

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THEOLOGY

PERCEPTION OF PARENTS ON CHILDREN'S
MINISTRY AT KCC

BY
PHILIP MWENEGAMBA

*A Thesis Submitted To The Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Christian Education*

JULY, 2008

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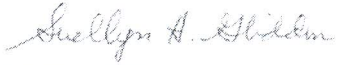
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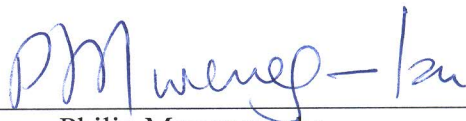
Student's Declaration

PERCEPTION OF PARENTS ON CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AT KCC

I declare that this is my original work which has never been submitted to any other
College or University for academic credit

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners

(Signed)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PM wenegeba', written over a horizontal line.

Philip Mwenegamba

July 2008

ABSTRACT

This study was to find out parents' perception on the relevance of the children's curriculum whether it was achieving the mission statement of Karen Community Church. It was a survey study which was carried out at Karen in Nairobi, Kenya.

The data was collected using a questionnaire which composed of open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire measured the opinion by using the Likert Scale with summated ratings to determine the parents' opinions. The sample of 20 parents was drawn from Karen Community Church.

The study was to find out the curriculum's relevance to realization of the mission statement. This came because it had been found that there is high drop out rate in the youth ministry when in children's ministry numbers are good. This high drop out rate looks contradictory to the mission statement of the church which is to build a community, so why is it that there is drop out? Therefore, the parents were to give the opinions if the curriculum was really offering what the mission statement of the church is stating. The mission statement aims at building a community of people who are knitted together and rooted in Christ. The question was: why was it that in the upper classes of children's ministry and the youth ministry numbers were lowering? It was appropriate to look at what the curriculum was delivering. The results of the study showed that some parts of the curriculum, goals, objectives and methods were perceived as relevant but the content was not. This is an area whereby the curriculum has to be revisited and retailored.

From the study it was recommended that: 1). K.C.C. should put a time interval when the curriculum for children's ministry has to be evaluated to see its relevance and adjust where necessary. 2). Since the program activities split the opinion of parents, it is recommended to revisit them to make them more relevant to K.C.C. mission statement. 3). Since the content was perceived inadequate, it is recommended that K.C.C. education desk should develop a curriculum with relevant content in line with clear goals. 4). Since the methods were perceived relevant, it is recommended that they should be maintained for teaching.

To

God alone be the glory forever and ever-Amen

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the early years of the twenty-first century, Christianity in Africa is stated to be growing rapidly as compared to other continents. This is epitomized by the growth of the churches planted by the early missionaries and the mushrooming of rapidly growing indigenous churches. A lot of ministries are operating and booming in Africa. All these ministries are there to meet the needs of Africans. Among the many fast growing churches in Africa, in particular Nairobi, Kenya, a church was planted on 14th September 1996 (KCC 2006, 2). It is called Karen Community Church (KCC), which is named after the location in which it has its infrastructures.

As with any other organization that is established for a purpose, KCC developed this mission statement:

To build a community of Christ's disciples in the Langata-Ngong neighborhood through the Holy Spirit, who are godly, rooted in the Holy Scriptures, care for each other, and influence their world through prayer, love and missions. (KCC brochure 2006, 1)

This church is more than a decade old and is providing a number of forums for ministry operations. Children's ministry is one of them, which is as old as the inception of the church itself.

Problem Statement

KCC has curriculum for its children's ministry but the church has never taken any initiative to measure the effectiveness of the ministry in relation to its

achievement of the mission statement of the church. The church faces growth problems because for some time it has appealed to its members to invite more people to attend the church and partake in the church's ministries including children's ministry. This appeal has been emphatically put across to its members through announcements in the main service of worship on Sundays. In the upper classes of the children's ministry which are Standards 6 to 8, there are few members who attend. In the lower classes, there are more attendees. The higher the class, the fewer the members there are. Since the numbers are lower despite the existence of the children's ministry with its curriculum, the question is: does the children's ministry curriculum contribute to the realization of the mission statement of the church? When you examine the mission statement of the church, you find that it encourages the church to build through fellowship and also reach out to other people through missions within and without. The issue is to find out if the church's organs are really running programs that contribute to actualization of the mission statement. In this case, the children ministry's curriculum is to be evaluated.

Therefore the interrogative problem statement is: What are the perceptions of the parents on the relevance of the program for children's ministry in achieving the purpose intended in the mission statement?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose for doing this research was to evaluate the curriculum of the children's ministry. The purpose was to find out the perceptions of the parents on the relevance of the goals and objectives, content activities and teaching methods adopted for children's ministry in light of the extent they address the mission statement of KCC. Many ministries had been operating and others were being instituted at KCC

The goals of the children's ministry were contributory to building a community of Christians who were godly, rooted in the Holy Scriptures, and influence their world through love and mission. If the children's ministry is making any achievement on the learners towards the mission statement, then it will be reflected in their lives as they interact with others in their social environment. Since children's parents at times attend the meetings of the children through a forum which is held once in a while and some stay in the tabernacle (a worship assembly of all children in church), the researcher decided to choose parents who are close to the children to see if there are elements or characteristics formulated or being formulated in the lives of children toward what the mission statement of the church says. Parents are aware of the church's mission statement because every Sunday there are bulletins given to every Sunday church attendee on which the mission statement is clearly written. In the liturgy of worship, there is a slot of missions' moment in which the mission of the church is said, and thereafter announcements concerning the mission department's activities. This brings awareness to all church attendees. In front of the church, there are also conspicuous letters written on the embroidery patch of cloth stating the mission statement. In most cases, the mission statement is also beamed on the front wall throughout the worship service. Whenever children go for camps and retreats, they are given leaflets to give their parents for fee contribution and on these leaflets the mission statement is written. From the above, parents should be aware of the mission statement of KCC.

Significance of the Study

This study was to help the leadership of KCC to know if the ministry of children is contributive to the realization of the goals as stipulated in the mission

statement of the church. The information obtained was to aid the educational desk to plan or develop a curriculum that when implemented could best achieve the mission statement of the church. This study was relevant and important because it was help the KCC if their was curriculum in children' ministry in today's world there are a number of other philosophies, which are antagonistic to the biblical truth as they hamper godly character, which is developing in the lives of children. This study was to help KCC develop a curriculum that could help curb the challenges of the counter-godly character.

The research's findings were to be basis for the church to solve current and persistent problems which are encountered. The findings were to awaken the church to come up with a time interval when every curriculum implemented can be evaluated if its goals and content were achieving the mission statement of KCC. This evaluation would be conducted from the views of the parents. This was important because it was easy for the implementers who are the KCC leadership and the teaching team of children to assume that they were achieving goals when in reality they were not. The parents' evaluation would be best because they were neither in the church's leadership nor the teaching team in the children's ministry; so they would give unbiased evaluation of the children's ministry curriculum.

Research Questions

For the researcher to get the required information, he used the following questions to guide the focus of the study:

RQ1. What is the parents' perception, if any, on the goals and objectives of the curriculum for children's ministry towards achievement of the mission statement at KCC?

RQ 2: In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the content of the curriculum for children's ministry in regard to achieving the mission statement of K.C.C?

RQ 3 In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the teaching methods used in the curriculum for children's ministry in regard to achieving the mission statement of K.C.C?

Null Hypotheses

There was no expectation of differences of perceptions among the parents at KCC on the curriculum for children's ministry towards achieving the mission statement of the church. The following null hypotheses were used in the study:

- H₀: 1.** Differences in educational qualification will not significantly affect the perception of relevance of the curriculum.
- H₀: 2.** Differences in gender will not affect significantly the perception of relevance of the curriculum.
- H₀: 3.** Differences in age will not significantly affect in perception of relevance of the curriculum.

Limitation

This research was restricted to one congregation called KCC in Karen estate of Nairobi city. This study was conducted at KCC on parents' perceptions of the curriculum for children's ministry. Its results are not to be generalized to other churches. There may be certain unrecognized variables which influenced parents' perception of the curriculum for children's ministry. These variables might be unavailable at KCC but present in other churches and other variables available in KCC may be unavailable in other churches. To a certain extent, there was a

possibility that some other variables could have influenced both the church in which the research was conducted and other churches. The researcher also realized the advantage of having a series of various denominational members' perceptions on the curriculum of children's ministries implemented in each church but due to scarce resources and limited time he restricted the research to one congregation.

Delimitation

The sample was drawn from parents who are bona fide members at KCC, including mothers and fathers.

Definition of Concepts

Below are some definitions that explain how the following key words and terms were used in this research:

Children's ministry: This refers to KCC's program, which serves the needs of children through Christian education and other pertinent activities. This program ministers to children from the time they can speak and answer questions (kindergarten) to age fourteen.

Parent: This refers to a biological father and mother or any adult who, as the guardian, provides physical, spiritual and other needs to a child or children he or she is raising.

Perception: An attitude, opinion, value and feeling that someone has of a particular subject or happening.

Curriculum: The teaching and/or learning content for children's ministry. It is a course of study for a particular period for a particular group of learners. The curriculum includes goals and objectives, teaching methods, length of lesson, topic or theme, and content to teach. It also contains the learning activities.

Goal: This is the intended terminal achievement by the learners after going through a series of lessons in the curriculum or syllabus.

Objectives: These are the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to be gained by the learners in a particular lesson on a given topic. These are enablement skills, knowledge, values and attitude to the goal.

Content: This is the body of a lesson, the substance with which the learners become familiarized in the lesson and from which the intended goal and objectives are acquired.

Teaching Method: This is how the lesson is presented to the learners. It involves activities through which the information is passed to learners.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section of literature review, there are many substantive precedents on how a good curriculum for children's ministry should be developed. This literature section covers the biblical basis for founding the children's ministry, the aims of children's ministry, incorporated ingredients in curriculum for children's ministry and the ways children learn to appropriate the intended knowledge and most successfully.

Why Children's Ministry?

Biblical Support for Children's Ministry

Children are part and parcel of the outreach in the Great Commission inaugurated by the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:10-20). Lawson and Choun state that there are a number of biblical references that inform the ministry of children. They point out that children have to be ministered to in order to achieve tender heartedness, which makes them exceptional (2 Chr. 13:11) and this can be learned from the Lord (Psalm 34:11). They also remark that foolishness characterizes the children (Prov. 22:15) and it has to be tactfully dealt with immediately (Lawson and Choun, 1998, 18-19). The co-authors emphatically quote the need for children's ministry in church based on previous research that has shown that most adult Christians (believers) made their commitment to follow Jesus Christ when they were boys and girls. According to Lawson and Choun:

The ministry of Jesus included children. The Gospels indicate that Jesus did not spend his time exclusively with adults and, as Christian educators, neither should we. Children were present in most cases when Jesus taught. Matthew 14:21 and 15:28 specify the presence of children...Mark 9:36-37 and other passages record that Christ took a child in his arms, looked a child in his arms, and said, "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives me". (1998, 25)

This gives us a picture of reasons why children have to be ministered to and shows the importance of children's ministry in a local congregation. Since there is a need to remove corruptible ways from children, there is a need to develop a curriculum for teaching children in order to bring needed values in their lives.

Lawson and Choun argue that the church supplements on the responsibility of what parents have to do at home. The church has been given a responsibility of nurturing children spiritually while at the same time helping the parent's to learn how to nurture children in their homes (Lawson and Choun 1998, 26).

Children are highly honored in the Bible. Jesus used some children's qualities for illustration in teaching the Kingdom of God. Hall explains how Jesus valued children by describing the time when Jesus put his ministry to adults on hold in order to attend to Jairus' daughter, who was twelve years old (Mark 5:41-43). Jesus encouraged adults to have the attitude of a child. She also went on to say that Jesus used an attitude of a child to drive a point to adults (Hall 1980, 23-25). Children have to grow and mature in a way that will please the Lord God. This calls for parents to shoulder the responsibility of making sure that their children grow in the way of the Lord. Christian parents have to pick up and continue with Jesus' task of ministering to their children. Therefore in all avenues where children can be nurtured, parents should ensure that their children are nourished in the Word. The Bible teaches the value of children in the Kingdom of God starting from the Old Testament, in which God gave the responsibility of teaching children the Word of God to the Jewish parents (Deut. 11:19), to the New Testament in which we see the Lord Jesus doing it as explained above. The apostle Paul gives instructions to minister to the children in various churches he planted (Eph. 6:4, 1 Tim. 3:4). This gives churches a premise for the institution of children's ministry.

It is important to train children to control their minds and develop the ability to make good decisions to the best of their ability. Each parent would like his or her children to be good decision makers on their own. Children have to make good decisions amidst their peers in their playing environment. Parents have an obligation to make sure that their children develop right decision making skills which align with the Word of God. Owen states that:

So, if the scripture is true, to be fearful or not is an act of volition. I cannot control the thoughts that come into my mind, but I can control what I think about, what I fix my mind on. Therefore to inculcate this principle in my children, I must learn and know the promises of God and teach them to my children. You and your children can repeat over and over again, forcing your minds and thoughts to practice what you are learning. (1984, 91)

Since we are living in a busy world with multiple responsibilities, this (decision making in children) can be achieved only if they sit under the feet of teachers who teach them curriculum developed appropriately for their age. For teachers to inculcate this into children, they have to teach them scriptures that the Holy Spirit uses for transformative work.

By bringing curriculum to children denotes the belief that having gone through it, there will be positive change in their lives. In their childhood world, they are going to make godly decisions which are heavily influenced by curriculum content. Wawire (1999, 14) also remarks that the debate about the age of accountability of children cannot be settled easily because it goes beyond doctrinal and theological convictions. He says that one's belief concerning the child's salvation is dependent on how one views salvation from the Bible. He remarks that salvation is based on faith in Jesus Christ. Wawire's words show that children are to respond in their lives to the experience of transformation upon going through the Christian curriculum. This implies that the curriculum implemented in children's ministry is able to bring transformation.

Aim of Children's Ministry

Children's ministries occur in different churches with one major goal, to give arm to parents' responsibility to nurture their children. Lawson and Choun (1998, 210) say that children ministries are there to help parents have their sons and daughters attain spiritual development. They also state succinctly that presently, the teaching role is delegated to teachers who partner with parents. The co-authors argue that joint responsibility by saying that teachers and parents cooperatively evaluate together the progress of the behavior of the child; and they plan together in Church (1998, 210-212). Because parents are too busy responding to different obligations, this spiritual reformation task has been left in the hands of the teachers who spend more time with the children. Teachers play a pivotal role in spiritual development.

Ahead of children's life journey, there are a number of things to solve. Their age is preparatory ground for acquisition of skills and techniques to address or avert those challenging situations. Crabb (1954, 41) says that children who are growing need standards for godly life in addition to housing. He says that children would like to have guidance which is experienced practically and authoritatively to help them make their own decisions. The guidance should not allow self-want which is an ego element to dominate and become superior over others since a human (in this case a child) is susceptible to numerous errors in behavior. Crabb notes that this can be largely reduced by exposing a child to godly standards in his or her life (1954, 42). He also remarks that parents and teachers are there to provide examples of life to children by training them as they sit under their feet for pedagogical instruction.

Crabb points out that teachers also provide guidance to children as they struggle and are caught in a dilemma in their world. Both training and guidance are conducted in educational forums. Crabb states that a maturing child will come across

problems and will be required to solve them by containing the emotion which throws off balance when one comes across a problem. Once a child controls his strong emotion, then he will reason to construe the best way of solving a problem at hand. This will make the child sort out the problem without any scaffolding from parents or other people experienced in problem solving (Crabb 1954, 47).

The implication of the above is that parents need their children to mature in handling issues on their own as a result of being in children's ministry. This maturity is reflected in children who are able to provide their own solutions to complex situations. The existence of children's ministry is a way to this maturity. Since children's ministry is operational in Christian gatherings like churches, the maturity attained by a child is drawn from Christian principles forming Christian worldview in children, hence it is godly yielded and not from ungodly philosophies. This maturity will assist the child to reason with Christian worldview as he will be gradually learning in making independent decisions, as he transits into young adulthood or more independent.

Needs of the Children

A curriculum should thoroughly address the needs of the children. Children, like adults, have needs in their lives. As children grow, their primary needs change. For example, children ages two to three need love and support. Four to five year olds need opportunities to practice new skills and express their eagerness to interact with different objects (Lawson and Choun 1998, 60-64).

A child also needs to mature in moral development. Moral values begin developing in children in relation to their growth. The older a child grows, the more advanced the moral values they acquire are, until the child is fully mature. Children's ministry is there to direct children on the path to moral maturity. Lindgren and Suter

(1985, 71-73) describe Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development with three levels, preconventional, conventional and postconventional.

In level one, preconventional (or premoral), the child acquires moral values when he or she does bad acts and those who impose moral values chide him or her for doing wrong. At the preconventional level, there are two stages in which the child finds that his or her egocentrism contradicts higher authority. The child learns obedience, which is objective responsibility rather than egocentrism, which is subjective responsibility.

Level two, conventional or role conformity, is the time when the child learns the natural role behaviors that are accepted and praised by the majority of the child's society. The child learns to behave in accordance with the obligations and duties they are expected to fulfill.

In level three, postconventional or self-accepted moral principles, the person is aware of what is right or wrong based on the set institutional standards, which are expected by everyone to comply with in order to be accepted. However, the person knows about an individual's tenets of conscience and that the institutionalized laws can be violated in order to fulfill an individual's conscience.

A child has to go through the above stages in order to be a mature human being who is holding to moral values. Lindgren and Suter (1985, 72) quote Kohlberg's appeal, "...teachers should be more actively concerned with teaching students moral values than they are." A curriculum for children's ministry has to take into consideration the various moral developmental stages in children. Every child is expected to attain full morality as he grows up. Clark, Brubaker and Zuck state:

Just as children pass through cognitive stages in development of the mind, they also move through identifiable stages of moral thought. Indeed, it seems plausible that the growing mind sets the limits on moral perception. In experiments with children in Christian education settings, Dough Scholl

of Harvard University found that there is an upward yearning in the child's mind for more mature modes of moral thought. (Clark, Brubaker and Zuck 1986, 14)

Physical development has to tally with moral development in the life of a child. This moral development is best learned by exposing the child to biblical truth.

Children's Curriculum

For children to learn well, they need a well tailored curriculum. Brandt quotes Hirsh and argues that a curriculum is pivotal for childrens' learning. The proponents of self-actualization stated that education should provide an opportunity for the learners to discover things for themselves, leading to better understanding and life application. Such a way of learning is very meaningful and long lasting. The curriculum should at least provide a satisfying consummatory experience, in which learners not only embrace concepts or principles passively but digest them through self analysis and interaction until they get imbued with the curriculum content. The author also described 'self actualization' stage as when the child reaches a point whereby all the characteristics of maturity in all milieu of a human being are fully developed. Brandt (1988, 5) state that the proponents of self actualization say that, "...education provides 'integrated experience' and 'liberating force' by entering fully into a child's life."

A curriculum should be clear to the instructor on what he is supposed to do in class and the learners too are to be clear of what they are supposed to achieve. Yount argues that an effective curriculum is more than content. He states that, "The purpose of teaching is more than talking through one's notes—it is helping students to learn." He says that teachers have to ask the reasons for the learners to come to the classes.

Yount points out that learners too have to know what they expect to achieve during the course (Yount 1999, 135-36).

Every curriculum for children should have objectives that are meaningful. The kinds of objectives should vary according to the nature of the instructional program (Popham and Baker 1970, 23). The lessons and the assignments should be relevant to the ages and experiences of the learners. Learners get interested in what appeals to their senses in their playing environment. This is true learning because it is transferable into their real life (playing or living environment). Shafer says (1985, 67-71) there must always be a contact point between the lesson with its subject and the learners.

For a Christian curriculum to be achievable in attaining its intended goals and objectives it has to be marked by certain qualities. These qualities are best listed and described by Stubblefield, who quoted Colson and Rigdon. Some of the qualities of a meaningful curriculum are: 1) that a curriculum should have biblical and theological soundness, which is representation of genuine Christianity; 2) that it has to reflect comprehensiveness of the essentials of Christianity; 3) it must have relevance in meeting the needs of learners; 4) it should be balanced to avoid overemphasis; 5) it must sequentially arrange the topics in order to build Christian character in the entire human being; 6) it has to be flexible for adaptability of the individual differences of the learners; and 7) it has to reflect correlation, which is the proper relating of parts in the total curriculum without disintegration. Colson and Rigdon are quoted as saying that organization of the curriculum hinders or influences the achievement of the programs (Stubblefield 1993, 142-143).

For a Christian education curriculum to be effective, it is advisable to have conceptualization of how the children differ in stages of development. Wilhoit and

Dettoni reiterate (1995, 147-150) the fact of differences of conceptualization in children by referring to Piaget who hypothesized children thinking at different levels in relation to their age. Children exhibit transductive reasoning (a contextual happening to be applicable into every situation even if the conditions in other situations vary), nonsensical (sensible to their age and insensible to adults) and syncretistical thinking (don't regard other peers' opinions), and symbolic reasoning. Children also exhibit conversational learning which happens at a particular age when a child grasps an attribute and uses it even if the situation changes. Later on, children expand sociocentric views which occur when they come to realize that they can cause or affect other people's affairs. Children also go through disequilibrium and synthesis in which they change their mental capabilities by interacting with the new data brought to them in the environment. Their confusion with the new situation (disequilibrium) will allow reasoning, which will be reflected in acting (synthesis) rightly to settle the situation.

A good curriculum for the children should bear some distinctive qualities. Wright mentions (1970, 96-97) some qualities such as it has to flow from known to unknown, which means a teacher should teach from what a child knows to what a child does not know. It should have stimulating questions and use their imaginations. A curriculum has to provide room to involve the child in the story being taught.

How Children Learn

All human beings do not learn the same. Hereditary intelligence (IQ) and other handicaps bring variation in the learners, who are going through the same curriculum. Children have their own way of learning, which is different from adults. Rozell describes (1956, 61-93) the factors that determine learning methods, including

preferred ways of learning in a particular cultural setting, age of the pupils, the number in the class, the sex of pupils, equipment available, and the concept of teaching from curriculum.

Different methods are applied as an effective way of teaching children. Children learn best through the body's gateways of natural learning which are the five senses, namely hearing, seeing, touching, smelling and tasting. Rondell also explains that different methods such as question and answer, discussion, scripture search and projects can be ways of teaching in Sunday School. Bailey also comments (1980, 37-39) on how children learn and says that children learn well by imitating, repetition and when they make their own choices in form of a play and not a serious class. In teaching children, the curriculum should contain a variety of methods. Zuck and Clark state (1986, 478) that Christian teachers have to use a variety of methods in one lesson. The authors said that Jesus' teachings had a variety of methods. The teacher's responsibility is not transmission of information from the Bible at one time only but is also continuous observation of seeing appropriation since learning is a process in a child's life. Therefore, the teacher is required to use discussions, role plays, reports and projects.

Having looked at the literature review for the children's ministry, the next section reviews the literature on the methodology which applies to the research conducted. The review covers sampling, questionnaire construction, and analysis.

Methodological Literature Review

Sampling

Different types of samples are used in probability sampling. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 165-169) mention and describe four types of sampling. The first one

is simple random sampling. The advantage of this one is that all the members in the population have equal chance of being picked for the sample. When using random sampling it is recommended that one uses a table of random numbers. This avoids the influence of bias in the researcher in selection of the sample. The disadvantage is that it is tasking to number all the subjects in the population when there is high number. The second type is the stratified sampling which is commendable to use in a population which has subgroups. The advantage of this is that "...it enables the researcher to study the differences that might exist between various subgroups of a population." (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh 2002, 167). Each stratum is represented in this type of sample. The third type is cluster sampling, which is when different categories of subjects are out there. It is used when it is difficult to select individuals for sample, so a block of people from the population has to be chosen. The disadvantage of this is that it is vulnerable to sampling error as the cluster members might be deficient of some other elements. The last one is systematic sampling which is to pick the *n*th subject of the population to sample. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 169) state that various combinations of sampling types could be applied in a single research.

In drawing the sample, it is commendable that it should have a true representation of the entire population. It has to make sure that all the distinct characteristics of the population are well represented in the sample. Kombo and Tromp (2006, 79) explain that if there are homogeneous subgroups in the population and if those subgroups are critical to research, it is appropriate to use probability sampling of a stratified type. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 164) describe this type of sampling as stratified probability sampling because the researcher takes up the task of making sure that all characteristics in the elements or the subjects of the population

are represented. This implies that all selection is dependent on the expert's knowledge in determining how to draw true representation. The other type of sampling is probability sampling, which involves drawing the sample by chance, in which each element or subject in the population stands an equal chance of being selected. This type is most likely favored because it includes the characteristics among the subjects, which might be critical in influencing the behavioral pattern of subjects in the research conducted.

Probability sampling is highly recommended to use in a large population and non probability is only used when probability sampling is difficult (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh 2002, 165).

Designing Questionnaires

On the construction of questions in a questionnaire, it is important that the researcher formulates questions which are succinct and that seek to tap the information needed. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 389-390) state two types of questions are needed, which are closed-ended and open-ended. The co-authors said that closed-ended questions take time to construct but they are easy to respond to, hence they do not take a long time to answer. The other advantage is that the questions asked have the same wording to all subjects. This helps to measure the same in all the subjects. Open-ended questions are easy to construct but at times give more than one answer on the question (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh 2002, 390). The researcher must read the responses, analyze them and interpret them. The researcher must develop a coding system for quantitative analysis of the responses. The researcher used both of these methods because they were advantageous to give more data in the type of survey research which the researcher conducted.

An extensive reading in the literature showed that opinions, attitudes, values and feelings are closely related. These determine the reactions and behavior of people towards a particular issue. Attitudinal elements are not easily measured by other instruments because they are not discontinuous in calibration but are continuous. The best way to do calibration or measurement is by scaling them through attitude scales (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh 2002, 224). The Likert scale, which is a summated rating scale is used in assessing attitudes by giving the frequency or the degree of the attitude being analyzed. The frequency falls on a continuum which has two extremities, the 'best' and the 'worst' with other points of fixed measurements in-between.

Analysis of Data

In quantitative research, Chi-Square is often used for statistical data processing. Two conditions are to be noted in Chi-Square application and these are data should be open to frequency counting and have categories into which frequencies fall. The Chi-Square requires independent variables that have to be measured into categories according to the scale design used in data collection (Borg and Gall 1989, 562-564). The Chi-Square is widely used by researchers in data interpretation.

Having reviewed the methodological literature, the next section describes the design for this research. This was the design which the researcher used on the subjects in data collection.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section deals with the method and procedure which were used to carry out the research in KCC. This research was to find out the perception of the parents on the curriculum for children's ministry towards achieving the goals of the mission statement at KCC. Parents were to give their beliefs, attitudes and opinions on the current curriculum for children's ministry. No other method was used apart from quantitative method in this research. According to Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 25), the characteristics of different groups' attitudes and opinions on a certain issue are best measured by survey. Since this research fell into the same category of measurement of individuals' expression of their attitudes, the researcher used the survey method with parents who go to KCC. This was a descriptive survey of the quantitative type. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 377) state that this kind of survey measures the non tangible constructs (attitudes, opinions) from people, therefore this survey was a sample survey of the intangibles. This type of survey was cross-sectional survey because it was done across the parents' ages and gender at a single point of time to find out the perceptions of people (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 378-380). This helped the researcher not to get opinions from a particular age or gender of the subjects only but from all the parents.

Entry

Since the researcher is a member of KCC, he talked to the pastor and the Children's Ministry Coordinator concerning the research that was to be carried out at KCC. Both of the KCC staff gave permission to go ahead and conduct the research and they expressed interest in knowing the outcome of the research at the very end. Both staff were agreeable to provide any help needed from the church.

Population

The population of the study was comprised of the mothers and fathers who were registered members of KCC in Nairobi. When these parents acquired membership in the church they went through classes during which the mission statement and the ministries of the church were explained. The children's ministry was included in this course.

Sampling

Having gone through all types of sampling, the researcher used probability sampling. This type of sampling was a systematic random type. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 168-169) note "if the list is not random, it is possible that every K th of the population might have some unique characteristic that would affect the dependent variable of the study..." KCC has proper records of registration and this eased the task of doing systematic sampling. The number of parents is around two hundred. A sample of twenty was drawn in order to have responses. In drawing the sample from the population, every tenth number was drawn from the population until twenty subjects were selected.

Designing Instruments

The instruments were designed in such a way to tap all the needed information for the research. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 216) said that, “A test is a set of stimuli presented to an individual in order to elicit responses on the basis of which a numerical score can be assigned.” The instrument the researcher used measured the attitudes of the parents. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002, 224) remarked again that, “The measurement of attitudes presumes the ability to place individuals along a continuum of favorableness-unfavorableness toward the object.” Questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample. The questionnaire contained code number, personal details of the respondents including gender, educational level or category, and age. The questionnaire contained closed-ended and open-ended questions asked to find out the personal views or perceptions of the participants on the children’s ministry curriculum. The questions were derived from the research questions.

The questionnaire in this study used two types of questions closed-ended-response and open-ended-response (Appendix A). The researcher developed these questions from the information, knowledge, history and methodology which he interacted with in the literature he read, as described above. First he looked critically at the literature that described the perception of parents on their children. This helped the researcher to develop the introductory section of the questionnaire, which asked for personal details of the respondents. Personal details contained sex, age range, and qualification categories.

Based on the literature, Part A of the questionnaire was developed to inquire about the information of Research Question 1, which related to the goals and

objectives of the curriculum and the three hypotheses stated in Chapter One. Part B collected information to answer Research Question 2 concerning the content of the curriculum. It was comprised of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Part C of the questionnaire asked for information related to Research Question 3, concerning the teaching methods applied in the curriculum. All the areas evaluated were related, to check if the mission statement of KCC was realized.

The Likert scale was used in the questionnaire items. There were five points on the scale which were to measure the opinions of the respondents. Some of the rating points were: Very Good, Good, Average, Poor, Very Poor and in some other questions were: Very Much, Much, Average, Little, Very Little.

Validity of Instruments

The questionnaire and the interviews met the standard of validity and reliability that apply to data collection measurements in educational research as Borg and Gall (1989, 290) suggest. Borg and his co-author say that, “Each item on your questionnaire must be developed to measure a specific aspect of one of your objectives or hypotheses. You should be able to explain in detail why you are asking the question and how you will analyze the responses” (Borg and Gall 1996, 290). Validity here referred to asking questions without ambiguity so that the intended response should come out from the respondent while the reliability refers to consistency of the instrument to obtain the same response if repeated. This validity was verified by three research experts.

The questions asked of respondents in this research study were tested by the experts in the field of educational research. The supervisor and the second reader had a look at it.

Pilot Testing

The instrument developed was tested in January 2008, was tested to establish its feasibility in the field intended and if it was effective. Pre-testing was done with five parents in KCC who were not part of the sample. The instrument was checked to verify if the questions were clear, measured what was supposed to be measured, and if they provoked a response. The manner of pre-testing and the amount and relevance of the data determined the amendments on the instrument. After amendments were made, the instrument was ready for use on the sample. The pastor, Jomo Muita, and one of the elders looked at it and they suggested how to modify some questions. In the first place, they said that they were happy with the questionnaire but questions had to be rephrased. Questions were rephrased and all unnecessary or ambiguous ones were removed. Pastor Mwita also suggested the date when the questionnaire would be best distributed to those twenty people in the sample. After further modification on the sample, the questionnaire as printed and ready for distribution to the twenty people in the sample.

Administering the Instrument

The questionnaire was distributed to the sample drawn from the parents whose children attend Children's Ministry at KCC. This was so because these parents were familiar with the mission statement of the church and the children's ministry since they send their children there. Some of these parents stay with their children as the teachers teach. These parents stay in the infants' crèche class (with very small

children) and pre-school class (with children who are about to start standard one).

The questionnaires were distributed through the pastor's office in a service of worship on a Sunday. The responses were collected through the Sunday service information desk and the pastor's office. This was to make the questionnaire official or formal, so that parents could take it seriously in responding and submitting it back to the pastor's office.

Method of Data Analysis

Upon receiving the completed questionnaires, the data was drawn from the Likert Scale and analyzed. Conclusions were made from this analysis on how the curriculum was making impact on the lives of the children. The degree of extent on the Likert Scale flowed like this: very good; good; neutral; bad; worse. This was later converted to figures with 'Very Good' having a score of '5' and descending with a reduction until we come to 'worse' as score '1'. This made the measurement to be discrete in calibration. This enabled statistics to be computed so that percentages could be obtained.

These tables were drawn according to information gathered to address the research questions in the three parts of the questionnaire, namely A, B, and C. The introductory part of the questionnaire in part A asked the age range, educational qualification, and genders. The hypotheses were tested. The responses collected were converted to figures to show frequencies and were further converted to percentages.

Since there were twenty respondents that meant the score value allocated to each score was 5 so that the percentage could be obtained.

To avoid having too many empty cells or cells with too many proportions of cases, it was minimized by collapsing the scale into two ends with in between,

“uncertainty”. “Relevant” subsumed responses like “very much” and “much”. “Uncertainty” included “average” responses and “irrelevant” included responses of “little” and “very little”. In some other cases where the scores fell on one side of the continuum, the actual points of scores on the Likert scale were fully drawn to show how the scores were distributed on one end of the continuum.

Each research question was asked in the questionnaire in Parts A, B, and C respectively. Each research question generated other supportive questions to collect enough data.

Since Chi-Square required independent observations on the subjects, each observation appeared once, and observations had frequencies. Chi-Square test was applied to see the significance of any differences among the categories of the subjects in the observed frequencies from the expected frequencies. Chi-Square is good at using discrete measurements or categories of which the calibration from 0% to 100% is inclusive. In order to identify any differences between participant opinions, the Chi-Square test applied to the values in each cell.

The Chi-Square formula is this:

$$\chi^2 = \text{Sum } \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \chi^2 &= \text{value of Chi-Square} \\ O &= \text{observed frequency} \\ E &= \text{expected frequency} \end{aligned}$$

In χ^2 calculation the significant level was 0.05. The degrees of differences were determined by the number of columns and rows in the tables. If the χ^2 did not exceed the critical table value it was not rejected, otherwise it was rejected.

Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh mentioned three assumptions that have to be taken into consideration when dealing with chi-square statistical calculations from the inferential figures:

1. Observations must be independent—that is, the subjects in each sample must be randomly and independently selected.
2. The categories must be mutually exclusive: Each observation can appear in one and only one of the categories in the table.
3. The observations are measured as frequencies. (2002, 207)

This is what the researcher applied in the data analysis in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The main purpose of this study was to seek the perceptions that parents who are members of KCC have regarding the relevance of the curriculum for children's ministry. Relevance of the curriculum was considered in terms of whether or not it was helping the church realize its mission statement. KCC mission statement is:

To build a community of Christ's disciples in the Karen-Ngong-Langata neighborhood through the Holy Spirit, who are Godly, rooted in the Holy Scriptures care for each other and influence their world through prayer, love and missions. (KCC brochure 2006, 1).

This chapter reports on the findings, analysis and interpretation of data that was collected through surveys from the parents who sent children to children's ministry at KCC. Research questions were formulated to draw perceptions on the curriculum. The independent variables, educational level differences, gender differences, and age differences from the parents were measured against the dependent variable, which is the parents' perception of the relevance of the curriculum.

Questionnaire Returns

Twenty questionnaires were distributed to parents of children in children's ministry at KCC. All the questionnaires were filled out and returned, giving a response rate of 100% from the respondents, the parents.

Table 1. Returns of questionnaires

Respondent Group	Number Sent Out	Number Returned	Percentage
Parents with their children in Children's ministry	20	20	100%

Parents' Perception of Relevance of Goals and Objectives of the Curriculum

Part A of the questionnaire (Appendix A) addressed the first research question,

RQ1: What is the parents' perception, if any, on the goals and objectives of the curriculum for children's ministry towards achievement of the mission statement at KCC?

The following null hypothesis was developed in response to this question.

H₀: 1. Differences in educational qualification will not significantly affect the perception of the parents on the relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

Items 1iii and 2i in the questionnaire were asked to indicate the qualification and the extent to which the activities the curriculum engaged in were fulfilling the mission statement of the church. These activities were drawn from the goals and objectives of the curriculum. The responses obtained were collapsed into three categories namely high, neutral and low perceptions. Each of the three hypotheses was tested using the chi-square test of independence. These calculations are shown in the table 2 below. Figures outside the brackets are the frequency counts that were observed and those in brackets are the expected frequency counts. The expected frequency counts were computed by multiplying the column total by the row total divided by the sum of the row totals.

Table 2. Perception of relevance of activities based on education

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Highly Educated	6 (5.68)	5 (5.68)	1 (0.64)	12
Middle Educated	3 (3.32)	4 (3.32)	0 (0.36)	7
Column Total	9	9	1	19

$\chi^2 = 0.8401$ $df = 2$ Significance level = 0.05 $N = 19$

In table 2, it shows that the highly educated had high perceptions (50%) of the activities done in children's ministry. The middle educated were mostly neutral (57%) but 43% held high perceptions.

The calculated χ^2 was 0.8402 with 2 degrees of freedom at the significance level of 0.05. This figure was far less in value compared to the critical value of 5.991, indicating the hypothesis shouldn't be rejected; therefore it was not rejected. It can be concluded that there was no significant difference of opinion between the highly and middle educated responses towards the activities taught in the children ministries.

H₀: 2. Differences in gender will not significantly affect the perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

Gender was recorded in item 1i of the questionnaire. The extent to which parents perceived the activities done in the curriculum were derived from the goals and objectives of the curriculum was recorded in item 2i. The findings were collapsed and recorded in table 3.

Table 3. Perception of relevance of activities based on gender

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Male	7 (5.85)	5 (6.5)	1 (0.65)	13
Female	2 (3.15)	5 (3.5)	0 (0.35)	7
Column Total	9	10	1	20

$$\chi^2 = 2.468$$

$$df = 2$$

Significance level 0.05

$$N=20$$

The data in the above table 3 shows that 54% of the males perceived high perception on the relevance of the activities and 46% gave low perception. This shows a split on their perception with minimal differences. From the females 28% gave high perception and 72% gave low perception. Since a huge percentage of females had low perception, this implies that more women were not satisfied with the activities carried out in the curriculum than males, while males were unsure because of the split.

The chi-square test was conducted to see if the independent variable (gender) influenced the independent variable (perception of relevance). The χ^2 found was 2.468 with 2 degrees of freedom at the significance level of 0.05. The χ^2 obtained was below the critical value of 5.991, therefore the hypothesis was not rejected. This means that gender significantly did not influence parents' perceptions of the activities done from the curriculum's goals and objectives. The parents are about evenly split between those who regard the activities relevant and not sure.

H₀: 3. Differences in age will not significantly affect in perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The respondents were asked to indicate their age range and their perceptions on the various activities conducted, in questionnaire items 1i and 2i. The independent variable was age and the dependent variable was perception of relevance.

Table 4. Perception of relevance of activities based on age

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Age 40 and above	5 (4.26)	4 (4.26)	0 (0.48)	9
Age 39 and below	4 (4.74)	5 (4.74)	1 (0.52)	10
Column Total	9	9	1	19

$\chi^2 = 1.197$ $df = 2$ Significance level= 0.05 $N = 19$

From the above table 4 the χ^2 test was performed and the value was 1.197 at 2 degrees of freedom at a significance level of 0.05. The χ^2 value of 1.197 is less the critical value of 5.991, therefore the hypothesis was not rejected. This reveals no significant difference between the two age groups' perceptions of the activities done from the curriculum. Both age groups, there's a split opinion in the number of those who perceived the activities as relevant and those who are not sure of their relevance.

Perception of Relevance of the Curriculum's Content

The second research question sought to find out the perception of the parents on the content of the curriculum used in the children's ministry. Research question two was:

RQ 2: In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the content of the curriculum for children's ministry in regard to achieving the mission statement of K.C.C?

This question had no hypothesis accompanying it. However two questions were included in the questionnaire to collect responses in answer to the research

question. The respondents were asked to give their perceptions of whether or not their child or children, when asked, were able to share the content they were taught in the children's ministry. Their answers showed that the content of the curriculum was retentive to learners as they indicated their children uttering what they learnt in children's ministry. Parents were also asked to what extent they perceive the content shared by their children contributing in light of the mission statement of KCC. The results of the two questions were collapsed and tallied in the table 5.

To arrive at the results of table 5, the responses received had Very Much and Much fused, Very Little and Little into high perception and low perception respectively. Neutral was just left. This fusing happened on each question asked in items 3i and ii.

Table 5. Perception of retention of content and relevance to the mission statement

	High perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Retention of content	7 (35%)	4 (20%)	9 (45%)	20 (100%)
Content's relation to mission statement	2 (10%)	9 (45%)	9 (45%)	20 (100%)

N=20

Items 3i and ii in the questionnaire were asked to find out parents' perception on the retention of content and its relevance to the mission statement. The findings show that the respondents tended to have more low perception of the retention shown by their children. The high percentage score of 45% on the low perception column shows that most parents perceived that what is taught in children's ministry is not well retained by them. This implies that a further study has to be made into reasons why it is so perceived. Answers to the second question of the questionnaire show that respondents have either a low perception or are unsure of the extent to which the content of the children's ministry fulfills the mission statement of the church. This is

evidenced by the high percentage score of 45% on the low perception and uncertainty responses. This implies that what the children share from the content learned in children's ministry is perceived as having little relation to the mission statement. As such, the mission statement is not fulfilled by the content of the curriculum. The results in the above table imply that something has to be done to improve on the content of the curriculum. Those who responded with low perception stated that the children did not say more content and the content say did not relate to the church's mission statement.

Perception of the Methods Used in the Curriculum

The third research question of this project was:

RQ 3: In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the teaching methods used in the curriculum for children's ministry in regard to achieving the mission statement of K.C.C?

The research question was designed to investigate the perceptions of the different methods used in the curriculum for teaching the different lessons. The three hypotheses were tested again with independent variables from item 1 on the questionnaire. The first hypothesis was:

H_{0:1} Differences in educational qualification will not significantly affect the perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The independent variables were 'highly educated' and 'middle educated' and the dependent variable was 'the perception of relevance'. Both independent variables, highly educated and middle educated, were the two unchangeable categories of constructs in the subjects while the independent variable, the perception of relevance, was the changeable category evidenced by variously responses.

Items 1iii and 4i on the questionnaire were asked to seek the parents' perceptions on the various methods employed in the curriculum for teaching lessons. The following five methods used in the curriculum were listed in the question: discussion, dramatization, singing, games and lecturing. Parents were asked to give their perceptions of these teaching methods. The results are reflected in table 6:

Table 6. Perception of relevance of methods in light of educational qualification

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Highly Educated	10 (9.48)	1 (1.89)	1 (0.63)	12
Middle Educated	5 (5.53)	2 (1.1)	0 (0.37)	7
Column Total	15	3	1	19

$$\chi^2 = 1.823$$

$$df = 2$$

$$\text{Significance level} = 0.05 \quad N=19$$

The findings in the table 6 show that the χ^2 test results of 1.823 with 2 degrees of freedom at the significance level of 0.05. Since the value obtained is less than the critical value of 5.991, the hypothesis was not rejected. This means that statistically no significant difference was found in responses along the educational levels. Both categories, the highly educated and the middle educated, had a high perception of the various methods used in the curriculum, with percentage scores of 83 and 71 respectively.

H₀: 2. Differences in gender will not significantly affect the perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The independent variables are male and female and the dependent variable is 'the perception of relevance'.

Item 1i in the questionnaire sought the gender of the respondents and item 4 requested their perceptions of the various methods used in the curriculum for teaching lessons. The results are reflected in the table below:

Table 7. Perception of relevance of various methods in light of gender

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Male	6 (5.6)	1 (1.05)	0 (0.35)	7
Female	10 (10.4)	2 (1.95)	1 (0.65)	13
Column Total	16	3	1	20

$\chi^2 = 0.586$ $df = 2$ Significance level = 0.05 N = 20

A χ^2 test of independence was performed at 2 degrees of freedom at a significance level of 0.05. The χ^2 value obtained was 0.586 which is below the critical value of 5.991. This means no major statistical difference existed between the males and females' perceptions of relevance of the various methods. From the obtained χ^2 (0.586), the null hypothesis was not rejected. From these results, both gender, age 40 and above and age 39 and below, reported having a high perception of the various methods used in the curriculum for teaching lessons.

H₀: 3. Differences in age will not significantly affect in perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

In the questionnaire items 1ii and 4i were designed to record the age and investigate the extent to which parents perceived the various methods used in the children's ministry as relevant to the mission of KCC

Table 8. Perception of relevance of various methods of the curriculum in light of age

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Age 40 and above	7 (7.1)	2 (1.43)	0 (0.47)	9
Age 39 and below	8 (7.89)	1 (1.58)	1 (0.53)	10
Column Total	15	3	1	19

$\chi^2 = 1.33$ $df = 2$ Significance level = 0.05 N = 19

The result of the χ^2 test of independence performed is 1.33 with 2 degrees of freedom at a significance level of 0.05. When the χ^2 is compared to the 5.991 critical value of determining either to reject or not reject the null hypothesis, the χ^2 value falls below the critical value. The hypothesis was not rejected because it fell within the range of acceptance. This means that no significant statistical difference exists along age differences to infer the dependent variables were influenced by the independent variable. Both age ranges, 40 and above and 39 and below, reported having a high perception of the various methods used in the curriculum for teaching with percentages scores of 78 for age range 40 and above, and 80 for age range 39 and below. Two respondents gave the reason that most of the methods were participative.

Discussion

The analysis shows the different perceptions of the different areas of the curriculum that were investigated. The testing of the hypotheses related to educational qualification, gender and age showed that none of these characteristics significantly influenced the respondents' perceptions of the curriculum. Most of the χ^2 values were below the critical value of deciding either to reject or not reject.

The perception of relevance of the various activities (e.g. evangelism, play games) conducted in children's ministry curriculum on average had 46.6% high perception, 48.1% neutral and 5.3% low perception. The perception of the retention and the relevance of the content to the mission statement was on average 22.5% high, 32.5% neutral and 45% low. Relevance of the methods used in the curriculum were perceived as high 79.3%, 15.5% neutral and 5.2% low. Regardless of their differences in gender, age and educational qualification, parents reported no significantly significant differences of opinion because there was a split of perceptions of the

activities. The parents also do not perceive what their children share with them from their lessons as relevant to the church's mission statement but they perceive the methods used to be highly relevant. The content retention and its relevance to the fulfillment of the mission statement, and the various methods used the curriculum. Generally, this suggests that the children's ministry curriculum is perceived as going by just what you presented, one would conclude however, the parents think highly of the methods used in teaching the children.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was to find out parents' perceptions or opinion on the relevance of the curriculum in KCC children's ministry whether it was realizing the mission statement of the Church. In this chapter, there is presentation of the findings, analysis and interpretations construed from the data that is configured in the tables.

Research Problem and Purpose

In order to carry this investigation effectively, the following research questions were used:

RQ 1. In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the program activities of the children's ministry curriculum of K.C.C?

RQ 2. In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the content of the curriculum for children's ministry of K.C.C?

3. In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the teaching methods used in the curriculum for children's ministry of K.C.C?

Significance of the Study

This study aims to help provide information to the education desk of the church so that they can develop a curriculum which contributes to the mission statement of the Church. By developing such a curriculum, it would meet the needs of the children and these would be grounded in the teaching hence helping to minimize the drop out rate in the youth ministry of the church. The opinions of the parents were evaluative to see if the curriculum was achieving the mission statement rather than assuming its achievement.

Research Design

In carrying out this survey research, a sample of 20 was drawn from the population. The instrument used was a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions. The Likert Scale of summated ratings was used to measure the opinions which were later put into tables of frequency counts. Chi-square was used to compute and determine the test on the relationships between the dependent and independent variables. The return rate for the questionnaire was 100%.

Summary of the Findings

Perception of the Goals and Objectives of the Curriculum

The three research questions which the researcher investigated are:

RQ1. In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the program activities of the children's ministry curriculum of K.C.C?

Three null hypotheses were generated in light of RQ 1.

H₀: 1. Differences in educational qualification will not significantly affect the perception of the parents on the relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The findings showed that despite the differences in educational qualifications among the parents, 47% held a high perception of the relevance of the children's curriculum achieving the mission statement, while 47% were neutral and 5 % had a low perception. The null hypothesis was not rejected. The results show that the goals and objectives of the curriculum were not very relevant to achieving the mission statement of the church as the score for high perception is low.

The second hypothesis stated:

H₀: 2. Differences in gender will not significantly affect the perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The findings showed that 45% of the parents' perception showed high and 50% neutral. Since the score for high is not great, it means that the goals and objectives of the curriculum are not very relevant to achieving the mission statement of the church.

The third hypothesis stated:

H₀: 3. Differences in age will not significantly affect the perception of relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The findings showed that 47% of the perception was for high and 47% was for neutral and 6% for low. The null hypothesis not rejected because it did not exceed the critical value.

This means that the relevance of goals and objectives of the children's ministry curriculum is unsatisfactory in achieving the mission statement of the church.

RQ2. In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the content of the curriculum.

The findings from the tabulation show that on average there was a great percentage score of 45% on the low perception. The content of the curriculum was perceived to be not relevant in achieving the mission statement of the church.

RQ 3 In what ways do parents perceive the relevance of the teaching methods used in the curriculum.

H₀: 1. Differences in educational qualification will not significantly affect the perception of the parents on the relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The findings showed that parents' had high perception on the teaching methods used in the curriculum in achieving the mission statement of the church. The percentage score of 78.94% was observed. The null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that teaching methods put in the curriculum for teaching are relevant.

The second hypothesis stated:

H₀: 2. Differences in gender will not significantly affect the perception of the parents on the relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The findings showed that the parents' perception was high on the methods used in this curriculum. A percentage score of 80% was found toward high perception. The null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that the various methods employed in the curriculum for teaching are relevant towards achieving the mission statement of the church.

H₀: 3. Differences in age will not significantly affect the perception of the parents on the relevance of the curriculum of children's ministry at KCC.

The findings showed that parents' high perception with a score of 78.94% towards the various methods used in the curriculum for teaching. The null hypothesis was not rejected. This means the various methods put in the curriculum for teaching are relevant to help in achieving the mission statement of the church.

Conclusion

This study aimed to find out the parents' perception of the relevance of the curriculum in achieving the mission statement of the church at KCC. From the above findings the following conclusion can be drawn:

1. Although parents perceived the goals and objectives to be relevant, the 'high perception column' percentage score was 43% which tells us that the goals and objectives have to be revisited and improved so that they achieve the mission.
2. The content in the curriculum has to be improved because it was perceived low by the majority of parents.
3. The majority of parents perceived the methods in the curriculum to be relevant.

Recommendation

Based on the conclusion drawn above, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. KCC should put a time interval when the curriculum for children's ministry has to be evaluated to see its relevance and adjust where necessary.

2. Since the program activities were perceived to be fairly relevant, it is recommended to revisit them to make them more relevant to KCC mission statement.
3. Since the content was perceived not relevant, it is recommended that KCC education desk should develop a curriculum with relevant content in line with clear goals.
4. Since the methods were perceived relevant, it is recommended that they should be maintained for teaching.

Areas for Further Research.

I recommend the following areas for further studies:

1. Another study should be carried out to find out the factors which may be responsible for parents' perception of the relevance of the curriculum in realizing mission statement.
2. This research restricted to parents only. A further research can be done to find out the teachers' perception of the relevance of the curriculum in achieving the mission statement.

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APPENDIX A

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear research informant.

Kindly you are requested to help in providing the needed data. Would you answer all the questions honestly in this questionnaire and the information given will be treated with confidentiality. After answering the questions would you return the questionnaire to the pastor's office at KCC.

Introduction: This questionnaire is to find out the parents' perception on the curriculum used in the children's ministry at KCC in contribution to achievement of the mission statement of the Church.

Please fill the questionnaire completely and be as honest as possible.

PART A

Check and write the statement in reply to the following questions:

1.
 - i. Sex : Male () Female ()
 - ii. Age Range: 39 and below () 40 and above
 - iii. Educational Qualification: Highly Educated () Middle Educated ()

NB. Highly educated if you have a degree in and any above qualification in any field.

Middle educated if you have a diploma or any below qualification.

2. i. How would you rate each of the following activities in relation to achieving the mission statement of the KCC?

	Very much	Much	Neutral	Little	Very Little
<i>Evangelism</i> i.e. teaching children to believe in Jesus, obeying parents					
<i>Play games</i> i.e. on bible stories, and games for fun					
<i>Singing songs</i> i.e. of worship and praising God.					
<i>Reciting</i> memory verses					
<i>Visiting and giving gifts</i> to the underprivileged e.g. orphans					

ii. Give the reason for your rating.

PART B

Check and write the statement in reply to the following questions:

- 3 i. When your child shares about what he/she learnt in children ministry, does the child articulate enough content?
- a. Very much [] b. Much [] c. Uncertain [] c. Little [] d. Very little []
- ii. To what extent would you rate the relevance of the content uttered by a child in relevance to fulfilling the mission statement of KCC?
- a. Very relevant [] b. Relevant [] c. Uncertain [] d. Irrelevant [] e. Very Irrelevant []

iii. Please give reason for your rating

PART C

Check and write the statement in reply to the following questions:

4 i. How would you rate the methods used in the curriculum in contribution to achieving the mission statement of KCC?

	Very Good	Good	Uncertain	Poor	Worse
Discussion					
Dramatization					
Singing					
Games					
Lecturing(preaching and teaching)					

5. i. How would you rate the methods used in the curriculum in contribution to achieving the mission statement of KCC?

a. Very Good [] b. Good [] c. Average [] d. Poor []

e. Very Poor []

ii. Please give reason for your rating

6. i. How would you rate the reflection of your child/children behavior in relation to the mission statement of KCC?

a. Close Reflection [] b. Partial Reflection [] c. Average [] d. Poor Reflection [] e. Worse Reflection [].

ii. Please give reason for your rating

Thank you for cooperating in completing this questionnaire. Please kindly return it to the Pastor's office of KCC.

APPENDIX B

TABLE OF FREQUENCY, PERCENTAGE AND THE CHI-SQUARE

Table 1. Returns of questionnaires

Respondent Group	Number Sent Out	Number Returned	Percentage
Parents with their children in Children's ministry	20	20	100%

Table 2. Perception of relevance of activities based on education

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Highly Educated	6 (5.68)	5 (5.68)	1 (0.64)	12
Middle Educated	3 (3.32)	4 (3.32)	0 (0.36)	7
Column Total	9	9	1	19

$\chi^2 = 0.8401$ $df = 2$ Significance level=0.05 N =19

Table 3. Perception of relevance of activities based on gender

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Male	7 (5.85)	5 (6.5)	1 (0.65)	13
Female	2 (3.15)	5 (3.5)	0 (0.35)	7
Column Total	9	10	1	20

$\chi^2 = 2.468$ $df = 2$ Significance level 0.05 N=20

Table 4. Perception of relevance of activities based on age

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Age 40 and above	5 (4.26)	4 (4.26)	0 (0.48)	9
Age 39 and below	4 (4.74)	5 (4.74)	1 (0.52)	10
Column Total	9	9	1	19

$\chi^2 = 1.197$ $df = 2$ Significance level= 0.05 $N = 19$

Table 5. Perception of retention of content and relevance to the mission statement

	High perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Retention of content	7 (35%)	4 (20%)	9 (45%)	20 (100%)
Content's relation to mission statement	2 (10%)	9 (45%)	9 (45%)	20 (100%)

Table 6. Perception of relevance of methods in light of educational qualification

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Highly Educated	10 (9.48)	1 (1.89)	1 (0.63)	12
Middle Educated	5 (5.53)	2 (1.1)	0 (0.37)	7
Column Total	15	3	1	19

$\chi^2 = 1.823$ $df = 2$ Significance level = 0.05 $N = 19$

Table 7. Perception of relevance of various methods in light of gender

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Male	6 (5.6)	1 (1.05)	0 (0.35)	7
Female	10 (10.4)	2 (1.95)	1 (0.65)	13
Column Total	16	3	1	20

$\chi^2 = 0.586$ $df = 2$ Significance level = 0.05 $N = 20$

Table 8. Perception of relevance of various methods of the curriculum in light of age

	High Perception	Neutral	Low Perception	Row Total
Age 40 and above	7 (7.1)	2 (1.43)	0 (0.47)	9
Age 39 and below	8 (7.89)	1 (1.58)	1 (0.53)	10
Column Total	15	3	1	19

$$\chi^2 = 1.33$$

$$df = 2$$

$$\text{Significance level} = 0.05$$

$$N = 19$$