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# **Effective Curriculum Design Framework for Children's Educational Ministry in Kenya: Focus on the Anglican Church**

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## **Abstract**

The Ministry of Christian Education for children in the Anglican Church in Kenya has, over time, remained a challenge. Notably, one of the factors hindering its development is the lack of a proper, well-structured curriculum in the Church setting. The Church is mandated to teach and instruct its members on biblical truths. Therefore, there is a need to develop more effective Bible teaching programs so that the Christian faith will become an integral part of its members' lives. Hence, when teaching children, the Bible, one must encourage and assist them to engage, act upon, and interact with the Bible as much as possible. This paper examines an effective curriculum design framework for children's educational ministry in Kenya. The empirical study was undertaken in the Anglican Church of Kenya. Thus, the findings can be used to help in curriculum development for Sunday school in churches with a similar context.

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## **Introduction**



A curriculum is a plan or policy presented to the students and teachers to help them achieve their objectives (Colson & Rigdon, 1981, p. 40). In this context, a curriculum design could serve as a blueprint for teaching the Bible successfully. When it comes to Christian education, a curriculum should be a detailed plan of a church organization for guiding students toward being mature Christians. The curriculum design varies according to circumstances and cultural composition. The Church should create a well-structured curriculum that would aid teachers in imparting Bible knowledge to young students to address their spiritual requirements.

The key elements that must be present in a well-developed curriculum design include the objective, scope, context, teaching-learning process, leadership development, and curriculum materials. The Church can create curriculum materials from this layout for various activities that can be carried out repeatedly. Luke discusses the goals and activities of the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles (2:42, 44–47). This can be compared to the curriculum of the Church. After all, the Latin verb ‘currere,’ meaning "to run," is the root of the English word curriculum. If taken literally, curriculum refers to a course to be followed. According to Harris (1989), the five facets of discipleship at all ages that the Church's curriculum incorporates include the following:

- Proclaim the word of Jesus' resurrection (*kerygma*)
- Teach the sacred story and its meaning to our lives (*didache*)
- Come together to pray and break the bread (*leiturgia*)
- Live in a community with one another (*koinonia*)
- Care for those in need (*diakonia*)

Yet, all too often, the curriculum is defined narrowly, viewing it solely as a package of materials for instructors and students. It is more accurate to refer to these resources as part of the overall church education curriculum. It must also remember that no matter the age, worship and proclamation, community and service continue to shape Christians as God's people (Chung, 2021).

### **Objectives for Christian Education Curriculum**

To effectively satisfy the educational needs of its members, the Church must develop curricular objectives consistent with Christian education. According to Rushdoony (2012), one approach to examining objectives is to present them as a way of involving children in numerous programs that enhance their personal development. The heart of Christian education is its objectives. The primary objective formulated by Wyckoff (1961) is considered helpful for this paper because Christian education at all times should help people of all ages in the faith community become children of God. The basic goal of the curriculum, according to Wyckoff (1961), is as follows:



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The objective of Christian education is that all persons be aware of God's self-disclosure, and especially his seeking love in Jesus Christ, and that they respond in faith and love, to the end that they may know who they are and what the human situation means, grow as Sons of God rooted in the Christian community, live in the Spirit of God in every relationship, fulfill their common discipleship in the world and abide in the Christian hope (Wyckoff, 1961, p. 129).

The objectives of the children's ministry curriculum should be developed based on Wyckoff's educational principle. Even though the Bible is the ultimate authority and fundamental textbook in Christian education, the student must be kept in mind. The Bible is taught for them to know Christ and grow more Christ-like. To address the requirements of the developing person as a whole, it is vital to comprehend them to define the aims and objectives of the Christian education curriculum (Freatly & Parker, 2013). Childhood, which lasts from birth to eleven years, is the first stage in setting the objectives for human development stages. Childhood is a foundational period in which the basic structure of personality, habits of life, and character are developed. As a person enters adolescence and adulthood, these life patterns grow more complex and harder to change.

It is vital to have a fundamental grasp of children's unique qualities and needs to develop goals that suit their requirements. Children are always growing and maturing. According to developmental psychologists, these stages are qualitatively distinct. While developing physically, emotionally, and intellectually, the child requires positive, constructive leadership and education to reach their full potential. Parents and adults are responsible for teaching their children about themselves, God, Jesus, the Church, the Bible, their fellow men, and the physical world. Thus, as the Gospel records, children are assured of being blessed; "And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them" (Mark 10:16). Goldman (2022) points out that through Christian education, God's promise of blessing can be made meaningful. The main question however is how the child can best learn about God. In answering this question, Zuck & Clark (1975) stated that, "The child is a bundle of trust, ready to accept what his parents or teachers tell him. He is endowed with limitless hunger to learn more about the Lord and his world" (p. 72).

The child can learn God's name and get various ideas about Him just by listening to teachers and making mental pictures as best they can with what they know. A child's religious and spiritual growth is important because if their faith is deeply rooted in Christ, they can healthily face the changing world. For a child, religion is connected to everything else they hear and see. God and angels are part of the same world as building blocks, dollhouses, and toys.

The beliefs and actions of the people who are physically closest to a child have a significant impact on the child's spiritual growth. The foundation for a child's future spiritual development is the unwavering trust in their parents, who wield unquestioned



dominion over them and everything they do. As time goes on, a child's faith transitions into the parents' faith, and eventually, through their unique experiences, they will develop their own faith. The process of one's spiritual development is influenced along the way by many individuals and possibly also a great number of organizations (Long, 2018). To effectively minister to children, parents, and other adults in the community require access to the spiritual resources provided by the local Church. Early childhood circumstances have a significant impact, either positively or negatively on the eventual acceptance or rejection of the Christian faith.

It is the duty and responsibility of the Christian community to develop Christian education objectives that will enable children to grow with real biblical understanding appropriate to their ages (Mumo, 2016). Christian education for children should be planned with their daily Christian lives in mind. According to Choun & Lawson (1998), the following are some goals that can be tailored to children's needs and skills:

1. To encourage the child to feel that the Bible and the Church are helpful factors in one's life and that God and Jesus Christ are kind and benevolent. And to lead them to identify themselves with these factors and these persons. This is meant to enlarge Christian attitudes and knowledge.
2. To help the child to recognize the meaning of the words 'God,' 'Jesus,' and 'Bible.'
3. To make the children understand the reality that God loves them.
4. To enable the child to share with his friends the forgiving love of God shown through Jesus Christ on the cross and manifested in the Holy Spirit.
5. To help the child to understand the meaning of sin and the importance of relationship and reconciliation with God as the Creator and the Master of the whole universe.
6. To enable the child to understand the mission of the Church, to fulfill the responsibility, to do personal evangelism, and to confess the Christian faith in any situation.
7. To guide the child to acknowledge Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Friend.
8. To help the child to realize the necessity of prayer for direct communication with God.
9. To help the child to accept the Bible as the unique, unchanging, and inspired word of God and to know the relationship between the Old and the New Testament.



10. To help a child to identify oneself in group activities and to make a positive contribution at home, family, and group through the expression of Christian character.
11. To help the child worship God and to respect his parents.
12. To help the child understand what the Bible says and what the Gospel means to them.

The primary purpose of these aims is to cultivate the children's faith in Jesus Christ. Their early childhood experiences largely influence their later adoption of the Christian faith.

### **The Scope of Christian Education**

The framework for Christian education in the Church and at home should be comprehensive, encompassing the central concerns of the Christian faith and life. Any thoroughly developed curriculum will strive to identify the principles around which it is built. These aspects comprise the curriculum's scope. The word 'curriculum scope' indicates the subject matter that may be covered within the curriculum's parameters (Teitelbaum, 1991). Christian education comprises sorts of human connections interpreted by the Church from the perspective of God's love and redemption in Jesus Christ. These relationships exhibit themselves in a person's constant lifelong concerns, such as his self-image, interpersonal relationships, sex, sense of destiny, survival, affection, usefulness, power, security, authority, trust, love, forgiveness, and reconciliation. To view all relationships and experiences from a Christian perspective is to examine them in light of the Gospel of God's redemptive love and Jesus Christ's reconciling actions. Studying or teaching about God, man, nature, or history is insufficient. It is crucial to create the curriculum of the Church such that all human and environmental relationships are viewed and experienced in light of the Gospel.

Wyckoff's (1961) definition of Christian education guides the entire process of Christian education and necessitates a curriculum that embodies and seeks to develop this Christian perspective. The key to achieving the goal is to be aware of the Gospel and respond in faith and love so that all of life can be seen and lived in light of the Gospel. This means having an encounter with God, who makes Himself known through the word, is mediated by the Bible and the Church. Learners become deeply involved as they study the Bible and the Church engages in its work and worship, which is its mission, and God calls them into a relationship in which they gain a new perspective on man, nature, and history (James et al., 2014). They see man as depicted in the word; created in the image of God, separated from God by sin, and redeemed by God's reconciling acts in Jesus Christ. This view of man allows students to see themselves in a new light, to comprehend the relationships of their common life and the responsibilities they entail, and to grasp their human culture and heritage with greater appreciation and meaning.



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In this new perspective, nature is viewed as the cosmic setting created by God for human endeavor. History is also seen as a continuous process in which God acts, and man responds, progressing from the first creative act to fulfilling God's purpose. The Church's children's curriculum should address these issues as thoroughly as possible while attempting to communicate the Christian perspective on man's relationships with God, nature, and history (White, 2017). This will bring together everything done in the Church and at home through the Sunday school program. Considering the scope mentioned above, the contents that comprise a curriculum are formed within the framework of those relationships. The curriculum's scope is congruent with what God has revealed through His redemptive action, and the implications of this redemptive action for man in the entire field of relationships include:

*(i) The Relationship with God*

God created the child, who derives identity from this fact. Since a child was created in the image of God, it is presumed that they can apprehend God. God gives the child freedom to develop their full potential. The choices, whether good or bad, are a gift from God, who loves and thus frees the child. Only a free person can love and respond to the call of another. Only a child who knows God's love can confront the biblical view of His justice. The child who understands sin can experience forgiveness and forgive those who wrong them. However, before the child can surrender his life to Jesus in loving obedience, he must first know Him. As a result, prayer, worship, biblical stories and praise, personal and communal (Church) activities can be realized and emphasized. Children, no matter how young, should be taught to practice these elements to reflect the Christian view of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, as well as one who seeks a personal relationship with man as revealed in the Gospel.

*(ii) The Relationship with Others*

The child's understanding of God grows through biblical stories, prayer, and real-life interactions. This starts in the family between parents, siblings, and relatives and progresses to peer groups in school, Church, and finally in society between the young and the old. These interpersonal relationships are crucial for children because they influence their personality development. Setting a good example for children should be emphasized strongly because children learn more from what they see and hear than from what they are taught because they mirror themselves in other people. Parents and teachers should behave lovingly and justly because they serve as role models to children. This should encourage them to develop and learn at their expected level. Some of life's most important principles are difficult to express in words (Richert et al., 2016). As a result, healthy relationships and educational ministry are the guiding principles that children use to form their identity.

*(iii) The Relationship with History*



History is relevant to people's lives because it influences and shapes learning. The Church exists today because it is a living remnant of the past. Everyone who has lived since the apostolic age has played a role in God's plan for the universal life and growth of the Church. Contemporary Christians continue to flourish because they keep their faith. If people keep it, future generations will know Christ. Children should learn about these people and realize that they faced problems similar to those Christians face today, such as how to live the Christian life in a secular world or be faithful in the face of persecution. We hope for the future based on our heritage and current circumstances. Children are said to be the Church of tomorrow, so if the Anglican Church of Kenya wants to build a strong church for future generations, it should prepare children through Christian education programs to help them shape the Church's future.

*(iv) The Relationship with Nature*

The Church's children's ministry must emphasize teaching children to be responsible for themselves and the natural environment. Everything God created should be viewed as a stewardship from Him. A biblical relationship with nature requires that man love and care for it rather than exploit it to satisfy his needs and greed (Moo & Moo, 2018). This is an important concept for children to grasp. They must learn to appreciate God's wonderful works and to be good stewards of the natural world that God has created.

**Context of the Curriculum for Children's Educational Ministry**

The learning environment in which education takes place is called context. As a result, the context of the curriculum for children's educational ministry is essential to the Christian community, a qualitative entity evidenced through Church and Christ (Cooperative Curriculum Project, 1965). The curriculum in Christian education becomes operational where the community of believers in Christ worships, witnesses, works, and proclaims the gospel message to the lost. In addition, when the Church and the home communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to children at their level of comprehension, the Gospel can become more meaningful to them. Cooperative Curriculum Project (1965) stated in this regard:

The curriculum becomes a reality through the action of a worshipping, witnessing, nurturing community. This community has a life, a message, a mission, a heritage to communicate which is best communicated within the Christian fellowship of love. The community includes the Christian home where much of Christian education, formal and informal, takes place (Cooperative Curriculum Project, 1965, p. 55).

Christian education should not be equated with academic schooling. Because the child has many formative experiences in a variety of settings, the curriculum should not be limited to the classroom but should encompass all aspects of life. The teacher must



recognize that Christian education of children occurs not only in the Sunday school class but also throughout the congregation, the Christian family, and society. This is referred to as the faith community.

### **Teaching-Learning Process**

Sunday school teaching guides students' learning with the ultimate goal of changing their lives through the Gospel. It is a process in which both the teacher and the student interact with the Word of God. Teaching can be divided into two types: teaching someone to do something and teaching someone to learn something. The first type emphasizes teaching as behavior formation and modification, whereas the second emphasizes knowledge transmission (Stetzer & Geiger, 2014). Giving and receiving are both involved in teaching. The teacher's initial role is to provide. Later, the committed teacher realizes that the long-term goal is to withdraw gradually so that the learner can become autonomous. The teacher becomes less necessary as the learner grows and develops the ability to discern other learning agencies. Thus, teaching is the arousal of the pupil's mind to grasp and hold a particular truth. It is more than simply telling others the truth; it inspires them to establish the facts themselves.

The teaching-learning process involves holding and letting go, where the teacher serves as the paedagogus and guide to Christ. The teacher's work is not finished until the process of letting go is completed. When the teacher can learn from the student, the task has been completed successfully. Learning is a continuous process of adapting to one's surroundings, assimilating new information, and incorporating new knowledge into one's existing knowledge (Burton et al., 2006). People are said to have learned when their behavior and attitudes change or are modified. Teachers must recognize that the true criterion of Christian learning, particularly with children, is the ability to live and express the teachings of the Bible. Learning is an action as well as a reaction.

Blackwell and Rives (1976) depict learning as a circle that includes knowing, feeling, understanding, applying, and practicing. They define learning as evolving, acting, experiencing, discovering, meaning, realizing, becoming, and living.

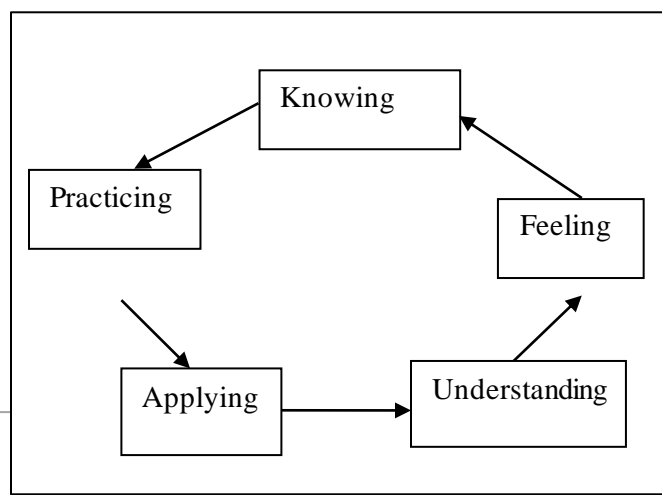




Figure 1: Learning Circle

There are three dimensions to basic learning. The first type of learning is cognitive learning, which includes information, ideas, and knowledge that can be transmitted via language. The second type of learning is effective learning, which concerns standards and values, what one considers worthy, and how one feels about ideas and actions. The third type of learning is psychomotor learning, which involves both the mind and the body. It is critical to teach children these three dimensions because their lives are being shaped in ways that will influence their lives now and in the future.

Because of the limited teaching-learning methods used by teachers, the Anglican Church has been unable to minister effectively to children. As a result, effectively ministering to children necessitates an understanding of the fundamental steps in a child's learning process, which will allow for appropriate planning of Bible teaching and learning experiences.

The five basic learning steps required for a dynamic learning process in any Christian education program include listening, exploring, discovering, appropriating, and assuming responsibility.

- (i) *Listening*. Listening is an indispensable and fundamental learning skill. It is the first point of contact for a teacher who wishes to initiate the learning process. Obtaining a child's attention is a strategic endeavor that requires motivating the student through the combined influence of the classroom environment and his initial introduction to the material to be studied. For instance, utilizing a puppet to provide instructions for a specific learning experience effectively captures children's attention. According to Currell (1985), puppets contribute greatly to the development of a child's learning by providing the child with opportunities to assemble, discover and comprehend a wide range of concepts, knowledge, skills, and situations.

The instructor establishes the tone for the entire class period during this time. One encourages the child to investigate the truth independently. Thus, the child begins to anticipate what the classmates will do during class. Throughout this experience,



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the teacher should rely on the Holy Spirit to facilitate authentic learning according to the unique needs of each student.

- (ii) *Exploring*. This phase of the learning process entails a thorough investigation of a problem or subject. The learner is an explorer, wholly engaged in pursuing something undiscovered or inexperienced (Bolton et al., 1988). One is a central and active participant in the teaching and learning process as opposed to a passive listener or mere spectator.

The children engage in activities requiring them to research, think critically, and interpret information. Individuals, small groups, or the entire class may participate in exploring activities. As children explore activities, they become much more acquainted with the topic of their study. The topic becomes theirs rather than the teachers. When they engage in exploration activities, students transform from passive to active participants.

The teacher's role in exploring activities is to provide clear, helpful instructions, make resources accessible to students, offer support and encouragement as needed, and monitor the progress of all students. Teachers must resist all temptations to explore on their student's behalf. Poor teaching is primarily caused by a failure to guide rather than instruct. When children can complete their assignments, they will gain significantly more knowledge and be more motivated. In addition, they will seek the Holy Spirit's guidance when studying the Bible.

- (iii) *Discovering*. The children explore as the teacher guides them until they discover the meaning of the passage or the solution to the problem. They can explore on their own or in groups. The fact that they can participate in discovering a new idea or truth on their own is an important aspect of this process. When students discover the truth, they are far more willing to obey it.

Experience is the best teacher because her lessons are always remembered. Discovering God's eternal truths in His Word is an exciting process. When a learner discovers a truth on their own, it becomes truly personal. The learner recognizes that the scripture can be understood through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit due to these learning experiences (Barna, 2016).

- (iv) *Appropriating*. The child should be allowed to learn the Scripture passage and think about the truth personally. For effective learning, one must personally relate the meanings and values discovered in one's experiences (Simanjuntak et al., 2022). Bible knowledge not translated into Christ-like attitudes and actions does



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not serve the purpose that God intended. Only self-discovered and self-appropriated learning has a significant impact on behavior.

There are numerous ways to direct the child's appropriation task. The teacher may present a real-world problem to solve based on biblical truth. A child must grasp the personal implications of God's Word. Recognizing that the Bible now has meaning for people strengthens one's faith in scripture as "... an ever-present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

Adopting the Bible's truth for a specific lesson is an important level of learning for each child. A child can then recognize its significance regarding his feelings and behavior. As a result of this step in the learning process, one understands what God expects in situations involving the truth studied (Papen, 2018). However, the learning process is not complete because the student has not yet applied the lesson's truth in terms of his own experience.

- (v) *Assuming Responsibility.* The previous tasks-listening, exploring, discovering, and appropriating-culminate at this point in the learning process. God's truth changes and molds a child's thinking, attitudes, and behavior during this time. This demonstrates the efforts to communicate God's truth effectively. The children must perceive the importance of doing certain things based on what they have learned in previous stages of the learning process. A child must see the actions required by the study and be led to accept responsibility.

Even if a child practically applies a scripture truth, the teacher should emphasize that learning should never end there. The child should keep forming new perceptions and comparing them to old ones. Based on these new insights, they can solve new problems. When a child voluntarily applies what one has learned in new situations, one has passed the true test of learning. The spiritual dimension of a child's personality can continue to grow and develop with the help of the Holy Spirit and a thoughtful teacher. "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men," (Luke 2:52).

When it comes to the teaching-learning process, the five steps listed above are critical. Teachers must recognize that they have not taught until the learner has learned. They must use appropriate language, engage students in learning, reach out to them through activities, and ensure their needs are met while serving as godly examples. Sunday school teaching aims to teach the Word of God to the unsaved and to help Christians grow in Jesus Christ so that each student can "... become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13).



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## **Effective Teaching Methods**

Methods describe the processes a teacher employs to communicate information to students. The methods a teacher uses to express attitude and convictions influence how students grasp the teaching contents. Zuck (1980) claims that the Holy Spirit works through methods to bring about spiritual nurture. The creative application of various methods promotes learning and, as a result, spiritual change and maturation. Several approaches can be taken when teaching children, the Bible. Play opportunities should be provided for children to learn effectively through various activities. Play is how children learn what they cannot learn through listening.

Storytelling is an effective way to convey the Bible's message to children. A story grabs and holds students' attention by bringing the past to life so they can better understand a concept. Learners can also identify with some of the characters in the story and learn to imitate or avoid the actions of those characters. God employs the story form to effect change throughout the Scriptures. Children can learn about developing kindness and right living through Bible stories, leading them to the favor of God, man, and even their enemies (Anderson-Umana, 2022). All children can experience salvation, honesty, generosity, understanding, and loving acceptance of others because the Holy Spirit, concerned parents, and teachers guide them using the stories.

An introduction, body, conclusion, and application should all be included in a Bible story. A good story, when told properly, arouses interest, inspires sympathy, produces reality, and influences behavior (Walsh, 2014). Recreating a story through role play should begin immediately after the story has been told. This can take the form of skits, puppet shows, role plays, finger plays, or simple dramatization. The teacher should guide the students as they prepare to act out a story. Depending on the children's level of comprehension, the presentation may be very simple.

Bible learning activities that include creative art experiences provide a fun and effective way for children to learn by reinforcing and applying Bible truth (van der Merwe, 2020). For example, as children plan and carry out a lesson-related activity, they may use art to depict the events of the Bible story in proper sequence, or they may portray ways a Bible truth relates to their own life, such as making potter's clay to give to a children's home and demonstrating an act of love and care. Children enjoy art activities and learn through self-expression. What they create helps them and others in the class visualize the Bible material. The Church should be able to provide the necessary materials, but if not, the teacher can use freely available materials such as old newspapers, old clothes, and other items.

Many children find written communication appealing because it is effective for reporting and recording information, reflecting feelings, and expressing ideas. Audiovisuals such as film strips, cassette tapes, records, and motion pictures can also be used. Many of these



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aids are extremely beneficial because most children understand Bible truths better when they are told. Music should be used so that children can enjoy and respond to it. Music is used to enhance worship experiences, but it can also be used to teach or reinforce facts or concepts and to express a response to biblical materials. Methods should be viewed as teaching tools through which students will achieve outcomes, gain knowledge of the Bible, apply its principles, and feel inspired to worship God (Grudem, 2022). Teachers should select methods that engage students in meaningful activities and reflect their interests, ability level, and desired outcome.

### **Leadership Development**

Good Christian education facilitates the Church to effectively communicate God's Word. Trained teachers of the doctrine who minister through teaching are required if the Church is to grow spiritually and advance God's program. As a result, the success of a well-organized Sunday school is largely dependent on those who oversee its plans and policies. Failure is frequently caused by the Sunday school staff's spiritual unfitness or a lack of leadership preparation. Leadership begins with commitment and concern. It is aided by preparation and comprehension. As a result, leaders and teachers must be carefully selected and thoroughly trained for their roles. Leadership implies having an impact on, influence, or control over others. "Leadership is a process of social influence through which one person is able to enlist the aid of others in reaching a goal" (Chemers, 1997, p. 5). A good teacher knows where he is going and can lead others there. As a result, a leader can generate, communicate, and sustain a commonality of purpose. Leadership is a church function, and training leaders is essentially a matter of clarifying the nature and mission of the Church and establishing the functions of leadership in light of the nature and mission of the Church. The success of everything proposed in any particular church depends on resolving the Church's leadership problem.

One key concern facing churches in Kenya today is a lack of dedicated, committed, and permanent teachers and leaders to teach children in Christian education. Children's ministry cannot be effective without a proper, well-planned leadership strategy to coordinate the program. People should be chosen and trained for church leadership positions. The Church must consider who it will train. This training is required because the Church cannot lead its members in achieving more results in the educational ministry if it cannot train leaders and teachers (Rop et al., 2021). To meet this challenge, this paper describes a leadership development process that can be used to effectively recruit and train teachers and leaders in the Church's educational ministry. Leadership has many meanings, but this paper focuses on teachers or leaders fully involved in the Church's educational ministry.



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### ***Clarifying What is Expected of Leaders***

One of the most common mistakes the Church makes regarding leadership development is assuming that anyone who volunteers to help with the Church's educational program already knows what to do and what is expected of them. As a result, there are no clear job descriptions for leaders or teachers, and they are left to decide how they will function. As a result, they make their own decisions based on a variety of factors. For example, they may observe what previous people in those positions did and model their work after it, whether or not they were doing the task satisfactorily (DeVries & Safstrom, 2018). Or they may be highly motivated to do a good job by introducing many new ideas and deciding for themselves what they believe should be done regardless of the expectations of those affected by their decisions and actions.

As a result, the church board's first step in the leadership development process is to formulate statements that will serve as guidelines for all who feel called into the Church's teaching ministry. The following questions adapted from Griggs et al. (1988) can be used as guidelines in the formulating process:

1. What is the relationship between teaching in the Sunday school and the larger ministry of the Church? How can the teachers be helped to see that they are an important part of the ministry of the Church?
2. What kind of relationship do we want teachers to develop with those they teach? Do we expect them to do anything with their class members at times other than Sunday?
3. What are the characteristics or qualifications of an effective teacher? Must they be members of the Church?
4. How concerned are we that the teachers use the curriculum selected by the Church? How much preparation do we expect the teachers to do?
5. Will the teachers work on a team of two or three, or will they serve alone?
6. Will teachers be expected to attend any meetings or workshops?
7. Are the teachers free to utilize their creativity and resourcefulness as they plan and implement section plans?
8. Are the teachers expected to arrange their substitutes, or will someone else be responsible for this?
9. How long will the teachers be expected to serve?

The answers to these questions can help prevent many misunderstandings and conflicts that arise due to a lack of mutual understanding about what is expected of leaders and teachers.



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### ***Recruiting Teachers and Leaders***

Once it is clear what is expected of teachers and leaders, the next step is to find people to take on those responsibilities in the Church's ministry. Asking people to share their faith with other Christians is known as recruiting. The Apostle Paul places teaching high among the spiritual gifts in Romans 12. This stage of the process should take four factors into account. When a vacant teaching position is announced in Anglican churches, Christians often place little significance on candidates' knowledge of the Sunday school curriculum. This gives the impression that the opportunity is only for a certain type of person. According to Houser (2008), the steps to recruiting teachers in the children education ministry include the following:

1. The first and most important step in this process is to consistently and persuasively communicate to the congregation that every member is called to ministry. This communication should occur through the church newsletter, notices in the weekly bulletin, prayers in the worship service, sermons, conversations, and regular meetings of church groups.
2. Second, recruiting for ministry necessitates focusing on individuals one at a time and considering them in terms of their gifts, interests, experiences, and current responsibilities to identify those who may be best suited for specific tasks. When we focus on people rather than positions, we communicate a different attitude, one of inviting them to serve in specific aspects of ministry.
3. Third, teacher and leader recruitment should be personal and deliberate. Because the task at hand is critical to the Church's ministry, both the task and the person must be treated with dignity and respect. What is expected of them should be mutually shared.
4. Fourth, identifying and inviting people to serve as teachers and leaders is a year-round process involving key people such as the pastor, Sunday school superintendent, Christian education committee, and other leaders. This process should not be one of responding to periodic emergencies, as has been the case in our local churches, but rather one that occurs consistently and regularly throughout the year. As a result, the problem of insufficient teachers in our Church's children's educational program will be solved.

### ***Assess the Needs of Teachers and Leaders***

When someone agrees to serve as a teacher or leader in the Church's educational program, that person is not immediately prepared to do the job. Everyone has needs that must be met to feel ready and capable of doing what is expected. First, some needs are personal regarding attitudes, images, and feelings about one's role as a teacher and leader. Most new teachers and leaders find themselves in situations for which they are unprepared



(McMillon & Edwards, 2000). Second, most teachers and leaders, both experienced and inexperienced, desire to learn more and improve their skills to perform more effectively in the roles for which they have accepted responsibility. The pastor and board members should be in charge of organizing orientation sessions for teachers and leaders. This will help to strengthen the two groups' working relationship. One method is to list some needs on a board or piece of paper and then have teachers and leaders indicate them. Furthermore, this system assists the pastor in determining what to include in the training sessions.

### ***Equipping and Training Teachers and Leaders with Information and Skills***

Once the teacher's and leader's information and skill needs have been identified, many of those needs can be met with specific strategies that will enable them to do their work more effectively. This could be pre-service or in-service training. As previously stated, most Kenyan church teachers lack training in teaching children. They are either women who enjoy teaching and working with children or college or high school students who enjoy practicing their teaching skills during Sunday school. It is biblical to train church leaders. There are examples in both the Old and New Testaments. Paul trained Silas, Barnabas, and Timothy in the same way that Jesus trained His disciples. The responsibility of contemporary leaders is to nurture and develop other leaders.

There are numerous methods and strategies for training Sunday school teachers, including observing others doing the job, interviews with those who have previously done the job, reading, listening to tapes, viewing films and filmstrips about the job, taking classes, and attending retreats, seminars, conferences, and workshops (Towns, 2001). Workshops, which combine theory and practice, are considered more relevant and effective in the Anglican Church setting. Hamilton (2016) explains that when organizing such workshops, the following factors should be considered:

1. Arrange for a leader skilled in the subject matter and will plan for the maximum involvement of the participants rather than just speaking about the subject.
2. Promote the workshop with clear, inviting information so prospective participants know what to expect and how they might benefit from attending.
3. Target the workshop invitations to persons who have particular needs being addressed.
4. Provide an opportunity for participants to interact with one another and the leader.
5. Plan time for the participants to practice the skills or discuss the information that is the workshop's focus.



6. Prepare one or more pages of a handout summarizing important points of the workshop, including suggestions of how to do it or recommending particular resources.
7. Arrange the space where the workshop is held to be inviting and comfortable.
8. Sitting at tables will ordinarily be more conducive to a successful workshop than sitting in a circle of folding chairs.
9. Such workshops equip persons with skills and information and provide a significant measure of nurture and support.

### ***Nurture Teachers and Leaders Spiritually***

Nurturing and supporting people spiritually is as important as providing them with knowledge and skills. They require such nurturing and support not because they are leaders and teachers but because they are God's children, created in the image of God and called to serve as faithful members of the Church's ministry. To fulfill their calling, they must be nurtured and supported in and through everything they do to serve God. When people are invited to reflect on their life journeys and share their experiences with others in an accepting, caring, and trusting environment, spiritual growth, and learning occur (Wahyuni, 2022). People grow spiritually when they open themselves to God and one another through prayer, Scripture reading, singing, speaking, and reflecting. One of the primary goals of Christian ministry in general, and Christian education in particular, is spiritual growth. The Apostle Paul defines spiritual growth as the responsibility of leaders to equip believers:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for the works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:11-13).

Every well-organized Sunday school relies on capable, dedicated, and spiritually fit leadership. The director of Christian education and the Sunday school superintendent should be solely responsible for Sunday school administration. Another important point to remember is that a church cannot have a proper Sunday school program unless its teachers are well-qualified and dedicated.

### **Resource Materials**

A church needs certain resources for ministry. Chief among these essential resources is curriculum materials that include guides for teachers and students that are needed to



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help in the teaching-learning process. These should include weekly materials for worship and Bible classes, vacation Bible camps, major Christian holidays, such as Easter and Christmas, and social projects. Since Church and family have interlocking responsibilities for the religious nurture of children, parents should be provided with materials to serve as guides for this purpose. This includes family worship and readings on how to win someone to Christ, bring up children in a Christian way, and communicate the Bible to them. A Church must also provide resources such as space, equipment, supplies, and finances. Church planning groups, such as the church council, organizational councils, certain church committees, and other groups, need to plan and work together to provide the best resources they can justify supporting the teaching ministry and its activities.

### **Conclusion**

This study has established that objectives are the direction the teacher and the pupils should follow in their involvement with Bible study. Since children are the future of the Church, their learning objectives should be carefully determined so that the future of the Church is assured, and their faith is firm. The scope and context of the curriculum design should encourage children to have relationships with God, others, nature, and history. This encourages them to love and appreciate their Maker, their neighbors, their peers, the environment in which they live, and the heritage from which they are derived. Knowledge and skills are required for the teacher to feel that one is doing effective work, given the complicated nature of the teaching process. There is much to know about the Bible, theology, education theory, human development, and group processes. There are many skills to master in planning lessons, using Bible study tools, guiding interaction, leading instructional activities, and audiovisuals. For the Sunday school program to succeed, the Church needs to strongly emphasize leadership development made possible by organizing leadership training and taking a keen interest in who, how, and when to recruit teachers and leaders. When made aware of what is expected of them, they are in a better position when they accept a job to teach or lead in the Sunday school program.

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