would be unfair not to thank you on behalf of the participants you interviewed today...this is what we really feel deep inside ourselves as the way forward in our education sector.

In one of the teachers' focus groups that had been especially dynamic, a teacher summarized her personal as well as the group's feelings this way, "I have many other questions but because of time, we have to go now." This statement meant to the researcher that the dialogues had either become to the teachers that engaged in them an important channel of venting their feelings, or that the discussions had empowered them to the extent that they felt ready to go into the next level of the dialogue, which would have been action. In conclusion to this introductory part, the researcher believes that since at this point this study is only exploratory, more questions than answers will be raised. This is because if Catholic schools in Nairobi are to go to the next level of planning and implementation of programs, all possible questions need to have been asked so

that supporting facts that would help in the finding of solutions may be found.

Decisions do not come easily.

CHAPTER 4:
CONTEMPORARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA:
VOICES FOR CHANGE

To answer the first research question, what do stakeholders believe is the general condition of education in Kenya? several themes were identified from the many categories of data that had been codified. These are: general views on high school education in Kenya, colonial education, place of national examination, curriculum expectations: what is and what ought to be emphasized.

General Views on High School Education in Kenya

One of the goals of this first research question was to provide a general picture of what high school education in Kenya is today. Creating this picture was considered to be important because this would provide the study with a context that would allow the examination of the Catholic school mosaic in the Archdiocese of Nairobi that will be presented in response to questions two and three to be done. At this point, it is good to note that just as it was impossible for some participants to refrain from commenting on other educational concerns unrelated to high school or Catholic education, readers of this report would perhaps do well to similarly avoid making a hasty conclusion that some parts seem out of place. The researcher would rather they wait until the end so that the bigger picture of what was said could be appreciated. It is necessary to do this because the Catholic high school story is part of the larger and more complex

mosaic of the educational scene in the country. As such, this first part of the report can only be described as being a mental conception because the truth of the matter is, that the Catholic high school education in Nairobi is intertwined with the public high school education.

We begin the description of Kenya's high school situation by describing what students think about it. The researcher is convinced that if there was one statement that most student participants would almost concur with, it would be that a majority of the students felt that high schools in Kenya had failed them. Most students felt that high schools were not doing their job. Students gave this harsh evaluation despite the fact that a majority of them also felt that the government had done a good thing to introduce a free elementary education for all students in Kenya. One student explained it this way:

One can say that education in the country is not going well because even though the government did promise a free primary education; without having enough teachers, that free education is like useless. This is because we now have more students in schools without sufficient number of teachers in secondary schools and therefore, the syllabus will drag on because most of the schools do not have enough teachers.

This comment highlights one of the most notorious problems facing high schools in Kenya today. That is, the issue of teachers. Other major issues that students talked about included lack of enough physical structures in high schools, an unbelievably high number of students in classrooms making the classrooms congested, and the fact that the government had not employed enough teachers,

and glaring inequalities within schools and regions. They also talked about the issue of not having the power to choose subjects they wanted to study. Many students complained that they had no voice in the choice of subjects to learn and thus, they complained that subjects like the Christian Religious Education (CRE) was being forced on them and this should not have been the case. The following quotation from one of the students explains this:

Some of the education in our high school should be scrapped off... some of it does not help us in any way, we find some things being oppressive to us... for instance, I personally find like in my school that... the school sometimes limits the subjects students can choose... and when it comes to things like CRE and physics... and let's say you are Muslim, if you don't do physics...because it's either you do physics or CRE and you don't have another option.... then you have to take CRE and you know this is not right according to their religion.

For these kinds of reasons, many students were convinced that the gains made in the provision of a free primary education were useless. Despite having this general negative view on education, there were a few student voices expressing positive things on education. Among these were three students who said that they were happy with the way things were going at the moment. One of the students said, "at least students know how to spell their names because of the free primary education." Two others argued that if the purpose of a high school education was to help someone to have a better life in the future, "then high schools were doing a good job." This is because according to yet another student,

“I think high school education forms the foundation to one’s life. This is because it helps you to go to the university as well as to learn some of the skills needed in future life.”

As for the teachers’ general view of high school education in the country, two of them had views that concurred with those of students. These were in the areas of inequality within schools and on the fact that the government had finally gotten its priorities right by emphasizing elementary education. However, teachers had two other profound thoughts concerning high schools in Kenya. First, they felt that there was a general lack of educational vision in the country and second, that among the greatest handicaps to high school education in the country was the issue of “teacher demotivation.” Teacher demotivation was a term that participants other than teachers knew and talked about. Such demotivated teachers in return end up demotivating their students, they argued. The researcher also found the description of high schools in Kenya by teachers very vivid. For instance, in one focus group the majority of teachers generally agreed that the relationships existing within and between schools in Kenya, was comparable to that between the so called “first-world” and “third-world” countries.

I would like to mention something about sijui [*I don’t know*] third-world schools like where I am coming from. You find that it is a place whereby, the students who are there do feel that they are the worst students...because they could not go to national, provincial and the major district schools and so they come to these schools as a last resort.

Other teachers commenting on this categorization of schools said that, according to them, it was true that a majority of Kenyan students attended such “third-world” schools. The students who ended up in these schools were often doubly condemned because most of them came from poor families. Secondly, they went to these schools knowing well that at best, they could only get either a C or D grade in their final national examination. To a majority of these teachers, such schools demotivated students not to succeed in school and in this sense, the schools only perpetuated the vicious cycle of poverty in the village:

A majority of the people you get in the villages are those who went to *harambee* schools... these were people who seemed to have had no hope even while in school because they would know that from this school they will come out with a C or a D and they would not qualify to go to the university. Their parents are not capable of taking them to a parallel degree program or taking them out of the country for studies.... Such a person would therefore not have any motivation to work hard at all. Again when you look at the economy of our country, you will notice that most of the people are farmers and particularly for us people who come from the coffee zones, you will realize that those parents have no money to pay the school fees. And so that kind of poverty starts from home.....When that child sees other people who have been to secondary schools and are still at home...that child will not work hard....and therefore they just go to school to grow up. This is because the young people are already condemned... and the facilities in the schools do not allow them to compete with

students in first world [sic] schools like Alliance High School or the best provincial schools.

In his classic novel *Things Fall Apart* (1959) Achebe, one of Africa's most renowned authors describes schools in Nigeria as having been like "fattening camps" at one point in history. This was because to him, students in "Umofia" village just went to school to be fed and to grow big in order to eventually get married. That image does not seem far fetched from the one described above by this teacher. A similar sentiment was expressed by other teachers in support of that argument that most parents with students in high schools did indeed "demotivate" their children when they encouraged them to live a "vegetative" life in school. It is true that some parents advised their children "to just go to school and stay for the 4 years so as to at least grow a bit bigger and older and then, they will be able to pick tea better when they finish school."

Such an absurd perception of the purpose of high school education was attributed by teachers to the fact that society had a blurred vision of what it expects from its students. Society's educational expectations as verbalized by its politicians, education officers, and so forth, had made it clear that all they were interested in was the good performance of their schools and students in the national examinations. Furthermore, the curricula taught in schools as well as the embedded messages found "in the books we use in class" show that only people working in offices are regarded highly. This, to another teacher is not what schools ought to be. Schools must not only be interested in achieving extrinsic values, but also be interested in achieving the superior intrinsic values of

education. As a consequence of having such a blurred educational vision, society ended up with a mixed understanding of itself. "I think that the poverty we are suffering so much from is not so much the poverty we see reflected in the social economic state of the country, but it is a poverty of the mind" said one teacher.

This position was repeated on numerous occasions throughout the study period. Participants felt there was a need for Kenya to do something about its educational vision. Among the professionals, a powerful voice advocated for this new vision saying that a country like Kenya which has agriculture as the base of its economy, had to devote a lot of its time to teaching innovative agricultural skills to its manpower if it ever hoped to propel itself to become economically independent of foreign countries. The only positive thing that teachers said about education in the country was that finally, the government had prioritized its educational endeavors correctly. The fact that the government had put primary education above high school education was noted as being significant.

For the parents, three issues stuck out as being important when talking about high schools in Kenya. First, there was a perception that it was necessary for all Kenyans to have a high school education because after all, being a "a standard eight drop out" was not something helpful in terms of getting yourself a job. "I don't think one has a chance to proceed into something else" in life said one parent. Second, though the parents seemed to agree that high schools were doing what was expected of them, they were still not quite up to the standards. Third, if the present 8.4.4 system is compared with the former A-levels system,

most parents were of the opinion that even though the present system had a few good things about it, it still had “limitations here and there.”

The principals developed this thought on the efficacy of the 8.4.4 system a little further. Most participating principals felt that the former A-level system of education was preferable to the present 8.4.4 system. Though the present system had a number of successes, too, such as it was seen as a “stepping stone to university education and also to career training,” this was all it did for students. Another principal who felt she was in the minority because of her positive opinions concerning high schools in Kenya, said, “I don’t think that the 8.4.4 is a bad system. I like the width and the breadth of the education system.” A third principal said something that this researcher believes is supported by research. He said that the fact that every child in Kenya is now able to get 8 years of elementary education was something beneficial to the country. Research supports this claim that this extra elementary year of schooling is helpful economically to the country. Since the new 8.4.4 system was adopted, Kenya now has 8 instead of 7 years of elementary education.

However, this same participant was also convinced that the manner in which the new 8.4.4 system was introduced was wrong. The then government in power hurriedly changed the original A-level system of education (7.4.2.3) without prior planning and study of the consequences and effects of that change. This, according to the participants, was wrong. Not only because schooling became burdensome to parents and students but also because it meant that many other important things could no longer be made available. First to go was the

important growth period that the 2 extra years of high school education offered to students in A-levels. Another principal believed that “many of our students who leave form four are very immature.” On another level, principals were concerned with the sequencing and depth of subjects taught in the 8.4.4 system of education. According to them, these were not right and they longed for the day when teachers would be given a free hand to set the subjects right:

The way the syllabus is, students are not able to come out of the school having really mastered the details of what they want to pursue later on. And you find that even in our universities, we’ve had that issue of not producing students who are very well baked... I would say so... but I think we are not so badly off as improvements are being made... I think in the past, there were too many courses to be taught and the time to teach them was still the same... and so the details were not properly given out. If I may go to some details since I’m also a teacher, you will find that subjects are sometimes broken down in a way that the flow is not very good. You may find that if a teacher was given a chance in a certain topic...he would have gone a little deeper in order to form the foundation for the next topic.

Principals’ final thought on this was that despite the good news that high school education was now accessible to more students in the country than at any other time in history, it was unfortunate that these benefits would only accrue to students from rich families. They felt that a majority of poor students were not able to join the high schools available due to economic reasons. Secondly,

because the rate of expansion of high schools has not equaled that of elementary schools, poor students were always going to miss out.

As for the professionals, most believed that it was not fair to condemn the entire education system as having failed the students without understanding the genesis of particular issues. For instance, if one was to understand why high schools in Kenya emphasized the passing of examinations more than the moral and integral formation of students, the professionals felt that it would have been important for such a people to revisit the country's history and to study how its transition from a traditional society to a more westernized one has affected it. It is only when one does this that one could understand why society had changed from its communal orientation to its present individualistic and competitive state. Thus, even though both professional focus groups did express positive feelings on the role high schools played in society and in the life of the students, the researcher believes that most participants still felt that high school education was not going well. All participants seemed to agree that the purpose of education in a country was simply not to acquire knowledge for the sake of it, but for the formation of students. In this second aspect, Kenya's education had completely failed its students.

Colonial and Missionary Roles in Education and their Impact Today

All focus group sessions did identify in one way or another, the centrality of this theme in the successes and failures of the educational endeavor in Kenya. Religious men and women from both local and international religious

organizations did participate in the dialogues. Though it was understandable that two of the religious people, one a woman (German) and the other a man (American) were not willing to share their thoughts and feelings on the role missionaries and colonialists played in Kenya's education, many others did. The researcher understood this position because participants were free to speak or not to speak in these interviews. As the following quote from another participant suggests, it is often precarious for one to judge another person from a different age or generation:

The education that we are using to criticize actually comes from them ... it's only that theirs were humble beginnings.... You know like the station where I am, all that I am doing I do it in good faith... and am doing it for the good of the child.... But you know 20 or 30 years in retrospect, another person who will be there might look at what I am doing today very negatively... so when we look at the education which was offered by the colonialists and the early missionaries...one thing we must emphasize is that, it was done in very good faith.

However, this was not the only voice on this issue as contrary opinions were raised by other participants on this issue. But before delving into those other opinions, let's go back to one point that the researcher wishes to highlight concerning the critical role missionaries played and still continue to play in Kenya.

Though the two religious persons mentioned above had every right not to offer their opinions on this issue; and the researcher was respectful of those

decisions, their choice not to offer either positive or negative criticism of the education system in Kenya should itself be critiqued. Even though foreigners typically consider it rude or not prudent to criticize the countries that host them while they still live there, such filtering is often not helpful to their host countries. The researcher believes that Kenya can always learn something useful from “outsiders” who criticize its policies in charity. The two religious participants with a combined 43 years of continuous life in Kenya certainly had enough experiences that would have allowed them to have an opinion concerning the state of education in the country. Furthermore, even comparing or contrasting the two systems that is, the American and German ones to the Kenyan one would have itself shed more light on how Kenya’s education is similar or different to global education.

Having said that, the researcher believes that missionaries still involved in schools in Kenya must be more proactive in helping Kenyans evaluate the system of education bequeathed by their compatriots. This should not be done in a manner that criticizes the past generations, but in a more constructive way. The Kikuyu people in Kenya have a saying “*ruku rwi itara rucukaga ruria rwi mwakini*” which means that, the log in the barn laughs at the one burning in the fire. This proverb cautions people without a certain experience in life against blaming and criticizing others with a different experience because their turn to be criticized and to be laughed at would also come. This is what the following quotation from one participant says:

We shouldn't so much go into the past... to bring out the evils of the system and thereby say that the colonialists and the early missionaries were wrong... after all when everything is said and done... we are the beneficiaries. We know from our church history that wherever the missionaries opened a parish, they also opened a school and a health center there.

This participant and others with similar views were saying that Kenyans will need to accept their history as it is. Doing this is important but they must not stop there, they must allow this past to help them plan for the future. Other aspects of colonial and missionary education were described by other participants.

Students, for instance, were more concerned with the relevance of books and the present curriculum found in the education system. Three distinguished positions on this issue could be discerned. First, some of them felt that the curriculum and/or books they used in the classrooms had changed for the better; another group felt that nothing much had changed; and to a few others, only modest changes could be felt. On the issue of relevance of books, or set books as many called them, a good number of students felt that there was some hope for better things now. For instance, one student said that "most of the books are now written by African authors and are giving us an African viewpoint." But this change was not enough or fast enough according to another student. Even when the books have changed, the course work may not be relevant since "it involves a lot of work which is totally irrelevant to us unlike in the European countries where they specialize in particular areas." So the students were clever enough to

distinguish that even books written by Africans may not always be expected to depict the African context. These books were still teaching subjects that were more relevant to European students than to African ones according to them.

To another group of students, the subjects taught in schools were so irrelevant to the needs of the students and the country and this was a sign that the colonial education was still strong today as one student notes below:

I personally think that most of the things we learn in school are not going to help us in the future... There should be a way in which someone could choose their path in life so that if it is in sports, in music or if one is academically inclined, that person should be educated in those things instead of wasting time doing a lot of physics and maybe that's not where you want to go.

As far as teachers were concerned, the attempts to rectify some of the pedagogical mistakes of the past colonial times had not borne the desired fruits. In their heated debates, teachers generally explained why they thought that today's educational set up was a relic of the past colonial and missionary education. One of them argued that, "all we have changed today are the names" but the education system remains the same. The expression, the more things have changed, the more they remain the same seems to correctly capture this historical problem:

I notice that it is true that the Kenyan people have tried to change because I know like the Harambee schools were started by Kenyans themselves because they wanted their children to be educated where they were. For

sometime this worked, but then slowly, the schools were taken over by the government and so they acquired the education system found within the colonial government schools.

This statement reminds the researcher of an earlier comment made in the literature review chapter (p. 58) concerning the growth of an independent school movement in the country a few years before and after independence. Within certain regions in the country, many parents on recognizing the value of education had decided to break away from colonial schools and start their own independent schools otherwise called *Karinga* schools in Kikuyu. Unfortunately, as some of the teachers argued, this positive effort was defeated by the colonial administration which saw the starting of an independent school movement as a threat to their existence.

What this participant describes above has been historically documented and one can only speculate that had the parents gotten their way, it is feasible to imagine that this attempt to gain independence would have gradually but slowly given birth to an educational system in tune with the needs of the country.

Another related issue discussed by parents concerned the patterns of segmentation that schools continue to maintain to this day. As far as teachers were concerned on this issue, though one could claim that the school system established by the colonial administrators was racial in structure, this had now changed. One could argue that the social stratification was no longer based on race but on the size of the pocket:

The biggest problem in our schools is not in the colonial mentality or structure that used to be there...but we have seen that children from the high social class, if they are not in the best schools in this country, they are out there in other countries.

This participant is saying that social stratification is now based on education. The more wealthy parents were, the better the education their children got. But again, the participant argues that Kenyans should overcome their “colonial hangover” and instead, they should now focus more on what they can do to improve their lot. For instance, this teacher argued that if all schools were to be equally good, then Kenyans had to seriously consider the possibility of doing away with boarding schools. Such a critical way of looking at schools and society is helpful in many ways because it asks Kenyans to decide whether things were okay as they were and if they were not, then there was need for change. In that light, Kenyans would then have to ask themselves whether or not their country should continue having a more agrarian based education and hence economy, or if it was time to rethink its education system so as to reflect the globalized context in which they found themselves. These and other emerging issues demand that new ways of looking at society’s expectations be considered.

However, there was a perception that things had not changed much from colonial administration to African leadership. This view was given further credence by some parents and professional participants. One parent claimed that, “it was only the government that had changed, what I would say is that people or the workers such as teachers are the ones who changed.” The above statement

seems to suggest that even though it was a recognized fact that the coming of independence in Kenya brought a change in leadership from Whites to Blacks, this change did not necessarily mean a change in policy or direction. This process of “Africanization” was merely an effort at swapping personalities or as Wahome Mutahi would have satirically said it, it was a case of playing the “dancing of chairs” game.

Furthermore, a voice of critique of the leadership-power structure in our schools was noted. According to one parent, not much had changed within the Church since the hierarchical way of doing things was still very strong in the country. In the following dialogue between the moderator and the parent, this feeling and the dilemmas it brings in school administration is captured:

Moderator: We are looking at general education system... when some people look at it, they argue that it continues to uphold the colonial and missionary methods of education. They argue that our system has not changed from the colonial times since as we remember from those days, there used to be high schools for Africans, Asians and for Europeans. They therefore argue that if you look at our system, you would see the same basic structures in our education...

Participant: I would support that kind of thinking because like in a parish or a given area of the church... you will find like a community has a problem with the bishop... because you will find that at times the board or the parents might really like a certain principal but the bishop will keep

interfering and saying that he doesn't like this head and says that he has been here for 3 years and then you find the head is transferred. They do this even without consulting the community to find out whether they like the head or whether the students are performing.

But is this perception that the hierarchy of the church has not changed true? Is it true that bishops in Kenya still retain an unchallenged authority in Catholic schools? Not at all, argued another participant. By giving a case example of a school in Nairobi, the following participant explains why he thinks that the relationship between the church authority and Catholic schools in the archdiocese of Nairobi has dramatically changed:

Sometimes the debate is...between the Church and the state such as the great controversy of 1968 when the then Monsignor Njenga was fighting with Dr. G.G Kiano just before the education act of 1968. And that was a great controversy... the point here is, sometimes the debate is also between the church or church authorities and parents. The case that I am going to mention here, I can mention it because it was in the public forum....

Archbishop Ndingi wanted to move the Catholic Parochial School (CPS) and am aware we are talking of high schools here...but I mention this particular case in order to illustrate that the debate can be wider. He wanted to move CPS from the Cathedral grounds and he made his intentions known. The parents who have children in the school said, but your grace, we heard you... but you are not going to move this school. Here, you have a situation where you have a debate going on between the

Church authorities and parents. And the parents are telling the Church authority look here, you might own the title deed but in actual sense, it is the parents who are saying, this school ain't moving.

So it is now a debatable issue on whether or not much change within the Catholic school movement has come or things have remained the same since colonial times. As the above two quotations indicate, this is an open discussion on whether things have changed or have remained the same. The researcher believes that even though the hierarchical structure of the Church still retains its importance in the leadership of the Church and its school systems, the exercise of that power in the day and age we live in must be updated.

To another professional participant looking at this colonial legacy, she believed that not only was colonial pedagogy left behind wrong, she also believed that its introduction was not by mistake but by design. The participant observed that over the years, she had noted that the pyramidal structure of education set up by the colonialists and missionaries had been set up to control people and to promote certain population segments. This perhaps explains why up to the present times, for instance, the issue of girl-child education is still a problem. Though other male participants disputed this girl-child "miseducation" claim and argued instead that it was the "boy-child" who is disenfranchised today, the following participant makes an important point on this:

What I have observed over the years is that there has been a transition from the pyramidal system where the colonialists had control over all of education... and they used to curtail education to encourage a few to go up

as they required. At least after independence, everything has opened up even though we still have the challenge of the girl-child education because of cultural beliefs... I mean that every community has its own beliefs... they have to have their own beliefs about the boy and girl child... and their responsibilities ... the boys are encouraged to go to school in the context that the boy would end up to be the head of the family. So you find that the girl-child was just being prepared for the role of being a mother, being a procreator or just getting married. It is only now that some of the communities are encouraging every child to go to school but the challenges are still there.

As difficult as it may seem to mentally make the connections between colonial education and the girl-child problem, two things can be said about the above statement. One, that colonial and missionary education is not only being blamed for its sins of commission but also for those of omission. This is because it had an opportunity to transform some of the repugnant cultures and values it found within some of the African traditions but instead, it chose to educate certain segments of populations at the expense of others. Secondly, by not providing an equal education to all, it created a structure of education that remains to this day unbalanced. This creates a situation whereby boys' and girls' schools do not teach the same subjects and skills because an assumption is made that boys and girls do not have the same IQ. To the researcher, this is the core problem in this boy-girl discussion.

For this kind of reason, it is understandable why some participants refuse to apportion blame for the present educational woes of the past. Instead, they see that the greatest failure is because today's policymakers and not the past colonial and missionary agents, have refused to provide the needed leadership in this area of education. The use of the collective term "we," makes it clear that some of the professionals were aware of their own culpability in compounding this failure. "We are killing the country" said one of them. When, "we punish students by asking them to dig holes in the farm we teach them to have negative attitudes towards agriculture." Another participant said that, "we emphasize on some subjects that we need least and because of this, I think we are failing... It is us people in the education field that are failing... we are not emphasizing on religion or social ethics yet we see so many students on drugs and so on."

Not all is lost, for there have been many success stories of exemplary leadership by past and present Catholic missionaries. Outstanding among these are two priests: Fr. Witte and Fr. Francis Mburu. Fr. Witte who was a Dutch priest and who lived in the 20s is today recognized by many Catholic educators in Kenya as being the father of Catholic higher education in Kenya. Because of his visionary work, he was honored by the British government by being awarded the "Order of the British Empire" (OBE) for his tireless work of starting the first Catholic high school in Kenya as reported below by one professional participant:

Though he was not English, he got the OBE. One of the reasons Fr. Witte was so honored by the colonial administration is that he had a vision of an educational praxis that would be practical. Although Ukambani is semi-

arid, Fr. Witte taught agriculture in Kabaa High School beginning in 1926 until it moved to Mang'u High School in the 1940s. He taught practical subjects, arts and crafts ... and he did not just simply teach practical areas in sciences. The students who were educated in Kabaa and later Mang'u High School were very good in music. He had a first class band and therefore, there were a few visionary educationists and Fr. Witte is a case in point.

Fr Witte managed through his school that he established in a semi-arid place to turn around the hopeless condition of Ukambani to become the place of hope it is today. His visionary leadership has evidently borne much fruit in the country as there are at least 100 Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi today.

Fr. Mburu on the other hand, was the last Education Secretary taking care of the over 100 high schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. Principals were particularly impressed with his work and described him in this way, "he was very well respected by everybody," another said, "for 2 years, he was able to visit our school at least once a month, he had a lasting impact on our boys." Visionary leadership must mean different things to different people at different times. For Fr. Witte, visionary leadership according to the researcher meant having the foresight to open the first Catholic high school in the country. In the last few years, this has certainly meant ensuring that the system established by the missionaries is well managed and that it had a lasting impact on the students. Future Catholic educational leaders must discern what this visionary leadership will mean in the years and decades to come.

To conclude this section on the role that colonial and missionary education played and continues to play in Kenya, it is good to end with the Archbishop's views. According to him, "it is for us to improve the schools... look, for me the system is good only that our teachers and administrators misuse the powers by imposing their will... if we got the right people, schools can be anything we want." These words should be encouraging to all because they acknowledge the fact that, even though there is no education system that is perfect in the world: not in Dayton, Ohio, or even in Nairobi, Kenya, it is within the power of stakeholders and policymakers in Kenya to create the kind of schools Kenyans wish to have in the 21st century. As such, these are hopeful times because after all, it is now clear that Kenyans can create the kind of nation they ever wanted to have through schools.

The Place of National Exams in the High School Education

To have, or not to have, a national examination was one of the themes that the researcher constructed from all the participants' words. This theme is important because of the issues that have been raised so far concerning inequality within and between schools and in geographical regions, and competition between public schools and private schools or "academies" for the limited spaces in colleges. This issue is considered to be core to the understanding of high school education in Kenya. This is because the dialogue has so far revealed that some of the schools in Kenya are so poor that the comparison made between them and some of the best schools was said to be close to that between "first" and "third"

world countries. It was also noted that many financially strong parents are now placing their children in the newly popularized schools called “academies.” With such a background whereby some students are at an advantage over others when it comes to sitting for the national examinations, it was important to hear the stakeholders’ opinion on what they thought about the national examination system in Kenya. The need to deal with this problem was clearly spelled out by one principal who said:

Something has to be done about the selection of students after standard eight...this is because students in private schools are cramming... and a very high percentage of these children who are going to private elementary schools or academies and are getting into our national and provincial schools.... and am very worried about accepting any students from the academies.

This problem of students from private elementary schools or academies taking up most of the space available in public high schools and ultimately in universities has become one of great concern to all stakeholders. As the author writes this part, the Ministry of Education is at the moment discussing whether or not to use the quota system to limit the number of students entering the public school system from such private schools and academies.

Though most participants accepted the claim that students from poor families were “doubly condemned” because of their poor background, discussing this fact was not easy because this is a complex and painful issue and there are no easy solutions. However, two views of this issue were proposed. On one hand,

participants had a strong belief that having a national examination is important since it offers all students the same opportunities to succeed. Many participants were of the opinion that having one national examination testing all students not only offered all students the same opportunity to succeed in school, but it also ensured that all schools worked hard to achieve the same standards. The positive thing about having a national examination and hence a national curriculum for many was that these two were a unifying factor to all students in the country. If one voice could have captured the feelings and thoughts of all participants sympathetic to the idea of having a national examination, it would have been the following one:

I think it is important to have a national curriculum at any given stage, you know that all the students are following that particular curriculum have at least got certain skills...I would fear to imagine a situation whereby every school would formulate its own curriculum, its own policies... I think it would be quite a chaotic situation and even in the first world, all the countries do have their national curriculum. Maybe what we should look at is the examination board, the assessment tools that we have... I think it is our assessment tools that give us an erroneous picture.

The other side of the argument held by other participants posited that, asking students to sit for the same national examination was kind of unfair to students considering the inequalities in schools. According to some principals, it was incumbent upon the government to first of all level the playing ground before asking students to sit for the same exam:

I will say that having a national examination is not fair. It is not fair at all considering that all our schools are in different locations and have different sponsors. At the same time, even though all the teachers are trained in the same colleges, their output is also different... since not all schools are equivalent, then we are in a dilemma.

From these two voices, it is clear that the current situation leaves the country in a dilemma as to which way to follow. Though it can be argued that having a national curriculum that demands that all students take a national examination is important, it can also be argued on the other hand that the goal of education is not really to make students think uniformly. For the researcher, a major distinction exists between making schools teach students subjects or values that create national unity or cohesiveness in society, and teaching them subjects that make them think and answer questions in a uniform way. The former makes students become nationalists while the latter makes them become conformists which is something that education systems must not allow their schools to do. To be able to get out of this dilemma, a third way must be creatively discovered that will help pull the education system in Kenya out of the rut it finds itself in. According to some professionals discussing this issue, policymakers seeking means and ways to get out of this dilemma, will need to first discover the true meaning of what education is all about. Only then can they decide what needs to be tested or assessed:

Professional 1: If we go with the definition of education, that education is the process of handing down culture from one generation to the other, we

have been handing down culture from one generation to the other. We have been handing over this culture that we inherited over the years... in all schools, we keep preparing students to pass exams so that they get jobs... but education should also be used to change the attitudes of students. Because if the attitudes of our students are changed that you don't have to do a white collar job... that there are other different types of jobs ... and we promote the dignity of work... I think that is the change we need in this country. Not really to overhaul the curriculum but to overhaul the attitudes and beliefs of our children...

Professional 2: This term education, possibly what it means or it meant sometimes back when formal education was introduced... and the term could have changed to mean something else.... Education is a Latin word which means assisting to pull out like a midwife. Assisting to pull out *educere*...so with this in mind we can see that the person who helped in education, was just like a midwife... but today it is different. We only impart so that a student will only reproduce what he got in class and that is what we call education...

Professional 3: You know education is purely in the hands of the Ministry of Education... and it is at the moment the only body that has the authority to offer a curriculum and also to test that particular curriculum. No other body has been given that mandate in this country... and that's why you

will see that our education is one sided... actually, it can be possible to allow the Catholic Church to be an alternative examining body in the republic. It can be possible for us to offer a curriculum to test and we have our university in this country where our students can go. This is so that right from the word go, in the primary school to the secondary schools to the universities, we are able to instill the values that we feel are supposed to be in a child.... But I think that as long as the docket of education is purely under the government, I think that our role will be very much constrained.

All these voices share one common belief, that there is hope that things can be different and be done differently. All that has to be done is to go back to the basics and identify the true meaning of education. Once this has been done, it is possible for the different education providers within the country to agree on the kind of education that they feel they are capable of providing to their students.

The Archbishop also raised some salient points on this issue. Though he himself was of the opinion that having a national examination was important to the country, he was at the same time optimistic that schools would ultimately be liberalized. In this way, schools and other such “educational centers” could ensure that all students were able to study for whatever was best for them. By giving his personal testimony of how schools in the past were able to give students a second chance to become what God intended them to be, the Archbishop was indirectly endorsing the view that policymakers do have the power to design schools that are relevant to both students’ and the country’s needs:

I was ordained in 1960 when I was at least 30 years old. I registered for the form four exams in 1962...then I studied in 1963-4. In the last 6 months of 1964, I went to the junior seminary to study with boys, mzee weeh! And in 1965, I got my certificate. When the results came out (moderator laughs on hearing this story of an old man studying with small boys) mzee juu! (old man is tops!)I know some people were embarrassed for they went to do the exam in Mombasa.... This is what the government should encourage... to allow and to make it possible for such facilities to be available to all and I know there is money to do that.

It was humorous to note that the Archbishop was only able to take his high school examination after his ordination to the priesthood. The lesson here is that, if this was possible during his time in the 60s, then it should be even more possible in our own times. The Archbishop says it clearly that everything is possible if only there is the political will and certainly God's will to do it. Money is not the problem on this issue. Parents on the other hand had two other positions that they felt were important to them. First, they were of the opinion that in order for schools to compete at the same level, the government would need to equip their schools first. Secondly, there was also the feeling that it may be helpful if instead of having national examinations, different regions could have their own examinations. Also on the table was a suggestion that the government could boost admittance to higher education for regions with limited resources by lowering the entrance points of those regions.

But then a question may be asked, how can schools be equalized? Would this mean that national, provincial and district schools would need to be abolished so that all students would go to the same schools? One parent asked the researcher, how do other countries deal with this? These questions put the researcher on the carpet for he now had to say something:

If you ask me... well, I don't know so many other countries other than the one where I am at the moment... America. I see that the situation there is a little different from what we have here... since in that country, public and church related schools are separated which is not what we have here... ours is a unique situation and in our own uniqueness, we are a little different.

This comparison with America triggered a thought in another principal, that Kenya could possibly learn from American schools how to adapt and apply the GPA system into its school system:

Principal 1: Even some of our universities have what is very common in America that is, the grade point average. The GPA system has a lot of positive things in it because it is able to show the grade that students gets. In the end it is related to how the student performed right from the first term one entered the school

Principal 2: There is a possibility of continuous assessment methods. This used to work in agriculture where the teacher would mark the student's

work and would go to see it from time to time, and then they marked and correlated the marks

As can be seen in these two descriptions, this GPA system was not completely new in Kenya only that it had been used minimally in examining agriculture students before they took their final national examination. At the same time, the Continuous Assessment Tests (CAT) that Kenyan universities still use are an example of how this GPA system works. In America, students accumulate their credits from the time they enter school until the time they leave whether it is in high school or in college. So, a whole lot of creative ways of assessment of students do exist which would allow the country to shift the current emphasis from national exams to assessing other competencies that students could be prepared in. Teachers and principals were very much aware of these issues:

Things are getting better because now at least, students know that in math paper one, they are going to be tested on what they did in first and second year of the syllabus... so even in studying, I think this is going to help students than it is today. Today, no one knows what will be included because it tests from form one to four... I agree with *mwelimu* (teacher) that it is a step in the right direction.

As can be noted here, there is hope in the new examining system that is to be introduced in the year 2006. The final word on this topic has not been spoken and as such, there is a general recognition that things are changing and who knows what the future portends for the national examinations? What is obvious to the researcher is that the stakeholders have spoken and the school system will

increasingly find itself being challenged to find an assessment tool that will measure students' individual talents while taking into account the national goals of education.

Curriculum Expectations: What is and What ought to be Emphasized

At the end of the last section, it became clear that the ground under which schools in Kenya operate is changing. This means that the dialogue within the educational community in Kenya must continue in this search for an appropriate educational paradigm. Any discussion that aims at discovering the condition of a country's education system cannot end without asking the question, what knowledge is being taught in the schools? This section therefore, attempts to answer that question. The researcher keenly attends to the voices of the participants in the focus groups in their attempt to describe what is and what ought to be taught in Kenyan schools of the 21st century.

Among the profound findings of this study was that, in almost all focus groups, all the participants were in agreement that Kenyan schools emphasized the teaching of science subjects above all those in arts or humanities. The researcher was not surprised to discover this overemphasis on sciences at the expense of other subjects in the humanities; but he was surprised at the reason given for this. It was unanimous from the students to the professionals that science subjects offered students the best opportunities for employment, something that is certainly not the case according to the researcher. (See finding 1.2 and its implications and recommendations).

A sampling of some of the voices expressing these beliefs would be quite in order at this point. One student speaking in a way that seemed to have convinced other students said that, "in the employment guides that talk about careers, you will find that chemistry is more applicable in most careers." Though there were a few voices disputing that position, still, this was the dominant belief among students on what is taught and possibly what should be taught. Among the parents, several reasons were given to explain why schools should emphasize the teaching of sciences. To one parent, the schools should teach more sciences because according to him, "if there were many musicians, we will not have the interest to listen to them...we will be bored." To another parent, "students have a better chance of doing modern things today when they study science. It is much more useful to modern society... since things like physics, math and biology are more related to what is happening in society" this parent argued. To these two parents, it is clear that the teaching of arts or humanities can generally be considered to be of lower value than science. At the same time, it is shocking to hear the claim that teaching the humanities such as music would make society bored since it would be tired of listening to music.

Though the place of science subjects or science teachers in the Kenyan education system seems to be more superior to that of other subjects or teachers, in terms of time allocation and remuneration, this premier position for science is today being challenged by the teaching of the core subjects such as Mathematics, English and Kiswahili. At the same time, many participants were anxious to see the situation whereby some teachers were regarded as being more important than

others come to an end. Teachers participating in the focus groups also narrated their experiences of why they thought that the system of education was set up this way in the country. They felt that it was oppressive to arts teachers right from college to the time they enter a high school classroom to teach. Most of humanities teachers in public schools felt unfairly treated by the structures set up in the education system.

The dialogue found in (Appendix B) describes this discussion on subjects more elaborately. That dialogue reveals the frustration that accompanies humanity or arts teachers right from the time they enter the university until the time they leave it. They are constantly reminded that they are second class teachers since science teachers come first. It is not a wonder that students do pick up some of these negative feelings and attitudes as the following student suggests:

As for me...[*teaching should be a call*]...I think one should be a teacher because one has a vision. In our school, most of the teachers lack that... this is because... by the way there is a young teacher who confessed to us and said “me, I never wanted to be a teacher, I wanted to be lawyer.” So when she comes to class, she is like... you guys you have to study, if you don’t study, that’s your problem. And then she goes on and she teaches and when she is finished, she goes out. That’s it! Yaani there is no bond between us and the teachers.

Such negative attitudes by teachers easily “demotivate” students. Students, as will be described elsewhere, are good at reading their teachers’ moods. One minor thing to note from the dialogue in Appendix B is that, whereas most of the

teachers in the public school system do express their frustrations in the way the system has handled them, teacher 4 who was from a private Catholic school felt that all teachers and subjects were treated equally in her school.

This debate among the students, teachers and even the parents was not one sided at all. There were many other dissenting voices such as students who felt that the emphasis on science was wrong. There were teachers too who thought that the one sided emphasis on the cognitive dimension of education where science occupied the top position was wrong. One science teacher who preferred teaching practical subjects such as metal works, was convinced that schools should be more interested in teaching such practical subjects than sciences. He said, "I consider the other practical subjects such as agriculture, business studies and metalwork that have been wiped off from the syllabus to be more practical and beneficial to students than even the learning of chemistry."

Though they agreed with the other participants in their views that science was more emphasized, the principals' input in this dialogue was that things were not static. To them, curricula change was an ongoing thing. At the time of this study, one other hotly contested educational debate going on in the country concerned the decision by the government to stop the teaching of all practical subjects in high schools. Though it later rescinded this decision, at the time of the interviews, the principals and professionals were extremely upset by this decision by the government and many were of the opinion that high schools too, should have been given a free hand to teach practical subjects. According to the principals, a circular from the ministry of education had gone round all the

schools asking principals to stop the teaching of all practical subjects and, to hand over the old equipment lying idle in their schools to polytechnics around them (see definition of polytechnics p. 29). Opening more polytechnics was to most principals and professionals a good thing for the country, but to push for their expansion at the expense of high schools was considered very inappropriate by principals.

I think that it was a step back when we stopped teaching subjects such as woodwork and technical drawing in schools... I think that students need to have at least one subject where their whole body is involved... like metal work, woodwork or home science.

The above observation by one of the principals was also re-emphasized by professional participants. According to one of them, the fact that the schools were abandoning the teaching of practical subjects in order to emphasize the science subjects meant that schools were alienating students from their families and the farms. This choice of academic subjects rather than practical ones ensured that schools were slowly but surely killing the students' desire to learn practical subjects while at the same time socializing them to opt for white collar jobs only.

As useful as it may be to find out whether such a call for schools to teach "practical subjects" was the same as that of asking schools to teach "manual labor" to students, this study cannot enter that debate in an exhaustive way at this point. However, it suffices to mention that implication 2.3.1 does discuss this point in some ways. The following quotation from yet another principal suggests that schools should find ways of making students love farm work or manual labor.

Students should be doing something more active... as this makes their day and week livelier. Some kids when they come to school in form one, they say... oh! The school is really nice but I would love to go out in the *shamba* [farm] since I do so much work when I am at home in the *shamba*.

This teaching of practical and agricultural subjects in the high schools has been a major part of this study's theoretical framework. The researcher has postulated that a link exists between a country's economic development or underdevelopment and what teachers do or do not do in the classroom. The two participants quoted above clearly make the same link between schools and society.

It is necessary to stop at this point to examine the implications of what these two participants advocate above. According to the researcher, these two participants are saying that a country's trajectory either for its good or bad can greatly be influenced by what schools decide to teach. The two examples clearly show that schools could easily alienate students from their regular home environments by choosing to teach values and skills that are foreign to their home environments. Such a curriculum demotivates students. When this fact and that of teachers who have been socialized to accept wrong careers in colleges are looked at together, it becomes possible to see why many students do not see schools as offering them a positive trajectory in life. Twenty-first century schools in Kenya will need to rediscover the place of agriculture, manual labor, and technical subjects including modern technologies in the school curriculum. Though as will be argued later, rural and urban schools do teach different curricula to students, it

was an expressed hope by many participants, especially students, that future schools in Kenya should teach students different skills depending on their desires and capabilities.

The emphasis on examinations or cognitive aspects of education must not be allowed to overshadow other important dimensions of education. This is something many participants such as teachers, professionals, and even the Archbishop agree schools should do. The following example provided by the Archbishop elaborates this point on what things ideal schools ought to do:

A school like Rongai since it was started... has always appeared among the first top 100 schools in the country...for the last 25 years. Before the students can go for their breakfast, they clean the animals (moderator laughs) they wash the animal's *kraal*/stalls, they make sure the cows, goats and *bata* (ducks) are fed and everything else is done... they even make their own bread.... They repair their own bicycles and if they misuse them, they are taken away from them.

These are the kinds of things that ideal schools, whether in public or within the Catholic school system, ought to be doing according to the Archbishop. They need to give students skills that will not only help them fulfill their immediate needs such as making bread, but also skills that will prepare the students in their job search once they leave school. Though it can be argued that Rongai is a privately owned Catholic school, this does not mean that public schools cannot learn from them or even that Catholic schools cannot learn from public schools. It occurred to the researcher that in another discussion he was having with one

alumni of this “ideal” school that he too agreed with the archbishop’s comments that the school does a good job in instilling values other than academic ones to students. However, “not all Kenyan schools could do this,” argued the alumni student from Rongai. According to him, schools in urban areas had no access to farm land and it was therefore not practical to ask them to teach agriculture to students. In such schools, educators need to look at what other technical subjects their schools have an advantage in and teach those to their students.

Among the professionals, an explanation was provided by one of the participants to explain why the teaching of technical subjects such as agriculture had been historically rejected. This participant believed that if Kenyan schools were to overcome the negative historical perceptions associated with the teaching of technical subjects, policymakers would need to develop strong marketing strategies that would overcome this negativity. That strategy would need to include ways of convincing parents, students, as well as teachers about the importance of technical subjects to a country’s economy. The participant had the following suggestions on how to achieve this change of attitudes:

I don’t know how far we want to go in history... but you know that when the missionaries introduced western education, it was really intended to teach Africans how to read and recite the Bible, so education was purely for religious reasons and so when Africans compared the quality of their education to that given to Europeans and Asians ... they felt that they too would have liked to have the type of education that these two other races were having... apart from the education that Africans were getting, most

of the education that was propagated we may call it purely academic. It was an education that would give people jobs in the offices, or to become administrators or clerks and this part of our history has remained with us for a long time.... There has been a dichotomy even when the system tried to introduce subjects that you may say are supposed to fit the students in their own environments. Subjects like agriculture and technical subjects....have been rejected. I think the case of 8-4-4 is the most recent example, when we started introducing agriculture and other subjects, it was never accepted because there has been a dichotomy between what is taught in schools and what happens out there. A dichotomy between remuneration in academic subjects as opposed to that in agricultural or technical subjects existed. So a person who is working in the farm or in the factory does not get the same status as someone who is working in the office.... So whatever the school has tried to teach has always been contrary to agriculture and Kenya being an agricultural country, this has been a chronic problem... that you cannot localize the curriculum.

There is no doubt that policymakers have a difficult task ahead of them to counteract the negative perceptions existing between technical and academic subjects. Though there is need for change, this researcher believes that such change must begin with paying both skilled and non-skilled workers, science and humanity teachers similar or nearly similar salaries and minimum wages. This is because there is need to reduce the wide gap between what farmers and office workers in Kenya are paid since farmers are usually disadvantaged. Second,

policymakers will also need to ensure that all schools have been equalized. These issues can no longer be swept under the carpet if the curriculum taught in Kenyan schools is to become localized and beneficial to all students.

Another important element connected with this desire for the localization of the curriculum concerns the fact that no matter the failures of the past, Kenya is part of a new world order and thus, it cannot afford to be left behind. According to some of the parents and teachers participating in the dialogues, there was a strong need to see to it that schools were preparing students to fit this changed world order. This is why to some teachers, schools then need to begin teaching new subjects such as foreign languages and culture in order to prepare students for the new world. (In America, schools are now beginning to teach students how to read, write and speak Mandarin – one of the Chinese languages since China has now been recognized to be the fastest growing economy in the world.)

To go back to the argument raised by teachers concerning the need for schools to teach foreign languages and localizing subjects, tough questions and concerns were being raised by participants on these issues. For instance, some parents and students questioned why schools needed to teach foreign languages while many Kenyan students were yet to learn their own ethnic languages and cultures which were fast disappearing. At the same time, a number of teachers were vociferous as to why it was necessary to localize some of the subjects or to teach students about other countries. One teacher questioned why it was necessary to teach Kenyan students things concerning other countries such as America while students knew very little about their own country:

Is it really necessary to teach students about the irrigation schemes in America whereas we do not teach them about the irrigation schemes in this country? In history, we teach about the former British empire and the former French empire... I think that some of the things we teach in our syllabus are not relevant to students in Kenya... If I could be given a chance, maybe I would narrow it to learning about Kenya, and Africa and just a few other things about the most important countries outside Africa.

As far as the parents were concerned, there was a general feeling that schools in the 21st century needed to begin emphasizing more on technology and the moral issues that affected students in their world. For instance, because the scourge of AIDS continues to devastate the country, this was an important moral issue that schools needed to deal with. The curriculum in Kenyan schools continued to be silent about this disease, yet many parents and students were still ignorant about how to deal with the disease. Principals felt that in order for schools to be teaching a relevant curriculum in the 21st century, both the government and industry needed to come together and work with educational policymakers to provide innovative ways of teaching students. Among the professionals, a participant expressed the dream that according to her, Kenyan schools ought to have:

My dream is that all women will be educated... since most people look at education in terms of teaching either science or arts.... Here in Kenya, teaching multi-intelligence is not common... we are giving teachers multi-intelligence seminars in our REAP courses to help teachers find out the

talents of the kids when they are teaching and to concentrate on advising them... but how can you advise a child to go to an arts school if there are no art schools?

Since such a dream has now been verbalized, it enters the realm of the possible since what has been imagined can hypothetically be brought into existence. In this dream, the participant looks forward to the day when Kenya will put up different schools that will teach students different intelligences. Gardner who is best known for his award winning book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligence* (1983), explains why students cannot all be taught in the same way. Gardner believed that there is not one common core curriculum or set knowledge base that every student is expected to learn. Instead, he identifies an alternative vision of how teachers are to teach. They should individualize their interactions with students to focus on each student's unique strengths and learning styles (Gardner, 1983).

Only when such schools have been constructed, could teachers teach students in ways that would allow students to use the seven intelligences with which they are endowed. In the other professional focus group, participants were unanimous that there was no single Achilles heel that could explain all the educational problems in Kenya. As we move from this hope for better days in high school education in Kenya, the report now begins to narrow itself to the situation within the Archdiocese of Nairobi. But before doing that we conclude with the words of one female student's dream of what she and other Kenyan students hope for in a new education paradigm.

I think our schools should have a syllabus with all the kind of things we are good at only up to class 8... but when we go to high school, one should be able to go to a school like of d.j, school of music, school of art, anything one is good at. This is because considering our level of IQ, not all students are good at books. Some may be good at dancing, drawing etc.; there are schools where music and art are not taught. This means that our talents will not be realized since there is no opportunity to practice them in these schools.

Amen Sisters! Would be the response many African-American Christian believers would give to such words full of hope and dreams for the Kenyan youth. Martin Luther King, Jr. too once said "I have a dream, that one day....little boys and little girls will walk hand in hand in the streets of America." Some dreams do take time to come true, but they do come true some day.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses the general condition of education in Kenya. Participants in the discussions concluded that even though some positive things could be noted within the Kenyan educational system, most of them believed that the education system in Kenya had failed its students. In the discussion on the impact that colonial and missionary education continues to play in Kenya's educational structure, participants argued that even though the wrong colonial pedagogical methods introduced in the country had been introduced by design and not by mistake, Kenyans still nursing such a "colonial hangover," must overcome

it now. This was because the past was only useful in as far as it helped policymakers envision the future that society can now creatively bring into existence. The future is within the Kenyan peoples' hands. The chapter also deals with the issue of assessment of students. It proposes that rather than testing Kenyan students, the country should embark on the journey of designing a new educational paradigm that would shift the skewed interest stakeholders have on science to other subjects that would help students achieve their potential in life.

CHAPTER FIVE:
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NAIROBI
AND THE GOALS OF EDUCATION

The second research question guiding this study was what do stakeholders believe about the effectiveness of CASAN in providing students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education? To answer this question, three minor questions had been formulated to help break down the original one to a level that participants could easily dialogue. Two layers of evaluating the effectiveness of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi in providing students with the said goals of education have been identified. In the first layer, participants speak about their expectations of what Catholic schools or education ought to be for it to effectively teach the goal of evangelization. This layer attempts to provide a realistic understanding of where Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi are on this road map of teaching the goal of evangelization. The second layer scrutinizes participants' understanding of whether these schools were using teaching and learning methods that assist students to better their lives. Thus, the layer examines the critical and dialogical goals of education as found in CASAN.

Evangelization Goal of education in CASAN

Because five different categories of Catholic schools exist in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, most participants in the focus groups had problems on how to describe this structure. This is because it was doubtful that a generic way

of looking at Catholic schools in Nairobi was possible. For that matter, policymakers in Nairobi are invited to enter this dialogue and become part of the solution to the problem of CASAN. We start this second part of the report with a commentary made by one of the participants on where Catholic schools are at the moment:

You are investigating CASAN... and even as you go about conducting your research, there is a need to emphasize the place of planning and coordination in your study... this is because very often, we are groping in darkness... very much groping in the dark hoping for the very best with very little conscious planning and going back to review what has been going on.

The above quote identifies two distinct issues that need to be addressed by policymakers in CASAN. First, there is need for them to engage themselves in serious planning and second, most educators within this school system continue groping in a kind of darkness that needs to be uncovered. It may be recalled that similar sentiments concerning this darkness have already been expressed by another participant who asserted that a serious form of poverty, that is "mental," affects many people in Kenya. Though such a language that is critical of the way policymakers and others handle matters within the school system could easily be rejected because of its harsh tone, the truth of the matter is that these two are authentic voices within CASAN and therefore, they do need to be listened to.

But is it possible for the five different categories of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi to have a realistic common goal in education? According

to some professional participants, the Catholic school structure in Nairobi consists of first, a few parochial or diocesan schools. These are schools that were started and were maintained by either the parish or the diocese. The second category of Catholic schools includes the religious or private Catholic schools. These are owned and are maintained by religious congregations or societies. The third category of Catholic schools is the sponsored schools. These were formerly owned and maintained religious schools that have now been taken over by the government; they are the largest group of Catholic schools in Kenya. In category four of Catholic schools would be a "kind of a school system that is private, but that has been started by individual Catholics." These are schools that are started by committed Catholic couples or individuals who decide to start schools that have a Catholic orientation. These individuals do at times invite priests and religious nuns or other Catholics to come in and help them to run the schools. Finally, there is a fifth type of Catholic school in the diocese. These would be schools that have many Catholic traditions but for reasons best known to them, the schools refuse to be identified with the Catholic school system.

With such a plurality of Catholic schools in existence, it is clear that coming up with one set of expectations for all these Catholic schools, though not impossible, is a treacherous thing to do. The suggestion by one of the professional participants that "we cannot speak always in a generic sense about Catholic schools because they do not always answer to what we think about Catholic schools," is a truthful statement in many ways. Despite that fact, the researcher cannot rule out the possibility of policymakers within the Archdiocese coming up

with a common vision or goals for such schools. This is exactly the proposition that was made by many participants who, for instance, argued that, what such a plurality of schools and educational providers now urgently requires is, that stakeholders should sit down together to create a common plan on how to guide Catholic schools in the 21st century. These providers who include: private individuals, religious congregations, boards of trustees and even the government have very limited options other than working together to form shared meaning of what it means to be a Catholic school in Nairobi.

Furthermore, the researcher sought to find out from the participants whether such an educational edifice could have a set of core values; he was informed that at least three core functions are at the center of any Catholic school system. These were: the need for Catholic schools to impart discipline to students, the need for the Catholic schools to teach religion, and thirdly, that the principal's faith played an important role in a Catholic school.

Because a majority of the Catholic schools in Nairobi are of the third category, sponsored schools, it was natural that a majority of participants in this study would come from this school system. This, however, does not imply that the findings of this study are skewed towards this third category of schools. The researcher believes this is not the case because a good number of participants were familiar with the private Catholic school system and they did offer enough input to validate this study. For instance, many participants from sponsored schools had had experiences with private schools at some point in their lives; some of them had friends in these private schools and so, many stories were

narrated during the focus group interviews concerning them. Finally, the researcher was keen to notice these other voices whenever they were raised.

To find out how effective Catholic schools in Nairobi were in evangelizing through school, the researcher asked students this probing question, “out of 10 points, how many points would you give your school if you were to evaluate it in terms of teaching you faith, morals and doctrine?” The results to this question were interesting. First, the two focus groups did not see the schools in the same way. In the first student focus group, the students gave their schools a mean of 7 while in the second group, their mean was 4. This means that students in the first focus group considered their schools to have been doing a fairly good job of teaching them faith and morals unlike in the second group which considered their schools to be doing a lower quality job.

Do these numbers represent a significant piece of information? Because the researcher did not ask the other stakeholders a similar question to rate the schools, it is impossible to compare and contrast the significance of these numbers in this study. However, when the numbers are compared to the verbal descriptions that students gave of their schools before awarding them points, it appears to the researcher that some discrepancies existed in these evaluations and this could be significant. For instance from the verbal and numerical evaluations given below by two students, a few observations can be made:

Student I: In our school we usually attend Mass every Thursday and this is mandatory for everybody. We also have the legionaries... we do pray the rosary, we do have Bible studies and sharing and we also do go for retreats

and recollections at the Resurrection Garden... the point I give my school is 6 out of 10.

Student 2: Our school offers a Catholic education every day... for example, the whole week, Monday to Friday, there is Mass at 4 p.m. after classes... this is a short Mass that is optional and then at night we have prayer meetings after preps. Then on Saturday we usually have the YCS... now, the school offers all these but nobody comes... since the students know that Mass is optional, except the Sunday one which is compulsory, so only about 4 students tend to come for Mass... as for the points, I give it 3 out of 10.

The first observation to be made is, though the researcher would have expected the first student to give her school a slightly lower grade than the second one because her school had made attending Mass compulsory unlike in the second school, this was not the case. This was a surprise to the researcher because many students in the focus groups had expressed strong objections to the fact that some of their schools were forcing them to attend Mass or faith formation programs. Many of them had expressed a hope that such faith formation programs should be made optional.

Secondly, even though the calculated mean for the second students' focus group is 4 and this is considered by the researcher to be relatively low, it seems possible that a school with a score of 3 such as the one highlighted above, can still be able to teach students faith and morals like any good Catholic school ought to

do. From the description given above by the second student, it seems possible that students could rate their schools poorly yet the same schools were performing their functions of “offering a Catholic education every day” to other students. One can therefore conclude that, even when the only faith formation program in a Catholic school is the “agreed” Christian Religion Education (CRE) program, it was still possible for schools to teach students some Christian values.

Many other opinions were raised concerning Catholic sponsored schools. Some students believed that Catholic schools were no different from other normal schools. One student reported, “Catholic schools are just like other schools only that they are sponsored by the Catholics.” To yet another student who was hearing for the first time that her school was Catholic, this dialogue was shocking because she was now realizing that her school was expected to be much more than it was at present. She said, “I didn’t even know that my school is Catholic sponsored.” On the other hand, there were a good number of students who were very happy with the Catholic identity of their schools. One thing that can be said about all these schools is that it matters a lot what school one goes to, if one is to be positively influenced by a school’s Catholic identity. This is because as the dialogues in the focus groups revealed, some of the schools were only Catholic by name and had very little else to show for their Catholic faith in the formation of students. It was also surprising to note that students from some of the Catholic schools could have even been hostile to the Catholic way of life as the following student’s comment suggests:

I think the need to show other people that this school is really a Catholic sponsored school does not come....This is because in our school you will find that there are Muslim and Protestant students and so this matter of showing people that the school is Catholic should only be in the background.

However, a question could be asked, is it possible to make a Catholic school truly Catholic? This is a question to which there are no easy answers and so, policymakers in the Archdiocese of Nairobi will have to find out how to answer it themselves. It seemed odd during the dialogues to note that whereas some of the students in Catholic schools were proud of their Catholic heritage, others had no clue as to what that means or at worst, they were hostile towards having such traditions implanted in their schools. At this rate, it should not be a surprise to policymakers when students graduating from their schools end up losing any sense of direction in life as soon as they leave high school and enter the real world.

Even among teachers, there were voices that said that it would be too much for society to expect students coming from such schools that had no Catholic identity to remain focused. Some of the teachers confirmed that some of the Catholic sponsored schools were only nominally Catholic. Among the many teachers' voices was one of lamentation that said, "even when records do indicate that these are Catholic sponsored schools, there is very little about the Catholic faith in these schools."

Two reasons can be advanced to partially explain why things had come to such a deplorable state. First, because most Catholic schools are public in nature, these schools do not have a mandate to admit students of their own choice into school. It can be argued as will shortly be explained that having such a mandate would have allowed Catholic schools to retain some degree of autonomy and Catholicity. Secondly, it can also be speculated that unless Catholic schools were allowed to use religion as a criterion for admitting a majority of students into school, it was virtually impossible for these schools to become agents of evangelization for they cannot teach Catholic doctrine to only a few Catholic students. As such, very few sponsored schools have been able to functionally become the kind of schools they are expected to be. In fact it was surprising to hear one teacher express her shock at discovering that her school was Catholic. Using very similar words to ones used by a student, she said “we didn’t even know that ours was a Catholic sponsored school.”

This failure by schools to give students guidance towards what to expect of themselves and from life was described by the professionals to be amongst the greatest problems facing Catholic schools. “Students are not told what the expectations are and so I don’t see how they can be expected to know them.” This can become especially problematic for Catholic schools if, as one other professional participant pointed out, the schools are expected by society to be the bedrock of social change. It is difficult to see how the schools can do their evangelization work without the needed tools:

I think we need to address the issue of attitudes... and how the curriculum can affect them...through evangelization in the Catholic schools, we can change the entire humanity, our children and ultimately...we will change the nation because Catholic schools are very influential. We can still use them to turn the nation around in our own small way, we can give our contribution.

Many parents and principals felt that it was still possible for Catholic schools to imbue their students with what they called Catholic ethos. This is something that both groups agreed was needed in the management of the schools. Because the government had taken over the schools, parents expressed a hope that the Church would do something to make its presence in the management of the schools felt. This view was given further credence by the principals who talked about the need for Catholic schools to not only be good in the performance at the national examinations, but also in those other vital areas of the students' lives. One principal in charge of one of the "ideal" sponsored schools within the Archdiocese and who had many years of experience working in Kenyan high schools had the following words to say about her school's success:

I think we do have a list of Christian ethos from the Catholic church in our school... I think we do try... and the parents are happy when the girls come home, they say that they are more helpful in the home. This is because we do tell our girls... you should be grateful to your parents for everything they are doing..... and I think that is important..... We do have Mass every day and you know we've got lots of girls going to Mass and

they don't have to go... I don't look at who is in for Mass but the church is probably half full, its probably well over 100 girls there every weekday at 6: 20 a.m.

This is not typical of most Catholic schools in Nairobi since most sponsored schools cannot overtly teach Catholic doctrine to their students as has been argued in chapter 1 (see pp. 3-4). However, through clubs and movements such as YCS and Legionaries, pastoral programs, and the Small Faith Communities, sponsored schools are now finding different ways through which they can now teach religious values to their students. This reminds the researcher of a comment made earlier by the Archbishop concerning his thoughts on schools. The Archbishop had said, "when you talk about having the best schools, where can you tell me are the best schools...? As for me the system is good only that it is for us to improve." These words from the Archbishop seem to be quite on target because the researcher too believes that there is always room for improvement. Even in countries of South East Asia, America, and Europe, educational leaders struggle to figure out the best practices and what kind of knowledge schools should teach. It is equally true, therefore, that CASAN as a school system should always seek new ways of improving its praxis.

The researcher now wishes to report on the three prerequisite issues identified by participants that CASAN must first deal with if it is to effectively evangelize its students. The three key issues are: one, the place of discipline in Catholic schools; two, the need of teaching religion in the new Catholic school

system and finally, whether a principal's faith does matter if a Catholic school is to maintain its true identity.

The first one as mentioned above is the place of discipline in Catholic schools. A question may be asked, what does discipline mean to all the different participants? Does it mean the same thing or not? Though all participating groups did zero in on the importance of discipline in a Catholic school, it was interesting to note that discipline meant different things to different people. To students, discipline was related to strictness in a school. The following description of discipline by one student clarifies this position more:

Most Catholic schools are organized in a strict manner... just the way the sisters used to do it...I think they left a legacy of strictness. When I was young, my mom used to tell me that the European sisters used to discipline them thoroughly.

To students, therefore, it can be assumed that discipline in a Catholic school reminds them of punishment for infractions one may commit. For a good Catholic school to effectively evangelize its students, it must be disciplined in this way. To students, a disciplined student was one that internalized the message of why they need to keep the school rules, just as the religious sisters used to do it in the past.

For the teachers, discipline in a Catholic school was synonymous with order. This meant that Catholic schools followed a certain rule of life that had a core Catholic value system. As one teacher explained, "the Catholic church is a very well ordered organization. Its structures of hierarchy are very well known and are clearly defined. We find this replicated in its schools." This statement

summarizes what many other teachers had said about discipline. It clearly captures the close relationship existing between a Catholic school and the Catholic Church; and because Catholic schools are in partnership with the church in its evangelizing mission, the schools must therefore, "enforce the way of life, the doctrines and teachings of the Church" another teacher remarked. However, these remarks elicited quite a different feeling to yet another teacher. "I think that what I have heard being described is what I would say an ideal Catholic school should perhaps look like."

As far as the parents were concerned, discipline was seen as the internalized behavior of all members of the school community. "Discipline is the way everybody in the school community behaves; that is, the child, the teacher and all. It is not one sided since it is found in the attitudes of the students and their peers." To the researcher, this statement, too, appears correct because it alludes to another important fact in Catholic schools. That Catholic schools need to have right relationships among all members of the school communities. As for the professionals, discipline was related to the character of the student:

For me... it is all about the commitment of the teachers... If students are the leaven and we can educate them to have value, and they live them out in life....this is for me the biggest choice we can make for them...because if you ask me, when employers take our girls and give them jobs...they take it for granted that they have done well academically. All they want to know is their character and this is what we point out to the students. That in their living certificates, character is all that counts and not their

academic slips.... This is the big moral lesson... that employers want to see in the living certificate what is written under certain particular aspects of a student's life.

This suggests, therefore, that a Catholic school that seeks to fulfill its mandate must be willing to implant both proximate and the ultimate goals of education. In other words, Catholic schools must be willing to provide a holistic education to students. A holistic education aims at forming students in their minds, bodies and souls. This, too, is what the Archbishop thinks Catholic schools ought to be, whether the schools are pre-primary, primary, secondary or even the university. The first thing that a Catholic school must do is seek character and moral formation of its students. "It is unfortunate that some people start with education without character formation," the Archbishop lamented.

One thing that comes out clearly in all this discussion by different participants on what discipline means to them is that discipline is central to what being a Catholic school is all about. All stakeholders are expected to have internalized a portion of this discipline cake in their lives. It is difficult to visualize how a Catholic school would be if its leaders, students, teachers and everybody else involved, show no respect to one another. In the document, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (CCE, 1966), the Church states what it expects a Catholic school with the right kind of relationships to be:

From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith, and having its own unique

characteristics...in a Catholic school, everyone should be aware of the living presence of Jesus the “Master” who, today as always, is with us in our journey through life as the one genuine “Teacher,” the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection. The inspiration of Jesus must be translated from the ideal into the real. (#25)

A Catholic school must therefore help all the members of its community to internalize this discipline in their lives. This is because, after all, all members of a Catholic school community are brothers and sisters of the perfect teacher and master, Jesus Christ. Achieving such an ideal community lifestyle is the discipline that all Catholic schools, whether in Nairobi or anywhere else in the world, must hope to fulfill if the schools expect to effectively evangelize.

Secondly, one may ask, is it necessary for Catholic schools in Nairobi to teach religion in order for students to come to know Jesus Christ in a personal way? What is the real situation in Nairobi as far as the teaching of religion is concerned? To begin this discussion on the place of religion in a Catholic school, a dialogue that introduces this debate to the reader is reported below. The dialogue introduces this complex issue and reveals that the debate does go beyond having a simple yes or no answer to this question of teaching religion in Catholic schools. At the core of this debate is the fundamental quest for what is “real” or “ideal” in teaching religion in CASAN:

Moderator: ... if you look at some of the church documents; for instance, the one I think called *Crossing the Threshold of the 21st Century* written by the late Pope John Paul II... the document somehow describes what a

Catholic education or school ought to be. In some of the other documents, they state that the teaching of religion or Catholic doctrine should be at the core of what a Catholic school ought to be.... I also remember when I was in the education office here in the diocese a few years ago... and I saw this all the time, parents would come to me looking for a place in a Catholic school for their children... why? I think it's because at the back of their minds, when parents came looking for Catholic school for their children... I think one can say that the teaching of religion was one of the main reasons why they came... so it can be said that this is the basic thing about being a Catholic school. Whether in this country or wherever they are...

Professional 1: Yeah! But I think that even in the course of conducting a research, there is a need to draw a distinction between the ideal and the real, as is and as ought to be... because the documents that you are referring to, are not so much talking about the situation as is, but as ought to be.

Professional 2: Two years ago, Archbishop Ndingi gave an address to all the heads of Catholic schools and I was there. And I sensed that he was pleading with them to teach CRE in schools. Now imagine that this is the situation on the ground, the Archbishop has to ask, can you please teach religion in school? That is where we are right now.

Professional 3: I think this is a very serious point. Exactly what you are saying does not exist at all. Teaching of what one may call Catholic doctrine in most of Catholic schools I am familiar with does not happen...and what you may call Catholic schools does not exist in those terms... you may have a teacher who may be Catholic, but that teacher does not necessarily teach CRE.... And CRE is also another issue, the CRE syllabus is an agreed syllabus among Christian churches and so it does not teach Catholic doctrine as such. If you are seen as if you are leaning towards Protestantism or Catholicism, then you as a teacher are in trouble. So the syllabus is what one would call impartial... am just putting this point across so that perhaps you may clarify here...

Professional 4: Actually I don't have much to contribute on this but am looking for clarification... more from them (points to participants one and three). I went to what I thought were Catholic schools right from standard one through form six... I wasn't Catholic (laughter from a participant) I became Catholic about 13 years ago... then when we went to high school I could not receive Communion because we were told that only those who were Catholics could receive and we wondered why? You see there were so many questions that were left unanswered... now my question actually to them is, you are calling these schools Catholic and they are saying there is a distinction and that Catholic school is not the right name to use here,

what would they call them? What would they advise that these schools be called if Catholic is ambiguous?

In some ways, the above dialogue suggests that the Church documents described above talk about an “ideal” Catholic school and not the situation as is on the ground. According to one of the participants, the real situation on the ground is such that the Archbishop has to plead with the principals in Catholic schools to teach religion. If speculation were allowed at this point, it is possible to conclude that this “reality” is a product of the “agreed” curriculum that does not permit schools to teach their religion or Catholic doctrine without raising some red flags.

From other focus group participants, the researcher also noted that many participants in the dialogues were confused by the Church’s position on whether or not Catholic schools ought to teach religion to students. Many of them were of the opinion that the Archdiocese should come out more clearly and state its policy on this issue. In a comment that drew some laughter from other teachers, a teacher speaking critically on the diocesan policy as declared by the Archbishop in a meeting said that, “the Archbishop made an announcement that Catholic schools should allow other denominations to worship in their own styles. I think this interfered with the management of our schools.” Though what this teacher is talking about in this particular instance seems to be unrelated to the question whether schools should teach religion, the broader sense of this comment is still related to this question about the teaching of religion. This is because, whether religion in a Catholic school is to be taught as prescribed in a school’s curricula or it is to be indirectly taught in a school’s other learning dimensions such as through

its liturgical celebrations, all these methods achieve one and the same thing; namely, that they teach religion. To clear the air on what the Archbishop had meant at the meeting in which he was quoted to have encouraged the teaching of other faiths in Catholic schools, the researcher sought a clarification from him:

Moderator: Should Catholic schools teach religion as a required subject?

Archbishop: They can make it a required subject if they want to...but I will not force it on my students... I will not force it on them because then, they will only learn it for the sake of learning. Those who want to learn it...let them be taught. But where there is a chaplain, there should at least be a conference once a week that will not only teach Catholic faith but morality.

The Archbishop's position helps to clarify two things. First, as the Archbishop clearly indicates, though the teaching of religion may be important to him, he was not going to force his opinion on others. To him, schools should seek non coercive ways of teaching faith to their students for only then, can schools guarantee that the faith students learn in schools will have a lifelong effect on the students. Secondly, the Archbishop was alluding to the fact that other creative ways of teaching religion do exist in schools and each school must identify the method that suits it best. According to the Archbishop, schools that have chaplains could have chaplain-student conferences once in a while so as to teach doctrinal and moral issues that are relevant to all students including non-Catholics. On the other hand, principals proposed that clubs and movements in

Catholic schools such as C.U; Y.C.S, and Legionaries be used to teach religion (see definition of C.U; Y.C.S, and Legionaries on pp. 32-33).

Though there were many students who supported the teaching of CRE in Catholic schools and wished that it was made compulsory, the majority of students in both student focus groups were convinced that it was wrong to force students to learn it. The two arguments used by students who supported the teaching of religion in Catholic schools were, "I think religion should be a compulsory subject in Catholic schools; this is because it helps to bring up moral students in a country." Secondly, teaching religion was important because a Catholic school should prepare students for life after school and for the next life. "It is good to take CRE because its aim is to teach about the end of life and how it will be... it also helps us to plan about our future." Some students vigorously opposed these two views saying that CRE does not teach morals and in any case, if one wanted to learn faith and morals, the best place to go and learn that was in the church.

On the other hand, many other arguments were raised by students to reject the idea of teaching religion in Catholic schools. For many students, forcing students to take CRE was being oppressive to them, especially if one was Muslim. "In our school, everyone must take CRE, even for Muslims it's a must for them to take it and I don't like that." To another student the fact that sponsored schools were also public schools meant that forcing CRE on all students was wrong. "Even though our school is Catholic sponsored, it is still a public school" he said.

At the same time, forcing students to take CRE meant that the choice of subjects that a student could take was now reduced:

Some students are not good in CRE and they may be science oriented...*yaani* in our school, you tend to find that students don't like it. Most of the students hate CRE and I don't know why, but most of them do.

The level of dialogue and openness that the students showed in this question was very surprising. As for the principals and professional participants, they showed that other wider implications of this question of teaching religion in a Catholic school existed. Though some of the professionals and even principals did acknowledge that students had a constitutional right to follow the religious practices of their choice, the other side of this coin was that, the very moment a parent or a child made a decision to come to a Catholic school, that decision meant that they had willingly chosen to cooperate with the school in following the rule of life already established in that school. In the case of Catholic schools, that rule of life meant that a school would follow Catholic traditions and values already established. The professionals argued that such practice was, after all, not peculiar to Catholic schools only, but was common in other sponsored schools such as those that belonged to the SDA and the Muslims.

The third thing that participants unanimously accepted as being necessary in making Catholic schools authentically Catholic involved the principal's spirituality. Though many participants were concerned that the dual nature of Catholic sponsored schools in Nairobi had made it almost impossible for the

schools to remain truly Catholic, a majority of participants in the study were convinced that having a Catholic principal to head a Catholic school should be the rule and not the exception. To highlight some of the complexities involved in this discussion, the following input by one of the participants raises important statistical questions concerning that desire to truly have Catholic schools when the odds are against achieving such a reality:

Another important dimension that you might want to consider when calling a school Catholic is the number of Catholic students in the school... very often, you will find that it is the fact that the situation in the school reflects the situation in the country in terms of percentages.

According to one study, Kenya is about 22% Roman Catholic, the world's average is about 18% and so when you go to schools, very often, you are going to find that kind of statistic... anything between 20-30% because if it's a government school... they do admit students on the basis of academic performance and not on the basis of their religious persuasion.

Therefore, when you are going to a school which is a microcosm reflecting the macrocosm that is Kenya, now the question arises, how justified would one be to call a school Catholic when only 20% of its

students are Catholic and any percentage like 70-80 belong to other faiths?

Participants were asked to give their opinions on what they thought concerning the percentage of students or teachers who should be Catholic in a Catholic school, or whether the principal needed to be Catholic in order for a Catholic school to maintain its identity. Though it is difficult to see how a school with only

20% of its student population being Catholic can maintain its Catholic identity, some interesting findings were obtained from the dialogues.

First, participants felt that it was not possible to demand that a majority of students in a Catholic school should be Catholic when in actual fact, the religion of the student was not used as criteria for admission to such a school. In all the dialogues on this question, only one publicly sponsored school was referenced by participants as having been able to maintain its Catholic identity despite the fact that it was a public sponsored school. This was true despite the fact that it still remained a public school only that it selected its students through an interview process. The school's principal admitted that though the school does inquire about a student's religious background in its interview sessions, this does not necessarily disqualify non-Catholic students from joining the school.

Though most participants, including the Archbishop, were in favor of having Catholics make up the majority of the students in Catholic sponsored schools, almost all of them were opposed to using religion as a criterion for admitting students. To the Archbishop, only parochial or religiously owned schools had a right to admit students of their own choice. He argued that, "private schools can admit anybody they want but government schools can only take students by a quota system if they are national schools."

As far as the religion of the Catholic schools' principals was concerned, it was unanimously accepted by most participants that the principal or at least his/her assistant should, as much as possible, be of the Catholic faith. Many of these participants stated that the principal played a crucial role in a school since

he or she acted as the spiritual leader. "If one is a committed Catholic, then one can make the whole school follow that tradition," a teacher argued. While supporting the same position, one principal stated that "the principal sets the tone of the school." They do this by promoting "Catholicism, since we lead by our own examples, by our attendance at Mass, by promoting games and learning and good neighborliness." These perceptions do indeed state a common conception held by many scholars. Many of them have argued that a principal's spirituality is important in ensuring that a school's Catholic identity is maintained. In this sense, a Catholic or Protestant principal can be expected to bring his or her spiritual baggage with him or her and as the passage below states:

For me it's an awful kind of hard work to be a principal and I would much prefer to be a teacher...but I know that as a principal, I have a lot of say in who I invite to the school to talk to the students. I encourage them to go to YCS and the Legion of Mary which is not my choice but the girls love it.... and they also mark the feast of the Sacred Heart...for years I never went to it but when the girls said they wanted it celebrated in the church, then I thought, well I have to go because it's in the church....you know if the principal was CPK or PCEA... I think the school would have more of a Protestant input.

It can be noted that the school described in the above passage is exceptional. It is not typical to see students leading and the principal following them in spiritual matters as it is usually the other way around. To give another example to explain this issue, both students' focus groups agreed that the presence of a Catholic

principal could help reduce the religious tensions movements such as CUs, YCS, and the Legionaries of Mary sometimes have. The example below explains this kind of religious tensions:

When we were in form two, there used to be clashes... the CUs used to claim that the Catholics worshiped idols but we would fight back and say that that was not true. It was really hurting to us those days...but even though ours is a Catholic school, we should agree that even though we are all different... you see I did not choose to be born in my religion... I didn't choose it but found myself in it and so we should all be proud of our religions and not criticize others. This is what we saw in the Vatican when the Pope died, the Pope did not criticize people but he united them.

Such tensions which are often caused by the fact that a majority of students in a Catholic school are non-Catholics, can only be resolved when the principal does not favor in this case the non-Catholic students. The above two cases do testify to the fact that a principal's spirituality does influence the direction that a school takes, for better or for worse.

However, the researcher did learn that another side of this story of a Catholic school principal did exist. This second face of the coin brought out further issues that needed to be considered when making the decision whether or not to insist that principals in Catholic schools should be Catholic. The other side of the story was the question: what would Catholics say about a Catholic principal heading a non-Catholic school? Could such a principal be expected to implant non-Catholic values in a non-Catholic school? Many participants did not have an

answer to this second question; many said they did not know what happens at that point. A few who attempted to answer this second question were convinced that technically speaking, it was possible to have a Catholic principal heading a Protestant school. However, this does not always work well and as much as possible, it was always better to have Catholics sent to Catholic schools and Protestants sent into Protestant schools. This discussion was not an easy one to have, as one participant suggests here:

I once was in a meeting at Holy Family Basilica that was attended by all the heads of Catholic schools. I was there as a chaplain and here were some heads who were not Catholic and when this question was brought up, they were very angry. They said, hey... am trying to do the best job that I can and supporting everything the Catholic Church wants me to support, so why should I be sacked just because I am not Catholic?

This dilemma is not easy to resolve, especially when the Catholic schools in question happen to be public. Though there are no quick fixes to such structural and leadership problems, participants were willing to provide a road map to resolving some of these difficult issues.

The best short-term plan that the Church could use to solve this dilemma would be to go back to the government and insist on its rights. The Church had to stop pandering to the government but must now insist on its rights as mandated in the 1968 Education Act. This means that it should demand that all future appointments of principals to Catholic schools would have to be made in consultation and in agreement with the Church. As far as the long-term plan was

concerned, the Church now had a duty to ensure that it had an educational plan on the type of schools it hoped to have in the coming decades. For instance, if such a plan involved a determination that it would spend more of its energy and money putting up parochial or diocesan schools, then it had responsibility to follow through in that decision, to make sure all its future schools were able to teach Catholic doctrine. In any case, the Christian Religious Education or CRE syllabus that was being used in schools today was only “an impartial syllabus that was agreed to by all the churches” according to one participant. In other words, it had nothing Catholic about it.

On the question of whether it was possible to have only Catholic teachers teaching in Catholic schools, two objections were raised by participants. First, most participants agreed that even though they desired to have more Catholic teachers in Catholic schools, nothing could be done to increase the numbers from the present situation where only two to three Catholic teachers are present in the faculties:

Half the number of teaching staff should be Catholics or otherwise when you only have one or two practicing Catholics in a school and the rest don't care about the welfare of the Catholic students, the needs of Catholic students in the school, even if the principal is Catholic, will not be met.

So, asking the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) which employs all teachers in the public school system including those in sponsored schools, to use religion as part of its criterion for hiring teachers for Catholic schools is at the moment considered not feasible. The second objection was that participants felt it was

easier for the Church to retrain its Catholic teachers already posted to these schools through its enrichment programs such as CAPAP than to demand more of them. This program was praised for its capacity to not only create a desire among Catholic teachers to teach religion and pastoral programs, but for also giving teachers the skills needed in order to do their job.

Effectiveness of Catholic Schools in Teaching Critical and Dialogical Goals of Education

In the first layer of this report on the second research question, a discussion on the path that Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi could take in their desire to effectively evangelize students was posited. The second layer of this report will concern itself with evaluating whether or not the Catholic school system in Nairobi has been accomplishing the critical and dialogical goals of education in order to educate its students effectively. As such, the goal in this second layer of the report is to find out whether the knowledge base that has been in use in this school system is one that liberates or one that continues to oppress students and other stakeholders in CASAN. A liberating education must be concerned with both the content of that knowledge base as well as the methods of delivery of that knowledge. This layer will therefore focus on participants' thoughts, feelings and beliefs concerning the knowledge base that is currently in use in CASAN, it will also attempt to define what knowledge base these participants hope that CASAN should have in the 21st century. The bottom line in

this question therefore is: do Catholic schools in Nairobi use more of the traditional banking methods or the postmodern critical methods of education?

In examining the question of what knowledge is worth knowing, it was highlighted in chapter two of this study that the traditional methods of knowing advocated from the 17th to the 20th century had now outlived their usefulness. The chapter also discussed the hope that a postmodern education could offer to students and their country. It spoke of the hope that students could become part of the solution to their problems. Stakeholders in the envisaged postmodern pedagogy become a community of learners who must come together to form meaning and understanding of their shared reality. Experiences that people bring to the table become an important aspect of this dialogic education because the end result is that all members of this community of learners become actively involved in finding solutions in their context. To use Freire's language, a dialogical pedagogy aims at liberating the marginalized such as the students, women, workers and peasants from their oppression. "My insistence on starting from their description of their daily life experiences is based in the possibility of starting from concreteness, from common sense to reach a rigorous understanding of reality" (p. 116)

When stakeholders were asked what they thought about the teaching and learning methods that were used in the Catholic schools, an overwhelming majority of the participants believed that the schools used more banking rather than critical or dialogical methods of education. However, student participants had the most diverse opinions concerning which of these 2 methods schools were

using. The 2 students' focus groups saw things differently. One group believed that schools were using more banking methods while the other group believed that schools were using more critical thinking methods. For instance, in one group almost all of the students agreed that their teachers just taught and expected the students to give back the same answers they got in class. "I think most major schools in Kenya dwell in banking since they just teach and teach and then the teacher expects you to write the same answers, no more, no less." A second student supporting this view said that, "we first wait for our teachers to teach and then we get into discussion groups." Though students do get into discussion groups at some point, it appears from these two students that teachers first dump the information on the students who do not know what to do with the information after that. In very rare occasions did teachers use critical thinking methods such as "giving us a topic to go and research on our own."

From the other student focus group, it was not only surprising to hear that schools were using critical thinking skills, but that this was most common in science rather than the humanities. To elaborate on this, one student had this to say about their learning in a science related subject. "Let's take for instance our school, when they teach subjects like physics, you will be given a small question then you will be told to go and do a research of the topic in the library." To another student, teachers went further than just asking students to go to the library and learn more in order to deepen their knowledge, "our teacher takes a group of say five students and he gives you a topic to research on and then the following morning, you will be given 2 hours to discuss the topic with the rest of the class"

to a third one, "it's not like the teacher comes and teaches and when she finishes she goes away, but when she comes to teach, it's like an open discussion."

Though students in this second focus group did believe that teachers were using critical thinking methods to teach them, these claims were not correlated by other focus group participants. For instance, it is possible that students did go to the libraries to do the "research" that teachers asked them for. When the researcher asked how many of the schools in this particular focus group had libraries, only 5 out of 11 students put up their hands. Secondly, if an earlier observation that had been made concerning teachers in Kenyan schools is correct, that is, that they do not have a lot of time to teach all they would want, then this claim that teachers would give a group of students 2 hours to discuss a topic is to the researcher an almost impossible thing to do in Kenyan schools if one is to consider the time factor alone. Though the researcher does not doubt that many schools did use discussion methods in their teaching, it is not very clear whether or not these discussions were helpful in making students become critical thinkers. According to the first group of students, students were after all only expected to give back what was banked in them, nothing more, nothing less.

When the students were asked to make a comparison between sponsored and private Catholic schools, that is, which of the two systems did a better job in teaching students using critical thinking skills, a good number of them were clear that private Catholic schools did a better job. This is clear in the following example given by one of the students:

Private schools do a better job because there are many teachers and their pay is good and so they usually motivate students... in private schools you can also find about 20 students in a class while in public school, you will find 40 students and above with only one teacher. Since I have most of my friends in private school, you will hear them tell you that, in the morning, a teacher works on the weaker students... and so when you compare yourself... let's say your friend went to a private school and you used to perform better than her before she went to that school; by the time she comes out, her level of education is higher than yours.

Because of a number of obvious reasons, students in private schools were receiving a better quality education than their counterparts in public schools. For instance, private schools had better physical facilities, better motivated teachers, and fewer students per class. Because of such favorable conditions, it is very likely that students in private schools were receiving a better deal in education than those in public schools as far as using dialogical and critical methods in education was concerned.

However, it was surprising for the researcher to note that students in the second focus group were convinced that science subjects offered students better opportunities to use critical thinking skills than the humanities would. This was new knowledge to the researcher. The following example given by a student in the second focus group reveals part of the source of the researcher's surprise:

As for me, I think that in a subject like biology, and you are studying a topic like pollution, when they take you on a tour and show you how our

country is being polluted, or when they take you to ecological tours... and you see how the environment is being degraded, this provokes you to... become an environmentalist.

The researcher's surprise was because first, he had come to believe that only a liberal arts education could bring students and teachers together to have a shared meaning of reality. But according to the above example, science subjects were equally capable of giving students meaningful experiences that could lead to new ways of dealing with a problem such as pollution.

The researcher became aware that some positive curricula changes had taken place in the time he had been away from the country. The second source of surprise was that, he had come back home expecting to find that the traditional methods of education such as rote memorization and deductive teaching were still the dominant teaching and learning methods in vogue. He discovered in the course of this study that a new program of teaching science and mathematics had been established. The new Strengthening of Teaching Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE) program had made the teaching and learning of these two subjects a positive experience for students in all schools. According to some of the teachers, the best thing about the new program was that students sitting for national examinations would no longer be expected to give back what they had learned in class. These exams would give students an opportunity to express, construct and interpret meanings to questions they were asked in the examination.

The greatest challenge that most teachers would experience while teaching the new math and science program, concerned their determination to break away from past pedagogical methods that were now recognized to have been wrong. Many teachers including some professional participants accepted the fact that the professional training they had all received in college had all been in rote memorization and therefore, it would be difficult to teach using other methods. What these teachers were saying was that this problem was truly bigger than them because it started earlier in teacher training colleges:

I think that we teachers are sometimes limited because we came from the same systems where we were trained in rote learning.... So even for us teachers sometimes we want neat answers, we want the students to answer like that, so somehow, we find ourselves limiting them. Somehow we find ourselves not sure how much we should allow students to express their views on certain things... sometimes we are not sure how much we want the students to give from their real lives.

As we conclude this part of the report, we conclude with the words of one of the professional participants who describes the strengths and weaknesses of Kenya's education system. This participant affirms that a major problem with Kenya's educational system was that it emphasized only one dimension of education and failed to deal with three others:

There is no doubt that the Kenya high school education system has as one of its main objectives, the provision of information. There is no doubt that it has been very successful in imparting information, in the acquisition, the

processing and the retrieval of knowledge. It is very strong in that regard. It is particularly weak as has been pointed by others when it comes to the aspect of formation...; therefore, we have a situation where the students are being informed... but when it comes to personal formation and therefore when it comes to the integration of the knowledge that they have learned... there is definitely a major weakness in that regard... I do agree with Madam here regarding our student's inability to use their critical and creative function. That is certainly a dimension that has not been very well developed in our education system and consequently, when it comes to other important dimensions of education such as the dialogical dimensions, then very serious problems arise.

According to this participant who is in turn supporting another participant with a similar view, the greatest weakness with the Kenyan education system was that it showed very little integration between the knowledge students acquired in school and their creative aspects of life. These are completely lacking in education and this is the "real" story of Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

So, even as the parents conclude that Catholic schools in Nairobi do usually a better job than public schools in forming students, the truth of the matter is that both systems have been judged to be lacking in other critical dimensions of education. This is especially true in the dialogic dimension. Why have things been allowed to get to this point? It can only be speculated that the pressure that teachers, students and even principals have to perform well on the national exams, is the cause of this problem. Teachers have no time to use their prophetic

imagination in their teaching to make schools part of the solution and not the problem in education. Though this part of the report has not been able to describe what the other dimensions are, the researcher intends to elaborate on this in chapter 7.

Conclusion

This report has revealed a number of underlying issues that Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi will need to deal with in order to effectively provide students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education. For instance, in order for schools to be effective evangelizing agents, Catholic school communities must first become disciplined. Discipline in this case means that the entire school community has to internalize the message of Jesus Christ, the perfect master and teacher. Other issues discussed included that of the complex place religion continues to occupy in Catholic schools. Participants hotly debated whether, first, demanding that a Catholic school should teach religion in order for it to remain authentically Catholic merited consideration. Second, the issue of whether or not Catholic school principals do need to be Catholics in order to head such schools was also debated. Finally, the chapter evaluates how far CASAN has effectively achieved the critical and dialogical goals of education. It concludes that CASAN as a school system was strong in imparting the cognitive dimension of education but very weak in imparting the critical and dialogical dimensions.

CHAPTER SIX:

A VISION TO VICTORY

In this chapter, the researcher reports the findings to the third research question guiding this study: what do stakeholders believe regarding the effectiveness of the schools they are affiliated with in providing students with the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals of education? The researcher examined the responses to two sub-questions that had been prepared as a way of breaking down this main one. These last two questions were designed to draw out some of the practical aspects of life within the Catholic school system and secondly, they also asked participants to describe some practical suggestions that future Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi need to take to be effective. In an attempt to provide answers to these two praxis issues, three themes have been derived from the focus group participants' responses. These include: restating the problem again, how effective or not effective Catholic schools in Nairobi are today and finally, a vision to have "great schools" for CASAN.

Restating the Problem

One of the recurring themes that most participants kept coming back to throughout the period of data collection and one that has come to shape this researcher's understanding of CASAN, is that there is not one single cause that could be used to explain the problems facing the school system. This first part of the third question revisits some of the issues that prevent Catholic schools in Nairobi from being great schools of the future. But before embarking on that

journey of describing the Catholic school system in Nairobi and what prevents it from becoming great, putting things in perspective at this time is important.

After listening to all the participants in the focus groups, the researcher has concluded that one of the biggest problems that significantly affects the Catholic school system in Nairobi today is the lack of proper educational vision in the Archdiocese. One professional participant put this very well saying “students do not know what society expects of them.” Nobody seems to tell them what is expected of them, even in schools. When one considers the fact that a majority of the students in Kenya end up going to failed schools otherwise called “third-world” schools, it is not surprising to note that many resign themselves to marking time as they wait to grow up and leave school.

Very few schools have been able to develop an educational praxis that connects the school to the local needs of the community. However, there is hope that even these schools can change for the better in spite of the fact that some of them come from very poor neighborhoods, as this student input suggests:

I can say that the interactions between the school and the community around the school are okay... I see the students taking care of the young children around the school whereby they oversee what they do and talk to them in a way that encourages them... there is also a good relationship with the church since every Sunday, our school is treated like a *Jumuiya* [that is a Small Christian Community].

From this example, it is most likely that among the many possible ways Catholic schools in Nairobi in the 21st century will be evaluated in the future, would be the

extent to which students from the school have been involved in community affairs. This kind of assessment would free schools from the current cul-de-sac in which they find themselves. When schools stop overemphasizing the passing of national examinations at the expense of other goals of education, then the dream that society will one day begin moving in the right direction will be achieved:

It is true that the kind of schools we have are more or less a reflection of the society...the fact that the principal of a school is not a Catholic and we do expect her to guide our children in Catholicism...it does not work...it should not be assumed that because this person is qualified and is related to the boss, then she can work here.... So until we get to a point when parents in a Catholic school are given an opportunity to say what kind of people should head our schools, then we are not moving.

This statement not only expresses frustrations that parents are not part of the decision-making process in Catholic schools, it also says that they must be involved in deciding the type of schools they want for their children.

This statement does also describe another major dilemma that Catholic parents face whenever they choose to bring their children to Catholic schools. That even though they may be bringing them there because they would like the children to be taught some Catholic values, the truth of the matter is that many students in Catholic schools never acquire the desired values. This is because in most of the Catholic sponsored schools in Nairobi, many principals are usually not Catholic and as has been argued elsewhere, the principal's spirituality is central in ensuring that a school maintains its identity. What the two participants

mentioned above have done is to raise up two of the fundamental issues that CASAN will have to resolve in the months and years ahead. Failure to resolve these issues is not an option because as was described in chapter two, organizations that fail to change, court disaster, or slow death.

Policymakers will therefore need to be more proactive than reactive in the decision-making and planning process if the school organizations they lead are to rise from their humble dwellings they find themselves in to become “great” schools of the future. The analogy of the *mafiga matatu* or the three traditional cooking stones that is provided below by one of the students helps in this decision-making process:

I am going to cite an example. For the food to be fully cooked... there must be 3 stones to support the *sufuria* [pot]. There must be the student, the teacher and also the parent. If the parents and the teachers have done their work, the student is therefore responsible for his or her failure. Then the problem is with the student and not the teachers or the parents.

This analogy should evoke a desire within policymakers in CASAN to handle this problem in schools from an African anthropological dimension. That is, in order for Catholic schools in Nairobi to rise to their desired heights; and for them to effectively play their role in the 21st century; three or more pillars will need to be included in order to support that educational edifice.

First, all the stakeholders such as the students, parents, teachers, and principals will need to be part of that decision-making process. Secondly, other organizations that have a genuine interest in the welfare of the students such as

the state, the Church and the business world will need to be involved in deciding the type(s) of schools society needs for its future development. Thirdly, because we are dealing with a Christian organization that is found in an African continent, the place of Christian and African value systems will need to be factored into the system. Only when all these have been accounted for can it be definitively said that Catholic schools in Nairobi have embarked on a mission of service to the individual students, the Church and the community at large. The *mafiga matatu* analogy used by the student clearly captures the feeling that the following professional participant expresses in the quote below:

The temptation to look for only one cause to account for the phenomenon of school failure in Kenya must be avoided. It is not always the case that there is one Achilles heel in a situation like that but often, a combination of various factors come together as it were to conspire in order for reality to be the way it is.

This is certainly a ground breaking way of understanding the complex nature of CASAN. It offers hope to all that despite the fact that Catholic schools have been challenged to become all things to all people, there exists multiple ways of fulfilling the multiple expectations in a pluralistic society such as Kenya's. The challenge therefore is for them to make teaching and learning as much fun and enjoyable as it could be for teachers and students in the 21st century. The historical problems that are known to have significantly accounted for the present state of groping in the darkness in education can no longer have

the stronghold they used to have. The past is no longer important, what matters is the future, which is in their own hands.

How Effective are Catholic Schools in Nairobi Today?

In this part of the report, the researcher attempts to combine the field notes he collected at the time of the field visits to the schools with the voices of participants in the study in order to describe the situation of Catholic schools in Nairobi as it is today. He hopes that these two methods of analysis will support each other and hence strengthen the validity of this study. In this way, the results will not only reflect the “real” situation on the ground, but they also become useful in helping policymakers to see the real picture of CASAN in its endeavor to effectively teach its students some of the important goals of education in life. Since effective schools must enable students to show an ethic of care and concern for their world, this third question is interested in finding out whether students in CASAN were interested in down to earth issues such as: justice and peace, environmental protection, and community service.

Since the researcher was able to visit 23 of the 24 schools that had been identified for this study, this part of the report is also an attempt to reflect on some of the firsthand impressions he gathered in the field. Among these 23 schools: 14 schools were in the rural areas, 7 in urban centers and 2 were in semi-urban neighborhoods. Another way of looking at schools would be: 2 were national, 7 were provincial, 10 were district and 4 were private; that is, either parochial or religious schools. Though all these schools had their unique peculiarities, the big

picture that emerges at the end of the analysis of these schools is that rural and urban schools taught students different values and skills.

From the field notes and analysis of participants' voices, it was noted that rural schools in Nairobi were mostly concerned with down-to-earth issues, such as the care for the environment. Urban or semi-urban schools were more concerned with instilling a professional image in their students. The researcher also noted during the visits to the schools that many (7) of the urban schools had multi-racial student populations. However, it was also noted that in almost all the urban schools, students had to wear a tie which was part of the school uniform. In one particular school, the researcher filed this note:

The school prepares students for an urban lifestyle... I was attended by a student who showed me where to sit and asked me how she could help me... the school, though old considering that it is built in the middle of some of the oldest looking native trees I have ever seen, has a multi-racial student population. It has neat flowerbeds and the secretary was well dressed in a black suit.

However, there were other urban schools, especially on the Eastern side of the city, that insisted on different values. Though all of them had nice buildings and some had recently been repainted, these boys' and girls' schools were mostly day schools. However, both boys and girls in all the schools I visited wore ties and sometimes blazers. One other thing that was observed in almost all the schools on the Eastern part of the city was that they were usually found in densely populated areas where the middle class society lived. At the same time, these schools were

often very near major roads that were not only noisy during the day, but in some cases the schools were in some of the most dangerous neighborhoods one could be in the whole of Nairobi. One would fear to walk along such roads at night. This was very much unlike the other schools in the Western part of the city that the researcher visited. These schools were not only found in higher class neighborhoods in the city, but all of them without exception, were in some of the most quiet and peaceful places one could think of, or wish to walk at any time of the day or night.

Also, there were semi-urban schools that were visited, too. These were found in the suburbs of the city. Though the neighborhoods are not urban areas, these schools cannot be described as being in rural settings either. For this reason, the researcher chose to see them as being semi-urban schools. These two schools were also in very heavily populated areas with one being in the middle of a slum while the other was in a more rural but urbanized setting where housing was cheap and there were many farms. Both schools shared one fact – that they both were in densely populated areas which could easily become dangerous for the students walking alone or at night. In one of these schools, the researcher overheard a teacher tell a parent on the phone to come and pick up her daughter who was sick and take her to hospital. In his diary that day, the researcher wrote his feeling about this experience:

Though the school is Catholic, most people I met did not know this fact... the school is situated in a densely populated area and could be dangerous for students to walk in and out of the area... I wonder what time the parent

would be able to get here and pick up the daughter and whether it would be safe for them to walk or drive around here at night.

Because of the unique environment of the other semi-urban school, it is good to mention what the researcher put down in his diary about this school:

The school is situated in Niagara side...an outskirt of Nairobi. There was tight security at the gate and one must identify him/herself before being allowed in...within the same compound is a primary school which means there is too much congestion. The compound is clean...a big statue of Mary is erected by the gate... School is on the borderline between the extremely rich and the extremely poor and these two societies are separated by gates and watchmen. After six o'clock, the guards protecting the rich neighborhood will not allow anybody to walk towards the school.

In all these schools in the urban and semi urban settings, the only thing that could be said to be typical of them was that they all had "stone" buildings. Some of the rural schools had semi-permanent wooden structures all around them. Secondly, all these urban and semi urban schools, seemed to prepare the students for future jobs within the offices. Most of the schools insisted on their students wearing the tie. In one of these urban schools, the student handbook did indicate that the school had two computer labs and internet connections. To the researcher, it appeared that urban schools were already beginning to adapt technology into their schools unlike some of the rural schools that had still to put up proper offices for the principal and his assistant.

Rural schools had their own unique lifestyle, too. A good number of them were located in areas that had very poor roads – if those were supposed to be roads. In one of the schools, which incidentally performs very well in national examinations, the researcher noted the following points:

School is found in a deep part of Kiambu District...perhaps this road is the worst road in the whole of Kiambu district.... researcher felt scared driving alone on this road as he met no other cars on his way to and from the school.... Teachers and parents find it hard to come here as there is no public means of transport. One teacher narrated to me how he had to walk many miles to get to the school. Since this is a girl's boarding school, one fears to imagine what would happen if a girl fell sick at night... the schools needs to put up more visible sign posts to indicate the direction to the school... but who cares to come here anyway!

If accessibility to the school were one of the criteria that students use in their selection of schools they would attend, the above school would perhaps be the last one in the entire Archdiocese to get any students. Fortunately it is among the few schools in the Archdiocese where parents fight to have their daughters admitted. Roads are not a factor in the selection of students who go to national or provincial schools. After all, only the brightest students are selected to a school such as this provincial one, and very few students who join drop out of the school before finishing form four. This school's mean score in the national examination in the year 2003 was 9.3 which was an improvement from the previous year which had been 8.9.

Other than the fact that some of the rural schools were found in difficult places to reach, many rural schools did seem to have at least one advantage over urban or semi-urban schools. According to the researcher's field notes, a good number of rural schools were actively teaching students to care for the environment around them and to do some farming. The researcher noted that a good number of rural schools had clear instructions written and placed in conspicuous places to remind students of this need. Many pinned instructions on notice boards or other open spaces such as on footpaths that read, "keep your school clean" or "be environment friendly" and so forth.

Another note made in the diary was that students in rural schools were more down-to-earth than those in the urban schools. For instance, the researcher found students in rural schools to be more open to strangers like him than students in urban schools. Students in rural schools were more eager to inquire from the researcher why he had come to visit their school, or to laugh at some of his activities such as taking photos. However, it was in one of the rural schools that the researcher was most shocked to see the state of the physical facilities in the school. The buildings not only looked old, but many had broken windows while the bathrooms were the old fashioned latrine type of toilets which are famous in most rural areas.

Magwas school... is a mixed school... it is poorest of the schools so far visited... it had broken windows and even the assistant principal's office had a type of furniture that was still unfinished...the school had a mean grade of 2.2 in 2003 and the year before, it was 1.95.... According to the

assistant principal, these poor results were caused by a number of things: teachers were not well trained, they were often absent and they frequently left the school... and a lot of absenteeism by students... the school, which was formerly a *harambee* school had recently been taken over by the government... this was one of the few schools that I saw a little farm where students were taught agriculture.

One immediate observation that could be made from the above notes was that a big gap exists between rural and urban schools in Nairobi. This was both in terms of physical facilities as well as in the type of values and skills that these schools were teaching their students. These distinctions in what schools emphasized to students reminded the researcher of Eisner's categorization of curriculum. In his book *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs* (1994) Eisner makes a distinction between three types of curricula that schools teach; he speaks about the explicit, implicit and null curriculum:

It seems to me that we are well advised to consider not only the explicit and implicit curricula of schools but also what schools do not teach. It is my thesis that what schools do not teach may be as important as what they do teach. (p. 97)

By displaying certain messages in prominent places within their school compounds, or the fact that students for instance in urban schools wore ties in school, meant that both rural and urban schools in Nairobi were implicitly and explicitly modeling a certain lifestyle to their students. These schools were giving and at the same time denying students certain values knowingly and unknowingly.

Parent participants supported some of the observations noted above. Two parents upheld the observation that rural schools were doing a better job than urban or semi urban schools in making students more active in community affairs. According to one parent from a rural school where his daughter attended, girls in this school were actively involved in serving the older members of their community. "They visit the aged and help them in whatever they are able to do. And when the students come back home, you can see that they have a desire to help those in need" he said. Yet to another parent from an urban school, the situation with urban students was completely different:

Moderator: Since as you have said you have been involved with the school for many years, do you see the students who come out of these schools playing an important role in society...? Do you see Catholic schools imparting the values of justice, fairness and even the care for the environment to students?

Parent: I don't know...but it seems to me that students are too young for me to judge.... I can only talk about my daughter since I don't know how the others are doing. But as for my daughter, I have not seen her being very keenly concerned with environmental things and helping the community... as can be expected of a Christian student to do. When we were growing up as Catholic youth, we grew knowing that if there was for instance an old lady in the village, we would go to fetch water and firewood for her. But our children today, or mine for that matter, I have

not seen them doing these things that show that they care...unless they are pushed.

Though it is dangerous to generalize and say that this is representative of all students in urban, semi-urban and rural schools without conducting a more scientific study to prove this, something valid remains in this parent's experience. Furthermore, the many years of experience that these parent participants speak from is sufficient for their conclusions to be considered.

As for the principal participants, it was good to hear another voice of experience speaking about the Catholic school system. One principal with over 30 years of experiences described her school, which sits in the middle of a vast coffee and tea plantation, as being on the frontline of teaching students the need to care for their environment. Her school was presently actively engaged in a tree planting project. She had reason to believe that the students were internalizing the implicit message the school was sending out. "We are now having our own tree nurseries and when the girls go home for holidays, I find them asking for flower cuttings so that they can plant them in their homes. I think that this is a step in the right direction."

Among the other things that principals were able to identify as being helpful in making students internalize messages that had long lasting impact on them, was the state of existing relationships within the school. According to principals, positive student-teacher, alumni-student relationships had lasting impact on students and what they did in their future lives. This revelation created a natural desire in the researcher to find out what other participants thought about

such relationships. Of more interest to the researcher was to find out how much the alumni - student relationship was influencing current students. Student participants spoke highly of this alumni-student relationship. One student said that, "many students do come back to thank the teachers for having molded them." Another student reflecting on its impact, gave an example of some of the internationally and nationally known icons in Kenya saying:

My greatest motivation is Wangari Mathaai because...she used to be the environmental captain in our school, as the evidence of her work is now being seen... people like *akina* Caroline Mutoko who was our debate club chairlady... are a challenge to us *guiz* to discover our talents. In the same way, there are people who have come out of school just the way they came to school, the school was to them like a bus stop... they leave the school because their 4 years are over... then you wonder, surely, they just wasted their money.

Professor Wangari Mathaai was declared the 2004 Nobel Peace price winner for her outstanding advocacy work on justice and peace as well as environment protection issues. Caroline Mutoko, on the other hand, is one of the most popular local radio presenters who is today considered to be an icon by many young people in Kenya. These two together with many others that were mentioned by students have become motivational leaders who regularly get invited to schools to speak to students on issues relevant to their lives. They speak about the AIDS pandemic, how to succeed in life after school, leadership and management issues, and so forth.

They tell us that we have to work hard since they have become who they are because they worked hard for it. There was this lady who had come, I think she is the manager of the Cooperative Bank of Kenya... she told us that for her to make it to become a manager, it started in school as she was once the deputy head girl. From the certificates she received, she realized that she could do a lot and be whatever she wanted to be if she chose to.

While the impact that role models have on students cannot be disputed, Catholic schools have not, on the other hand, played their gatekeeping role in terms of combating negative mass media impact very well.

Some of the students and the parents were convinced that Catholic schools had yet to recognize that just as mass media and computer technology could play a positive role in the education of the students, so too could these have a negative impact on students' lives. The following dialogue between the researcher and some of the students attempts to grapple with the problem of what Kenyan students have to deal with when they graduate from high school. A link is made between what schools do or do not teach students concerning the modern culture they must engage with when they complete high school. Even though the students believe that schools are doing their best, it is questionable what that best means:

Student 1: you know a lot depends on one's parents... when the teachers have done their work and we go home after finishing form four, we find our parents back home... and they should continue guiding us. But some of them tell their children that they are now grown ups... and they get them jobs in Nairobi...let's say you become a green grocer or

something... they tell you that now you have an I.D. card and you should be able to take care of yourself because they have other kids in the home to care of. So I can say that parents should now be more serious in guiding us. They should not only give us money and find us jobs to do... they should also try and look after us, the way we behave.

Student 2: What I would like to say is that... let's say that you have done well in your studies and the teachers prepared you well...but when you go back home, you find there is no help, maybe there is no money to take you to college...so you end up being discouraged... and you see there is nobody to take care of you. You end up being involved in drug taking.

Student 3: Okay, I think we shouldn't blame the schools and the teachers because they have done their part and the rest is to be done by the student... I think it is us students who do not know how to take our freedom, some of the students who used to be limited by school rules... when they get out, they just don't know what to do with their freedom... because now there are no rules and they can do anything without supervision or punishment... I think it is up to the students now.

Student 4: As concerns the riots we see among students... for example I saw this in our school when students rioted because one of them was hit by a teacher and that they exaggerated this...I think that most of the times

students rely on peer pressure. They believe that they will die together and so there are good peer groups and bad ones

Student 5: I think that when we talk about the African culture, most of it we learn it from drama and music festivals. That's where we go... and maybe you are in the audience and are watching these things. Otherwise I find it hard to see how teachers can come to class and start talking about African cultures except maybe in a history lesson.

Moderator: I am asking this question because high schools could teach many other skills and values....such as to take care of our cultures or otherwise we know that *mkosa mila ni mtumwa!* [whoever does not have his/her culture is a slave of foreign cultures]

Student 6: That's where CRE comes in. It also talks a little about African cultures. It emphasizes the good ones. There are certain ones which have to be kept. This is why I don't know...I tend to think that CRE should be taught to all students.

Though students do recognize that many challenges await them once high school period was over, the above dialogue does not indicate that schools have prepared them for that future life. Only in CRE does student six believe that a little bit of culture is being taught. For the parents, the only way Catholic schools could respond to such challenges would be if more investment was done in the re-

training of teachers to use modern tools of evangelization in schools. Such retraining is crucial if teachers are to teach traditional values that will enhance the needs of a society that is in transition. This is why if Catholic schools in Nairobi are to be relevant to the future needs of society, they cannot afford to ignore technology and media issues anymore. (For more discussion on this issue of technology, please see Implication 2.4.2 in chapter 7). This is something parents are keenly becoming aware of as the following dialogue among two of them indicates:

Parent 1: I believe that most Catholic schools are not doing their best to educate students about the life they are going to face after the school. But this can change because it depends on parents... we have all kinds of parents with all sorts of attitudes and degrees of poverty. So the students can change depending on parents.... Because when they go back home, some of the students do get the magazines or videos to watch depending on the family background they come from.

Parent 2: Concerning the T.V... we don't have our own Catholic T.V channel and therefore, whatever our young generation receive from the media is not what the Catholics would like them to see. Though we now have a Catholic Radio it is still not enough... at the moment there is a lot of news from the media concerning diseases especially the outbreak of AIDS... we might want to teach them the good things to observe and the bad things to avoid, but we don't have the T.V to do it.

A further discussion on this issue of mass media and technology in education is provided in chapter seven. It suffices to note that as these two parents clearly point out, Catholic schools in Nairobi will need to find ways of teaching students to not only be media savvy, but also to keep their cultural identities in the midst of other competing global cultures and values.

A Vision to Have Great Schools

In part three of the literature review chapter, the researcher suggested four possible paths that CASAN as a school system could take as it moved further into the 21st century. In this final part of the report, the researcher presents the key pathways that participants in the study believe CASAN needs to take in the years ahead in order to have great schools in the future. Though some of the pathways have already been reported elsewhere, it is good to keep the four pathways as presented in chapter two (pages 98-99) at the back of the mind for comparison purposes.

The Kikuyu proverb that says *Riua ritietagirira muthamak*” which literally translates to, “the sun does not wait for the King” urges stakeholders not to waste time anymore but to do what needs to be done now. Time for procrastination is gone for what must be done today to make CASAN great schools cannot wait another day.

The first thing that Catholic schools in Nairobi need to do according to most participants, was to bring all stakeholders together to set up a functional and realistic educational vision for Catholic schools in the 21st century. For the

students, such an education has to be enjoyable and relevant and at the same time be less burdening to them and their teachers. For the teachers, a Catholic education must not only be a liberal education, but must also be an education that wraps everything in a Catholic philosophy of education. But what is Catholic education and is there such a thing as a Catholic philosophy of education? The following dialogue initiated by a teacher describes the dilemma that most teachers in CASAN have concerning having a Catholic education:

Teacher 1: I have a question, can we talk about a Catholic education or is it just education in a Catholic school?

Teacher 2: I think we can talk about a Catholic education. It is an education which is given from the perspective of being a Catholic... whatever one is learning, there is a Catholic perspective to it, be it in medicine or what... like the Opus Dei, they are geared towards a certain goal... and in that way, you can say that whatever education one gives, it is wrapped in some kind of basic principle that could be Catholic.

Teacher 1: It is a line of inquiry because if you are teaching anything, maybe science... you find a way of finally wrapping it up in a Kenyan and Catholic form.

Teacher 3: I think you can say that in whatever you do, that is a vocation for you... even if you end up becoming a vegetable seller, that is your

vocation... or if you are a mother staying at home, that is your vocation... whatever you become, that's your vocation. It's a call from God and that is a kind of Catholic education that is not generally found in other kinds of faiths or schools.

Teacher 1: For me, what we have been talking about is education in a Catholic school...and since we have some Catholic institutions, then one can say there is some Catholic influence in the education

Teacher 2: How many times do we make sure that in anything we teach there is a Catholic influence in the 40 minutes or one hour we teach? How many times do you actually mention or inculcate a certain Catholic ethos, say for instance in English?

Teacher 4: In the way I am going to teach... or the way students view me and the way I am going to talk about the values that I impart, will of course be based in my Catholic faith.

Teacher 2: What I am asking is, how many times do you mention something of definite Catholic nature in the classroom? You know the way nowadays we are told to integrate AIDS awareness into our classes so that if you are teaching Kiswahili or history or economics, you will talk about AIDS. But how many times do we find ourselves mentioning

something specifically Catholic in our classes so that we can say it's a Catholic education as opposed to education in a Catholic school?

Moderator: I think there is a distinction between the two.

Teacher 2: There is.

Moderator: If I may also say one thing.... I think that if for example someone is teaching mathematics... first of all, I think it is not so much the mathematics itself that you teach but you want to instill the value in your students that mathematics has value in life. Good teachers in mathematics or science will first handle the question of what is science all about. What is mathematics all about? And you know there is a Catholic perception of what the world is all about... science is all about the world, physics and chemistry and mathematics are also about the world... I think a good mathematics teacher will impart to students one's own appreciation of numbers and what they mean to you.

Among the professional participants, this same debate was held by the group.

However, for them, there could not be a generic classification of Catholic schools because according to them, there was no such thing as an "ideal" Catholic school.

Furthermore, both professional focus group members unanimously agreed that with four or five Catholic educational providers with different objectives, it was

almost impossible to have all these groups agreeing on one common educational vision.

One professional participant suggested that Catholic schools of the future must be willing to teach multi-intelligence. Teachers must be sensitized on this and above all, schools that teach all these intelligences must be made available to students. These words that appear to be critical of the government that it does not spend its money efficiently must not be thought to be negative. To the researcher, these words sound hopeful. They acknowledge some of the greatest weaknesses that are found in Kenya's education system but at the same time, they capture the enduring hope that Catholic schools could fill in those missing gaps. REAP (Religious Education Awareness Program) in the archdiocese of Nairobi has already recognized this need and is actively doing something about it. According to the Archbishop, three things need to be done to ensure that all schools including Catholic ones were doing what was expected of them:

First, we must make sure that the teachers are properly motivated to provide the education that is suitable. That they have the faith, the ability, the interest and the time. They must be remunerated properly as their remuneration is not good.... Secondly, create an atmosphere where every student at least reaches high school and that schools have a place for the poor who are qualified. Thirdly look at what other countries have done... do you know why South Korea and Japan after the war prospered? After the Korean war, South. Korea went out and interviewed all students in the country regardless of status; those who proved best in science [and arts]

went for special education...but do you know what is missing in Kenya, the big people are only interested in getting 10%... I don't know what they are paid that for.

Though achieving these ambitious educational objectives and visions is something desirable and noble, the reality of the matter is that it takes time, money and planning to achieve them. It also takes courage and strong leadership to be able to fight some of the evils described above. Corruption has been identified as one of the greatest problems that affects not only the wider community, but also the educational system. It is no wonder that having a strong Catholic leadership especially in matters related to education is considered the second most important aspect that will guide Catholic schools in the 21st century.

A look to the East as has been suggested is itself not a panacea. If change in Catholic schools is to be long lasting and effective, it needs to also be localized. It is inconceivable that a country like Kenya could spend about 40% of its national budget on education and yet, still be going in the wrong direction. This is wrong because 40 years after independence, the country is still struggling to not only become economically strong, but also to stay socially integrated. Such an opinion was strongly expressed by one participant who argued that:

We are reminded time and again that education is consuming up to 40% of our national budget, a very considerable percentage of our budget, yet it is not translating this into desirable practical results and therefore am persuaded to ...say that there is a major problem when it comes to planning. This is an area of education that needs to be revisited and I think

that there is need to look at the relationship between the economy and education in this country.

It may be true that the absence of proper planning especially in the educational scene could be the primary source of the current social problems in Kenya. However, as has been mentioned earlier, this groping in darkness cannot be blamed on one single cause as was suggested. The absence of a strong and visionary educational leadership could also be part of the issue here. Some professional participants were convinced that the Church had failed to provide this vision despite the fact that many opportunities in the past had availed themselves for it to do that. History had once again become kind to the Church to achieve its proximate and ultimate goals of education if only it could grab this new opportunity. A new democratic and Catholic sympathetic political authority has now assumed authority in the country. This gives the Church a second chance to do what it had failed to do in the past as the following participant states:

If Catholic schools are to achieve the goals of forming students fully, that is in mind, body and soul, and if at the same time they would like to see that at the end of education here, everybody would achieve their final goal which is to go to heaven... then they need to have the correct guard. That guard is a head teacher who must be Catholic... and maybe even the curriculum...the role of the sponsor also needs to be strengthened.... At the same time, the education act needs to be revised. This is because we may want to have real Catholic schools but the education act does not allow that unless it is changed. So I think that since at the moment the

political environment does favor Catholics, they need to use all methods: persuasion, canvassing etc... you know three quarters of the government is Catholic at the moment and so we need to consider all these...we might do this quietly or diplomatically because we know that we initially failed because our country was under the British who were Protestants. And so the people who were there ensured that Catholics could not go very far.

The researcher agrees with this statement. These are hopeful times and the church must do all it can to ensure that Catholic schools have a true Catholic identity.

After all, many non-Catholic parents often work hard to bring their children to Catholic schools. But because the researcher also believes that Kenya is a pluralistic society and therefore, the diversity of opinions and faiths in the country must not only be tolerated but must be celebrated. It is for this reason that the researcher would like to caution that the best strategy for the church to use in order to achieve its educational goals, is to work in an ecumenical fashion with other religious sponsors interested in such joint action to dialogue with the government. Catholics must always be sensitive to students and people of other faiths and values. This however, does not mean that because of the need to respect diversity, Catholic schools must give up their identity in order to appease people of different faiths. Some religious organizations such as the SDAs and the Muslims have in the past done the same and the quote from one professional participant argues this concerning the need for Catholics to do the same:

The SDA have been immensely successful in first of all having their own curriculum and also in looking at the state curriculum and seeing how they

are going to work the two out. But it is very clear that they begin with theirs as the major blueprint and then operate on the basis of that.... The SDA church right from the colonial period has always refused to have state support in its education. Up to this day as we are talking, Kamagambo School is a very good case study, they train their own teachers, they employ their own teachers and so they will take the state curriculum but you see, they give it a very heavy dose of SDA doctrine... so we too can take the curriculum but the mode of delivery and the deliverers will be Catholic.

Two important ideas from the above quote are noteworthy. First, the Church must be willing to renegotiate with the government to take back its schools just like the SDAs. To do that, it may require that it temporarily rejects the grants in aid assistance that have been part of the schooling system since colonial times. Should it be necessary to make this tough decision in the years ahead, it will be important for the Church to provide strong and visionary leadership. The golden rule that one participant talked about is poignantly recalled since "whoever has the gold gets to make the rules." But where would the church get the money to pay the teachers and all the other incidental needs of schools? The following dialogue describes some of these problems:

Professional 1: If I may ask you a question, though I know you are a student, I also know you are a son of this Archdiocese... I know that you now have some experiences with all levels of schools in America. But is

there a role you can play now to assist our diocese in some of the areas we are discussing? For instance, how do you compare our system of education with other countries such as America? Having been brought up in Kenya and now you are studying in America and as an educationist, what are some of the things that you can suggest that we can actually implement or borrow without necessarily interfering with the government structure in order to enhance our Catholic schools today?

Moderator: That's a very good question that I have also been thinking about... and I know I shouldn't be talking today but be listening to you... but since you directly ask me about my experiences, maybe I too can be a participant in this dialogue...so my feelings and thoughts about this is partly why we are here today. As a son of this diocese, I think what I can give back to the diocese is to do exactly what I am doing, conduct this study, compare notes with other countries and listen to your voices as there is lots of wisdom coming out of all this. If all this wisdom can be put down in writing so that the Archdiocese can have this tool to use... this is my hope, that one day, this study will be completed and it will become a tool for the entire Archdiocese to use....in the past, I have tried to bring technology by sending computers to our schools...because I believe that technology is one of the things all our Catholic schools should begin to teach our students. Not that we just want computers but that at the same time, if our students have to be on the same page with everybody else in

the world, then it is time that our schools begin imparting such skills and knowledge... we need to emphasize other areas such as counseling because we can ask, why are our students so violent these days?... A participant has mentioned a couple of sentences ago, he broke down the Catholic school system into public, private and religious organizations... in my mind I am thinking that it is somehow within this whole system of Catholic schools that the church has the power to do things or change things...or we have the power to change the country for the better. But the way the structure is, it is very cumbersome to do that and I sometimes doubt whether we will be able to do that. So I hope that after listening to the voices of private, parochial and sponsored Catholic schools, that I am going to put together some of these things that can be done. This is the contribution that I can make on this issue of how to make Catholic schools better.... So in my mind, I am thinking that somehow, the Archdiocese needs to rethink the kind of structure its Catholic schools need to emphasize on. I know that the issue of finance will come in when we demand that we have our own Catholic school system and then the diocese will say, where is the money to pay the teachers going to come from? But I think if properly managed, we can take back our schools. This is my crazy way of looking at it... that the Church as an institution can demand to have its schools back and then that way, as you are saying that we could have our own curriculum, then that way, we can even set up our own

curriculum. I am sure that parents will be able to pay the tuition that we charge if they know that is what we are doing.

Professional 2: Maybe just as a matter of interest and if it would interest you...I would recommend that you visit one school like Starehe Boys Center. This is because in Starehe... the director of the schools seems to have total control or he feels that he has a grip of whatever is happening in that institution....I have been there as a Chaplain and so I know what I am telling you is really correct. At the same time he has such control of the teachers he wants... which is something I have not been able to reconcile within me... that is, that he is only an individual... what if the Church was given the same mandate as a corporate body? We can be able to take over all our public schools. This means that there are some areas we can have some control over such as the staff.

The bottom line in this dialogue is Money! The perception that the Catholic Church in Kenya is rich and hence it has the capacity to raise such money was discussed. Some of the participants argued that all the church needed to do was to ask Rome for financial support. These proposals were quickly discarded by other participants who felt that in this day and age, it was not practical to expect Rome to give this kind of support. And so in general, participants came to accept the fact that all stakeholders and particularly the parents, would have to bear the heavy burden of financing such a school system. Because parents would ultimately have to bear this cost of educating their

children, it was therefore crucial that they have more say than anybody else, theirs should be the loudest voice in determining the kind of schools their children have.

As far as the teachers were concerned, the proper question that needed to be raised was, how could the Education Secretary be empowered to do his job? They argued that giving this office the legal mandate to run the affairs of the education office in the Archdiocese was not enough. It was important that the holder of this office would have the financial independence to pay the teachers and sponsor teacher conferences for REAP, CISRET, and CAPAP as well as all the other management issues therein. These teachers went further than enumerating what the job description of that official would be by suggesting two possible ways of funding the education office.

First, they suggested that the Archdiocese could ask the parishes that border Catholic schools to financially contribute to and support these schools. Secondly, the Kenyan Catholic Church could learn from other countries such as Tanzania or America, or even South East Asian countries as the Archbishop had suggested elsewhere. The Tanzanian experience as described below allows Catholic schools to pay a certain amount of tax to the Education Secretaries so as to manage the Catholic schools:

It is true that... [lack of money]... is the thing that led our schools to be taken over by the government. This is because if you make them pure private schools, most parents cannot afford to pay.... But I wonder whether such amounts of money can be foreseen before the annual school budget is made... maybe a contribution I can make on this is... I have

seen the system in Tanzania. The bishops there have made it known that every year, a Catholic sponsored school should contribute some money to their dioceses for the development of all the schools... for the activities of the education department at the diocesan level. I wonder whether that can be possible here, I know this will require a liaison with the ministry of education for that to happen.

That sounds like a good proposal to the researcher. But how much money can the Church demand from the schools? Would the parents who might be already heavily taxed be willing to pay the extra money that would go to support the Education Secretary's work? Would the government be willing to let go of its current hold on schools? Or even more seriously, would the Church be willing to take back its old schools? At this point in time, such questions cannot be answered, but they can be raised.

Other proposals were put on the table. As far as the students were concerned, since "nobody pays extra taxes," then all students whether in Catholic schools or not had a right to get an equal education wherever they chose to go to school in the country. But then a question could be asked, could a government ensure that all students got an equal education everywhere in the country? Was it true that all students had a right to receive an equal education even in separate school systems as claimed by students? This report will not enter that discussion at this point. It suffices to state that Kenya can learn from the American history of education something about providing an equal education to all students. If there was one thing that could be inferred from the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education*

of *Topeka* Supreme Court ruling, it would be that achieving an equal education opportunity for all students is not something achievable in a single day. This is not a single event but possibly a lifelong commitment. This Supreme Court ruling that sought to bring all races together is still an ideal that both public and parochial school systems in America have yet to achieve.

From a principal's point of view, since achieving such an ideal is not going to be a single day's event as the *Brown v. Board* case quoted above has shown; the next best thing to do would be to try and reduce this inequality. This as one principal describes below is something schools could realistically achieve. "Just as our brother here has suggested, the government should make an effort to make schools... though not exactly the same, but at least *ziwe zimekaribiana* that is, more or less the same." This is a vision that policymakers in CASAN should consider worthy of their effort to achieve. It is important to mention that legitimate and sometimes not so legitimate reasons do exist that prevent such ideals from being achieved.

However, in order for a country like Kenya to achieve this, a very honest debate among the stakeholders must be held so that sticky social problems that are often embarrassing could be dealt with. Only in a dialogic communication and education can Kenyans and Catholics in Nairobi come up with the kind of education that they want their children to have in the 21st century. The Kikuyu have yet another valuable proverb that says, *gutiri mwana wa nda na wamugongo* which literally means, there is no child of the womb or of the backbone. This implies that all children are born equal and it does not matter the religious, ethnic,

gender or social background, for all children in the eyes of natural law are born equal. Until all communities in Kenya will begin to see that all children have an inherent right to an equal education, everything else they achieve, no matter how great it may be, will only be a pale shadow of the great potential an equal education can do to the country.

It may also be that, within this discernment process on the type(s) of school(s) or school system(s) the church will expend more of its time and energy promoting in the 21st century that a decision may have to be made on whether or not to separate itself from the government. At the moment, it is not clear whether such a decision to separate would be necessary so that Catholic schools could maintain their identity. When participants were asked about their opinions on this notion of separation of church and state at least in the field of education, the idea was neither completely accepted nor completely rejected. Among the principals, a hybrid of the two was the preferred option to go. Among the professionals, setting up such a school system was not only feasible, but it was legally possible:

if you want to have a “pure” Catholic school, then you have to go back and set up a school that will run purely on the basis of Catholic doctrine...pay your teachers and do all the things you need to do...and I think that the laws of the land are not against this, that one could go and set up a school and say that this is a Catholic run school and this is our doctrine.

Strong and visionary leadership of the type that Catholic schools would need in order to achieve their goals were exemplified in the work of the former director of

Starehe High School Dr. Griffin – who died a few days after this study was conducted. As the dialogue between the researcher and the professional participants below indicates, if one single person had such a potential to do good in a school, it was almost inconceivable how much good the Church as a corporate body could do if given a similar mandate.

Professional 1: Starehe,... is one school that its director of the school seems to have a total control, or he feels he has a grip of whatever is happening in that particular institution...he is one person who believes in students getting the spiritual nourishment from their local pastors and churches... that's why when you go to Starehe, you will get a Muslim, a Protestant and a Catholic chaplain.... I have been there as a chaplain and I know what I am telling you is correct. At the same time, you will find that he has such a control over the teachers he wants in the school... something that I have not been able to reconcile in me is, he is only one individual, what if the Church was given the same mandate as a corporate body? Then we can be able to take control of all our sponsored schools....for it doesn't matter whether it is a private school or a public school, the government controls all education.

Professional 2: On the same note that my colleague has spoken about... even when the director goes to choose or select students to join form one, he doesn't follow the procedures other national schools do. He gets what he wants without any guidance... they have a strict procedure and nobody

can interfere with... and this is something that is recognized by the powers that be.

Professional 3: I think his case is slightly different. I taught in Starehe for sometime... the director is this kind of a person who will sack you in the morning and in the afternoon replace you. He is a person who is not threatened like other directors or principals... I think if those privileges were awarded to his colleagues, they would do the same...it only works because the director cannot be pushed around even by the president if he is seeking admission.

Though Starehe is a public school, it surprised the participants to see that the school was able to cater to the spiritual needs of all its diverse student population. At the same time, the participants were amazed to see how much power the director had. He could hire and fire teachers at will, select the students he wanted for his school without any interference from the powers that be; something that Catholics schools would love to have, but do not.

This was not the only example that could inspire Catholics to move in that direction for within the Catholic systems in Nairobi, strong and visionary leadership has been seen in the past. The following account given by one principal in a sponsored school in Nairobi reminds policymakers that since such independence has been possible within the Catholic school system in the past, it was still possible to do similar things in the future:

You know we are an old Harambee school and we therefore have always selected our students...we are holding on to our right of selecting because it's a privilege we kind of like holding on to... because a few years ago we were asked to go and select students in Nyeri, and we were supposed to have become a provincial school... and Cardinal Maurice Otunga – I spoke personally to him and he was totally against it... and so even today, we still remain being a district school.

Times have changed since the time of Cardinal Otunga. The new image of the Church as “people of God” has empowered parents to even assert their rights when the Church hierarchy wanted to move “their” school elsewhere. This is something that would have been unheard of in the time of Cardinal Otunga. What may not change even in this new model of the Church is that stakeholders; that is, parents, bishops, teachers and so forth, will still retain their respective responsibilities since some of these cannot change.

One participant who did not wish to voice his opinions on this issue of separation of church and state during the interview session, later on in a follow up conversation was able to reveal his reasons for objecting to this separation of church and state. In a recorded entry in the researcher's notebook, he argued this way:

On the issue of separation of church and state, though the participant was non-committal, he felt that the most negative thing about this call for the separation of church and state was that it could bring the secularization found in the American public school system to Kenya. According to him,

Kenyan schools were better in this regard since the government and the church were partners in education... there was not as much individualism in Kenya as in the American public sector.

Such a critique on the proposal to separate the church and state in schools is healthy. A second participant also indirectly objected to this separation because she believed that, "Kenya is one of the very few and unique places in the world... this is perhaps one of the very few countries in the world where every meeting, whether in public or in private places always starts with a prayer." The researcher could not agree more with these two sentiments for he himself is very much aware of some of the raging debate in America concerning the place of prayer and the Ten Commandments in public places. On this issue of separation of church and state, the Archbishop had a very unique way of looking at this relationship. To him, both the government and the church had different responsibilities to play in the education of the children and for that matter, he was of the opinion that because things were going on well at the moment, there was no need for such a separation at the moment:

At the moment, I cannot accuse the government of controlling our schools. What they want is to make sure that things are going right. They are entitled to see to it that the teachers are qualified and disciplined and that they are following the timetable.... The government is entitled to see to it that our schools take students without discrimination.... What the government cannot do is to tell us not to celebrate Mass in the

schools...we don't need permission to have Masses in school for that is our business.

We leave this discussion on the separation of church and state here. The discussion will be picked up later but before then, a final thought to conclude this part is, that policymakers should keep their minds open to new ideas. Though the arguments raised so far seem to be solid and legitimate, policymakers must not allow their minds to be blocked from receiving other views that could change the way they think on some policies. The worst thing that could happen at this point is to let fear prevent policymakers from engaging in further debate on the merits and demerits of such a separation. The fear not to rock the boat lest those who do so sink in it, should be furthest from policymakers' minds because after all, the Bible (John 12: 24) states clearly that "unless a wheat grain falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it yields a rich harvest."

Finally, there is one more thing that was discussed by participants and because of its close linkage with visionary leadership, it too needs to be highlighted. It is so important to talk about it because all organizations in postmodern societies cannot avoid talking about this new way of looking at human capital. Though some of its ideas have been mentioned throughout this report, for a clear understanding of it, the researcher needs to deal with it a little further. According to many participants voicing their concerns, the new model CASAN envisaged needs to reject some of the old-fashioned hierarchical and often close-ended leadership styles and needs to adopt the new participatory and open-ended styles of leadership. For instance, among the professionals, the

parental voice was particularly important in these new schools. Whereas in the past parents and students were never part of the decision-making process, in the new model Catholic school, parents and students are not only seen but must now be heard:

What I would urge is that, when we start schools that have a Catholic connection, we should involve parents from the very beginning. This brings us back to planning...let it be a participatory model even in the running of the schools... so that we do not leave it simply to perceived religious leaders in terms of bishops and the priests and the nuns.

Important as these are, if the spirit of God is in the people of God, then they too should be involved in the planning and running of the schools.

What this participant is saying here could sound very “Umofic” or “Utopic” that is, beneath or above anybody’s expectations depending on one’s degree of conservatism or liberalism. However, the participant quoted above states it very succinctly. That the new model Catholic school structure will no longer need to be clerically oriented. This is what the Second Vatican Council recommended about empowering the people of God. It is important to note that this does not mean that the hierarchical structure of the Church as we know it will not have a role in the new school structure. It only means that parents will assume more responsibilities proper to their calling.

Secondly, the management style envisaged will no longer need a military style of leadership that is common within the school system today. It will be a much more open leadership style that is also open ended in nature. This type of

leadership does not seek to dominate or control others but leads by consensus amongst stakeholders. The type of leadership described in this dialogue will not survive that kind of environment:

Moderator: Do members of the staff or teachers feel free to approach you as the principal? (principal laughs) or do they fear you because the relationships in the school are really like it's us versus them?

Principal 1: Taking my own example, I would say that I am accessible to them... to both staff and students.

Moderator: I know that one can easily say that I am accessible to them... but do you think on the other hand that that they feel free to come to you? Looking at it from their side, do you think they see you as being accessible to them?

Principal 1: My approach to them is that, one needs a lot of tact... because as much as you might want to be friendly, you must be very firm so that they deliver. So a principal has to wear two coats, one for being firm and one for being friendly at the same time. (Loud laughter from other participants on this suggestion of being firm but friendly)

Principal 2: I would say be firm but gently... this is because what madam is saying is... one has to be very careful so that you don't have a

breakdown of the structures. This is because these schools' survival depends on the structures and here I agree that the system is a good system...that by being accessible, there will be a flow of information so that one may be able to learn what is happening within the school... but this is the ideal and as to what level we will be able to attain it, that is another question.

Though the research describes the above structural style of leadership as military type, this leadership style has many advantages but it equally has some major weakness. For instance, the military style of leadership does not function well when one level of that hierarchical structure does not obey orders. For instance, if the general leading an army falls sick in a critical time of war and does not issue the commands at the expected time, that army may easily be decimated. Similarly, when teachers in a school such as the ones students describe in (Appendix C) begin to play the cat and mouse game when the principal is away, then such a school structure ceases serving any useful purposes.

That student dialogue clearly indicates that although students are in most cases the silent majority, the students do observe a lot. This silent majority sees and hears many things that teachers, parents and principals do not imagine that they do. They easily notice the little wars going on in the school, the disunity between principals and teachers or even among students, they even notice when teachers mistreat parents. Surprisingly, students do also know when they are wrong but they will keep pushing the envelope. In that dialogue, policymakers will note that students will even know when principals have been transferred or

fired because of the good or bad work they may have done. Who would have thought that students would even know when teachers plot a principal's downfall but the students do get to know. In an earlier dialogue that is not reported here, students were very critical of their relationships with teachers.

Though this report does not report on the type of student-teacher relationships existing in schools, the students were very clear that even though some of these were above reproach since some teachers acted like their big brothers, sisters, mothers or even fathers, yet there were many other instances where such relationships were at times abusive. It was surprising to hear that in many schools, female students and female teachers usually did not see eye to eye on many things and often, girls preferred male teachers to female ones. The same thing was also mentioned by boy students that female teachers were to them like their elder sisters or mothers. They treated them with respect unlike the male teachers who were rough. In some schools, the relationship was really of the type between us and them. But to go back to the teacher-principal relationships, one can also see that issues of class, culture, and dominance do come into play in schools.

These issues of race, culture and spirituality will take a prominent place in the new Catholic school structure. Since it is now an agreed fact that the principal is the prime mover of things in a school, this heightened responsibility will require that new criteria be used in selecting them. Part of that selection criteria may have to be that a Catholic school principal would need to be of the Catholic faith and, that one should have a graduate degree and so forth; but as will be

shown later, even these might also be negotiable. However, it is important to state that a majority of participants believed that a principal of a Catholic school need not be Catholic. This should be an exception and not the rule. Not all was gloomy on the part of the principals, some of the professionals suggested that some principals including Protestant ones were doing a sterling job in the Catholic schools they served.

In the professional participants' dialogue reported in Appendix D, it is clear that a good number of principals including those of Protestant faith heading Catholic schools were doing a sterling job in the schools. However, the dialogue also reveals that stakeholders needed to change some of their attitudes toward African principals because issues of race, gender, culture and spirituality weighed heavily in Catholic schools.

The dialogue describes some of the difficulties that African principals have to go through whenever they have had to take over Catholic schools from European or American principals. Most stakeholders expect such schools to "fall apart" whenever an African assumed the leadership responsibility in the schools. The above dialogue at the same time suggests that things are not always black and white as one might wish them to be. Many gray areas exist on the type of leadership the new Catholic school model should take. This dilemma is brought to the fore in a serious way by the fact that it is also clear that many good Catholic principals were also heading non Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

Besides encouraging good Catholics to consider taking leadership responsibilities in Catholic schools, the Church hierarchy in Nairobi needs to also

consider giving more power to its Diocesan Board of Education. When many of the participating professionals in one focus group were asked to comment on the need to empower this board, many spoke highly about the idea of making it a trustee board rather than continuing with its present advisory status. When a board becomes a trustee board, it has the power to set an educational vision, set and implement policy and probably more importantly, evaluate its own work. Some of these functions cannot be dealt with at the moment since at most, the current board can only advise the Archbishop on matters related to education. As far as the participants were concerned, the role the Archbishop played in such a board would not change at all for he would still be the chair of the board and as usual, he can delegate this responsibility to his education secretary.

Professional 1: I think that that idea of a trustee board is very good one...I actually do coordinate the board on behalf of the Archbishop...and I can assure you that he comes to our meetings whenever he can.... But you see, this is only an advisory board. I think if it is given the mandate of being a trustee of diocesan schools, it would have the strength to make things happen. But as of now, the situation is that we just advise on matters of education.

Professional 2: I think it is a great idea to have the trustees. This is because you can have a board that is only nominally Catholic but have no Catholic values at all... and you know we must pander to the government which we

shouldn't do for we have certain rights... and we should claim our rights. That would be my prayer for this diocese, that the people of such a trustee board be truly Catholic, that they are not dilly dallying with you know... pandering whoever is strong. A board should be able to say, let's have this teacher conferences on this date... but what we have now, we always have to be on our knees begging the government to give us teachers to come for the conferences. Right now, I am reduced to calling Catholic teachers only on Saturdays when the teachers are not in school. We need more empowerment.

We end this report on this note that "empowerment" is the key to the success of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi in the 21st century. If the Catholic school system is to free itself from the many marginalizing and oppressive structures it finds itself in, it needs to be free. The researcher believes that for CASAN to be effective in providing the students with the three goals of education namely: the critical, dialogical and evangelization goals, it must free itself from all that enslaves it. This is why the writings of Catholic educators such as Freire, Oldenski, Boff and Boff, among others need to be studied alongside those of African Educationists such as Njoroge and Bennars (2000), Njoroge and Ngugi wa Thiong'o to name but just a few. From such writings, it might be possible to imagine how a liberating Catholic school system in Africa and more so in Nairobi, could become a beacon of hope to the continent that yearns to be free. The stakeholders have spoken, it's time for policymakers to take action.

Conclusion

Every story that has a beginning must have an end. Hopefully, that story might also have some hopeful and at times not so hopeful parts too. The narrative provided in this chapter concerning CASAN had both. For instance, policymakers within CASAN were urged by student participants not to be afraid to “hold the bull by the horns” in order give the Archdiocese of Nairobi schools that are worth students in the 21st century. One student used the *mafiga matatu* analogy to remind policymakers and others that many “voices” in Nairobi were still willing to speak truth to the power. These voices were only waiting for visionary leaders who will lead them to becoming part of the solution to the numerous problems within CASAN. This chapter concludes on a high note that even though rural and urban schools in Nairobi have major problems such as: finance and separation of church and state to overcome, there was hope that they too can become “great” schools of the 21st century.

CHAPTER 7:
FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction to the Findings, Implications and Recommendations

From his favorite spot on the fifth floor of Roesch library, the researcher now takes a relaxed posture to reflect on the major findings, implications, and recommendations of this study. He hopes that by doing this, he will now bring closure to this dissertation. Two immediate questions need his attention in order to accomplish that. First, he must now ask himself, what new knowledge has been gained in this study? And secondly, he must also answer the question, so what? That is, do these findings mean anything? It is in this attempt to answer the second question, that the researcher will proceed to give his considered reflections on the major implications and recommendations he would like to make in this study. His hope at this point is that, readers of this study who include policymakers and stakeholders in CASAN, will find these findings, implications, and recommendations relevant to praxis and hence needing their immediate attention.

In previous chapters, the researcher took time to make the connections from the experiences and reflections of the participants. He also used his own observations during the period of study to compile a montage of the school system in Kenya and in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. In this chapter, the researcher proposes to present the new knowledge that has so far been gained, and

together with that, identify some of the major implications and recommendations he proposes to make. The chapter is divided into two parts. In part one, the findings, implications, and recommendations relevant to the general condition of education in the country are presented. In part two, the researcher reports on the findings, implications, and recommendations that are more relevant to CASAN.

Part One: Findings, Implications and Recommendations Relevant to the General Condition of Education in the Country.

Four general findings (1.1 to 1.4) and their subsequent implications and recommendations have so far been identified. These are explained below:

Finding 1.1: On the role that missionary and colonial education played or continues to play in the education sector in Kenya

A majority of participants felt that the colonial and missionary methods of education introduced in Kenya before independence, continued to have a major structural and pedagogical impact on Kenya's education. However, strong voices from a small group of participants urged the country to move on and to overcome its "colonial hangover." This group argued that blaming the past for today's difficulties is an unproductive thing to do. What Kenyans need to know and do is that it is within their power to make Kenya the kind of country they wish to have in the future. The past is only relevant in as far as it reminds Kenyans of past mistakes they must tenaciously avoid to repeat in the future. Two implications can be identified from this finding.

Implication 1.1.1: *Need for dialogue between African and Christian Value Systems*

For Kenya to move on to the next stage of its economic development, and for the country as a whole to be able to push the past off its back, a lot of groundwork remains to be done. Policymakers, theologians, philosophers, and educators need to brace themselves for the difficult task ahead. They need to sharpen their diversified tools to study this question on what impact the past colonial structures continue to have on schools and society in general. The researcher believes that it is not enough to suggest that people move on with their lives without providing them with a road map on how to achieve that desired new African personality.

It is likely that African theologians, philosophers and educators and other scholars have done this in the past, but according to the researcher, much still remains to be done for Kenya is *Not Yet Uhuru* (Not Yet Free) as Odinga (1967) put it in his book. In the new Christian milieu that the new African person finds him/herself in, the balance between Christian and African value systems must be maintained if a schizophrenic personality as the one described below is to be avoided. This is what scholars such as Bujo (1997), a moral theologian from Congo sees and argues about:

Christianity that came to Africa [came] with the claim of absoluteness.

Religion and ethics, which for centuries had given people hope for a better life had to disappear as irrelevant, and were replaced by a new more powerful but nevertheless foreign, religion and morality. Christianity

however, was not able to uproot the African way of thought completely. Nowadays Christianity and African religion seem to operate separately from each other. With regard to ethics, therefore, it has to be asked whether Christian morality fulfills the needs of the African and whether a dialogue towards a new and more dynamic model is possible. (p. 29)

According to Bujo, the form of Christianity that came to Africa from the Western countries was not able to have a true dialogue with the African value system it found in the continent. Instead, the Christianity that came to Africa chose to present itself with a certain absoluteness. Throughout this dissertation, the researcher has proposed that a way be found to resolve this dilemma. This is so necessary in today's Africa since a way of life that is truly African and truly Christian needs to be identified.

Recommendation 1.1.1

The Koech Education commission recommended that:

A major exercise of redefining the nationally "accepted" social values and ethics be undertaken by a committee comprised of representatives from the civil society, religious organizations and the government. The information from this exercise be used for the formulation of a new syllabi on social Education and Ethics. (Koech, 1999, p. 61)

This researcher not only recommends that this cause of action be followed, but also adds that....Recent moves by the government to reform the education sector in Kenya will not bear the desired fruits in the long run. This is because not all

stakeholders in education for instance: all the education providers, students, parents, teachers, principals, professionals, and civil authority members have been invited to dialogically share their meaning on the type of nation they wish to have. It is imperative that such stakeholders be involved in the planning and implementing stages of this new education paradigm.

Implication 1.1.2: *Appreciating the good in some of the colonial and missionary education*

Secondly, as was noted by a small number of participants, not everything that was done by the colonialists and missionaries was bad. It is important to acknowledge some of the positive things that some colonialists and missionaries did to the country. One participant argued. "The education that we are using to criticize actually comes from them." So while it is true to state on one hand that the coming of colonialists and missionaries did make traditional methods of pedagogy irrelevant, it is also equally true on the other hand to state that their coming did bring some good things too. Though the researcher does not wish to identify with any side of this debate at this point, he sees strong points on both sides of the argument.

For instance, he seems to agree with those who argue that had the missionaries and colonialists not come to Kenya at the time they did, it is most probable that the country could have taken a longer period of time to appropriate some of the significant lessons it has learned today in the education field. The educational theories and the historical lessons that Kenyans have learned from the

Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, Medieval, Renaissance and contemporary times would not have been learned in such a short period of time. The other side of this debate as was reported in chapter 3 states that Africa was certainly not as underdeveloped as many would want to believe. Yes, it would have probably taken the continent a couple of decades to get to where we are today but without the baggage the continent carries now. This debate is more extensive than this and it has its own protagonists. For the researcher, virtue is in the middle.

Recommendation 1.1.2

Some of the negative social aspects of life in Kenya can directly be attributed to the colonial and missionary pedagogical methods that were left behind. A new beginning that will spur Kenyans toward having a truly African and Christian approach to evangelization through schools needs to be sought. For this to happen, the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Nairobi must as a matter of urgency put together either an Archdiocesan Education Commission or Archdiocesan Synod to study this and other similar questions on whether a need still exists for Kenyans to retrieve their lost heritage.

Finding 1.2: *Investing in the Knowledge Economy:*

A second major finding in this study highlighted by many participants was that the Kenyan education system is still groping in the darkness of little planning and investment into the future. Such darkness breeds all kinds of poverty including the “mental poverty” which is the worst form of poverty. Participants

were genuinely interested in finding solutions to such weaknesses and were willing to adapt non threatening strategies from other countries. Many participants were interested in finding out what other African, Western or even South East Asian countries could offer them in terms of making the education system in Kenya serve the future needs of the country. The researcher perceived this inquiry from participants to be asking him, do you think the “world has really become flat”? as Friedman and other writers and scholars see it. If the answer to this question is yes, then Kenya as a country must quickly begin to invest in the knowledge economy.

Implication 1.2.1: *Is the world really flat?*

The most immediate implication of this finding is that there is now definitely a need for a new vision and educational paradigm in the country. This must go beyond teaching students a curriculum that keeps them competitive within the country, but it must be one that prepares them to compete in a globalized economy. This means that Kenyan schools must be brought on par with other high schools in Europe, America, Asia and other leading African countries. In his book *The World Is Flat*, Friedman (2005) describes how in the last few decades, the world has changed:

Outsourcing is just one dimension of a much more fundamental thing happening today in the world... what happened over the last few years is that there was a massive investment in technology, especially the bubble era, when hundreds of millions of dollars were invested in putting

broadband connectivity around the world, undersea cables and all that...at the same time, computers became cheaper and dispersed all over the world and there was an explosion of software – email, search engine such as google... in short, the playing field had been leveled... countries like India are now able to compete for global knowledge work as never before....

Professionally, the recognition that the world was flat was unnerving because I realized that this flattening had been taking place while I was sleeping. (pp. 7-8)

While Friedman was still sleeping, the world around him was slowly changing so that by the time he woke up, the bubble era had shrunk the world from size large to size small. For poor countries in Africa, such as Kenya, they must awake themselves from the slumber of ignorance they presently find themselves in. Their learning curve may be so sharp if they expect to find their niche in this flattened global economy. What is happening to India and China must also begin happening in Africa sooner rather than later.

Dynamic networks organizations and management create new forms of competition. Wealth is no longer created just by natural resources or production, but by the way products and services are designed and delivered to the market. The power of ideas and brand names and the harnessing of knowledge and information to leverage them – are driving the world economy. Keeping up requires investments intangibles such as R&D, software, education, training, marketing, distribution, organization and networks. (Dahlman & Aubert, 2001, p. 29)

What all this discussion implies is that, countries such as Kenya must continue investing more money in finding best practices in agriculture and industry, and these are the things that must now be done more efficiently in order to maximize productivity. At the same time, there is now a broad recognition that in order for countries to optimally create wealth, there is need for them to invest more on the knowledge economy which is an intangible good. This means that they must invest more on service based industries, on research and development, and in developing the worth of their human capital.

Recommendation 1.2.1

There is need for policymakers in Kenya to make a radical surgery of the country's education and economy and the trajectory they have taken in order to determine whether the investment the country is currently making in education is paying off or not. Such a surgery will also suggest new ways in which they can maximize this potential. While Asian countries such as China, India, Japan, Malaysia, and South Korea are today not only thriving but increasingly becoming economic giants rivaling the American economic might, African countries, such as Kenya, continue to wallow in economic stagnation. Yet only a few years ago, Malaysia and South Korea were more or less in the same economic condition as Kenya. What countries such as Kenya must do to recapture the lost ground, is something that the researcher alone cannot propose. Educational policymakers will have to be part of the answer to this enigma.

Implication 1.2.2: *The need for a global curriculum*

Because it is going to be necessary for Kenyans to build a future society that will be able to fit into the global world, curriculum planners and policymakers will need to sit down to design the content and methods of delivery that such a globalized curriculum will require. Once again, their competitive edge in this knowledge economy will not so much be determined by producing and consuming goods and services that other African or Western or Asian countries are producing and consuming. Kenya's competitiveness will come when first, it identifies the values it wishes to pass from one generation of students to the next, and second, when the country develops smart and creative ways of producing goods and services that support those values.

As such, Kenyan students must be prepared to function effectively not only within their country but also as global citizens of the world. For this to happen, there will be a need for them to be firmly grounded in authentic African values that they will later on share with the rest of the world, while at the same time, such students must be prepared to receive new values from this world. Thus, the new curriculum must develop within the students the capacity to dialogue with other world cultures, religions, values, and idiosyncrasies. Because Africa is more of a community rather than individual oriented society, it is foreseeable that accepting other peoples' values is not going to be a difficult thing for Africans well grounded in their own value system to do.

Recommendation: 1.2.2

The kind of Kenyan student envisaged in this research is one who is deeply rooted in his or her traditional value system but at the same time, a student who is willing in a communitarian way to acquire global values because this is the reality of the new world. The new Kenyan personality will need to remain embedded in the best African value system where the I – Thou relationship favors both the individual and the community. The individual is only important because of the community but at the same time, the community becomes even greater because its individuals have now appropriated global values. Educators in Kenya will need to figure out creatively how schools in Kenya will help the student acquire such a smart, creative and entrepreneurial personality.

Finding I.3: *On the current state of the 8.4.4 system of education:*

When the current 8.4.4 system of education is compared to the former A-level system, many participants believe that it has failed both the students and the country. Its greatest failure is that it over-emphasizes the cognitive dimension of education at the expense of other dimensions. At the same time, it emphasizes the teaching of science at the expense of the technical subjects such as agriculture. And though science and languages have an important place in any education system, science must not be seen to be, a be all in education.

Implication 1.3.1: *The Four Dimensions of Education*

Besides emphasizing the cognitive dimension of education, Kenyan high schools need to also assess students on other dimensions of education. Njoroge (1999) and Njoroge and Bennaars (2000), briefly describe what the three other dimensions besides the cognitive one are all about:

these conditions must be fulfilled for any activity to be called education. If any of these conditions is not fulfilled in a particular case, one may give that activity any other name, e.g., training, instructions, recreation, but one cannot call it education.... In summary we may say that we view education as a multi-dimensional concept, containing four distinct dimensions: the normative, cognitive, creative and dialogical dimensions.

(Njoroge & Bennaars, pp. 135-137)

To give a little more flesh to what these four dimensions of education mean, Njoroge (1999) summarizes the role of these four dimensions this way:

First: education imparts knowledge; in this respect it is cognitive

Second: it instills virtues and values; thus it is normative

Third: education should encourage critical thinking

Finally: it is dialogical in that it is an intersubjective process. (p. 230)

It is hard not to agree with these two scholars because a school system that does not offer its students all the four dimensions of education, only makes the system lose its credibility. A number of participants in the interview sessions did fault the education system in Kenya claiming that it produced half-baked students, or said that it only aimed at teaching students to pass examinations. Others were of the

opinion that the former A-Level system did give students two extra years of high school education that was very necessary for the maturity of students. One thing was however repeated often by many participants. That most Catholic schools, especially the private ones, unlike public schools, did attempt to at least provide the second dimension of education.

A good number of participants accepted that Catholic schools did teach students some moral values. Whichever way one may choose to describe Kenya's high school education system, whether to see it as indoctrinating students or making them conformists or as being science oriented, one thing is clear today: that it needs to ensure that it helps Kenyan students to unleash their potential in life. This is why all education providers must be prepared to contribute what they are best at giving in order that students will benefit. The government will still have the responsibility to provide a public education system that is still functional, but it will also need to ensure that standards were kept high by devising better ways of assessing schools rather than students as it is at the moment.

Recommendation 1.3.1

The dialogue between the government and other education providers needs to be stepped up. It could be found that none of the four or five education providers is capable of providing all four dimensions at the same time. But in order to strategize and harmonize on what needs to be taught and by whom, all education providers must dialogue.

Implication 1.3.2: *Quality versus Quantity dialogue*

Another implication of this finding on the 8.4.4 system of education is that a massive brain drain is now being experienced in the country at all levels of education. Many stakeholders interviewed considered the education system in Kenya as not being well planned and organized and as a result of this, many high school and university students were now heading to Uganda or South Africa among many other countries as they believed that the quality of education was higher there. Student participants in this study felt they studied many irrelevant subjects that had irrelevant content that were shallowly taught. Virtually all focus groups did wish that the country had maintained the former A-Level type of education. However, there was some good news about the current 8.4.4 system. A number of participants were happy that the current system did give a wider number of students in the country an opportunity to get a high school education. The researcher thinks there is something true about this belief by participants. Because by eliminating the 2 extra years of high school education in the country, the 8.4.4 system did remove in many ways the “elitist” mentality that the former A-level system had unfortunately perennially maintained.

However, the above criticism of the inadequacies found in the present 8.4.4 were collaborated in other writings such as the following report in a Kenyan educational journal *Education Watch* (Olita, 2004):

Most parents whose children fail to secure a place at Kenya's six public universities end up in Uganda.... But why should students abandon their motherland for higher education in Uganda? “Uganda is a favorite

destination for many Kenyan students as it offers the old system of education where there is a provision for Advanced Level Certificate before one qualifies to join the university” said majority of parents interviewed by Education Watch.... Students pursuing A-Level certificate pay an equivalent of Ksh 7000 per term in most colleges, including boarding fees. In Kenya, one can pay three times that amount in most academies...Ferdinand Osama (Vice President of MUKESA) said, “education in Kenya is too burdensome. There is too much content to be covered with no specialization at the end of the day. In Uganda, students are prepared to specialize in certain areas”...Jimmy Washiko (22 years and 1st year) said, “if one were to choose an appropriate destination abroad, then it must be Africa. Education in the West may not be applicable to local situations. This is why Makerere would be a better choice.” (pp. 21-23)

The direction that Kenya’s education has taken in the last few decades as is described by participants in this study and as corroborated by this journal article, indicates that instead of progressing in terms of the quality, content and delivery of material being taught, the country’s education was retrogressing. The amount of workload that teachers and students have to deal with, together with the large number of students in the classrooms does not permit a quality education to be provided at the moment. The old question of quality versus quantity that African countries as reported in chapter 3 had to deal with soon after attaining independence is still not yet resolved in Kenya to date.

Though the researcher is glad that the number of high schools and of students attending them is getting better compared to a few years ago, much more needs to be done to improve the quality of delivery. The following statement from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology 2005-2010 education plan speaks about some of the issues mentioned above even better:

Formal secondary education in Kenya...consists of over 4000 public secondary schools and about 600 private secondary schools with a total student population of over 850,000....One of the factors constraining secondary school enrollment is that the growth in the number of secondary schools has not matched that of primary school. In 2003, there were 3661 public secondary schools and about 400 registered private secondary schools, compared to 18, 081 public primary schools. This imbalance is expected to worsen following the implementation and strengthening of FPE [Free Primary Education]. The demand is already acute in urban areas, especially urban slums, where over 60 percent of the total urban population is concentrated....the secondary sub sector continues to face challenges, particularly the low participation rates, unsatisfactory level of transition from primary to secondary and from secondary to tertiary (particularly to universities), as well as serious gender and regional disparities. The quality of secondary education is low. Policy document, including Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, indicate a target transition rate of 70 percent from primary to secondary schools by 2008. (MOEST, 2005, pp. 175-176)

The researcher appreciates the candor that the Ministry of Education Science and Technology speaks about the challenges it faces in the educational sector. But to think that the same problems witnessed almost 50 years ago when the country was attaining its independence are the same ones being experienced today is a little troubling. What is even more serious about all this is that the ministry is still predicting that things will have to be bad before they get better.

The fact that massive numbers of students do not transition to high schools, and that those who do so end up being “miseducated,” means that the nation will continue suffering for a long time. The researcher would have wished that the Ministry of Education would be a little more radical in its way of dealing with these issues but at the moment, there is little hope for things to get better. Most of the education commissions that have been commissioned by this ministry to propose educational reforms have not recommended the radical changes that are needed. To the researcher, the Koech Educational Commission was an exception, but because its work was considered as not being politically correct, all its efforts were consigned to the dustbin.

Recommendation 1.3.2

The stakeholders have spoken and if policymakers and politicians do not listen, stakeholders are voting with their feet by taking their students elsewhere to study. The Koech Education Commission’s report needs to be re-evaluated and reconsidered. At worst, this report should serve as a reference point for other studies and commissions wishing to revive the education system in Kenya. A

quality and cost-effective education can be provided in Kenya and this is not a question of lack of funds but a lack of imagination and political will to do it.

Finding 1.4: *On the question of whether or not Kenyan students should have a common national examination:*

Two distinct schools of thought exist on this issue. On one side of the debate are people who believe that national examinations do play an important role in the country. These believe that national exams and curriculum do help the countries to be more unified and cohesive. At the same time, they believed that such a national curriculum as well as a national examination did “standardize” and “objectify” the testing instruments hence ensuring that all students in the country did share some common values and knowledge base. On the other side of this argument are those who see the current system as being unequal and hence being unfair to poor students. To this group, asking students to sit for the same national examination when some schools were “first-world” and others “third-world” was morally wrong.

Implication 1.4.1: *National Exams versus GPA System*

Among the important implications in this national examination issue is that of the assessment of students. Instead of these national examinations being assessment tools that help students identify their strengths and weaknesses, the examinations as designed were tests that gave a numerical score to describe and determine the students’ fate. As it was revealed in the literature review section

that dealt with the dual nature of Catholic schools in Nairobi, the national examinations were faulted for labeling students either as failures or success stories every year. A distinction exists between these two ways of testing students in schools. Wiggins (1998) describes this distinction this way:

During the bulk of schooling, unfortunately, the story is ... from first grade through the beginning (and often the end) of the undergraduate years in college, standardized and short answer tests – and the mentality they promote – are dominant. Students are tested not the way they use, extend, or criticize “knowledge” but on their ability to generate a superficially correct response on cue. They are allowed one attempt at a test that they know nothing about until they begin taking it, for their efforts, they receive, and are judged by – a single numerical score that tells them little or nothing about their current level of progress and gives them no help in improving... every test, every grade affects the learner. Every dull test – no matter how technically sound – affects the learner’s future initiative and engagement. Even saying it this day does not do justice to the consequences of our testing practices. (pp. 287- 288)

This way of looking at exams is exactly the same as many of the teachers and students narrated in this study. Some teachers openly accepted that they expected only neat answers from their students – meaning that students were expected to give exactly the same kind of answers they were taught in class. Failure to memorize the details led to their failure in exams.

It does not matter which side of the debate is correct at this time. What matters most is that a careful analysis be done on what exams need to do. Whether they should test or assess students? Educators must know that just as Wiggins points out in the above quotation, that every test taken and grade received do affect the trajectory of a student's life either positively or negatively. This explanation makes lots of sense as to why it can no longer be a surprise to anybody that Kenya as a nation continues having an economic depression even after investing 40% of its GDP in education. Because the education system is so dependent on the single grade it gives students at the end of each level of education, this grade which cannot be improved once given ends up labeling students as being successful or failures in life. Furthermore, students who are labeled as "failures" acquire an aversion to reading and thus have no desire to self-improve their lives. This "aversion has given birth to a non reading culture which is very prevalent in Kenya" (Koech, 1999, p. 38).

Recommendation 1.4.1

It is the view of this researcher that multiple ways of assessing students do exist and some of these have been recommended by participants in this study. A participant proposed that schools should be able to teach using multi-intelligence theory since not all students have the same gifts. In the literature review, the researcher discussed the need for Kenyan schools to teach a culturally relevant education since according to Ogbu's theory, "the provision of a culturally relevant education to black students in Africa and those in diaspora...helps this race

become self actualizing” (2003, p. 132). Other recommendations include adapting the GPA system. This appears at the moment to be the only assessment tool that can help grade students in ways that do not label them as failures.

Implication 1.4.2: *Equity Issues in High Schools*

Secondly, this issue of asking students in the country to take a national exam at the end of the year raises a number of serious issues all related to equity in education. Since the Koech Education Commission (Koech, 1999) has given a thorough analysis of how this disparity in Kenyan schools has affected students, especially in the Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASAL), an extensive discussion of this is not possible at this time; however, the following quotation from that commission’s report is very relevant for our purposes:

The commission notes that the goal of equity has been hindered by:

- Persistent gender imbalance especially in secondary, technical and university education, with particular reference to science and technology
- Few scattered schools in some areas.
- Inequitable distribution of national schools.
- Inequitable distribution of resources – facilities, school workshops, laboratories at all levels
- Poor infrastructure which hinders transport and communication, lack of adequate water and electricity in many parts of the country especially in ASAL areas.

The commission was urged to emphasize the need for equitable distribution of resources to ensure that girls, the handicapped and disadvantaged communities are never again discriminated against in the provision of education, and that affirmative action programs be implemented to eradicate existing disparities. (Koech, 1999, pp. 86-87)

Koech's report highlights similar issues on disparities that my own research was able to reveal in chapter 4. In its report, however, the commission provides what appears to be strong and ethical reasons why it would be considered morally wrong to demand that all students should sit for a national examination when schools they go to have been appended with unequal resources. Unfortunately, as the *Brown v. Board of Education* case earlier on highlighted, this process to bringing needed change in schools is pernicious. At best, schools cannot be completely equal but at least, *zikaibiane*, let them get closer! One principal urged.

Recommendation 1.4.2

Achieving equity in education is perhaps a lifelong process and not a single day's event. The government together with other educational providers must sit down and see what must be done to achieve this goal. It might require that the education system has to do away with the current boarding school system and culture so that students do not have to travel to other regions looking for schools. Equity will only come when all schools receive the same amount of shilling for each student enrolled in the school.

*Part Two: Findings, Implications and Recommendations related more specifically
to Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi*

Four other findings (2.1 to 2.4) particularly related to praxis in CASAN and their attendant implications and recommendations have been identified. These were:

Finding 2.1: On how to achieve the goal of evangelization

In order for CASAN to effectively evangelize students, three prerequisite values were identified by participants as being important. These were: discipline, importance of teaching religion in a Catholic school, and the principal's leadership and/or spirituality. Discipline in a Catholic school meant different things to different stakeholders; however, the best description of discipline was from parent participants who said that, "discipline is the way everybody in the school community behaves." Such discipline then becomes an acquired way of life that is internalized by all stakeholders in a Catholic school. All stakeholders are expected to internalize the message that Jesus Christ is their master and teacher. To effectively teach such a message, the majority of participants believe that first, a Catholic school must teach religion and secondly, that the principal must be Catholic.

Implication 2.1.1: Authentic Catholic Schools in Nairobi

Several important implications can be derived from this finding concerning Catholic schools. The first one is that because there are many different

types of Catholic schools in Nairobi, it is not easy to come up with a generic description of what Catholic schools in Nairobi would need to be in order to evangelize. However, the efforts by participants in this study to grapple with the complexities involved in this determination are greatly appreciated. One thing that stands out clearly from the dialogues obtained in the study was that every diocese and country has its unique experience on what it means to have a Catholic education or school in that country.

It goes beyond the purpose of this inquiry at this point, to give a detailed exposition of what scholars consider to be essential qualities of a Catholic school or education. But it suffices to mention that according to Buetow (1988), it is essential that a Catholic school be able to teach a liberal education. A proper understanding of the goals of a liberal arts education is important; liberal comes from the Latin *liber* which means to free a person. Essentially, what a liberal Catholic education wishes to achieve is, that persons become free agents in their desire to attain God.

The liberal arts have other advantages, like bringing the human race to a higher understanding of truth, goodness, and beauty, to points of view of having universal values. Education in liberal arts counteracts a propensity toward exclusive concentration upon scientific and technical progress, which has dangers... this does not say, however, that science is without positive values. (Buetow, 1988, pp. 101-102)

Connected in a very intimate way to this point, is the question of teaching religion in a Catholic school. Even though many participants did voice their

dissenting opinions that ideal Catholic schools do exist anywhere in the world, there was general agreement that a few values were common to them. However, it was most surprising to the researcher that a good number of participants in the study were not convinced that the teaching of religion should be made a required subject in all Catholic schools.

The researcher had expected that participants would be unanimous in accepting that all Catholic schools should teach religion, but to his surprise, a majority of them were opposed to going that way. Many of them believed that because Catholic schools teach students from other faiths, then they must be sensitive to the religious rights of other faiths. Such a “realistic” understanding of Catholic schools is surprisingly supported by Buetow who accepts that “Catholic schools embrace the formal teaching of religion. But even in a Catholic school, religion remains a delicate subject that entails problems” (1988, p. 102).

According to the policy document, *Policy Document For Catholic Education In Kenya* (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000) issued by the Catholic Bishops of Kenya, and which this researcher is credited for having been part of the team that prepared it, the following comments are made.

A Catholic sponsored school curriculum ordinarily includes a substantial religious education program. This program is life-centered, broad and multi-faceted, encompassing personal growth as well as explicit religious exploration. The program is rooted in the Catholic traditions and those from different religious traditions participate in ways that nurture their own spiritual development....CRE/PPI must be taught in all Catholic

sponsored schools up to form four and must not be replaced by Social Education and Ethics. (p. 29)

It is interesting to note that the Catholic Church in Kenya has now seen it necessary to state categorically that all sponsored schools must teach religion or CRE in schools. It is not clear how this can be done because the policy itself is silent about this and only states that "the program is rooted in the Catholic traditions" (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000 p. 29).

Since this is the only place in the document that specifically mentions the teaching of religion in Catholic schools, the Church needs to state this policy a little more clearly. This is because if the religious education that is taught in Catholic schools is rooted in Catholic traditions, it is not clear how students from other religious backgrounds can experience it "in ways that nurture their own spiritual development" (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000, p. 29).

The 1983 Code of Canon law especially says in Canons 802 and 803 that Catholic schools must teach Catholic doctrine. These Canons are however silent on how the bishop is to interpret this in his jurisdiction. In the Archdiocese of Nairobi, the reality of the matter is that the Archbishop has not made the teaching of religion a requirement in all Catholic schools. Though many participants were of the opinion that he needs to do that, the Archbishop on his part believed that because of the plurality of communities in his Archdiocese, he was not going to force all students in Catholic schools to take religion. This was to him a question of personal choice of the students. The good news is that such tough decisions on the place of religion in Catholic schools are not peculiar to the Archdiocese of

Nairobi or in Kenya alone, but something experienced even in Europe, America, Asia, and other African countries. But there is hope that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, these Catholic schools will continue meeting their future challenges in faith.

Recommendation 2.1.1

Because all dioceses are autonomous, and because different environments and contexts suggest that there is no generic way of describing what authentic Catholic school systems ought to be in each diocese, it is incumbent upon the hierarchical leadership in each diocese to put together a school system that it feels furthers its mission and vision. In the Archdiocese of Nairobi, the Archbishop, together with his clergy and the people of God in the Archdiocese, must together set up a Catholic school model they are all willing to support morally and financially.

Implication 2.1.2: *Catholic Teachers and Principals*

One other important implication to talk about concerns the role the principals' and teachers' faith plays in a Catholic school. Many participants correctly argued that the principal is the chief prime-mover of things in a school. They acknowledged that a Catholic school depended a lot on the principal's spirituality for the school to be successful in teaching spiritual values to students. According to McDermott, "Catholic school administrators must be conversant

with critical Church issues and teachings in order to challenge teachers to relate these in context of each academic discipline” (as cited in Wallace, 2000, p. 192).

At the same time, the role of teachers, especially religion teachers, in a Catholic school was raised. Many participants accept the fact that the TSC cannot be compelled to send only Catholic teachers to Catholic schools. The only problem with this situation is that often teachers who are not Catholic or some that are ill prepared to teach religion do end up doing so even in Catholic schools.

Recommendation 2.1.2

The Church must see to it that a critical mass of Catholic teachers is sent to Catholic schools to help in the formation of Catholic and non-Catholic students. Good Catholic principals alone cannot maintain a school’s Catholic identity. Similarly, a Catholic school with many Catholic teachers who are willing to form students, but which has a principal who is against all the Catholics stand for, cannot also fulfill its mandate properly. The Church must be assertive in making its voice heard in the Ministry of Education. At the same time, the Education Secretary with the assistance of the pastors can have an important impact in Catholic schools. He does this by ensuring that only good Catholic teachers and principals, or in exceptional cases those who support the church are sent to lead Catholic schools.

Finding 2.2: *On whether these schools have effectively achieved the critical and dialogical goals of education*

A majority of participants were convinced that Catholic schools, especially the sponsored ones, had not been able to achieve these two goals. Most schools still relied heavily in the banking method where rote memorization reigned supreme. However, since nothing is static and things were changing for the better, students were being encouraged to become critical thinkers, especially in the science subjects. As far as offering a dialogical education in Catholic schools is concerned, the schools have to deal with the question of empowerment of the stakeholders. For Catholic schools in the 21st century to achieve the dialogical dimension, there is need for them to first deal with the assumptions and limitations that prevent stakeholders from listening to one another in order to resolve their problems.

Implication 2.2.1: *Achieving the critical and dialogical goals of education*

All schools, whether public or private, Catholic or those sponsored by other religious organizations, need to empower their stakeholders. They do this by helping students, parents, teachers, and so forth, acquire the skills they need in order to be able to navigate through the modern life. Catholic schools have a special mission within the Church's evangelization goal since they, too, are called to proclaim the message of the Kingdom and to make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28: 19). To be effective, they must be on the forefront of denouncing all forms of oppression. Oppressive structures and situations such as hunger, poverty,

disease, and corruption continue to plague Kenya, and more particularly the people in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. This makes this call for new ways of evangelizing through schools even more urgent.

The words of Archbishop Arthur Hinsley which were highlighted in chapter 3, and were repeated by a number of participants in the study, that “whoever owns the schools will own Africa” continue to reverberate throughout the Catholic school system in Nairobi to this day. Whereas “ownership” in 1927 may have meant securing lands and school buildings, to Monsignor Arthur Hinsley, who had been appointed by Pope Pius XI to come and promote Catholic education in the then British East Africa region, ownership today goes beyond those limits. Ownership in Catholic related schools now means helping students achieve the higher goals of a liberal Catholic education which as earlier mentioned are to seek the good, truthful, and beautiful in life.

Because the “big man” culture is deeply embedded within the educational corridors of power in Nairobi, the researcher is skeptical that Catholic schools can liberate themselves unless something is done about these structures. Ryan’s (1993) dissertation *Evangelization As Liberation From the Perspective of the Poor: An Analysis Of The Theology of Evangelization of Gustavo Gutierrez* that analyzed Gutierrez’s theology of liberation and evangelization suggests that for the Church to proclaim its message of the kingdom to the poor, it must now use the method of proclamation and denunciation. Ryan describes the method this way:

The principal method of evangelization must be verbal proclamation. This consists of two moments, annunciation and denunciation. The two are in harmony, one pointing God's plan, the other indicating where that plan is being breached. Denunciation, firstly, identifies and censures every sin of oppression of the poor. It is then a verbal condemnation of injustice, a preliminary step in its elimination.... Denunciation or judgment is always accompanied by annunciation. Oppression of the poor is confronted with the pronouncement of the love of the Father which calls all men [and women] in Christ and through the action of the Spirit to union among themselves and communion with him. To announce is then, to proclaim God's Kingdom, and plan, for humanity: it is to declare the reversal of the present order, that poverty will be replaced with plenty, oppression with liberation.... For Gutierrez, action accompanies proclamation; there is an intimate oneness between word and action. Proclamation leads to action, while action makes proclamation a reality within history. (p. 326)

Denouncing and announcing as a method of proclamation is to the researcher a positive method of freeing the oppressed from the oppressors because all is done in a spirit of charity. But changing the status quo in certain structures is not easy as the Koech Education Commission of (Koech, 1999) discovered. This commission, which made many wonderful recommendations of substantive nature, failed to reform the current education system in Kenya and it was instead thrown into the waste basket for it threatened to change the status quo. The big lesson to learn from the situation of oppression is that unless the oppressed

persons decide to free themselves, the oppressor will not hand them their freedom on a platter.

Recommendation 2.2.1

The “big man” culture that exists within the public and private school systems in Kenya needs to be announced and denounced. Stakeholders of education in Catholic schools need to be empowered and this task is not for the feeble and half hearted. It requires analysis which leads to action, which may at times be threatening to the status quo.

Implication 2.2.2: *Jumuiya or Small Christian Community as Praxis Model for CASAN*

Other practical ways were recommended by participants in order to further the attainment of the goal for a critical and dialogical education. In chapter 2, liberation theology was proposed as a method of critique of the Eurocentric educational and theological discourses. In that chapter, a critical as well as a dialogic education was described as being a sort of the meeting of minds between several stakeholders to form shared meanings that lead to praxis. The researcher explained it this way:

Planning [is] not reduced to the implementation of an already decided set of objectives, but exists as an opportunity for teachers, students, administrators and community to participate in praxis... in this way, the

whole community of learners contributes positively to the creation of the kind of schools needed.

When liberation theology becomes used in this way as a language of discourse and of critique of past Eurocentric theological, historical and cultural texts, it helps the dominated cultures such as those in Africa to resurrect their own forgotten voices. Boff and Boff (2001) reveal three levels at which liberation theology as a language of critique can be diffused dialogically. They state that:

Between the basic level and the “highest,” or professional level of liberation theology, there is an intermediate level... those who see only the professional theologians at work in it see only the branches of the tree. They fail to see the trunk, which is the thinking of priests and other pastoral ministers, let alone the roots beneath the solid that hold the whole tree – trunk and branches – in place. The roots are the practical living and thinking – though submerged and anonymous – going on in tens of thousands of base communities living out their faith and thinking in a liberating key. (p. 12)

What this means in a practical sense is that three levels of producing the shared meaning of what Catholic schools can do to liberate communities from their oppression do exist. These three levels share three equally important aspects of liberation theology in a dialogical manner in order to form a common shared meaning. Since no doubt exists concerning the role that theologians and the clerical part of the church play on this platform of dialogue, the researcher briefly

turns to the third level that is little talked about to show how it can help CASAN achieve the critical and dialogical goals of education.

It is this third level of discourse that Catholic churches in various parts of the world are now turning to, to help communities of learners appropriate the critical skills they need to critique and do some things about their world. This third level of doing praxis theology is called the *Jumuiya* in Nairobi or the Small Christian Community (SCC). In this study, a number of participants did express their satisfaction at how *Jumuiyas* that is SCCs, have radically been empowering students, teachers and even principals to live a praxis life. We also reported how high school students in one of the semi-urban schools had become important role models to elementary school children within the community. To use the student's own words to explain this, the student said that "I can say that the interactions between the school and the community around the school are okay... I see the students taking care of the young children around the school...our school is treated like a *Jumuiya*."

This discovery in the power of *Jumuiyas* to empower local church communities as the student quoted above explains, can be extended to the schools bordering a local Catholic church so that each school can become one of the *Jumuiya*'s in the parish. This is something that is not only becoming trendy in Kenya but throughout the world as Healey and Hinton ably capture in their book *Small Christian Communities Today: Capturing The New Moment* (2005):

It is in response to the challenge of the Gospel that small communities worldwide respond creatively to needs as they present themselves day to

day. What is striking is how many concerns are shared across six continents. People at risk from social, political, economic, and environmental causes are at the heart of these concerns... Small Christian Communities are still the church of the poor... whether in the shantytowns of Kisumu in East Africa or in the “rich” cities of Rome, London, or New York. (p. 3)

These two editors describe what is happening at the macro level within the Small Christian Communities throughout the world. Their book also describes in greater details how these communities are now becoming virtual communities through the internet in their quest to share and learn from each others’ experiences. The book also shares the following comments about *Jumuiyas* in Kenya.

We have realized that SCCs that are not focused towards action easily disintegrate and the members become unresponsive; “faith without good deeds is useless” (James 2: 14-23). The significance of the need to reflect on actions and act on reflections cannot be undervalued when establishing thinking, feeling and active church. We have seen SCCs lighting up neighborhoods where hope has been a thing of the past. We have seen many joining and returning to the church as a result. (Omolo as cited in Healey & Hinton, 2005, p. 114)

It is in the *Jumuiya* that the real church lives, moves, breathes, hurts, heals, mourns, and laughs in Kenya. It is also in the *Jumuiya* that weighty matters affecting the community such as unemployment, disease, and hunger are reflected upon through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Bible sharing in the community.

From such sharing and analysis of problems, communities of faith do come together to share meaning and determine the course of action to take. Pastors and theologians have their important role to play in forming this shared meaning.

The example given above from Kisumu which is Kenya's third largest city, highlights what has been going on in Nairobi over and over a number of times. The new knowledge gained in this study, however, is that a bigger picture of how this praxis method can be used in Catholic schools has been gained. At the same time, it is good to note that this trend is happening throughout the world and it's not an isolated thing happening somewhere in the corner of Africa. This does work very well in New York and could even be tried in East St. Louis or here in Dayton, Ohio. Catholic educators throughout the world can at least make more conscious efforts to see how far such a method could be applied in making faith practical and localized.

Recommendation 2.2.2

Different regions of the world have different ways of resolving enigmatic community problems. In Nairobi, the *Jumuiyas* which have in the past been a common thing among adult faith communities can now be proposed as an innovative way of making students' faith practical. *Jumuiyas* have the potential to teach students social action in an African-Christian milieu. This is where the Church in Archdiocese of Nairobi is alive and African theologians, priests, educators, and other civil society representatives will need to meet to chart the way forward in this regard.

Finding 2.3: Rural – Urban school dialogue

When the field notes taken during the time of the study, together with the participant voices are analyzed, a down to earth picture of the CASAN is made. This picture reveals that urban and rural schools implicitly and explicitly teach students different values inadvertently. It was clear to the researcher that most urban private and sponsored Catholic schools do implant in their students a desire to acquire professional values by insisting that students wear ties; on the other hand, a majority of rural schools visited in the rural areas would easily fit the “third-world” description given by some participants. Though the students in rural schools were more down-to-earth than those in the city, these schools had more poor facilities than the city schools. In some rural schools, there was a clear intent to teach agricultural values to the students.

Implication 2.3.1: Is the school the enemy of the farm?

Kenya is basically an agricultural country. In the literature review chapter as well as in the report in chapters 4 to 6, it was postulated that schools in Kenya do alienate students from their families and the farm. But a question may be asked, is the school indeed the enemy of the farm? Hanson (1980), discusses this question very knowledgeably:

Students assessing farming as an occupational choice, take into account many relevant factors and are influenced by many realistic conditions limiting the potentialities of farming for the young school leaver... partly, students' aspirations and consequent behavior are conditioned by the

expectations of those who have invested heavily in their education... the primary expectation being that future economic returns from wage employment will contribute to the security of the families and provide students themselves with the basis for a good life. In large part, students are appraising realistically the likelihood of making a profitable living through farming. When land, relevant knowledge, labor, and markets are sufficient for profitable enterprise, most students look with favor on agriculture; when these are lacking, students frequently do not reject agriculture out of hand, but rather seek to postpone the prospect of farming until a later point in their life when they anticipate that the opportunity for successful independent farming will be greater. (p. 25)

This extensive quotation from the paper *Is The School The Enemy of The Farm? The African Experience* by Hanson (1980) of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University is purposeful. It is aimed at highlighting a major concern that has implicitly and explicitly been stated in this study; namely, why do many high school students in Kenya not go into farming?

From the beginning of this study, the researcher has attempted to make a connection between what happens in the classrooms in Kenya with the present socioeconomic conditions in the country. He postulated that teachers held the keys to a country's development or underdevelopment (see p. 4). One of the things that he has labored to understand throughout this period is to make sense why students who finish high schools keep hanging around the shopping centers seemingly doing nothing, instead of engaging in productive activities such as

farming. According to Hanson, two good reasons can be advanced to explain this behavior. First, students do not see farming as fulfilling their own and their extended families' expectations. Secondly, it is not true that students in Africa hate farming per se; it is only that farming has not yet become an economic endeavor worth young people's time and energy. So though it may look as though the youth do run away from the villages and farms, this is actually a reasonable and conscious decision that is made because there are no better economic activities besides the unproductive farming in the village. And they are probably right that there is no point for them to break their backs for meager economic returns. This makes sense to the researcher who always wondered why many students seemed to waste time in the shopping centers or even chose to migrate to the cities in search for jobs while leaving their farms in the village unattended.

Recommendation 2.3.1

The high school curricula must not only acquaint students with modern farming techniques, but it must also give the student positive experiences related to farming. The most motivating thing that would encourage young people to venture into farming is to have good returns from farms. The government must do all it can to stabilize agricultural prices so as to help farmers make long-term plans and investments that are based on reliable future incomes.

Finding 2.4 Vision to having “Great” Catholic schools of the 21st century in Nairobi

For Catholic schools in the archdiocese of Nairobi to become “great” schools of the 21st century, a number of issues need to be dealt with. First, is the demand that the Church must invest more money and personnel in the formation of teachers and students. Secondly, that the Church must ensure principals do not only have the right qualifications but that they also have a Catholic faith. The issue of separation of church and state and the implications this would have on both public and parochial school system needs to be examined, too.

Implication 2.4.1: Finances to Run Programs in CASAN

When it comes to the question of investing more money and personnel into the Catholic school system, many people including those in the Church such as bishops and priests do not like to talk about this. This is because any talk about money often means that people have to dig deeper into their pockets and usually, not many people like doing that. However, if people are going to criticize schools for not doing what is expected of them, then they must also be willing to fulfill their part of the deal which is to give schools more money in order for them to succeed. They must fund the schools and therefore be willing to walk the walk and talk the talk. However, it must be borne in mind that giving more money to the schools does not always mean that schools will do better as the literature review chapter argued.

This mention of money reminds the researcher of some good old days spent here in Dayton with two of his friends Ed and Bill (R.I.P) hotly debating around “kitchen table” issues concerning money, and its importance in life. Bill would always go first and begin the conversation this way, “remember this my friend” then he would point his finger at the researcher. “Money rules and everything else walks!” This comment would often infuriate Ed who would respond, “Ah, stop that! Who says money is everything in the world?” These conversations on liberal and conservative ways of looking at money would go on for hours and at some point, the researcher would interject and say, “yes my friends, money is important but it is not the most important thing in the world.” In saying this, the conversations would often come to an end and everyone would stand to leave laughing heartily; because neither side of the argument would have won or lost the debate. One former powerful Cardinal in Rome is remembered for his quick quip on this issue. He is quoted to have said that “even the Church does not run on Hail Marys alone, it too needs money.”

Many participants were kind enough to propose innovative ways that could fund Catholic school programs. Some suggested that the Church should demand a small tax from its schools, others argued that the Church and State should enter some form of dialogue in which the Church could get back some of its old schools. To the students, the feeling was that since the State did collect taxes from all people in the country, then it should pay to educate all students. As for the Church, if push came to shove, the worst thing that would happen would

be for it to abandon public schools and focus on starting its own parochial school system. In all these proposals, the question of funding was central.

Meanwhile, as the Archdiocese talks about where to get the money to do all this work, it must also think about something else closely related to that. It must look at its priorities and how these are reflected in its budgeting. Though some participants were completely against the idea of connecting sponsorship of Catholic schools with how much money the Archdiocese gives its schools, there is something good to learn about how the overall diocesan budget is appropriated.

For instance, it would be interesting to see what departments are allocated more money because this in itself would indicate where the priorities of the Archdiocese are. Questions of adequacy and efficiency in school finance can also be raised. These are important questions to ask too because though the amount of money the Archdiocese allocates its schools is important, sometimes it is not so much the amount it allocates schools that is important, but whether it is adequate to do the job and whether it is efficiently being utilized. So the question here is not how much money it invests, but is it enough to run the programs needed? There will never be enough money to give every department in the Archdiocese but then it is always important to know whether what is allocated can ensure that the Archdiocesan educational mission and vision are being fulfilled:

The basic economic principle of scarcity is always operational in the budgeting process. There is never enough money to support the desires and aspirations of employees. This is as it should be! In fact, working within a budget sometimes spurs creativity. Staff members who are

content to operate with the same level of expenditures from year to year are also generally content with the status quo. (Rebore & Rebore, 1993, p.112)

This quote restates the issue in Nairobi clearly: that if the Archdiocese is going to have certain expectations from its schools and students, it must make some inputs in order to get some outputs. Policymakers can take consolation in the above quote because it says clearly to them that there are times when they might not have to give all the money that was budgeted for programs to implement certain programs. This is because working with limited budgets does spur people to come up with creative ideas on how to keep schools running with minimum finances without closing them down.

Recommendation 2.4.1

It is not the amount of money that the Archdiocese invests in its school system that will determine how much it cares for its schools because sponsorship must never be equated with the amount of money the Church gives its school systems. However, the Church has a moral responsibility to ensure that teachers teaching in Catholic schools are adequately trained to do their job and to effectively do that, it must invest in its teachers. Let the Archdiocese set a budget that is realistically possible to achieve but at the same time, one that would enable it to move ahead in its educational mission.

Implication 2.4.2: *Teachers and Principals*

For the teachers and principals envisaged in this study to have the kind of qualities expected of them, something from the Church needs to happen. The gap between the ideal teachers expected and the ones Catholic schools in Nairobi have today is just astronomical. Teachers themselves were clear about this for they knew that they “demotivated” their students in the way they taught them; however, they explained this by saying that they too were highly demotivated. The Catholic bishops of Kenya describe the kind of teachers they wish to see in their schools. These must have the following qualities:

- The teacher is committed to Jesus Christ and lives in an ever deepening relationship with Him. From this relationship she/he witnesses to the Gospel
- The teacher is committed and dedicated to the Catholic Church
- The teacher is a person of prayer, who frequently reflects on the scripture and whose living testifies its power to transform lives
- The teacher believes in the Gospel and in its power to transform lives.
- The teacher fosters community as one who has learned its meaning by experiencing it
- The school is committed to serving the Christian community in the school as well as the wider community. (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000, p. 26)

According to the researcher, this checklist forgets to include other qualities that Catholic teachers in the 21st century must have if they are to ensure they are to

prepare students well. Not even the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in its 2005-2010 projections does mention how it is going to meet the challenge of retraining teachers to gain competence in the digital and technological world. The researcher cannot see how these two education providers can miss to include such training proposals in their policy documents.

This is surprising because unless veteran teachers are provided with some form of in-service training, they will continue using the old pedagogical methods they learned many years ago in college. At the moment of writing this, most Kenyan universities are still using the lecture method to “teach” students. According to teacher and professional participants in the study, professors in the Kenyan universities often used microphones to teach classes which typically had hundreds and occasionally even a thousand students attending. Unless the teacher education departments in the universities can somehow figure out how they can teach smaller groups of students so as to help them internalize the best practices in teacher education, the lecture methods they pick in colleges will continue being used in Kenyan schools for a long time.

One other concern this researcher has, is that the rate at which the country is moving into the digital and technological world is inadequate. It would not surprise the researcher that in the next decade, many teachers will still not know how to use a computer for personal work or even as a teaching aid. Many teachers, especially in some of the rural schools the researcher visited, may never learn how to use the internet because in the first place, their schools do not have electricity. It must not surprise anybody to see teachers 20 years from now not

willing to use the internet for personal communication or to retrieve information because as this researcher writes this implication, many students in Kenyan universities accept that they have never used the internet for academic reasons. In any case, professors do not demand that they download articles to help them write papers since professors have no time to read such papers anyway. These technological advances which are taken for granted even within kindergartens in Western countries are still a luxury in Kenya. It is no wonder why one parent in the study lamented the fact that the country did not have a Catholic T.V channel to at least teach Catholic values to students.

As far as the principals are concerned, issues of corruption, poor administration of personnel, especially of teachers, and management of finances were reported. These must be uprooted in Catholic schools of the 21st century. As was noted; students do see, hear and understand both explicit and implicit messages that adults and schools think they do not understand. By seeing the things schools value and those that they do not, students learn what to appropriate for themselves and what to leave out. "Heads of schools and educational administrators need to be aware that authentic authority presupposes a spirit of service and a strong sense of responsibility. It means giving their whole attention and dedicating all their working hours to the school" (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000, p. 23). This is just part of what future teachers and principals of Catholic schools in Kenya will need to deal with.

Recommendations 2.4.2

In light of the fact that this aspect of implementation has dealt with teachers and principals, two recommendations can be made:

- A. First, that teachers need to be encouraged and to be motivated to improve their teaching skills. The best way to do this is to encourage them to go back to the university to get more education in their areas of specialization. This can only be possible when the teachers' terms of service are updated so that it rewards those who are willing to go back for graduate studies with higher salaries than the current system where science and language teachers are favored.

- B. That the current method of appointing principals and their assistants to schools be stopped. Appointment by consultation and agreement between the Ministry and the Church has been greatly abused in the past. What needs to be encouraged today is that qualified people should send in their applications to a committee composed of the sponsors and the ministry of education officials. These must then select the best candidate from a shortlist of applicants with minimum qualifications. Then through interviews, the best candidate should be picked to head Catholic schools.

Implication 2.4.3: *Separation of Church and State*

In light of all that has been said concerning the need for Catholic schools to maintain their identity, it is important to briefly describe another point that has major implications for the future of both Catholic and public schools in Nairobi. While it is true that policymakers must put into consideration some of the critical issues raised concerning the secularization effect that such a change could bring to public schools, it should not be lost on policymakers that such a separation does have many potential positive effects on both Catholic and public schools.

Okullu in his book, *Church and Politics in East Africa* (1974) discusses this issue at length. He states that “there is no blueprint pattern of behavior of Church/State relationship anywhere which could be transplanted and fitted into the present situation in E. Africa” (p. 11). As such, the fear that the secularization effect experienced in American public school systems would be felt in Kenya is not necessarily true. The researcher believes that even when such proposals are effected, nothing would stop public schools in Kenya from offering an “agreed” religious education to students who choose to take it in high school. As far as Catholic schools are concerned, they stand to gain immensely from such a separation because they too, like the Muslim or SDA schools, would now have an opportunity to teach Catholic doctrines in their school system. Okullu, who was one of the prominent Anglican Bishops who passed away recently, appears to have supported this need for separation of church and state as his book further says:

One of the most effective methods of imparting Christian teaching has been through schools built and managed by Churches. This avenue for direct Christian influence has been partly blocked through the government's take over of the management of schools, putting both Church and State in the horns of dilemma. While the government allows religious jurisdiction over teachers, subsequently the teaching of religious education is now largely falling into the hands of those who do not believe a word of what they are teaching though they may be professing Christians. (1974, p. 11)

It is now more than 30 years since these words were written by Okullu. The researcher postulates that nothing much has changed in terms of ensuring that this separation has occurred. It is most likely that there are now more people who would be opposed to this separation of church and state than there would have been in 1974 when the country was only a few years old after independence.

The researcher highlights this point of the separation of church and state in order to once again place this issue on the front burner of the stove. A closer re-examination and re-evaluation of the merits and demerits of such a separation is called for if religiously sponsored schools including those of the Muslim or the Hindu communities are to teach their religious values. Parents, after all, do have a right to educate their children in schools of their choice. The Catholic bishops of Kenya state in their policy document that, "parents are the primary educators of their children and have a right in determining the kind of education they want for their children. All parents who choose to send their children to our sponsored

schools, must know that the schools operate within the Catholic traditions” (Kenya Episcopal Conference, 2000, p. 27). For the researcher, this is as it should be but the reality of the matter is that, some schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi do not even know what it means for them to be sponsored schools.

Recommendation 2.4.3

The Church and State are essentially different in their origin. These two institutions are created for different purposes but when it comes to the education of the youth, they must be allowed to play their proper roles. In this sense, the Church must not be hindered to offer religious education in its schools. It needs to also be allowed to teach an unadulterated religion. The state on the other hand has a right to collect taxes and to distribute them equally and fairly to all schools. It has the right to ensure that high standards of education are maintained throughout the country and teachers are paid a fair and just salary.

Implication 2.4.4: *Change Forces*

Finally, it would be foolhardy for one to assume that all the recommendations made in this study can be immediately applied. Among the major principles of change that this researcher has learned in and out of class is that, change is fiercely resisted in any organization. A second equally important principle is that change is incremental and not an event. To conclude this study, the researcher wishes to end with three quotations: One from a real story about the Marianists’ endeavor to change Mangu High School in Kenya, the second is from

the researcher's own observation of Mangu as recorded in his diary, finally, a quote about change from Dr. Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania.

Osogo's (1970) M.A thesis on *The History of Kabaa – Mang'u High School and the Contribution of the Holy Ghost Fathers Upon Education in Kenya*, records the following true account about the Marianists' priests' and brothers' endeavor to change Mangu High school in Kenya:

The Marianists came with plenty of ideas, but they soon realized that the British type of education current in Kenya had important differences from that operating in their home country of the United States, and that the work of the Holy Ghost Fathers at Mangu had been of very high standard within the British context. They therefore decided to take over where the Holy Ghost Fathers had left off and to build on the firm foundations they had laid over the twenty-one years they had been managing Mangu... the Brothers introduced such innovations as they thought would enrich the system and added a new dimension to the school. They laid great stress on the practical teaching of science... which quickly established a scientific tradition in the school.... Brother Michael became noted for his introduction of new science activities at the school. He started an amateur Radio Club and set up a radio transmitting station at the school both of which aroused great interest and enthusiasm among the boys... in addition to the electronics programme, Brother Michael also started at Mangu an Air Program to interest the boys in things connected with aviation. His intention was to teach the boys to fly... he was immensely successful, and

the results of his work have been evident in recent years by the number of ex-Mangu students who have joined the Kenya Air Force or are working with the East African Airways... the Marianists at first wanted to make many more such innovations in the educational system, but they found it necessary to go slow with their new ideas, realizing that the examination – geared system in Kenya made it imperative to prepare students for the Cambridge syllabus. (Osogo, 1970, pp. 287-290)

The popular saying that even Rome was not built in a single day, should be consoling to both the Marianists and to all the other change agents out there. This is because, even when attempts to change school systems such as Mangu fail to take place immediately, they can take consolation that some of their efforts were not wasted as this researcher's observation of the school during the time of the study indicates:

I visited Mangu High School on 13-05-05. I was well received by the principal Mr. Henry Raichene... This is a national school. A little white airplane is on display in the compound of the school just besides the principal's office. The school teaches computers to students... and it's on a main highway from Thika to Nairobi. One of the best performing schools in Kenya.... Last year its mean score was 9.719 and the previous year it was 9.77. Last year, the school was the 12th overall best school in the country. Twenty-two students had straight A's while 55 others had A-. That means 77 out of 193 boys had As...only one student had a D+. A good display of various tournament cups in the front office shows that the

school must be active in many areas... the school helps poor students with tuition, the principal told me that currently, the school is helping to educate at least five orphaned students free of charge. These students came to school with very little personal effects. The tuition fee is about Ksh 43,500 per year.

The Marianists as well as the Holy Ghost congregation and all the other religious men and women congregations that have ever taught or continue teaching in Kenya need to be thanked for a job well done. Even though this dissertation has raised a number of issues concerning the legacy some of the methods they brought to Kenya continue to have in the country's education system, surely, not everything they did was bad. In the above two quotations, it is clear that the good legacy left behind by the Marianists at Mangu continue to thrive under the leadership of an African lay principal. The school's high academic standards together with the implicit and explicit messages it sends its students every time they look at that small plane or look at the many trophies won and displayed in the principal's office ensure that the sky is truly the limit in this school. Its tuition fee of Ksh. 43,500 which is equivalent of \$621 when compared to that of a school like Kiamworia at Ksh. 3, 500 or about \$50 is way up on the higher side. Thus, even though the principal was proud of the fact that the school was at that moment giving five students a full scholarship to study there, only sons of the very well to do can come to such a school.

Change is often slow. Changing a school's culture as was argued in chapter 3, is perhaps the hardest thing one can change in a school. It goes beyond

this researcher's imagination to think about the difficulties that the Marianists had to go through in their attempt to change not only a dominant British pedagogy with an American one, but to try to do so in a country that was still smelling, thinking, and dreaming British. This must have been doubly difficult. The only close example one can give about such an endeavor is that they must have been swimming upstream in a river going downstream. Many years after that, they did change the course of that river somehow. In this third quote taken from a "post-Arusha" policy directive by President Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania in 1967, this African leader speaks for many African countries in their effort to design educational systems that serve their African people. Kenyans can learn at least from their neighbors some things:

The education systems in different kinds of the world have been, and are, very different in organization and content. They are different because the societies providing the education are different... and the purpose [of education]... whether it is formal or informal... is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society, and to prepare the young people for their future membership of society and their active participation in its maintenance or development... this is true of ... capitalist societies of the west, the communist of the East, and the pre-colonial African societies too.... The education provided by the colonial government... had a different purpose. It was not designed to prepare young people for the service of their own country; instead, it was motivated by a desire to inculcate the values of a colonial society and to

train individuals for the service of the colonial state....This statement of fact is not given as a criticism of the many individuals who worked hard, often under difficult conditions, in teaching and organizing educational work... what it does mean, however, is that the educational system introduced in Tanzania by the colonialists was modeled on the British system, but with even heavier emphasis on subservient attitudes and on white collar skills...it emphasized and encouraged the individualistic instincts of mankind, instead of cooperative instincts. It led to the possession of individual material wealth being the major criterion of social merit and worth... Only when we are clear about the kind of society we are trying to build can we design our education service to serve our goals.... We have said that we want to create a socialist society which is based on three principles: equality and respect for human dignity; sharing of the resources which are produced by our efforts; work by everyone and exploitation by none. (Nyerere, 1967, p. 17)

One might not agree with everything Nyerere says because he envisions a society that has socialist objectives. This policy directive is still meaningful in many other ways because its foundation is firm.

It tells Africans, especially their policymakers, that whatever type of society they choose to have is okay. However, they must ensure that the education system they design serves the interests of their own country first and not those of their colonial masters. The jury is still out deliberating on which policies between Kenya and Tanzania in the overall ended up serving their countries well. Kenya

went the capitalist way while Tanzania went the socialist way. While no one doubts that Kenya is within the East African region the more economically powerful country, its moral fiber is clearly to all below that of Tanzania. While Tanzania was busy sharing its resources and working to ensure no one exploited the other, Kenya was at the same time being described as a “man eat man” society.

The three East African countries, of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania are now moving toward having a more political and economic integration. Such an integration process has been an enormously difficult task to achieve because of past failures as well as the fact that all three countries have had different political and economic structures. But the good news is that they are all learning from each other and there is hope that some day, this integration that is so necessary if the region is to economically develop and free itself from reliance on foreign aid and donor community handouts will be achieved. As Kaiser and Okumu (2004) report in their book *Democratic Transitions in East Africa*, “the regional integration process is also pressuring each country to engage in political reforms. When one country successfully moves forward in the political reform process, citizens of neighboring countries use this success as a reference point for their own quest for a more democratic order.” (p. 8)

Recommendation 2.4.4

It is time policymakers began planning to institute deep rather than incremental changes in the Kenyan educational scene. This is because it is now

over 40 years since the country achieved its independence from the British yet the country's education is still steeply British oriented. This needs to change if the country is to stop inflicting deep wounds on its wounded soul. Failure to institute deep changes that instill the African value system could bring slow death to Kenya's moral fiber. Corruption for instance, has become cancerous in Kenya and it is now threatening to consume not only the institutions it operates within, but everybody who dares to stand up against it. These changes can be effected by policymakers who care about the general direction the country is going in.

Concluding remarks

Numerous challenges and lessons were encountered in the period of time it took to collect the data, compile the report, and determine the implications, and the recommendations of this study. As a way of bringing closure in this study, the researcher believes that it is important to highlight a few of the more problematic challenges and lessons encountered and learned so that future researchers could explore and clarify them further. The first challenge to be considered concerns the need for researchers in this kind of study to spend a longer period of time in the field. Though this researcher was able to spend a month and a half period of time on the ground, it occurred to him that if one was to adequately conduct a study of this magnitude, this time was not enough. Spending more time would allow researchers to conduct ancillary activities such as follow-up interviews and member checking.

Second, because the communication infrastructure in Kenya is still far from being perfect, the researcher noted that conducting this kind of study in an environment that has minimal electronic or reliable telephone communication facilities made the completion of this study an exceptionally difficult mission to undertake. Although future researchers will need to discover alternative means of communication besides driving long distances on sometimes rough roads to secure appointments, this researcher believes that in the end, such experiences are beneficial to this kind of study. This is because these experiences ensure that the researcher has some firsthand information regarding the situation on the ground as has been proven throughout this study.

Third, the researcher discovered that symptoms of the “big-man” culture do exist within the education sector in Kenya. This chance discovery was confirmed many times over by individuals and institutions charged with the responsibility of managing the affairs of the educational sector in the country. This culture needs to be announced and denounced as the method of proclamation advocated in implication 2.2.1. Evidence of this cultural rot were recorded in the researcher’s diary:

One of the lessons I keep learning about conducting research in Kenya is that participants need to be reminded all the time about the importance of attending the research sessions... it seems like participants feel they are doing me a great favor to come. Yet, I believe that most of the participants, especially invited professionals should have taken this as part of what their job descriptions require.

This note expressing the researcher's frustration with the way participants in government and church institutions cooperated in this study hints at the possibility of the existence of this "big-man" culture within individuals and institutions in the education sector.

Despite this researcher's numerous calls, personal visits to offices of significant importance in the education sector to deliver mail, efforts to renew old acquaintances, and verbal assurances by some participants that they would honor appointments made, the researcher was in the end disappointed by many participants who failed to honor their appointments for interviews. As he kept reshaping his strategies in preparation for data collection, the researcher began to hypothesize that the impenetrability of this culture was perhaps the single most responsible fact that prevented information regarding Kenyan schools from being readily available. It was clear to the researcher that this culture was at least an important variable that needs to be accounted for by future researchers in future related studies. Since knowledge is power and those who accumulate knowledge can easily horde it for the sake of retaining their power structures intact, the researcher perceives that until these barriers that impede the sharing of information are broken down, Kenya's educational sector will continue being oppressive to a majority of its students. This is because the "big-man" culture does not permit dialogical communications that eventually lead to the establishing of a dialogical education to be held. Information within such dysfunctional organizations only travels one way; that is, from the boss to the junior cadre rather than in both ways as it should in open organizations and societies.

It would be unethical for the researcher to name the institutions and individuals that chose not to cooperate in this study though the method of proclamation mentioned above advocates for that. Naming these would violate guarantees stipulated in the informed consent form (Appendix E) that participants in this study signed. However, it is important at this point to provide at least two examples to help explain how this “big-man” culture affects organizations and prevents them from gaining useful information and knowledge to help them grow.

In the first scenario, the researcher and the research assistant began the day intending to get in touch with a senior government official to find out whether he would be available for the upcoming interview sessions. After spending the entire morning session trying to get in touch with the targeted participant, the researcher and his assistant were hurriedly invited to “come and meet” with the official in his Nairobi downtown office one afternoon. After waiting in the lounge and on the “corridors of power” for what must have been more than 4 hours, the team was informed at around 5 p.m. that the “big man” had already left the office and he would only return to meet the public the following week. In all this period of anxious waiting, the researcher and his assistant noted that “political friends” and “members of his tribe” were the only ones being attended to in his public office. The rest of the people waited patiently and silently for their turn to be attended to and unfortunately, a majority of them had to leave at the end without having being attended.

The second example which happened soon after the first one explains this cultural problem further. It reveals that this “big-man” culture does not respect

gender as it also affects women educational leaders, too. To the researcher, anyone unknown to this lady seeking to meet her must be prepared to overcome a series of barriers that seem to be purposely placed there to prevent such a meeting from taking place. The simple errand of delivering an invitational letter to this public officer turned out to be one of the most frustrating experiences this researcher had to go through in this study. All visitors to this office have to first answer a battery of questions from unfriendly junior officials who insist on knowing the exact business that brings one to this building. After answering these questions that seem designed to weed undesired people from getting into the offices, and after the junior officials read the invitation letter, a pass stating the name, and the floor on which the targeted official could be found was issued. Only then was the researcher allowed to join a group of other visitors who had also been cleared, to form a line that led to several tiny elevators that would take visitors to their desired floors. This process did not only seem oppressive to the researcher but did indeed feel that way.

Next was the elevator ride. This ride reconfirmed this researcher's fears that oppressive structures existed within the most significant educational offices in the country. The researcher noted that visitors to this building had no freedom to move as they wished. For instance, the researcher himself could not choose whether to use the crowded elevators or to walk the stairs to his desired floor. It was at this point that the researcher began to question himself and to wonder, if visitors to this building do not have the freedom to walk into any of the offices of

their choice, how could anybody hope to influence policies in the education sector?

After surmounting these barriers, the researcher left the office only to discover soon thereafter that he had now begun another frustrating process in this study. This process involved calling the office of the targeted official in order to find out whether she would attend the interview sessions or not. All his phone calls went unanswered till the last day the interviews were conducted. This lady official like many other educationists who were invited but never turned up for the interviews, did not find it necessary to send an apology note or to make a courtesy call to say that she would not be available for the interviews.

These barriers encountered during the study led the researcher to make several conclusions. First, that this "big man" culture is pervasive within government and church related educational institutions; and among men and women leaders and it needs to be recognized in order to be expunged. One can only hope that business in such public offices would cease being conducted on friendly and clan basis but on professional basis. Second, that it is no longer a surprise that educational practice in Kenya is little informed by science and research. It is difficult to see how progressive ideas with the potential to create a new educational paradigm can be nurtured in such a dysfunctional culture.

On a more positive note, the researcher would like to specially thank all the students, teachers, principals, professionals, and parents who took time to come to Nairobi to take part in the interview sessions. Though the researcher did give a token gift to all participants to show his appreciation for their efforts, he

was particularly happy to note that some participants from some very interior parts of the Archdiocese did take the trouble to come all the way to Nairobi using not so reliable public transport system, and in a rainy season. At the same time, the researcher was delighted that the Archbishop of Nairobi was obliging enough to participate in this study despite his busy schedule. The Archbishop's voice not only complements other stakeholders' voices, but it gives the findings in this study added strength.

The fourth lesson that has been learned in this study is that despite the fact that the researcher followed the recruitment procedures as laid down in chapter 3, the situation on the ground changed some of the rules. For instance, even though 53 out of the anticipated 60 participants turned up for the interviews thus giving the study an 88% success rating, these figures do not present a true picture of what actually happened. This is because out of the 53 participants who turned up, 18 were students, 12 professionals, 13 teachers, 5 principals, 4 parents, and the Archbishop of Nairobi. Such low participation in some of the planned focus group sessions was disappointing because it meant that at some point, the planned focus groups ceased becoming focus groups and instead became mini-focus groups or even individual interviews. Did this fact impede the overall picture of the education scene in Nairobi from being revealed? The researcher does not think so. Though he acknowledges that the non-participation of some of the targeted people did slightly affect the results, the researcher believes that 53 out of 60 is an acceptable figure to work with. In any case, the fact that there were eight focus

groups, two mini-focus groups and two individual interviews means that there were enough groups to triangulate the findings.

Finally, since the overall goal of this study was to find out the stakeholders' beliefs on Catholic education in Nairobi, the researcher is happy that this study has revealed many fundamental issues that affect Catholic schools in Nairobi. Surprisingly, most of these revealed issues are similar to those that continue to dominate debate in other Catholic school systems in the world. For instance the issues of: finance, church and state relationship in schools, principals' and teachers' spirituality in relation to the maintenance of a school's Catholic identity, and so forth are issues that other Catholic school systems in Africa and even in America face today. The new knowledge gained from this study of CASAN includes the fact that there are other innovative ways of funding school systems and the Tanzanian model is a case in point. At the same time, the *Jumuiya* method of teaching critical and dialogical dimensions of education has now been proposed in this study. This praxis method which is authentically Catholic and African offers Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi an effective tool of evangelization in the 21st century.

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Appendix A Checklist for Monitoring Focus Groups

Date _____

Participants _____

Topic _____ Time begin _____ Time
end _____

Moderator 1. Charles Kanai Moderator 2. X Moderator 3. Y

Directions: Check all areas as they are completed.

Before Focus Group

Moderator 3

- Clear bulletin board
- Set up and tested recording equipment
- Turned off PA system

Moderator 1 & 2

- Set up food and drinks
- Set up other materials (agenda, name tags, etc.)

Arrival tasks – moderator 1 & 3

- Directed participants to room
- Confirmed attendance list
- Handed out name tags

Moderator 1

- Greeted participants individually
- Explained use of tape recorder

Moderator 3

- Turned on recorder at _____ o'clock.

Start Focus Group

Moderator 1

- Introduced self and other moderators
- Thanked participants for coming
- Described how participants were chosen
- Explained purpose of focus group

Moderator 2

- Conducted ice-breaker activity
- Reemphasized time limits and agenda for session

Moderator 1

- Explained ground rules for discussion
- Explained looking at watch behavior

During Focus Group

Moderator 1

- Asked the question as planned
- Reminded participants when 2 minutes remained

Moderator 3

- Took notes

Moderator 1 & 2

- Paraphrased/ summarized responses
- Asked participants to clarify/ correct summary
- Maintained verbal and nonverbal neutrality
- Gave everyone a chance to speak
- Did not ask leading probes
- Stated probes mostly as commands rather than questions
- Stated probes mostly in open-ended form

Moderator 3

- Turned off tape recorder at _____ o'clock

Appendix B

Teachers' Dialogue

Teacher 1: It is clearly known that we have 3 core subjects that is, Mathematics, English and Kiswahili... if a student is not good in these three, they will not be admitted to do certain programs at the university.... For example, I had a boy in Alliance high school who had an A in the science subjects, he was not admitted to do medicine ...just because this student was not good in one language disqualified him from taking medicine... we had to counsel the boy and tell him that maybe God did not want him to do this kind of course...you will find that the emphasis in some subjects and even the way our schools are... the teachers in science and language departments are already getting higher salaries than those in arts subjects...and when it comes to providing the facilities, schools first buy mathematics books, then the science ones and then finally, humanity books are bought last.

Teacher 2: Teacher one has described something I wanted to talk about... the discrepancy that the government has created between teachers... it has already classified the teachers, just as it has classified the schools. The science and language teachers have been classified into an upper category while teachers in other subjects especially the arts are in another category. The first already have a better pay than others... those who teach science and languages are in a class of their own. In some schools, some school

heads do also favor teachers in those subjects by giving them the resources they require in order to do their job while teachers of say history and CRE are told you just need the Bible... it is the government, the society, everybody including the parents who tell the children to do better in science because it is more important...

Teacher 3: I am laughing because when the subjects are classified like that, it puts pressure even on teachers. For example, if you are teaching a language which is a compulsory subject, it means you will have a whole class and so you become overloaded with work... and even though other teachers feel they are looked at as second class teachers... I don't know. Some schools even classify subjects as deflators and others as boosters... they give them names

Teacher 4: Honestly in my school, we don't have anything like that as all subjects are equal. There is no subject that is less equal than the other because the student who is taking science is geared toward something... and the student who is taking history or geography is equally taken seriously. In our school, the KSCE system gives English 8 lessons and teachers still complain, Kiswahili has 6 and mathematics has between 7 and 8. When it comes to GCE and the International Baccalaureate (IB) systems, the subjects students are doing are given the same time...as a history teacher, I know am not a second class teacher and am still

marketable... I know that at a certain point in time, people decided to you know, that history and CRE can be taught by anybody and maybe because of the needs of society or the nation at that time, we needed to be more science oriented... and so we concentrated on sciences... but this should not be the case today, our universities are churning out very few history teachers....

Teacher 5. Okay, for me, I think this started way back at the University of Umofia it seems like those of us taking PRS (philosophy and religious studies) were nicknamed to be studying Poverty Related Subjects (laughter from group) and from that background, we knew we were headed nowhere.... And when the government started posting teachers, those with science related subjects were posted first and most of us were left behind and it was like everybody was celebrating we were left behind...and when you come to the schools, when parents come to meet teachers on open days, they will ask the CRE and history teachers, what don't we know about the bible or about Jesus and so forth...if it is history, they will ask, what is so difficult to understand about Vasco da Gama? And when it comes to making the timetable, I know this because I am involved, what usually happens is that you first deal with sciences, then languages and then ours become the last

Appendix C

Students' Dialogue

Moderator: let us talk about relationships we see in our schools. We have been talking about relationships between students and teachers... and some girls are complaining that some female teachers are not nice to them... let us talk now a little bit more about the relationships you see among teachers themselves and those between teachers and parents and teachers and principals.

Student 1: I will be very particular, in our school, I think the principal and the teachers do not have a very good relationship...okay, like last week, our principal was not there as she had gone to Mombasa for the national principal's meeting. The teachers were very free and they could come and leave at any time. They would come to class if they wanted, you see? But if she was there, the teachers are strictly in the school and they don't move about, they come to classes, etc.

Student 2: The teachers are not very much together with the principal because she tends to be a little conservative so that the school could run well but the teachers don't like that. On many parents-teachers meetings, many parents complain that teachers are always late to the meetings. This is usually a problem in our school since teachers will usually come late, if the meeting was scheduled to be 9am, most teachers will come around

11am. The parents come earlier and have to wait for teachers and thing like this are what cause conflicts between the principal and teachers. Because when she tries to make them see some things, they don't.

Student 3: I don't think our principal does feel superior. She knows her duties and therefore she feels free with everybody both teachers and students. the same thing happens between teachers and parents. If you go home and try to tell your mum, I don't like this teacher, she will ask you, why don't you like the teacher and the teacher is nice in meetings and is always taking care of us and doing this and that. You must be naughty or bad toward the teacher. I just want to say that the relationship between teachers, parents and principal is very good. This has brought improvement in the school because they always work as family.

Student 4: I personally don't think that there is a very good relationship between teachers and principal. This is because I still believe that the teachers are the cause of the transfer of our former principal. They believed that she was a spendthrift... because she was a woman of taste... she was exquisite and loved expensive things. She was a woman of class but unfortunately, the teachers saw this as a waste of money. But even if you think where the monies have gone, they have gone nowhere. ... teachers always used to complain about how the school used to waste money... for example in those days, all the events in first, second, third

and fourth form, there were always candles and roses for each event... with the new principal, we see that there are still problems between the principal and teachers because nowadays, we have a checklist form where we tick when a teacher comes and leaves.... I believe that formerly, the principal and administration and teachers had trust in each other and there was no need for this police thing.

Student 5: In our school, the principal and teachers are not social...yaani when the principal is around, you see teachers going the other way. They don't stay together and talk. The principal is always alone and quiet in his office. If as a student you go to report anything to the principal, you may have to go home for just a simple thing. So our principal is not that very nice.

Student 6: When I was in form one, our school had a white principal. The teachers were so accustomed to him and we were free with him. Then somehow he went back to America and now we have a sister. Somehow, its very hard to cope with her. You know we were just used to ... you know the way white people just love fun... and we were used to him and then when they brought this other principal who doesn't think about other people and somehow it is really hard to adapt to her... I think it all depends on how people take it because personally, if there is anything I

want to talk with the new principal, I can go to her office and chat... I

don't think our principal is feared.

Appendix D

Professionals' Dialogue

Moderator: At this point, though you have not stated it categorically, are you saying that it would be necessary for the leader or the head of a Catholic school to be a Catholic in order for the spirit of that school to be Catholic?

Professional 1: Not necessarily... there are a number of schools that I know of which are headed by persons who are not religious in the technical sense of the word. That is a religious priest, nun or a priest belonging to a diocese or congregation. In fact, quite a number of schools that used to be run by nuns and by priests are now being headed by good, fine Catholic faithful with tremendous success. We can give quite a number of places... in a place like St Monica girls, which has been running very well, Ms. George there has been doing a sterling job... if you think of a school like Maji Matamu high school after the priest who was the principal there left, there is now a fine Catholic lady who is doing a sterling job... and there have been instances where in a Catholic sponsored school, a non Catholic was appointed to head the school, though there have been hostilities in certain cases, there have also been instances where such non-Catholic principals worked for the furtherance of the traditions of a Catholic school. And therefore we do not want to be clerical in our approach to these matters and imagine that because a school

has a priest or a nun, it is going to translate immediately into achieving a Catholic spirit

Professional 2: If you want to maintain the school's Catholic tradition... since the Catholics do have a chance to give an input on whoever is to be appointed to head a Catholic sponsored school... I think that what Sister has said regarding the success of these Catholic schools is true concerning priests and nuns as heads of schools... and there are a number of competent lay people who also happen to be Catholics and they are doing a wonderful job. But in the public domain, the perception that a school is being run by a priest or a nun and you can even find that there is a racial angle to that, that if this person happens to be white, then the public perceives that the school is better managed. There is a management question here, that a school managed by a white is better than one managed by an African. And you will hear the public say after we Africanize the headship of the school, that the school is now going down...so people like the ones Sister has mentioned have a hard time especially when they are taking over from these former heads.

Professional 3: I was going to support what Sister and Brother have said here... and suggest that you actually take a little time and talk to parents... you will hear that a majority of them would like to go to a Catholic school with a nun heading it if it's a girls school. I am not sure about the priest

heading schools...! Because I know there have been very many unsuccessful cases of priests heading school. But the nuns have been more successful, and I don't know why.

Moderator: How about you No. 4

Professional 4: it is difficult for me to judge that one. But I was in a meeting once, we have this meeting every year at Holy Family with all the heads of Catholic schools. and I was there as the head. And there were some heads there who were not Catholic and when this question was brought up they were very angry. They said, hey, I am trying to do the best job that I can and supporting everything the Catholic church wants me to support, so why should I be sacked just because I am not Catholic? Now this was a very tricky issue because the Catholic church's not the one paying the man's salary.

Professional 1: But then there is a gender angle to this also. That parents would like to take their daughters to a nun school.... But since we are discussing Catholic schools, there have been instances of successful Catholic heads who are heading schools that are not Catholic...I am thinking of Mountain View High school. The head is a Catholic lady and the school is sponsored by the ABC church and they have no objection at all to that. The students who are mostly of ABC faith are very happy the

way things are going and even the Catholic students are very happy the
way things are going

Appendix E

University of Dayton

Informed consent form

Dear Research Participant:

Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi: An Exploratory Study. The research is being conducted by Charles Kanai a student in the School of Education and Allied Professions at the University of Dayton, and is seeking information that will be useful in the field of Catholic Education. The aims of the research are: (1) to identify the most suitable type of Catholic school in Nairobi in the 21st century; and (2) to assist policy makers make informed decisions on what choice to make concerning them.

In accordance with these aims, the following procedures will be used: (a) deliberate selection of focus group candidates by principals, moderators and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools (b) random selection of recruited candidates to become participants; (c) conducting 10 focus group interviews; (d). We anticipate the total number of participants to be about 60. If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following: (1) agree to travel to interview venue; (2) To allow only one person to speak at a time; (3) that you will agree to spend one to two hours interviewing (Include an estimation of the time which will be required to complete the research procedures).

Your consent to be a research participant is strictly voluntary and should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects on your; health employment, or grades. The risks of involvement in this study are minimal but may include; spending your time and money to come to the interview center. The researcher assures that the information you will provide will be kept in a safe and locked cabinet in the researcher's office. The following measures have been taken to further minimize the risks. A token gift will be given at the end of the interview to compensate for the time and money spent through your participation. The use of pseudonyms as identifiers to information provided.

Since there may not be any direct benefits to you as a participant, your participation in this study is very much appreciated. It helps us understand the cultural context under which the present Catholic school system in the Archdiocese of Nairobi operates. This in return will help us develop a vision on the type of Catholic schools that future students in Catholic schools would like to have. By completing and returning the informed consent form, you show that you agree to participate in this study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation in the study, please feel free to contact me at charleskanai@hotmail.com, or my supervisor, Dr. Thomas Hunt at

Thomas.Hunt@notes.udayton.edu, or the chair of the Committee for the
Protection of Human Subjects, Jon Nieberding at
jon.nieberding@udri.udayton.edu

Voluntary Consent

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this study by _____ and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to participate in this experiment.

Signature of Participant

Date

Researcher
Date

Date

Witness

Appendix F

Focus group questions

General education in the country

1. What is your view of high school education in the country? What dream(s) or vision(s) do you have for this country and how can schools help achieve them?
(Probe: The role played by missionaries and colonialists in Kenya's education, weaknesses and strengths of general education in Kenya)
2. From your experience of the education system in the country, are there subjects that have been more emphasized than others in the high school curricula? What other subjects should be included in the high school curricula but are currently not?
(Probe: subjects taught and those not taught, liberal arts education vs. science education, hidden and unhidden curricula, banking vs. critical thinking education)

Catholic schools in general

3. What in your opinion should a Catholic school/education be?
(Probe: Philosophy, goals and visions of Catholic schools).
4. In general, do CASAN meet your concept of Catholic education?
(Probe: whether thoughts on Catholic education are sacrosanct to their experience of the same)

Questions to respondents concerning their home schools (schools they are affiliated with)

5. Do you think the school with which you are affiliated with meets the concept of Catholic education you described earlier?
(Probe: how teachers teach, strengths and weaknesses of each school system, banking v. critical)
6. To what extent do members of the school community: administrators, teachers, students, parents and others interact with each other? In your opinion, do you think the level of interaction among the people in the school needs to be improved?
(Probe: inter-personal relationships, whether these interactions are characterized by domineering or stimulating engagements that foster learning within and ' outside the school)
7. Do you think Catholic schools have had a positive or a negative impact on students who attend them?
(Probe: whether Catholic schools are a real need or a felt need in the Archdiocese, in the development of ethical, moral and cultural values in the country, justice, peace and environmental issues)
8. To conclude and in the light of all that has been said today, what do the CASAN need to do to improve?
(Probe: Separation of church and state in Catholic schools, leadership and change process in hierarchical organizations)

Appendix G

Rev. Charles Kanai
P.O
BOX 33
Thika.

Email: charleskanai@hotmail.com
Tel: 0720384434

Dear

Mr./ Mrs./ Ms/ Hon/ Dr/ Rev _____

Ref: Request for participation in our research on Catholic schools

We are pleased to write this letter to you, to ask for your participation in our research study on Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. The purpose of this study is to identifying the type of Catholic schools that are of most relevance to the needs and aspirations of the 21st century high school students in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

This doctoral study hopes to analyze the "voices" of stakeholders from the three types of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi namely: parochial, private and public sponsored schools. In order to achieve this, ten focus group sessions with the following groups of stakeholders: students, parents, administrators and professionals, have been scheduled.

In collaboration with other co-moderators, and the Education Secretary Archdiocese of Nairobi, sixty participants will be recruited in this study. No socioeconomic or linguistic barriers will be imposed to deny the socially and economically challenged their participation in these focus group interviews. Because of your experience and/or expertise in matters concerning education/Catholic schools, you have been identified as one of the suitable participants in this study. Your agreeing to become a research participant is therefore requested and is greatly appreciated.

Education secretary the Archdiocese of Nairobi,

Moderator,

Date:

Date:

Appendix H

Plan for Beginning Focus Groups

Outline	Wording
Introduction: of self and other moderators	Hellow, my name is Charles and I will be moderating our discussion today. With me are X and Y who will be helping me to moderate. You will see X and me writing down some things as we go along. I would also like to introduce Y who will also be take notes today.
Thank you: How chosen:	Thank you for taking your time to come. All of you have randomly been selected from a group of candidates with similar or near similar qualities. We believe that through you, we shall learn a lot about Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi because you have some experiences about these schools.
Background filler: Tonight' purpose:	Having been a student in a public school and later on a private Catholic school; and having taught in a Catholic sponsored high school, and been a Superintendent of Catholic schools, and having taken time to study Catholic schools outside the country for a number of years, I have some little understanding of how Catholic schools in Nairobi function. However, you are more directly related to these schools and your experience will help us identify the true picture of Catholic schools today.
Ice-breaker:	We'll be using just first names when speaking with one another today. Please introduce yourself and tell us something special about: your school, your place of work, and your family. Moderator(s) should allow all around the table to introduce themselves.
Time limit, restating Agenda/purpose:	We will have about an hour to two hours of discussion today. We will have a break about halfway through. Given our time constraints, I'll ask everyone to stay on topic so that we can address the task at hand. To discover the nature of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

Requests to help us
(ground rules):

Besides remaining focused on the topic, there are some other ways you could be of help. First, we want to hear from all of you –no matter how trivial your comment may be to you, it may be important information to us. Also, please take turns while talking. If two of you talk at once, the rest of us may not be able to hear everything that is said. One of the most important things to remember is to speak your mind- we want to know what your actual opinions are on the topic. The more ideas we hear today, the better. We're not here to evaluate any ideas or to come to a consensus; besides, there are no right or wrong ideas anyway.

About looking at
watch

Finally, a couple of other things: Feel free to ask questions to each other – I don't need to be the only one who asks questions! Also, if you see me look at my watch, please don't think I am impolite or ready to end the discussion – I'll just be trying to keep up on schedule.

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