



# Challenges of Church-State Collaborations in Management of Catholic Church Sponsored Public Secondary Schools in Nandi County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** *This study investigated the challenges of collaboration between the Kenya Government and Catholic Church in management of Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools in Nandi County. Objectives of this study were to find out: the challenges that the collaborators (Catholic Church and State) were experiencing in managing Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools; and how the Collaborative Management roles between the Government and the Catholic Church could be enhanced in Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools in Nandi County. The study employed descriptive survey research design. Its target population included all Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools found in Nandi County, all Principals and teachers of these schools and their Parents Associations' Chairpersons. It also included all the Sub-County Directors of Education, all Catholic Fathers in-Charge in Nandi Deanery and the Diocesan Education Secretary of Catholic Diocese of Eldoret. It used stratified, purposive and simple random sampling procedures to select its sample. It used Questionnaires and Semi-Structured Interview Schedules to collect data. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The study found out that these two partners were experiencing several challenges in their shared responsibility of managing these schools which included: mistrust; failure to consult widely; open protests by the Catholic Church; among others. It recommended that: Catholic Church and Government should organize regular workshops and seminars for BOM members, to acquaint them with the current School Management issues; and there was need to form a conflict resolution mechanism for resolving amicably the disagreements between these two partners.*

**Keywords:** *Catholic Church, Collaboration, Management Sponsor, Conflict resolution. County*

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## 1. Introduction

Historically speaking, the church is a key player in the provision of education world over. In the first half of the nineteenth century education everywhere in Europe was in the hands of religious minorities or interest groups (Benvenuta, 1973). In Ireland, for example, a relatively weak and newly independent Irish state handed over

education, health care, and welfare sectors to the far stronger and more institutionalized Roman Catholic Church in the 1920s (Grzymala-Busse & Slater, 2018).

This collaboration of the church and state, however, has had some challenges since the two parties tend to disagree on some issues. For instance, in 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Philippines, the Church consistently substituted for weak

state authority, but also intermittently struggled against state authority when it assumed an especially despotic and interventionist character (Grzymala-Busse & Slater, 2018). In Ireland, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at every turn of State policy in education matters the Catholic Church challenged the State, ignored it if necessary and went ahead persistently with the establishment of its own school-system (Benvenuto, 1973).

In Africa, Christian missionaries pioneered formal education. There was however some conflicts between the missionaries and the colonial governments. For instance, in DR Congo, according to Boyle (1995), education for the Congolese was rarely the focus of political or social conflict in the colony or in Belgium before 1946. Partly through their efforts on behalf of a nascent education sector, colonial agents, missionaries, and congregations helped to forge key political relationships in the colony, to create and then solidify administrative structures in both church and state, and to set the orientations for colonial social policy. Not surprisingly, it was precisely the close collaboration in education between missionaries and administrators, and their divergent views about how and when to form an indigenous elite, that eventually became the focus of late colonial conflicts. But relations between the missions and the colony's Belgian rulers, despite their difficult beginnings, had steadily improved until the 1950s (Boyle, 1995).

Immediately after independence, many African leaders started questioning the rationale of the dominance of the church in running of schools. While the Government of Guinea went as far as nationalizing all schools and excluding the church from education matters, most African Governments acted quickly to diminish the role of the church (Sifuna, 1980).

In East Africa and particularly in Tanzania, the colonial racial structure of education and the control of schools by the church, necessitated a new major government policy (Sifuna, 1980). Despite the church's protest, its dominance was reduced and local governments were given prominence.

In Kenya, the involvement of the Church in the provision of Education has a long history beginning from 15<sup>th</sup> Century, when Vasco da Gama arrived at the Coast and built a Chapel at Malindi (Sifuna and Otiende, 1992). The Church in collaboration with the state has played a pivotal role in provision of formal education to Kenyan citizens since the debut of Missionaries (Sifuna, 1990).

The Catholic Missionaries were among the first evangelists to start their mission work in East Africa. The first Missionary settlement on the coast of East Africa can be

traced from the time of Portuguese Voyages' of 15<sup>th</sup> century. Vasco da Gama, searching for a sea way to India in 1498 arrived in Malindi and was received by its ruler who was referred to as the Sultan (Baur, 2005). Christian Missionaries pioneered Western education in Kenya, as one of their strategies of spreading Christianity. They started schools so that they could use them to provide Education to Africans, before they could introduce them to the new faith-Christianity (Rono & Sang, 2017). According to Sifuna (1990), early schools grew out of the desire to win converts, train African Catechists workers and create an African middle class. Njoroge (1999) supports this view by stating that Missionary strategy, both Catholic and Protestant, had foreseen in the school the single most effective means of evangelization. To emphasize this belief, Ward (2021) states that both educators and pastors must work together to cultivate and build positive relationships between the church and school. Educators can create a welcoming atmosphere that encourages pastors to show up at the school regularly and to participate in activities.

Throughout the colonial era, the missionaries co-operated with the government and were largely proprietors of schools and native education. According to Oliver (1952), the alliance between the imperial Government and the Missionary factors in Education amounted to much more an alignment of theoretical policies. This implies that there was little to show that real cooperation between the Church and the Colonial Government in terms of actual formulation and delivery of curriculum in these schools. However, this may not be entirely true. The Fraser Commission Report of 1909, The Education Commission of 1919, and the Phelps Stokes Commission report of 1924, as well as the education ordinances of the 1930s issued by the colonial government showed that these reports actually compelled the church to take into account the government-designed curriculum which was more practical-oriented as a way of keeping graduates out of academic fields, so as to keep them less politicized and to make them reside in rural areas. Though the government might not have had a direct influence on the curriculum for Christian religious education, but it designed the rest of the curriculum that was disseminated in all schools including Church sponsored ones.

Shortly before independence, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) party in its Manifesto, welcomed and acknowledged the role and participation of Church in education. However, it declared that the task of educating the Kenyan citizens was a social responsibility of the government, setting the stage for the government take-over of schools originally owned by the Church (KEC, 1982).

Immediately after independence, the KANU government appointed the Kenya Education Commission headed by Prof. Ominde in 1964. This Commission is popularly known as the Ominde Commission (KEC, 1982). The Commission addressed many issues pertaining to the state of Education in Kenya. Among other recommendations, the Commission stated that: local authorities should manage public schools; segregation based on race, ethnic groups or religious affiliation in schools should be abolished; change of status of the churches from owners of the schools they had started and managed to that of Sponsors (Government of Kenya, 1968).

The word “sponsor” is first mentioned in Section 8(1) of Education Act Cap 211 in relation to schools that were previously owned and managed by the church, which were transferred to the local authority. Section 8 (1) of the Education Act (1968) state that:

Where the transferred school was managed by a local Church or organization of Churches, and it is the wish of the community served by the school that the religious traditions of the school should be respected, the former manager shall be appointed by the local authority to serve as sponsor of the school. (Republic of Kenya, 1968, p. 8)

The Basic Education Act (2013) clearly stipulates the role of a Sponsor in Church-Sponsored Public Schools, among them being a member of Board of Management. Section 56 (1) d of this Act sets aside three slots for the Sponsor to the Board of Management. Despite this there still

## **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

According to the Kenya Episcopal Conference (1992), there were several challenges that the Catholic Church was facing in its collaborative role of managing the Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools. Some of these challenges included: Some Ministry of Education officials were ignorant of the rights and roles of the sponsor; some of the Ministry of Education officials chose to ignore the right and role of the Church as the Sponsor; and some Politicians deliberately refused to recognize the rights and role of the Church as the Sponsor (KEC, 1992).

Conflict between the state and the church is an international concern (Ndung'u & Ouda, 2016). In Kenya, the Sessional Paper Number 14 of 2012 states that there exists a conflict over the role of Sponsors and the Ministry of Education with regard to ownership, management and appointment of head teachers of faith based sponsored institutions (Ministry of Education, 2012). This is echoed by the framework document for Education (2012) on aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya and Vision 2030 and beyond. This conflict

remained unresolved (Ministry of Education, 2012). This situation has led to some sponsors asserting undue influence on the running of schools (Ministry of Education, 2012). The major issues in contention involves interpretation of the responsibilities and the rights of both the state and the church on who has the last say on the matters of education (Nyamosi, 2019). According to Kafu and Nasimiyu (2015), the church is ignored and, in some cases, demonized by the government in matters concerning management of education.

This study looked at the manner by which the collaboration between the Catholic Church and the Kenya Government was being conducted in the management of Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools in Nandi County, where differences between Christian faith-based sponsors and Ministry of Education officials were common.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study were to find out:

1. The challenges that the collaborators (Catholic Church and State) were experiencing in managing Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools in Nandi County.
2. How the Collaborative Management roles between the Government and the Catholic Church could be enhanced in Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools in Nandi County

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Some Legal Policy Documents on Education matters in Kenya**

There are many legal and policy documents on education related issues in Kenya. This section looks only at some documents that deals with or justifies the involvement of the Church (Catholic Church for this matter) in the provision and management of education in Kenya.

#### **2.1.1 The Constitution of Kenya 2010**

The new constitution of Kenya ratified by Kenyans through a referendum in the year 2010 forms the basis of all other laws that govern all sectors, education included. The constitution therefore has sections that are relevant to this study.

Articles 53, 54, 55, 56, 57 and 59 of the Constitution have provisions on children's right to free and compulsory Basic Education, including quality services. These provisions are

in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church on quality education. The Vatican 11 document states in part that:

Since every man of whatever race, condition, and age is endowed with the dignity of a person, he has an inalienable right to an education corresponding to his proper destiny and suited to his native talents, his cultural background, and his ancestral heritage. At the same time, this education should pave way to brotherly association with other people, so that genuine unity and peace on earth may be promoted. (Abbott, 1966, p. 639)

The Catholic Church's role is especially evident in Catholic schools. These schools are zealous in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. The Catholic Schools enables young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given them in baptism (Flanner, 1982). This statement implies that the Catholic Church is well prepared and ready to collaborate with the Government of Kenya in the provision of quality education to Kenyan citizens in line with the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

Articles 62, 63 and 66 refer to public land, which will be vested in and held by both the national/and county governments in trust for the people resident in the country, and shall be administered on their behalf by the National Land Commission; unregistered community land to be held in trust by county governments on behalf of the communities for which it is held; enactment by Parliament of appropriate legislation ensuring that investments in property benefit local communities and their economies. The articles are relevant since educational infrastructure is constructed on public or community land. It is important to mention here that all Faith-Based Sponsored Schools (Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools included) are built on land owned by the Church. It is therefore logical that the Sponsor should have a say on how these schools should be managed.

Articles 174, 175, 176, 189 and Schedule 4 of the Constitution have provisions on the devolution of services to county governments, ensuring equity, access, quality and special attention to minorities and marginalized groups. The Basic Education Act creates County Education Board whose membership includes the sponsors representatives. This is an aspect of Collaborative management of education sector.

Article 237 accords special status to the Teachers Service Commission. Article 237 (2) stipulates the functions of the commission. They include:

To register trained teachers; To recruit and employ registered teachers; To assign teachers employed by the Commission for service in any public school or institution; To promote and transfer teachers; To exercise disciplinary control over teachers; and To terminate the employment of teachers.

Sub article 3 further stipulates that the Commission shall review the standards of education and training of persons entering the teaching service; review the demand for and the supply of teachers; and advise the national government on matters relating to the teaching profession. The teacher management is one of the issues that ought to be handled collaboratively by the two partners- the Government and the sponsor, especially when it comes to deployment of teachers in faith-based sponsored public secondary schools, bearing in mind the vested interests both partners have in this issue. The constitution appears silent on involvement of the sponsors in this case. However, section 4 of the new TSC Act, 2012 stipulates that TSC shall consult stakeholders in undertaking its duties. It is believed that sponsors will be one of the key stake holders to be consulted by TSC, especially when it comes to deployment of teachers in faith-based sponsored public secondary schools. Such schools include Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools.

### **2.1.2 Task Force on Realignment of Education on New Constitution 2010**

This Task Force noted a number of gaps, challenges and concerns in the Education Sector. Some of the specific issues that the Task Force identified included: effective governance and management; sufficiently flexible and responsive regulatory framework to be able to deal with the current and emerging challenges and ensure access, equity and quality; teacher education, management and attrition; sufficient flexibility to adapt to the changing socio-economic needs; standards and quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation; among others.

The Task Force came up with various recommendations for improvement in institutional management. They included developing a policy framework on institutional management with clear provision on: open and competitive process for identification of institutional heads; clear job description and a competitive scheme of service for head teachers; minimum qualifications in terms of education attainment, skills, competences and values with basic training in financial management, strategic leadership, quality assurance and mentorship; minimum set of professional standards for school managers; appointment to and removal from office of head teachers to be done through consultation between County Education Board (CEB), TSC and the Sponsor.

Basing on the recommendations of the Task Force, it is clear that the Task Force recognized the important role played by the Faith-Based Sponsors in Education and Training. That is why it recommends that a Sponsor has to be consulted on various management issues. The Task Force further lists the roles of the Sponsor in schools. They include: being consulted in appointment of institutional managers; nominating faith based persons to manage the spiritual aspects of a school; participating in Board of Management as full members; providing spiritual leadership and guidance in the institution; providing ethos of the institution and participating in resource mobilization.

The role of the Sponsor cannot be ignored as shown in the report of the Task Force on education. A Sponsor plays a key role in matters of formulating spiritual values of a school. She mobilizes resources for the school and is part of the school's management team. More so, the Task Force reports that a sponsor should be consulted on matters of deployment of head teachers to schools that she sponsors. The Basic Education Act, 2013 captured most of the recommendations of the Task Force. However, it appeared to reduce the influence of the Sponsor in management of schools, especially by not consulting the Sponsors on deployment of teachers and head teachers in faith-sponsored public schools and reducing the number of sponsor's representatives on school's Board of Management. The new TSC Act (2012) is also silent on the issue of consulting the school's Sponsor on deployment of the head teachers.

### **2.1.3 The Teachers Service Commission Act 2012**

The TSC Act 2012 has replaced the TSC Act Cap 212 of 1967. Provisions that required a Sponsor to be consulted prior to deploying teachers to Church-Sponsored Public Schools have been removed in the new Act. The influence of Sponsors, including Catholic Church has therefore been reduced. However, the Act states that TSC is to carry out its functions in consultation with the Government and other non-state actors in education sector. Section 4 of TSC Act of 2012 states that:

In performance of its functions and exercise of its power, the Commission shall-

- (a) be guided by the national values and principles of governance under article 10 and the values and principles of public service under article 232 of the constitution, taking into account the interests of the child under article 53 of the constitution, and

- (b) Subject to article 249 (2) of the constitution, consult with state and non-state actors in the education sector. (TSC Act, 2012 Section 4)

It is contemplated that one of the key stakeholders in Education sector is the sponsor. However, it is very unlikely that a sponsor will be consulted on matters pertaining to deployment of Principals in Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools. This is so because the same did not happen in the past despite having been there a clear provision in the previous TSC Act Cap 212, and Education Act Cap 211.

The shared responsibility of the Sponsor and the Government in teacher management can also be witnessed in the TCS's new policy of recruiting and deploying teachers to Public Secondary Schools. This new policy is demand driven as opposed to the previous policy that was driven by availability of trained teachers. The TCS has decentralized the exercise of interviewing the prospective teachers to be hired, to school level, in case of secondary schools. This mandate has been delegated to respective Boards of Management. The Sponsor is represented on these boards. Therefore, the Catholic Church's role in hiring teachers for the schools she sponsors can be realized at Management Board's level. Though, as mentioned earlier, the influence of the Sponsor stands reduced drastically.

### **2.1.4 The Basic Education Act 2013**

The Basic Education Act of 2013 was signed into law (enacted) by the president on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Its date of commencement is 25<sup>th</sup> January 2013 (Basic Education Act, 2013). Therefore it repealed the Education Act Cap 211 of 1968, in ways that affected the role of the Church in sponsorship of education. The areas affected can be found in the sections of the Act discussed below:

Section 4 (t) of this Act on its guiding principles stipulates that:

The provision of basic education shall be guided by the following principles-

- ...enhancement of co-operation, consultation and Collaboration among the Cabinet Secretary, Teachers Service Commission, the National Education Board, the County Education Boards, the education and training institutions and other related stakeholders on matters related to Education.

[Basic Education Act, 2013 Section 4 (t)]

The section of the Basic Education Act quoted above implies that the Ministry of Education recognizes other players in education sector. It refers to them as stakeholders

and pledges to collaborate with them to provide education to Kenyan citizens. Among these stakeholders are definitely the Church and the Catholic Church for this matter. However, this Act is not as clear as the previous Education Act Cap 211 of 1968, revised 2009, which singled out clearly the Church as key players in Education matters as Sponsor. Nevertheless, the Basic Education Act, 2013 still recognizes the religious Sponsors as stakeholders in education sector. For instance, the Church-sponsors have been assigned slots on the selection panel of the National Education Board and are members of the County Education Boards. Section 10 (2) stipulates:

The selection panel appointed under subsection (1) shall consist of ...

- (e). three persons nominated by the following bodies- ...
- (i). a joint forum of the National Council of Churches of Kenya and the Evangelical

Fellowship of Kenya;

- (ii). the Kenya Episcopal Conference; and
  - (iii). the Muslims Education Council.
- [Basic Education Act, 2013 Section 10 (2)]

Section 10 (2) e (i), (ii) and (iii) clearly shows that Church organizations which are also the sponsors have been given prominence in determining the members of the National Education Board. In particular, Section 10 (2) e (ii) provides for appointment of a representative of the Catholic Church through the Kenya Episcopal Conference. The schools Sponsors' interests on the National Education Board are expected to be realized through their representatives on the selection panel.

At County level, each County shall constitute County Education Board to oversee the management of education sector. Again, the Act recognizes the religious groups including Catholic Church as a major stakeholder and assigns them slots on the County Education Board. Section 20 (1) on composition of County Education Board states in part that:

Every County Education Board shall consist of a Chairperson, and twelve other members appointed by the Cabinet Secretary through an open and competitive process and shall include ...

- (e). where applicable, one person each representing-
- (i). jointly, the National Council of Churches of Kenya and the Evangelical Fellowship of Kenya;
- (ii). the Kenya Episcopal Conference; and
- (iii). the Muslims Education Council;

And at school level, under Section 56 (1) (e) on Composition of the Board of Management of Public

Schools, out of fourteen members who constitute the Board of Management, the sponsor is supposed to nominate only three representatives. A keen look at the Basic Education Act 2013 reveals that the influence of the sponsor has been reduced, if the number of her representatives on Board of Management is anything to go by. This is likely to heighten already existing areas of discontent in the collaborative arrangement. Unlike the previous Education Act Cap 211 of 1968, which allocated the sponsor four slots out of ten members of the school's BOG, the Basic Education Act 2013 allocates the Sponsor only three slots out of fourteen members of the Board of Management. It is not clear why the sponsor's representatives have been reduced in number.

Section 56 (5) states that, for Public Schools sponsored by faith-based organizations, the Chairperson of the Board of Management shall be appointed by the County Education Board in consultation with the Sponsor. This implies that sponsors have been given prominence on Boards of Management for the respective schools they sponsor. However, subsection (7) of section 56 states that:

Despite subsection (5), a faith-based sponsor who does not make a significant impact to a school or institution as contemplated under section 2 of the Act shall not be consulted in the appointment of the chairperson of the Board of Management of that school or institution. (Basic Education Act, 2013)

According to section 2 of the Basic Education Act (2013), the term "sponsor" means a person or institution that makes a significant contribution and impact on the academic, financial, infrastructural and spiritual development of an institution of basic education. This definition is not clear on a very important aspect of land, on which faith-based sponsored schools were built. The land belongs to or was donated by sponsor. Similarly, it appears unclear how a given church sponsor can significantly contribute to all the fields of academic, financial, infrastructural and spiritual development of an institution specified in Section II. For instance, the church may not make a very significant contribution in the training and staffing of schools, given that the provisions that enabled this to happen have been removed from the basic Education Act (2013) and TSC Act, (2012). This apparent conflict raises queries which could lead to difficulties in the collaboration process in the management of sponsored schools by the Catholic Church and the State.

The Act also attempts to stipulate the role of the sponsor in public secondary schools. Section 27 states that:

The role of the Sponsor shall be –

- (a). to participate and make recommendations of review of syllabus, curriculum, books and other teaching aids;

- (b). representation in the School Management Committees and Board of Management;
  - (c). to provide supervisory and advisory services in matters regarding spiritual development in schools, including the appointment of chaplains at their own expense;
  - (d). maintenance of spiritual development while safeguarding the denomination or religious adherence of others;
  - (e). to offer financial and infrastructural support.
- (Basic Education Act, 2013 Section 27)

It is curious to note that unlike the previous Education Act Cap 211 of 1968 which gave the sponsors a say in deployment of head teachers and other teachers in schools that they sponsored, the current Act is silent on this key issue. It is the same position that has been taken by the new TSC Act of 2012. This issue has been a source of conflict between the sponsor and the government's agency-the TSC. The two documents seem to be attempting to tackle this problem.

## **2.2 Empirical Studies on Catholic Church Involvement in School Management**

Ndung'u & Ouda (2016), conducted a study on "Church-State Conflict in Catholic Church Sponsored Public Secondary Schools Management; Effects on Student Academic Performance in Kiambu County, Kenya." Findings of the study revealed that there existed conflicts in management due to lack of cooperation between the sponsor (Church) and the State. The study also showed that sponsor was not being involved in many school activities and that the school administration wasn't ready to have more roles assigned to the sponsor. The study recommended that there should be more cooperation between the Church (sponsor) and the state, the Church priests should be more involved in school decision making for they were in close contacts with the school administration.

Unlike the current study whose focus is on the entire county of Nandi, this study covered a smaller area (Kiambu District), equivalent to a Sub-County. Its target population was also slightly different. It had a Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (QASO) as part of its population, while the current study had Sub-County Directors of Education.

Mabeya, Ndiku and Njino (2009), conducted a study entitled, "Role of Church Sponsor in Management of Secondary Schools: Impact on Academic Performance and Conflict Concern in Kenya." This study was conducted in Uasin Gishu District.

The findings of the study were: there is a significant influence of the provision of a conducive learning environment on academic performance; the expectations of the sponsor on teachers and students had a significant influence on schools' operations; there is relationship between a School Sponsor and academic performance in Schools and administration challenges have a significant relationship with the role played by sponsors in schools. Most prevalent challenges that head teachers experience while dealing with Sponsors in School Management are: Favors sought; nomination of ineffective Chairpersons; and use of school facilities for non-academic activities by sponsors. The researchers concluded that the Church Sponsors do meddle in School Management. This study therefore recommended that the Ministry of Education needs to review the Sponsorship Policy.

This study focused generally on the different Churches that Sponsors Secondary Schools in Uasin Gishu District. The current study was particular. It restricted itself on the Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools in Nandi County. The study mainly looked at the Collaborative approach to the Management of Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools by the Government and the Catholic Church, the aspect that was not well addressed by the previous study. This was the gap that the current study attempted hand to fill.

Mwanzia (2008), Conducted a study on "Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Mwingi District, Kenya." The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of the Sponsor on Public Secondary School administration in Mwingi District. The study's aim was: to determine the level of knowledge of Sponsors and Head teachers in the administration of Public Secondary Schools; establish the influence of the Sponsor in the administration and development of Sponsored Schools; identify areas of conflict in the administration of Public Secondary Schools between the Sponsors and the School Head teachers and identify the problematic areas facing Sponsors and the School Heads in the administration of Public Secondary Schools in Mwingi District and possible solutions.

This study's findings revealed that the Sponsors played the role of advisory to the School administration. The Sponsor's representatives formed part of the Board of Governors (B.O.G) and also visited Schools conducting Pastoral programs. It was also found out that the Sponsor influenced the School administration in matters of use of School facilities such as School-Buses and School-Buildings, hiring of non-teaching staff, replacement of B.O.G teachers and in general development of the Schools. More so, the findings revealed some areas of conflict between the Sponsor and School administration.

The findings of this study revealed marginalized role of the Church in School Management and recommended cooperation between the Church and the Government. What was not clear was how the Catholic Church and the Government have fared on thereafter in their shared Management roles of Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools. This was the gap that the current study attempted to fill. Moreover, the previous study looked at the Church in general as a Sponsor. The current study was specific. It focused on the Catholic Church as Sponsor of Public Secondary Schools, in Collaboration with the Kenya Government.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Description of Study Area

This study was conducted in Nandi County. Administratively, Nandi County has five Sub-Counties: Nandi North, Nandi Central, Nandi East, Tindiret and Nandi South.

The Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools are forty five [45] in the whole County. There were 33 mixed day schools, 10 girls' boarding schools and only 2 boys' boarding schools. (S/CDE's Offices, Statistics Sections, 2020). Nandi North Sub-County had a total of 11 Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools,

Nandi Central had 16 Schools, Nandi South had 7, Nandi East had 4 Schools, while Tindiret had 7 Schools.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The study used descriptive survey research design. The researcher collected data, classified it according to various variables, analyzed it by use of descriptive statistics and reported its findings. The data from closed ended questionnaire items were analyzed quantitatively while that from open ended items and from interview schedules, were analyzed qualitatively.

#### 3.3 The Target Population

The target population for this study included all the Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools found in Nandi County. There were 45 Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools in Nandi County. Out of these schools, only 2 were purely Boys' schools, 10 schools were purely Girls' schools, while the rest (33 schools) were Mixed. We had 1 National (Girls') school and 6 (4 Girls' and 2 Boys') County schools, while the rest (38) are Sub-County schools. Full boarding Schools were 12 (10 Girls' Boarding and 2 Boys' Boarding), 2 schools were Mixed-Day and Boarding, while the rest (31 schools) were Mixed Day Schools. The table below shows the different categories (Strata) of Catholic-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools that were found in Nandi County:

**Table 1: Different Strata of Catholic-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools in Nandi County**

Sub-County	Boys' Schools	Girls' Schools	Mixed Schools	Total
Nandi North	-	2	9	11
Nandi Central	1	3	12	16
Nandi East	1	2	1	4
Tindiret	-	1	6	7
Nandi South	-	2	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>45</b>

Source: Diocesan Education Secretary's Office- Eldoret Diocese 2020



There were about 450 teachers employed by TSC in these Schools and 45 Principals. There were also 45 Parents Associations' Chairpersons. All these constituted the target population, apart from students. The target population also included 5 Sub-County Directors of Education, 12 Parish Priests/Fathers in charge and 1 Diocesan Education Secretary.

### 3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The researcher sampled teachers, Principals, Parents Associations' Chairpersons and Parish Priests/fathers in charge. For the Sub-County Directors Education and the Diocesan Education Secretary, their entire population was used. This was because their number was small. Thus, all the five Sub-County Directors of Education and one Diocesan Education Secretary participated in the study. The researcher ensured that the respective samples from other strata were representative of the target population, by employing acceptable sampling procedures.

The researcher used Probability Sampling Procedures, which included Stratified Sampling and Simple Random Sampling to get a representative sample. He also used Purposive (nonprobability) Sampling Procedure to select participants privy to certain required information, who included the Sub-County Directors of Education and the Diocesan Education Secretary.

Concerning Stratified Sampling procedure, the strata in the population of this study included; Principals, Teachers, Parents Associations' Chairpersons, Parish Priests/ Fathers in charge, Diocesan Education Secretary and Sub-County Directors of Education. Apart from, Diocesan Education Secretary and Sub-County Directors of Education strata that were purposively sampled, the researcher placed the rest of the target population in respective strata before selecting representatives from each stratum to be part of the sample, using Simple Random Sampling Procedure. Other strata in the target population were the various categories

of schools. Thus: Boys' Schools; Girls' Schools; Mixed Schools; Boarding Schools; Day Schools; National Schools; County Schools and Sub-County Schools. All these categories of schools were considered during sampling so as to get a representative sample.

### 3.5 Sample Size

Since this study employed a Survey Research Design and analyzed the data that was collected statistically, the researcher used a sample size of twenty percent (20%) of the total population. This implies that out of 45 Catholic Church-sponsored Public Secondary Schools found in Nandi County, nine (9) schools were sampled randomly to participate in the study. Thus, out of 45 Principals, 9 (20%) were randomly selected as a sample. Out of 450 teachers, 90 teachers (20%) were selected randomly to participate in the study. The sample of teachers included a proportionate number of both males and females. Also, a sample of Principals included some female Principals who were purposively sampled for the sake of gender balance. Three (3) out of twelve (12) Parish Priests/ Fathers in charge were randomly selected to participate in the study, constituting a sample size of twenty five percent (25%) of participants from this stratum. More so, nine (9) out of forty five (45) PA Chairpersons were selected as a sample to participate in the study, constituting twenty percent (20%).

However, since the total population of other strata of the target population was very small, a whole population of these strata was included in the study. These strata included the Diocesan Education Secretary and the Sub-County Directors of Education. There was only one Diocesan Education Secretary and five (5) Sub-County Directors of Education. All the five (5) Sub-County Directors of Education were selected to participate in the study. The same treatment was given to the Diocesan Education Secretary who was only one in the whole Catholic Diocese. The table below shows a summary of the percentage sample sizes and population of different strata.

**Table2: Target Population, Sample and Percentage Sample Size**

<b>Population Stratum</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Percentage Sample Size . (%)</b>
Teachers	450	90	20
Principals	45	9	20
PA Chairpersons	45	9	20
Parish Priests/ Fathers In Charge	12	3	25
Sub-County Directors of Education	5	5	-
Education Secretary	1	1	-

### **3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments**

This study used Questionnaires and Semi-Structured Interview Schedules as the tools of collecting data. Questionnaires were the main tool that was used to collect the data. The researcher prepared questionnaires for Principals, Teachers, PA Chairpersons and Parish Priests.

Interview Schedules were prepared for the Sub-County Directors of Education and the Diocesan Education Secretary

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Challenges Faced by Partners in Collaborative Management**

The researcher sought to know from the respondents if there were any challenges that the two partners were facing in their collaborative management roles of Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools in Nandi County. Their responses were summarized in the tables below:

**Table 3: Challenges Faced by Catholic Church in Her Collaborative Management**

Items on challenges faced by the Catholic Church & Government in their Collaborative Management Roles	Principals <i>n</i> =9		Teachers <i>n</i> =77		PA Chairpersons <i>n</i> =9		Fathers in Charge <i>n</i> =3		Total <i>n</i> =98	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Failure of Government to consult Catholic Church prior to deploying Principals to Catholic Sponsored Public Secondary Schools.	3	33	40	52	5	56	2	67	50	51
Failure of Government to consult Catholic Church prior to posting teachers to Catholic Sponsored Public Secondary Schools.	6	67	42	55	6	67	2	67	56	57
Education Act is not clear on how the Government and Sponsor are supposed to manage jointly Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools.	6	66	32	36	5	56	2	67	45	46
<b>mean responses of challenges</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>51</b>

**Key**

*n*- Total number of respondents in each category

*f*- Frequencies

Table 3 above shows that the Catholic Church experiences several Challenges. On deployment of Principals and their Deputies, 51% of respondents said it posed a challenge to the sponsor. On posting of teachers to Catholic Church-sponsored schools, 51% of respondents saw it as another challenge that faced the sponsor. Finally, 46% of respondents identified Education Act as a source of

challenge because it was not clear on how the partners were to jointly manage schools. The overall mean percentage of the challenges was 51%. On the other hand, the government also had its share of challenges. A summary of how the respondents responded is shown in the table below:

**Table 4: Challenges Faced by Government in its Collaborative Management Role**

Items on challenges faced by the Catholic Church & Government in their Collaborative Management Roles	Principals <i>n</i> =9		Teachers <i>n</i> =77		PA Chairpersons <i>n</i> =9		Fathers in Charge <i>n</i> =3		Total <i>n</i> =98	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Catholic Church's insistence on people it prefers to head Schools it sponsors despite their questionable professional competence.	4	44	59	77	5	56	1	33	69	70
Open protest by the Catholic Church on Government's unilateral decisions on issues affecting Schools sponsored by Catholic Church.	5	56	44	57	5	56	1	33	53	54
Education Act is not clear on how the Government and Sponsor are supposed to manage jointly Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools.	6	67	32	36	5	56	2	67	45	46
The Catholic Church's insistence that all students must embrace Catholic values	3	33	38	42	4	44	1	33	46	47
<b>mean responses of challenges</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>54</b>

**Key**

*n*- Total number of respondents in each category

*f*- Frequencies

As tables 3 and 4 above show, majority of respondents identified the deployment of Principals and their Deputies to Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools as one of the major challenges facing these two partners. About 70% of the respondents observed that Catholic Church takes the adherence to Catholic faith by a prospective Principal in a Catholic Church-sponsored secondary school as a precondition, despite their competence being questionable. This poses a serious challenge. Out of the 98 respondents on this issue, teachers were the ones who returned a higher percentage (77%). Majority of teachers saw this issue as a major challenge. On the same issue, the score of Fathers in charge was 33%, while that of Principals was 44%. These are the only two groups of the respondents who gave scores below the average score of 50%. Teachers and PA Chairpersons gave

scores above 50%. Thus, they scored 77% and 56% respectively. The overall mean percentage of these challenges was 54%, which was relatively high.

Principals and Fathers in charge might have scored that low because they are the main victims of this scenario. Principals are the victims because they are the ones being pushed by the Catholic Church to take over the headship of the Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools, despite their questionable competence to handle this responsibility. Fathers in charge on the other hand are victims due to the fact that they are the representatives of the Catholic Church which prefers Principals of Catholic faith to head these schools despite their questionable leadership qualities.

Another challenge that was identified by most respondents is that of the failure by the Government to consult the Catholic Church (Sponsor) prior to posting teachers to Catholic Sponsored Public Secondary Schools. About 57% of the respondents saw this as a challenge to Collaborative management of Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools. Principals, PA Chairpersons and Fathers in charge all scored 67%, while teachers scored 55%. This scenario is in agreement with Kafu and Nasimiyu (2015) who observed that the voice of the church in education has been muzzled and its role in this enterprise has been more or less obliterated.

A related challenge was the one-off deploying Principals to such schools by the Government without consulting the Sponsor (The Catholic Church) About 33% of Principals concurred with this challenge. Their percentage was the lowest. The Fathers in charge scored the highest in support of this challenge, at 67%. PA Chairpersons scored 56% while teachers scored 52%. Education Act Cap 211 (1968) stipulates that the Government should consult the Sponsor before posting of teachers and deployment of Head teachers to such schools. This position is also supported by the Task Force on Education (2012). However, this provision seems to be overlooked by the Government. One of the reasons why the Government fails to consult the Sponsor could be the insistence of the sponsor on people who profess Catholic faith despite their lack of the necessary professional requirements. The Government prefers professional competence to religious inclination. This conflict of interest therefore poses a challenge to these two partners. This is in line with Ndung'u & Ouda, (2016) who stated that the needs of each of the two groups create conflict in the education sector.

Open protest by the Catholic Church on Government's unilateral decisions on issues that affect the Public Secondary Schools Sponsored by the Catholic Church was identified by most respondents as one of the challenges. It attracted 54% of the respondents. The score of Principals and PA Chairpersons was 56%, for teachers it was 57% while that of Fathers in charge was 33%. The decision by the Government to turn some Catholic Church-Sponsored Public Secondary Schools to National Schools in recent past is one of the unilateral decisions by the Government, which led to protest by the Catholic Church. The Government was forced to bring the Catholic Church to negotiating table before this decision was affected.

On average, 50% of Principals, 53% of teachers, 55% of PA Chairpersons and 50% of Fathers in charge gave their views in support of the challenges that the two partners- the Government and the Catholic Church were facing in their Collaborative Management of these Schools. Therefore, many respondents were in agreement that these challenges

were real. Information obtained from interview schedules and open-ended segments of the questionnaires supports the findings tabulated above.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The first research objective sought to find out whether Catholic Church and the Government were experiencing any challenges in their shared responsibility of managing these schools jointly. Related to it, the second research objective which sought to find out how the Catholic Church and Kenya Government's collaborative role of managing Catholic Church-sponsored public secondary schools could be enhanced. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that indeed there were several challenges that needed urgent attention. They included: disagreements on deployment of school principals and their deputies; mistrust among these partners; failure to consult widely on some issues; open protests; among others. There was therefore a need for swift action from both parties to arrest the situation.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

1. The study found out that most of the sponsor's representatives to school management bodies like BOMs were not aware of their roles. They were ignorant. Therefore, the Sponsor (Catholic Church) should second competent people to represent her on respective School Boards of Management. In this connection the Ministry of Education should stipulate clearly the minimum academic qualification an individual to be appointed to school's Board of Management should have, in line with the recommendation of the Basic Education Act, 2013. There is need for regular workshops and seminars for BOM members, organized by the Schools' Sponsor and the Government, to acquaint them with the current School Management issues. This will enable them to articulate issues of Collaborative Management from an informed point of view.
2. The study found out that at times the two partners fail to agree on some pertinent issues, leading to some conflict. Based on this finding, the researcher recommends that there is a need to form a conflict resolution mechanism for sorting out amicably any differences that might occur between these partners. There is need for an arbitrator between the Ministry of Education officials and Catholic Church officials, in the

event of them failing to agree on some pertinent School Management issues. The Government and the Church should work together in formulating the recommended conflict resolution mechanism.

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