

Management Issues
in Fulfilling
the Mission of Catholic Educational
Institutes

Presentation from Africa

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European entry to Africa

- Colonial influences began in late 1600s and early 1700s
- to find a new and better life, and to share in the riches of the resources of these countries.
- 1987 Christian Brothers came from Ireland to Kimberley, South Africa.
- to bring schools to educate the children of the Irish immigrants
- Brothers from the UK began education ministry in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the early 1960's
- the work of the Irish spread into Zambia about the same time.
- The Brothers from Australia made foundations in East Africa (Tanzania and Kenya) in the late 1980s.

There was already an African Education system

*“The study of the Gikuyu system of education should reveal to European educationalists how the **character** of individuals is formed **within the family circle**, then **within the local group**, then **within the whole tribal organisation** through a course of **initiation ceremonies**, and it should give them the **process of character formation** in the routine of Gikuyu life history with its numerous age groupings”.*

(Kenyatta 1978, 98).

African Way of Life

- Extraordinarily integrated into community life
- They lived out their **relationship** to the **Supreme**, to **each other**, to the **world around them** through **rituals** and **contacts with “spiritual leaders”**.
- Founded upon the understanding that **“I am because we are”**, the foundation of their identity.
- It focused on the eternal question of what it means **to be human**, the **recognition of human and spiritual powers** and the **presence of evil and suffering** in the world order.
- It provided a **basis** for **ethical behaviours** and **good order** in the community.

Impact of European influences

- The expansion of **colonialism** and the movement of **Church Mission Evangelisation** got somehow intertwined, often working together for their own different ends.
- The agricultural and mining industries began to flourish.
- Mass education was introduced through European style **mission schools**.
- These were created as a way of helping the indigenous people to transition to the new economic wider world.
- The Churches - Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Lutheran – were the **main initiators** and **managers** of this radical way of “**changing society**” and its way of forming its people.

Early days of independence

- The church school systems became the national school systems
- The Churches became the spiritual and moral authorities.
- Some schools were nationalised and considered as church sponsored and the churches remain as sponsors / supervisors / Board members;
- Some Church schools remained private and the churches retained total administrative responsibility. (Strangely these became schools for the rich).

- In the **private** school the **Congregation is responsible** for finding the **resources** for the management of the school, hiring of teachers and paying of salaries, provision of school physical resources and all enrichment needs of the school.
- In the **Catholic sponsored school**, the Congregation is having a **seat on the Board** and the Board has **limited powers** to **advise** the government (through the Headteacher) on the **management of the school**, on **the ethos, vision and mission** of the school, and to raise **financial resources for additional facilities or Board teachers**. The government provides for the appointment and payment of the allocated teaching staff, the normal administrative costs and classroom facilities. The Board may also advise the Education ministry on appointment of key personnel within the school.

Kenya recognized the impact of the Church Schools

- On November 2018, President Uhuru Kenyatta, the fourth President and son of the first President, acknowledged **the impact of the Churches, and the Catholic Church in particular, when he directed the ministry to restore Church sponsorship of schools which traditionally used to be under their care.**
- Uhuru Kenyatta emphasized the importance of **the moral impact** of the ethos and vision of the Church schools, for these schools focus more on **integrated personal development** rather than on just gaining qualifications,
- President Kenyatta said the Government would also start to engage more closely with religious organizations to enforce better morality among school children.

- The first president of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, told the AMECEA Bishops in the early days (1967), of his Presidency, “You are the conscience of society and if we go wrong and you fail to correct us, one day you may answer for our mistakes”

We must promote our Vision of the Catholic School

- We need to have familiarity with the **Vision** of a Catholic School.
- We need to **spell out** that Vision.
- Our Catholic Schools focus on **personal development** of the students. Even the national governments acknowledge that.
- Our education plan is based on **values**, and on the **encouragement to behave well out of respect for people** around us, and **to maintain our standards for the surrounding communities**.
- We develop a **Strategic Plan** to make that Vision possible. It emphasises **pastoral care of students**, the **performance standards we expect of teachers and administrators**, **safeguarding policies for our students**, especially the more vulnerable ones, the motivation for students to seek to be the best they can be.

Support for Managers of Catholic Schools

- In Kenya, the Catholic Institutions, such as **Catholic University of Eastern Africa** and **Tangaza University College**, have developed programmes, both **academic** in Masters of Education in Leadership and Management and also in the area of Teacher training and Curriculum Development,
- and **non-academic** training programmes, seminars and workshops for school staff.
- A further area of great importance is the provision of training for teachers and school administrators in the area of **Child Safeguarding**.

Challenges to School Managers

1. Cooperation with National Government Authorities
2. Finding like-minded members for School Boards
3. Finding Financial Resources

(As Christian Brothers we have sought assistance from our colleagues, schools, in developed world)

4. **Training of Teachers** (In Kenya, CUEA, TUC, MIUC and many Catholic sponsored Teacher Training Colleges are making progress in this area, but we are still needing more graduates for teaching in our schools).

Conclusion

- The **Challenges remain many**, but we are not deterred.
- The Mission of **Evangelisation** is still **relatively new** in Kenya, and in Africa as a whole, less than 300 years).
- African Proverb: **if you want to go fast, go alone**, but if you want **to go far, you must travel with others**.
- So we go with others, and **make haste slowly**.
- Thank you for listening and sharing.