

**THE ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS TOWARDS CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NAKIGO SUB-COUNTY  
IGANGA DISTRICT IN UGANDA**

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## DECLARATION

I, NAIWUMBWE ZAINA, declare that the contents of this research report is my original work and it has not previously in its entirety or in part, submitted it to any university for any award.

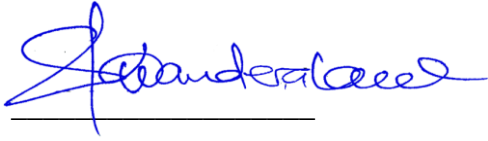
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## **APPROVAL**

This research report has been under my supervision and guidance. It is now ready for submission and award in the related field under the education faculty.

Mr. Wandera Robert



Wandera Robert

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## **ABSTRACT**

Christian Religious Education (CRE) has been offered for a long time as a subject of study in Primary schools in Uganda. At the beginning, it was taught for the conversion of Africans to Christianity. However; after independence, it gained a new orientation of an academic subject that could be used to achieve the national goals of education such as molding students' behaviour and fostering respect for human personality. CRE assumed a low status due to its limitation in the provision of opportunities for self-employment. Hence, the subject became an elective which few students chose. However, in the last decade, there have been many student riots, which have led to the destruction of property, loss of school time due to unprecedented closures, and loss of life. This may be an indicator of the lack of emphasis on core moral values that CRE was expected to instill in students. This study investigated the attitudes of teachers towards CRE as a tool for shaping moral values of students and it also sought the suitability of the teaching methods used in CRE in meeting objectives within the affective domain in which attitude changes lie. A mixed research design was adopted. The study was carried out among CRE teachers and Form Four students in 10 selected Primary schools in Nakigo Sub-County Iganga District. The sample size for this study comprised of 307 students and 31 CRE teachers. Teachers Attitude Questionnaire (TAQ) and Students' Questionnaire (SAQ), containing both closed and open-ended items were used to collect data. Data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 9.0. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Tests of significance were performed at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The results of the study indicated that the study of CRE is important and relevant in the world today due to its contribution to moral and spiritual development and provision of career opportunities. However, the wide nature of the syllabus, peer pressure, lack of suitable adult role models and human weakness affected its effectiveness in bringing about positive behavioral change. The results could therefore be useful to policy makers in the Ministry of Education; Curriculum Developers Centre (CDC) in that they can revise the syllabus to suit the current moral needs in schools. CRE teachers may also benefit in that the results may help them to adjust their instructional strategies. Counselors may help students to come out of the web of peer pressure and human weakness.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background Information

Religion has been defined differently by various people. According to Mugambi (2010), religion is defined historically as the embracement of beliefs, rites and institutions, which fulfil specific functions of a society. To others, religion means the worship of higher powers from the sense of need (Braden, 1981). According to these definitions, religion recognizes the supreme power and also expresses and explains the values of the society.

Man is concerned with finding out why things happen the way they do, who he is and what the universe is (Iheoma, 2017). Man believes that there is a higher power concerned with all this. Mbiti (2019) asserts that religion permeates the whole way of life of man and it does not exist as a separate institution. It is interlaced into the fabric of all institutions and aspects of life. Ondiek, (1988) as cited by Barnard & Burges (2016) note that religion is important to man in that it teaches people about the universal brotherhood of mankind and the consequent need for harmonious co-existence. They argue further that religion attempts to make unusual phenomena comprehensible, it is a source of moral guidance, teaches about virtues of humility, value of life and encourages human development through education. Religion integrates people into ritual ceremonies, which bind them -into moral values and beliefs. It provides values that safeguard and uphold the society. These values include truth, love, respect and decency (Mbiti, 2015). Therefore, one of the characteristics of religion is moral prescription which stresses that some things are good and should be encouraged and vice versa (Johnston, 2017). Johnston continues to argue that religion is unique in that it claims a 'higher' source of moral values in which the sacred is invoked in order to influence behaviour. Watson (2013) notes that all the great world religions have high moral codes that teaches selflessness and love for others. He also admits that though moral values can be held or lived without religion, the link between religion and morality cannot be readily separated.

The school aims at molding the youth to become men and women of integrity and substance. Education is a form of socialization and reflects the needs and interests of society (Iheoma, 2017). The school attempts to transmit the cultural moral values, which the society appreciates and endeavors to attain so that the youth can fit into the larger society after school. These values include self-control, helpfulness, respect for individual's property, respect for authority and respect for other people (Shepard, 1977; Schaffer & Lamm, 1992).

Watson & Groenewegen ( 2013) argue that it is necessary for students in schools to receive part of their education through Religious Education (RE). This is because one of the purposes of RE is to teach morality. That is, RE is understood as moral education through which students' values and attitudes are molded towards a desirable and accepted form by society. Examples of such values are kindness, compassion, tolerance, co-operation and concern for justice. Religious Education is seen as a way to reduce crime and promote a stable society (Goldman, 1964). The teaching of RE also helps to promote respect and understanding of religion and people (Watson, 1993). It is in this connection that Aduda (2001) asserts that providing learners with only cognitive skills is not enough. Schools are not useful if they produce bright but intolerant and violent people, who cannot accommodate and accept others. Neither are they useful if they produce people without morals. Christians believe that their faith provides a more adequate basis for life and thought than a secular world view and regard the world as lacking an ultimate purpose and value other than those ascribed to it by individuals (Gunton. 1992). Students need to know God and how their behaviour, the world and society around them should be, these virtues are learnt in Religious Education (Byrnes, 1984).

However. Religious Education faces many challenges. These include: problems of global evil and suffering, technology, materialistic lifestyle and damaging criticisms of various religious leaders and teachers among others (Grimmitt, 2017; Watson, 1993). Concerns about morality today and solutions to human problems are seen as mechanistic and so religion is left out (Watson. 1993). All these affect the perceived value of Religious Education and as a result, it continues to have a low status.

There are two religions that are taught in Uganda's Primary schools whose syllabi have been approved by the NCDC (National Curriculum Development Centre). These are Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and Christian Religious Education (CRE). Islam is the youngest major world religion and its founder is prophet Mohammed (MoE, 1988; Ondiek, 1989; KIE, 1989; Mugambi 2010). Islam means submission to God (Allah). The Koran and Hadith are the main sources of the content of learning. Islam stresses on the acceptance of God and adoption of right or virtuous way of life (MoE, 1988). A Muslim should, therefore, maintain purity in every form. A person should become conscious of the existence of God which should stimulate true moral qualities corresponding to every physical action (Ahmad,2018) The basic moral principles of Islam are based on the practical aspects of religion, that is Fighi (MoE, 1988) as cited by Poulin (2022). These are the internal (spiritual) life and the external

aspects. which are the simple practical practices of a Muslim in daily life. A Muslim is expected to maintain harmony and keep his body and mind clean and pure. It stresses upon decency, love and charity and discourages pride and vanity. In understanding the objectives of IRE, the learner is expected to judge others' experiences, avoid unverified matters, engage in a wide range of experiences and choose the best (Rusen &Neville, 1994).

Christianity is the religion founded by Jesus Christ of Nazareth and the teachings are found in the Bible (MoE, 1988). Jesus stressed two main themes: love for God and love for one's (Matthew: 22:37). In the Bible, Jesus is portrayed as a compassionate person. He encouraged, consoled, fed and healed people (MoE, 1988). Christians try to follow his way of life. Among the objectives of teaching CRE are the moral concerns such as self- respect, respect for others and for their property. From the foregoing discussion, it emerges that the major aim of teaching these religions is to offer to the learners experiences that would enable them make positive contributions to the society and to lay a strong foundation for the development of self-discipline, integrity, diligence, adaptability and co-operation (MOEs, 2012 report). They are, therefore, all concerned with behaviour and moral development of Learners in their early age.

## **1.2 Historical Background**

The teaching of CRE in Uganda can be traced back in the 19th century with the coming of the European Missionaries (Church of Uganda 2019). It was during this time that formal education was largely started in Uganda and Christian Religious Education held a central part in the objectives of teaching (Mungai, 2012). For many people, therefore, CRE was identified with Christian Missionaries.

Christian education all through the colonial period was conversional. The Bible was the main text for teaching. The main aim of the missionaries' coming to Uganda was to convert, regenerate and civilize Africans (Sifuna, 1976as cited by Poulin 2022). The goal of missionary education was to convert Africans and train catechists who could both preach and teach the converts. Consequently, Africans were expected to leave their traditional religious practices which were thought by Europeans to be superstitious, immoral and ungodly and adopt Christian values. Many European Christian denominations were involved in this work and the school was, therefore, used as a means of spreading the Good News to win converts for each denomination. Since the early times, Christian churches have had close links with

education and the teaching of CRE was always a feature of the curriculum (Iheorna, 1997 as cited by Poulin 2022).

During the colonial period, education in Uganda became predominantly religious in which the lives of the holy men of the Bible were magnified. Such an exposure aimed at giving the youth an education that would lead them to be good Christians. At the same time, it aimed at enabling them to develop such habits of industry and economy that would enable them to become good citizens, who would be able to support and take care of themselves when no longer supported by the missionaries (Groenewegen, 2013).

After independence, the Commission was set up to look into the general problems affecting education in Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 1964). One of the issues it considered was whether religious education and other religions accepted in the country, should be taught in a secular and a multi-religious society of Uganda. The commission concluded that Religious Education, in as far as it was concerned with moral growth and the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, should continue to play this vital role in the school curriculum.

Religious Education, therefore, took a new look. The content and nature of the subject matter changed from that of converting Africans to Christianity to an academic subject so that it could be utilized in the realization of one of the national goals of education: to consciously change positively the attitudes of learners and foster respect for human personality (Republic of Uganda. 1964). The Commission, therefore, recommended that Religious Education continue being taught in Ugandan schools. In this regard, CRE has therefore, been holding an important position in the educational system before and after independence.

The objectives of the CRE curriculum aim at influencing the moral upbringing of students by inculcating moral values. The general objectives of CRE as stated in the syllabus include: developing the spiritual and moral insights in reaching conclusions and making appropriate decisions in a changing and developing country, developing a sense of self-respect and respect for others and promoting unity by developing understanding, respect and appreciation of other people's faiths and living in love with all people. It is an optional subject in secondary schools but compulsory in Primary schools. This further shows the importance it is given by the Ugandan society.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

According to NCDC (2020 report), the objective of teaching CRE in Primary schools, is to enable the learner to develop spiritual and moral insights in reaching conclusions and making decisions appropriate to a Christian in a changing world. Through CRE, students are expected to develop positive attitudes of self-respect, respect for others and their property. However, inspite of CRE being mandatory in almost all public schools in both primary and secondary, the secondary schools make it optional thereafter, there has been a concomitant increase in irresponsible behaviour and unacceptable acts among some students in schools in Uganda in recent times. The cases of rampant lawlessness, drug abuse, destruction of property and lack of respect for human life, may be a reflection of a lack of core moral values that CRE is expected to inculcate in the students. This study therefore sought to investigate the attitude of teachers towards the teaching and learning of CRE in selected primary schools in Nakigo Sub-County Iganga District In Uganda.

### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the attitudes of teachers towards teaching of CRE in primary schools in Nakigo Sub-County Iganga District In Uganda.

### **1.5 Specific Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine the attitudes of teachers on the importance of CRE in enhancing moral values:
2. To determine the attitudes of teachers on the relevance of the themes in the CRE syllabus to moral development of the youth;
3. To determine the appropriateness of the methods used in the teaching of CRE with changing of attitudes

### **1.6 research questions**

The research questions for this study were as follows:

1. What are the attitudes of teachers and students on the importance of CRE in enhancing moral values?
2. Are the themes in CRE syllabus relevant to the moral development of the youth?
3. Are methods used in teaching CRE in schools appropriate for development of positive attitudes?

## **1.7 Justification of the study**

Every society has a code of conduct and values which the members are expected to observe. If a member does not behave as expected, then that behaviour is termed as abnormal or unacceptable. CRE is taught in schools with an aim of helping the students to develop positive values such as self-respect and respect for others and their property. Though CRE continues to be taught in Primary schools in Uganda, this does not seem to translate into positive learners' behaviour. In the recent past, cases of students' unrest and disruptive behaviour have intensified. These include the destruction of property, drug abuse and harmful religious practices (Government of Uganda 2001). This is shocking and unacceptable to parents, stakeholders and educationists. Hence the attitude has prompted the researcher to investigate the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of CRE in primary schools.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

The study sought to provide empirical data on teachers' attitudes towards teaching and learning of CRE and its relevance in inculcating positive moral values in the children in Primary schools. The teaching of CRE appears not to achieve these objectives in view of rampant indiscipline in primary schools. This study attempted to shed light on why this is happening.

The information could be useful to teachers, as this may help them to adjust their instructional procedures in order to make the subject relevant. Knowledge acquired from the study may also be useful to guidance and counseling teachers.

Policy makers, the Ministry of Education and curriculum developers Centre may also benefit from the findings of the study because additional data is required for making curriculum and evaluation decisions which may make the subject more relevant and useful.

### **1.9.1 Scope of the Study**

This study was confined to selected CRE teachers and students in selected primary schools in Nakigo Sub-county Iganga District in Uganda. This was because CRE teachers were chosen because they were responsible for the implementation of the syllabus while students were selected due to their conduct and interest they show in Religious Education subject. The selected schools was Bulubandi, Bugabwe, Nakigo P/s, Busambira P/s, Nawanzu P/s, and Busowobi P/s Primary in Nakigo Sub-county.

### **1.9.2 Limitations of the Study**

Due to the limited time available for this study, the researcher considered selected primary schools in Nakigo Sub-county Iganga District in Uganda. Samples of CRE teachers Learners were the subjects for the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Several scholars of Religious Education note that literature on CRE in primary schools is plentiful but mostly written by Western Europeans, particularly the British (Ombuna 1994; Wainaina 1984 as cited by Poulin 2022). However, there are a few local writers such as Mbiti (1975), Mugambi (2010) and Ihoema (2017), among others. This literature review was used to contextualize and illuminate this study.

#### **2.2 Religious Education in Schools**

CRE is not just an object of human curiosity but also a source of emotional security that gives self-confidence to people (Eavey, 1968). It is supposed to bring change both at home and in schools. It is, therefore, important to look at CRE in the light of educational and social conditions (Eavey, 1968; Republic of Kenya, 1964).

Religious Education is important as it has been identified as providing answers to the ultimate questions raised by man. It assists man in the search for truth as he/she responds to God's revelation and provides an understanding of beliefs in a way that could enrich one's own religious horizons and experiences (Holms, 1975; Ehoema, 1997). CRE is not only concerned with the development of religious and spiritual understanding, but also with the understanding of human nature and issues of harmonious social co-existence. Therefore, CRE teaches students how to live harmoniously with each other and with other people in the society.

#### **2.3 Theoretical review**

This study was guided by the functionalist theory developed by Emile Durkheim in 1856. The focus of this theory is the concept of function (Schaefer & Lamm, 1985). In this theory, Emile noted the positive role played by religion in society. He noted that religion is of vital importance in all societies as it plays a key function in assisting social cohesion or solidarity. Functionalists emphasize that schooling performs many functions that are essential in maintaining the stability of society. Among these are the transmission of culture, knowledge, promotion of social integration and maintenance of self-control (Schaefer & Lamm, 1985).

In early societies, knowledge, skills, values and beliefs, which enhanced social cohesion, were transmitted from one generation to the other, through initiation of the young by the

older generation (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). In modern times, education is viewed as a conscious effort by society to promote certain important values and beliefs of the community (Ondiek, 1986; Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Ondiek (1986) further claims, "that schools are social institutions created and maintained by the society in order to perpetuate certain aspects of its culture, through purposive schooling and learning" (p. 26). Schooling enhances attitudes and values that the society thinks are essential for its propagation (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992). Ondiek (1986) and Shiundu & Omulando (1992) argue that education boosts environmental and inherited contributions to the shaping of students' behaviour in the desired direction. Functional approach emphasises that behaviour is directed towards accomplishing goals that are socially defined (Light, Sheldon & Woodhead, 1991). Ondiek further notes that education offers liberating skills, which help people to control themselves, their lives and their environment. Such qualities as honesty, industry, sharing, love of self and others and respect for other peoples' property are encouraged (Ondiek, 1986, Scheafer & Lamm, 1995; Shiundu & Omulando, 1992).

The purpose of cognition, which is translated through social units such as formal institutions, is to guide intelligent action (Light, et al 1991). The Christian principles that are taught through CRE emphasize virtues that help to keep the school and the society as a whole in harmony. These include loving your neighbour as yourself and doing unto others what you would like them do unto you. Other principles that are stressed include love, charity and selflessness. respect of self and universal brotherhood of mankind among others.

## **2.4.0 Empirical review**

### **2.4.1 Effects of Teachers' Attitudes on the Teaching/ Learning of CRE**

Mbiti (1991) contends that a large number of teachers are in the profession only because they could not find a job of their choice and that the profession often attracts candidates who were not keenly interested in it. Kariuki and Kibera (1996) claim that even after teachers complete their training, teaching is only a waiting bay for other opportune careers. Experience has shown that when students are making career choices to train in public universities, most of them choose teaching as the third or fourth option. Therefore, they get to teaching only after other areas have failed. This can be attributed to a lack of interest in the profession, which may result in lack of enthusiasm and motivation (Ndirangu, 2000).

Remuneration is another contentious issue. From experience as a teacher, arts teachers are paid less than science and technical teachers and this causes discontent. This demotivates teachers and causes them to feel that their subjects are not important. Nkosana (1998) found

out that if the teachers feel that a subject is not important to an extent that they do not emphasise it, students are not to blame for having the same attitude. At the same time, teachers' attitudes and behaviour towards teaching could affect their teaching styles in such a way as to make a difference in students' outcomes (Husen & Noonan, 1978; Twoli, 1986).

A report from district education officer (2001) shows that students who had dropped CRE in favor of other subjects felt that the subject was difficult, abstract or too historical. This could be a reflection of poor approaches used in the teaching of CRE in schools. Some teachers do not seem to have fully understood what the subject is all about. It is a bit like trying to paint a picture with no picture frame in mind resulting into confusion, distraction and difficulty in applying oneself to anything.

It was important, therefore, to find out the stimulating imagination, stirring interest, encouraging curiosity and giving the child a lot of teaching and leads the child to adventuring, intellectual hunts, opening of windows in the mind, a positive attitude towards the teaching of CRE. Good planning by the teacher enhances good and able to prepare properly for teaching it. This could probably make the students develop their students accordingly. They can be more effective if they are seen as experts in their areas need to know the overall value and purpose of CRE (Watson, 1993). This will help them advice resulting into confusion, distraction and difficulty in applying oneself to anything.

Emphasis laid on other subjects has effect on students' attitude towards CRE. Therefore, religion Education must work together to the benefit of the society. Society without religion is lame (2001) therefore, schools would be useless if they only produced bright but tolerant people with religious values and moral.

Though CRE is a core subject in moral and spiritual upbringing of students, CRE does not seem to offer these skills, students tend to choose subjects that would provide employment because candidates are required credibility and has a low economic status. CRE has, therefore, lost its education intent in Ugandan schools as result of no recognition of the subject in job market today. Emphasis has been placed on science and other subjects which could indirectly affect teachers' attitude towards teaching and learning of CRE in schools. This may indicate that man is has direct concern on material than moral, possessions, power, social status, pleasure and entertainment among others.

## **2.5 Effect of attitudes of teachers on the CRE syllabus in Primary schools**

CRE syllabus is abstract and historical in nature and therefore divorced from learners' experiences (Gachegoh, 2010). An ideal syllabus should be relevant to individual pupils and society. It should be suitable for the age group or stage of development of the pupils and integrated or linked with other subjects in the curriculum (Ayot and Patel, 1987). According to IOfEC (2000), CRE syllabus derives its structure from five main domains. These are; The Old Testament; The African Heritage; The New Testament; The life of Christian Communities in the past; Contemporary Christian Living.

This organization starts from unknown to the known rather than vice versa which should be the norm, making it difficult for students to understand the immediate relevance of CRE. This may perpetuate students' negative attitudes towards the subject. Indeed, the subject is an elective in form three and this kind of a structure may discourage the students from pursuing the subject. Further, Shiundu (1980) and Otiende (1982) have also identified the problems of CRE as being too abstract and divorced from the child's immediate surroundings hence its low social status at primary and secondary school levels. The main complaint from teachers on the other hand has been that the secondary school syllabus is overloaded with content, therefore, teachers tend to rely heavily on teaching for examination rather than application of the content of the subject (Groenewegen, 1993).

Though some modifications were made in 1992, Groenewegen noted that the reduction in the aspects of contemporary Christian living was somewhat unfortunate. As a result, the traditional biblical components of the Old and New Testament have become much more prominent at the expense of more relevant contemporary aspects. This is because the former is easier to examine but it is a sacrifice at the altar of the examination system. There is need therefore, to shift emphasis from examination to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Further, Evening (1974) contends that one of the major problems in understanding Religious Education of which CRE is part, is that the syllabus is not suitable for the age group of the student. This is because those who make the syllabus are adults and find it difficult to look into the child's mind or to identify moral aspects to be taught at a certain age. Therefore, it is easy to make a syllabus which does not fit the age of the child (Malusu, 1981). This could lead to lack of understanding of the content by the students leading further to a negative attitude towards the subject. Specialists who understand child psychology and development should, therefore, make the syllabus.

Other problems faced by students in understanding the Old Testament books results from among other factors, lack of archaeological and historical support for Bible stories and the fact that CRE is clothed in Western traditions (Ombuna, 1994). Constant use of the Bible also makes the subject boring and difficult to answer application questions (Wassike, 1985). Bell, cited by Wassike (1985), visited Kenya, courtesy of Churches Education Association (CEA) to teach educationists on the theory and practice of teaching CRE in schools. He noted that CRE needed more than a factual knowledge to be an educational task. It should be appraised to help children cope with the present and the future. Watson (1993) noted that to some students, CRE is an embarrassment, dull, irrelevant, a soft option and dangerous as it tries to get into peoples' morals. While to others, it is tremendously important, central to curriculum and exciting. As such there is need to choose well-connected experiences which will cater for both groups. There is, therefore, a need to evaluate the structure of the CRE syllabus so as to make it comprehensive and relevant to the changing times. This would make the students see its relevance to everyday life. This would lead to a positive change of attitude.

## **2.6 Effect of teaching methods of CRE with changing of teachers attitudes**

Watson (1993) note that the most fundamental factor in the teaching of any subject is the teacher. An effective CRE teacher is not only able to create a good rapport with students but is also good at organizing the subject. It is obvious that experience and knowledge yield dividends in the classroom. In the secondary schools, considerable sophistication is called for in order to sustain students' interest. This is because students can pick many notions from every method teachers use. The relevance of an educational programme is to a large extent determined by the quality of teachers. If teachers are misfits or are indifferent to their responsibilities, the whole programme is likely to be ineffective and largely wasted (Mwangi, 2000). This may make the student develop a negative attitude towards a programme or a subject, resulting in the objectives of the course not being met.

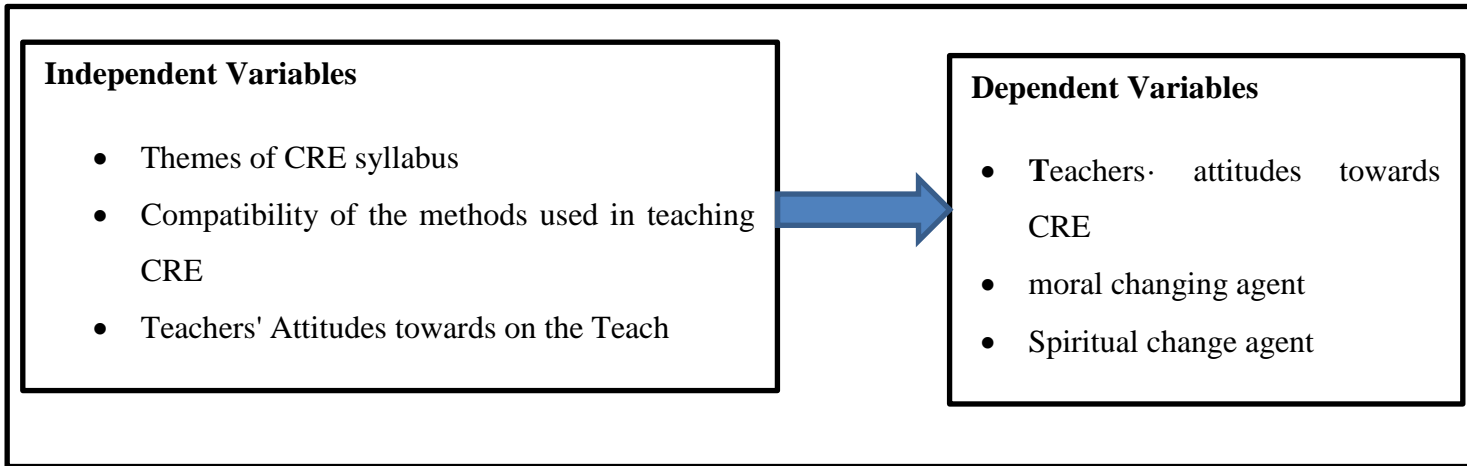
Different scholars hold differing views about good teaching. Some say that it is as a result of teacher training in a college or university, others view it as a matter of teachers "dynamic personality" and still others argue that it is revealed by the discipline the teacher is able to maintain in the classroom. However, Ryan contends that whatever the stand, competent teachers should have a mastery of technical skills of teaching to facilitate students learning and display attitudes which foster learning.

Kathuri (1990) observes that Teachers never cover the content as expected nor use the practical oriented methods necessary for developing the anticipated skills and attitudes. They neither use practical methods nor teaching aids. Teachers use the lecture method mostly in teaching at secondary school level. Though this method saves time during instruction, it should not be overemphasised as the learner may remain passive and slavishly follow the teacher without any critical input. Practical methods should not only apply to science subjects where laboratories are used. but also to the arts subjects such as CRE. In addition to the lecture method, other methods advocated are audio-visual presentations, field trips, demonstrations, role-plays, socio-drama, creative methods such as poetry and dance, among others.

Life Approach and Social and Life Designs are also important methods for teaching CRE because they help the learner to relate the knowledge learnt to everyday life experiences. These methods help to overcome situations in which some of the academic disciplines are felt to be divorced from reality. Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Comenius (cited in Sifuna, 1976; Shiundu & Omulando, 1992) emphasise the need to place pupils' interests at the centre of the learning process. They argue that children learn nothing from books and rote memorization as these make learning entirely meaningless and uninteresting. They advocate a curriculum where the child, not the subject matter, determines both the quality and quantity of learning. Opportunities should, therefore, be created to link the children's past and present experiences with what they recognize to be the central concept of religion. It is in this light that Gachegoh (1990) and Malusu (1981) recommend that CRE be made more relevant through the use of the child's experiences. This is likely to make the subject more exciting for learners.

Another teaching/ learning approach related to the above is the Systematic Method (Groenewegen, 1993). This approach assists the learner to see relationships between what is known and the unknown, thus laying a good basis for what is to be learnt. The learner can learn from any exchange with the environment as organised by the teacher, so long as it is well organised to enable the learner to conceptualise events. This study sought to find out if these methods are applied relevantly during the teaching of CRE, so as to enhance positive changes in behaviour.

## 2.7 Conceptual frame work



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the description and justification of research methodology that was used in the study. It describes the research design, population, sampling, and instrumentation, administration of research questionnaires and data analysis. The purpose of this study was to determine the attitudes of teachers towards CRE in selected Primary schools in Nakigo Sub-county Iganga district in Uganda.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted a qualitative research approach. The research design describes the procedure for conducting the study, including when, from whom and under what conditions the data will be obtained (Schumacher 2010). The study conducted a focus group interview with participants in three primary schools of Busia District because a focus group interview is a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Lekhesa 2008).

A qualitative approach is a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of the participants, asks broad or general questions, collects data consisting largely of words or texts from the participants, and describes, analyses and conducts an inquiry in a subjective manner (Creswell 2008:46). McMillan and Schumacher (2010:320) claim that qualitative research is an accepted methodology for many important questions and makes significant contributions to both theory and practice.

Qualitative designs can vary significantly depending on the theoretical framework, philosophy, assumptions about the nature of knowledge and field of study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:459) explain qualitative as a type of research that refers to an in-depth study using face to face or observation techniques to collect data from people in their natural settings. In qualitative research numerous forms of data are collected and examined from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multi-faceted situation (Tsomo, 2012:50).

#### **3.2 Location of the Study**

The study was carried out in selected secondary schools in Nakigo Iganga District in Uganda. This district was selected because of its nature, accessibility and familiarity to the researcher and the existence of poor performance and neglect of CRE subject in Primary schools.

### **3.3 Population**

The target population comprised of all CRE teachers and some pupils from selected primary schools in Nakigo Iganaga district. The pupils were selected in this study because they observe the conduct of teachers when CRE subject is to be taught.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

According to a report obtained from the Iganga District Education Office (2001), there were more than 134 primary schools in the district. Due to time and financial constraints, schools in all the divisions could not be visited. Sampling was, therefore, carried out to provide a sample which could give information that was used to make decisions about a much larger number of cases (Kathuri & Pals, 1993).

The sampling frame was obtained from the class registers of learners of the selected schools in Nakigo Sub-county Iganga district. Two divisions were purposively selected. These were Iganga Municipality and Iganga rural. This was because the two divisions were accessible and familiar to the researcher. The population of the selected students in these divisions was 179 and 110 respectively, totaling to 289.

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

Attitudes can either be positive or negative. Attitudes are measured by the use of attitude scales, which may be in the form of either. five point likert scales or semantic differentiation (Nannully, 1978; Kerlinger, 1983). Various instruments may be used for collecting attitudinal data. for example, questionnaires (Nunnally, 1978). Tuckman (1972) argues that questionnaires make it possible for the researcher to measure what a person knows (knowledge), likes and dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs). Consequently. the questionnaire was found to be an appropriate tool for data collection for this study.

### **3.6 Teachers' Attitude Questionnaire (TAQ)**

This consisted of items which were both closed and open -ended on the attitudes of teachers towards the teaching and learning of CRE. Specific areas of focus were; the importance of CRE as a moral changing agent, the adequacy of the syllabus content, the teaching and learning methods used and the attitude towards the acts of indiscipline in secondary schools in Kenya. Closed- ended questions were measured on a 5-point Likert scale.

### **3.7 Credibility**

The credibility criteria involve establishing that the results of the qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participants in the research Mqulwana (2010:61). The purpose of qualitative research is to describe or understand the phenomena of interest from the participants' point of view. Only they can legitimately judge the credibility of the results. According to Creswell (2009:191), the use of rich and thick description will

transport the readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences. Lekhesa (2007) explain that for the research findings to be credible, a detailed description of the setting and all the steps taken should be provided.

### **3.8 Administration of Research Instruments**

A research permit was sought. after which the researcher contacted participating schools through a letter posted to the school (see appendix A). Then, dates and time were fixed when the researcher could visit the school to carry out the research. The researcher delivered the questionnaires to the schools and administered them to the CRE teachers and students. The researcher collected the questionnaires immediately after they were filled in to ensure higher returns. However, some teachers required more time due to their involvement in other responsibilities. In such cases, arrangements were made on when the questionnaires were to be collected.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The questionnaires contained both closed (5- point Likert scale) and open-ended items. For the closed items, each item was coded in order to obtain the magnitude of what was being measured with strongly agree (SA) being the highest and strongly disagree (SD) being the lowest. Openended items were assigned descriptive codes, which were used to assign meaning to each response (Greenan; et. al, 1998). The analysis of the coded data was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were used in which both descriptive (frequencies, means and percentages) and inferential statistics (Ttest) were applied. The statistical significant level for inferential statistics was at  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

### **3.10 Authenticity**

Authenticity refers to the extent to which the researchers fairly and faithfully show a range of different realities (Bray 2007). To ensure authenticity of the study, negative information that runs counter to the themes and the tone of the participants was offered (Creswell 2009:192). In this study, all information that ran counter to the themes was presented in as realistic a way as possible.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion on the attitudes of teachers towards CRE in selected primary schools in Nakigo Sub-county Iganga District Uganda. The data was collected from CRE teachers and learners in selected primary schools. The study aimed at answering the following questions: Are the themes in CRE syllabus relevant to the moral development of the learners? Are the methods applied in teaching CRE appropriate for changing attitudes?; What are the attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of CRE in Primary schools?.

### 4.1 Distribution of Participation by Religion and Gender

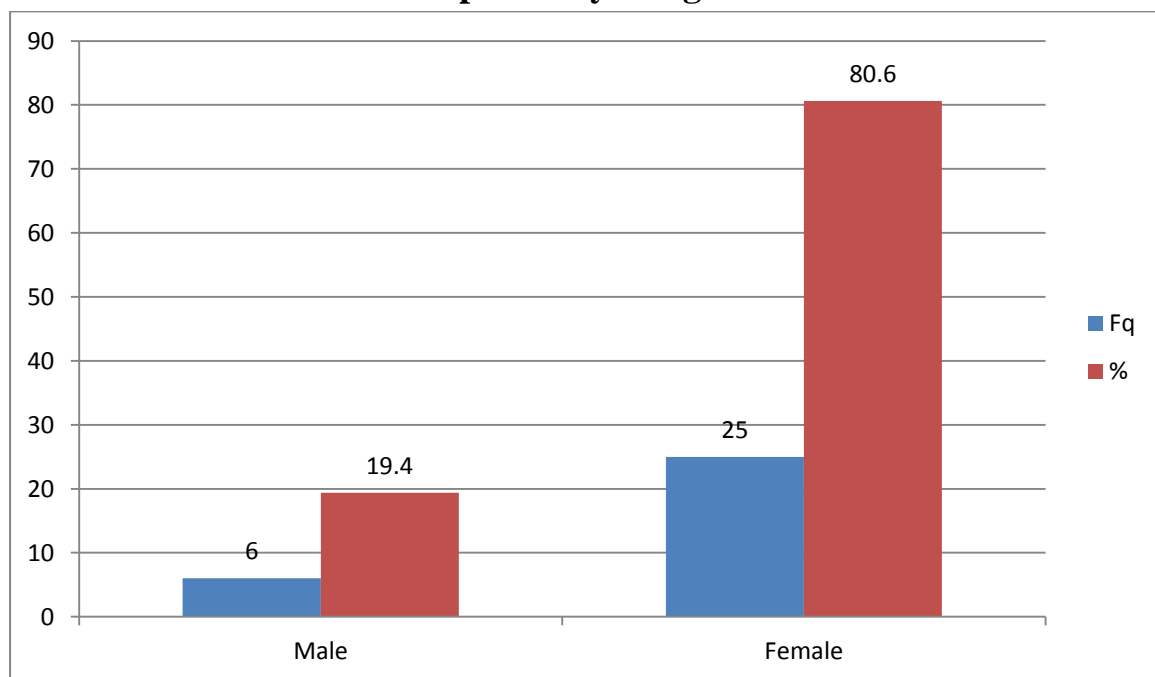


Table 2 indicates that there were more women teaching CRE than men. This imply that women were more sympathetic to religion than men. The researcher has also observed that there were more women attending church than men as earlier observed by Johnson (1997). This may explain the higher representation of women teaching CRE.

### 4.2 Distribution of Students by Religion and Gender

Table 3 indicates students enrollment by gender and religious inclination

Religion	Gender	F	Percentage
Christianity	Male	146	49.0%

	Female	142	47.9%
Muslim	Male	0	0
	Female	7	2.3%
Others	Male	2	0.6%
	Female	1	0.3%
	Total	298	100

The total number of students was 297. They are 10 less than the actual sample size. This was because some learners did not indicate their religion as required in the questionnaire. However, results showed that majority of students studying CRE (96.8%) professed the Christian faith, while others were Muslims and other students. Muslim students studied CRE so as to meet the minimum requirements for examination purposes. Others had the lowest percentages because they are upcoming and outlawed sects with few followers. The results that most of the students studying CRE were Christians is in line with results obtained by Ken (2001), which indicated that 93.0% of students in Uganda are Christians and 6.18% are Muslims.

#### **4.3 Relevance of the Themes of CRE to the Moral Development of Learners**

Teachers were then asked whether CRE topics were relevant in the enhancement of moral values. Results from the study indicated that a majority of the teachers (74.6%) agreed that the topics in the CRE syllabus were relevant in enhancing moral values. This implies that CRE topics were relevant to the moral development of the youth. Nevertheless, this contradicted the kind of behaviour that was portrayed by the students in school and out of school. Such behaviour as violence against their colleagues, teachers and parents was against the teachings of CRE.

<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Health and society (HIV/AIDS)	27.7%
Adolescence and its challenges	23.5%
Power and politics	20.5%
Gender relations and sexuality	16.8%
Gospel and the Epistles	11.7%
Family life education	9.8%

Results of the study on Table above indicates that a few topics needed to be added to the current CRE syllabus to make it more relevant in school today. The topic on health and society was rated highest. Teachers indicated that this topic needed attention with special reference to HIV/ AIDS. This may be due to the effects the disease has had on the society. These include increased number of orphans, street children. Economic constraints on families and untimely deaths (MOEs 2021). Another topic which captured the attention of the teachers was adolescence and its challenges. Secondary school students are at this stage of life. The characteristics of this stage include search for independence and identity. Other challenges were unemployment, health and marriage (Adams & Gullota, 1983; Lerner & Spanier (1980)). All these problems needed to be looked at early enough to help students cope with the challenges they posed in school and after school.

The teachers also recommended the topic on power and politics to be included in the syllabus. This may be because political leaders are perceived by the youths as role models. However, many of these leaders portray negative behaviour to the youth. The Government of Uganda (2001) noted that leaders made inflammatory statements and practiced corruption among other malpractices. Such behaviour may result in a negative rather than a positive influence on children. Such a topic would help students to understand the political arena hence guard against corrupt influences of powerpolitics not tempered by moral influence.

#### **4.4 Methods used in Teaching CRE**

Each topic has specific objectives to achieve (Otiende, Bennars & Boisvert, 1994) and therefore. appropriate teaching methods to help achieve the set objective(s) must be employed by teachers. There are certain methods that can be used in changing attitudes. The study also sought to find out the teaching methods generally applied by CRE teachers and whether they can positively change student's attitude towards life.

Table 8 indicates that CRE teachers mainly used three methods in teaching CRE. This can clearly be observed from the table where use of life examples, lecture and group discussions were rated 86.0%, 83.0% and 89.7% respectively by teachers. Teachers and students generally agreed on the use of lecture method in the teaching of CRE. However, they differed on the use of life examples that was rated at only 50.6% by CRE students.

Methods	Teachers % of use N=31	Learners % of Use N=307

Use of life examples	86.0	50.6
Lecture	83.0	89.9
Group discussion	89.7	61.3
Narratives	52.0	99.2
Assignments	48.0	14.0
Dramatization	26.0	13.7
Resource persons	22.0	9.0
Educational trips	16.0	8.2

The frequent use of the lecture by teachers as indicated by the students showed that CRE teachers did not exploit methods that were likely to bring attitudinal change fully. Due to the wide nature of the syllabus and limited time, lecture method is used to help cover the vast syllabus in time for examinations (Groenewegen, 1993). The over-use of the lecture method by the teacher may lead to students getting bored and not critically analysing the meaning of what was being taught. Walk.in (1982), Groenewegen (1993), Benaars, Otiende & Boisvert (1994), disapprove the frequent use of lecture method by teachers because it inhibits students participation as it is a one way communication. Kathuri (1990) also agrees with them by arguing that the use of the lecture method makes students to slavishly follow the teacher without any critical input.

Use of life examples was another method which 86.0% of teachers indicated they often used. This implies that teachers tried to relate topics being taught to learner's experiences or to day-today issues. However, only about half of the students (50.6%) agreed with their teachers on this. This means that CRE teachers may not be using Life Examples method as much as they claimed. Malusu (1981) and Gachegoh (1990), agree with the students that teachers do not relate topics well to the learners' experiences. Use of Life Examples is one of the methods recommended in the teaching of CRE. It tries to overcome situations in which some of the academic disciplines are delivered in an abstract or theoretical manner, divorced from the learner's experiences.

Discussion was another method which teachers claimed they often used. This indicates that teachers actively involved students in the learning process during CRE lessons. Class discussion helps students to share ideas and experiences and also promotes the power of reason. This method is used only on specific topics of a subject. for example, the new

Testament principles on responsibility for others such as Jesus the Shephard, forgiving, being the light and salt of the world among others ((Otiende. Benaars & Boisvert, (1994): Groenewegen, (1993). Nevertheless, Dehaan. (1999) argues that class discussion is an important method in teaching ethical dilemmas. For instance, whether it is justifiable to assist somebody who is terminally ill, with no hope of recovery, to end his or her life or whether taking the life of a convicted murderer provides sufficient restitution to the person who was killed and to the relatives left behind. Through the discussion method, students debate are able to deal with these issues intelligently rather than emotionally. Group discussion facilitates the development of critical thinking skills. It helps the students to attain most levels of cognitive and affective domains (Groenewegen, 1993). However, it requires skillful use by the teacher in order to avoid time wasting and rowdiness that may result if it is poorly planned and implemented (Groenewegen, 1993). 61.3% of CRE students also supported their teachers contention that they used group discussion as a teaching method.

99.2% of the students indicated that their teachers used narratives. Only half of the teachers indicated that they used the narrative method (50.2%). This implies that teachers do not emphasise the narrative, one of the methods recommended in the teaching of CRE for the purpose of behavioural change. Narratives are peculiar to the teaching of social sciences of which CRE is part (Groenewegen, 1993) as they give more lengthy examples to support the teaching. The lengthy examples help the students to clearly understand the meaning of what is being taught. Half of CRE teachers did not emphasise the narrative method. They may be weak in using narratives as an instructional device.

However, the results of the study indicate that CRE teachers tried as much as possible to employ methods that can help students to positively change behaviour. Those were for example, use of life examples, dramatization and to some extent, narratives, field trips and resource persons among others. However, many of the teachers (80.6%) saw CRE in terms of provision of career opportunities (see Table 6). This means that they may not have emphasised methods which may change students' attitudes positively inspite of indicating so. CRE teachers also may be hindered from the use of a variety of methods by time and limited resources. Some methods such as field trips require a lot of time and money. Time and resources may be limited in the face of the current CRE syllabus and the current economic situation in Kenya respectively. Teachers, therefore, need to use locally available materials where possible in order to achieve the set objectives (UNESCO, 1997).

## **4.5 Summary**

Majority of CRE teachers agreed that the themes/ content in the syllabus were adequate in enhancing moral values. However, a few of the teachers indicated that there was need to add a few topics which would enable the teaching of CRE to meet the current moral challenges. However, there was little agreement among teachers on the themes to be included

The findings revealed that, CRE teachers tried as much as possible to use methods that would lead to behaviour change. These were, life examples and discussion and to some extent dramatization, field trips and invitation of resource persons among others.

However, there was a general agreement by teachers and students on the overuse of the lecture method. This method is not recommended for teaching of CRE. This is because; it is a one way communication hence hindering students' active participation in the learning process. The students easily get bored and slavishly follow the teacher without any critical input which may lead to a less positive impact on behaviour.

Teachers complained that the syllabus was wide. Consequently, they used the lecture method to help them cover the syllabus in time for the national examinations.

The subject was also viewed as important in providing career opportunities, especially by teachers who participated in the study.

On the same note, students indicated that they chose to study CRE not because it was an easier option but because they wanted to know God more. They indicated that this knowledge was important in building them up morally and spiritually.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The study aimed at investigating the attitudes of teachers towards CRE in selected primary schools in Nakigo Sub-county Iganga District.

The main aim of the study was to determine the attitudes of teachers and students on: the relevance of the themes in CRE syllabus; • the appropriateness of the methods applied in teaching CRE for attitudinal change; attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of CRE in primary schools. Data analysis was carried out according to the responses to research questions which were in turn based on the research objectives.

#### 5.1.0 CONCLUSIONS

##### 5.1.1 Teachers' Attitudes on the relevance teaching of CRE in Primary schools

Under this theme the researcher aimed at determining the perceptions of CRE on the value of CRE in helping students develop positive moral values. The results indicated that both CRE teachers and form four students agreed that CRE was an important subject in shaping students' moral values. Students indicated that they chose to study CRE not because it was an easier option but because they wanted to know God more. Furthermore, teachers and students claimed that CRE was relevant in the world of today as it leads to moral and spiritual development and also provides career opportunities. However, it was noted that many teachers viewed CRE as a way of earning their daily bread while students indicated that CRE was important 'to them for moral and spiritual development. Hence, teachers may not emphasize the teaching of CRE in order to achieve the desired changes on students but instead do it as a routine.

### **5.1.2 Teachers' Attitudes towards the Relevance of the Themes of CRE Syllabus in primary schools**

Teachers agreed that the themes addressed in the CRE syllabus were adequate in inculcating moral values. However, a few of them suggested that some extra topics be included to help tackle the current moral issues effectively.

### **5.1.3 Teachers' Attitudes on the Methods used in the Teaching of CRE in primary schools**

On this theme and objective, results showed that CRE teachers tried to some extent to use methods that would help students to positively change attitude. These were life examples, discussion and dramatization. However, there was a general agreement on the over-use of the lecture. The lecture method is not recommended in the teaching of CRE, as it is a one-way communication that reduces student participation a lot during the lesson. The overuse of the lecture was due to limited time for covering the vast CRE syllabus for purposes of examination.

## **5.2 RECOM1VIENDATIONS**

Since CRE was perceived by both teachers and students as an important subject in enhancing moral values. The teachers must have special skills of handling CRE subject in primary schools. This can be through upgrading or seminars to ensure skills attainment in the CRE subject. In-service courses should be made available for CRE teachers to help them teach well within limits of overloaded syllabus, time pressure and resources. This will help the teachers to acquire practical skills for classroom use

CRE teachers themselves should put more emphasis on the teaching methods that would help achieve objectives within the affective domain.

CRE teachers used lecture more often than any other method. They claimed they did this because the syllabus was overloaded with content hence time was a limiting factor. In view of this, the CRE syllabus should be trimmed to allow for the use of a variety of methods which may lead to attitudinal change.

### **5.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

Research should be carried out to determine;

- The influence of modern teaching aids on the performance of learners in CRE subject in primary schools.
- Effect of CRE subject on learners moral conduct in primary schools

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

You are kindly requested to answer the questions below. Respond either by writing, or putting a tick (✓) where required. There is no correct or wrong answer. The information you give will be treated confidentially. You are therefore free to give any additional information where necessary.

### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Type of school:** Girls only \_\_\_\_\_ Boysonly \_\_\_\_\_ Mixed \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Gender:** Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Religion:** Christian \_\_\_\_\_ Muslim \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Experience as a teacher for CRE \_\_\_\_\_
5. I enjoy teaching CRE
6. CRE is useful to students
7. CRE helps students to grow morally upright
8. CRE helps students to accept other people
9. CRE enhances self-respect, respect of others and their property
10. I view CRE as an important subject
11. The public view CRE as an important subject
12. I feel embarrassed being a CRE teacher
13. Do you think the teaching of CRE helps in discouraging the occurrence of bad behavior?
14. Are the, CRE topics adequate in inculcating moral values among students?
15. My school readily provides the required resources for teaching CRE.
16. Teaching resources used in the teaching of CRE are outdated.
17. Lecture method should be discouraged in the teaching of CRE.
18. CRE resource persons visit my school often time.
19. Students actively participate in class during CRE lessons.
20. CRE assignments waste a lot of time.
21. Students visit religious centers to learn more on some CRE topics
22. I like using life-examples in the teaching of CRE.
23. I encourage discussions during CRE lessons.

24. Time allocated for teaching CRE is inadequate

25. I feel teaching CRE is boring

26. I prefer teaching CRE to any other subject

27. Educational stories should be encouraged in learning of CRE.