Abstract:

Bringing up children and taking care of them is a great responsibility for parents. Parental influence is of vital importance in the spiritual and moral nurture of children. The character and behaviour witnessed in the children reflect on how they are brought up. Rebellion, drugs and substance abuse, immorality etc among children is rampant and parents are at pains because of the behaviour of their children. The rite of passage of baptism and confirmation as taught in the Anglican Church of Kenya Catechism is wanting. This is because the catechism though having gone through this they do not practically reflect the teachings. Parents who themselves underwent the same also do not seem to take these catechetical teachings seriously. This problem led the researcher to look at the parental involvement in spiritual and moral nurture of children in ACK St Polycarp Mlango Kubwa Parish (Nairobi). Chapter one, thus looks at the background, statement of the problem, the objectives, justification, scope and limitation, literature review, theoretical framework, hypothesis, and the methodology of the study. In chapter two, the study looks at the importance of Christian education for parents on parenting. The church plays a vital role in imparting parents with the right knowledge as far as parenting is concerned. Through the various programmes like the couples fellowship, parenting seminars etc the parents get an opportunity to learn. Despite all these the researcher found out that there’s still a gap. Chapter three looks at the African traditional approach to spiritual and moral nurture of children through the rites of passage especially that of birth and initiation was compared to the Christian ones of baptism and confirmation. The role of sponsors came out strongly as being trainers and teachers. The communal responsibility in instilling of such teachings in the African traditional society is lacking in the Christian rites thus posing a challenge. The study looks at the roles of uncles, aunties and grandparents as well as those of teachers, pastors and church leaders in spiritual and moral nurture of the children. In chapter four, the study looks at the good parental qualities and challenges on spiritual and moral nurture of children was addressed. The parents ought to spend time with their children, show them love and more so listen to their children. The study found out that some parents do not spend time with their children due to the nature of their work and business that they do. This leaves the children under the care of house helps. Some children lamented that their parents suffer the disease called 'TB ' (Too Busy), thus their companion becomes the electronic gadgets in the house. For us to get a generation of responsible citizens, we need to take this issue of parenting seriously. The society presently faces a lot of problems and the greatest is lack of proper parental guidance. ‘Without Civic morality, the community perishes; and without personal morals, its survival lacks value.’ In chapter five, we have the summary and conclusion in which the study recommends that all the stakeholders in parenting namely parents, teachers, church leaders and pastors should play their role and avoid blame game and passing the back Spiritual and moral nurture of children should be given the seriousness it deserves for posterity of the church and the society. Technology is a very important tool especially in the 21st century. Children must be made aware of what is good for them and
discard what is evil especially the pornographic sites. The study recommends mentorship programmes for the children and having them involved more in church activities. Children should have their talents identified early and nurtured and instead of the parents discouraging them they instead be their encouragers. In conclusion, parental involvement in spiritual and moral nurture of children is of great importance and cannot be undermined. Parental challenges especially in the 21st Century cannot be ignored either. This calls for a concerted effort by all stakeholders in ensuring that we have an upright society in whose children and young people form the greatest percentage. This is because an informed man is indeed a reformed man.