

3.4 ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (314)

In the year 2019, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) was tested in two papers. *Paper 1(314/1)* consisted of six structured essay questions and candidates were required to answer five. The paper tested the *Quran, Hadith/Sunnah, Devotional acts* and *Pillars of Iman*. *Paper 2 (314/2)* also had six structured essay questions of which candidates were required to answer five. This paper tested *Akhlaq, Muamalat, History of Islam and Muslim scholars*. Both Paper 1 (314/1) and Paper 2 (314/2) were marked out of a maximum of 100 marks each and time allocation for each paper was 2 hours and 30 minutes (2½ hours). Each question in the two papers carried a maximum of 20 marks.

The questions in the IRE examination tested candidates:

- Knowledge of the factual materials relevant to each topic in the syllabus.
- Understanding of the meaning and interpretation of each of the topics.
- Ability to express themselves on the basis of evidence and argument.
- Appreciation and evaluation of the materials studied in each topic.
- Ability to respond and apply the religious, moral and social issues raised in each topic.

3.4.1 GENERAL CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE

The table below shows candidates' performance in IRE at the KCSE level for the last four years.

Table 11: Candidates' Overall Performance in IRE in the last four years

| Year | Paper | Candidature | Maximum Score | Mean Score | Standard Deviation |
|------|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 2016 | 1 | | 100 | 41.14 | 19.99 |
| | 2 | | 100 | 33.10 | 19.47 |
| | Overall | 23,941 | 200 | 73.95 | 37.48 |
| 2017 | 1 | | 100 | 34.87 | 17.63 |
| | 2 | | 100 | 42.27 | 18.86 |
| | Overall | 25,512 | 200 | 77.38 | 34.31 |
| 2018 | 1 | | 100 | 34.91 | 17.33 |
| | 2 | | 100 | 33.56 | 18.66 |
| | Overall | 28,662 | 200 | 68.33 | 34.17 |
| 2019 | 1 | | 100 | 37.63 | 20.03 |
| | 2 | | 100 | 28.21 | 17.34 |
| | Overall | 32,685 | 200 | 65.79 | 35.68 |

Observations can be made from the table above:

- The candidature increased from **28,662** in 2018 to **32,685** in 2019, a percentage increase of 12.3%.
- In the year 2019, candidates' performance improved in paper one and dropped in Paper two.
- The overall mean dropped from **68.33** in 2018 to **67.79** in 2019

This report analyses the candidates' general performance in the year 2019 KCSE IRE examination papers, paying special attention to the questions where candidate's performance was relatively poor.

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An attempt has been made to highlight possible causes of the poor performance. The report also gives samples of expected responses and makes suggestions to the teachers of IRE with the hope of helping them evaluate and improve their teaching methods and approaches with the aim of improving candidate's performance in future.

3.4.2 IRE Paper (314/1)

The mean for IRE Paper 1 (314/1) was **37.63** in 2019. The questions in which candidates' performance was relatively poor in the year 2019 KCSE IRE Paper 1 (314/1) examination were **2 (a), 3 (c) and 4 (c)**,

Question 2(a)

Describe the background to the revelation of Surah Hujurat.

Weaknesses

Majority of the candidates were not able to describe the background to the revelation of Surah Hujurat but gave the themes of the surah.

Advice to Teachers

Thorough teaching of selected Surah, Candidates must be taught the background, meaning of the verses, teachings and lessons of the Surahs.

Expected Responses

- (i) After the conquest of Makka, many Arabs tribes (Bedouins) sent emissaries to the Prophet (P.b.u.h.) to make allegiance and accept Islam.
- (ii) These desert tribes (Bedouins) appeared unpolished in their manner of dress and speech.
- (iii) They spoke loudly and in a manner which was disrespectful to the Prophet (P.b.u.h.).
- (iv) Their approach to the Prophet (P.b.u.h.) displeased Allah (s.w.t.).
- (v) Surah Hujurat was revealed to reprimand them and to lay down a general code of behavior for Muslims and for all people.

Question 3(c)

A man came to the Prophet (P.b.u.h.) and said, "Advise me". The Prophet (P.b.u.h.) said, "Do not get angry". With reference to the *Hadith*, explain ways through which a Muslim can manage anger.

Weaknesses

Candidates gave the effects of anger instead of ways of managing anger

Advice to Teachers

Teachers need to expose learners to application questions on hadith.

Expected Responses

- (i) By remembering Allah through dhikr/ performance of two rakaats
- (ii) By taking ablution/drinking water
- (iii) By changing position e.g. when one is standing he should sit down.
- (iv) By walking away from the situation evoking anger.
- (v) By seeking refuge in Allah from evils of sheitwan by saying 'Audhu billah mina shaitwan rajim'.

- (vi) By observing humility.
- (vii) By keeping silence.
- (viii) By avoiding unnecessary arguments.
- (ix) By avoiding aggressive situations and people.

Question 4(c)

Explain seven conditions to be fulfilled for one to be considered a mujtahid in Islam.

Weaknesses

Candidates were expected to explain the conditions to be fulfilled by a mujtahid but gave the qualities of a muhaddith instead. This shows that majority of the candidates had not been taught the subtopic of Ijtihad

Advice to Teachers

Teachers need to teach the syllabus exhaustively

Expected Responses

- (i) He must be a Muslim of sincere belief.
- (ii) He must be mature
- (iii) He must be pious, modest, upright and of unblemished character.
- (iv) He must have knowledge of the Islamic Shariah.
- (v) He must have the knowledge of Quran and its science.
- (vi) He must have the knowledge of the Sunnah of the Prophet (P.b.u.h.) and the science of Hadith.
- (vii) He should acquire sufficient knowledge of every aspect of the issues about which Ijtihad is required.
- (viii) One must have the skills of Arabic language because all original sources of sharia are in Arabic.
- (ix) Should have knowledge of the pattern of behavior, customs and traditions of the local community.

3.4.3 IRE Paper 2 (314/2)

The paper tested the syllabus adequately and all questions were within the syllabus, the performance dropped from a mean of **33.56** in 2018 to **28.21** in 2019. Questions which posed challenges to candidates were **1(a)**, **2(a)**, and **4(a)**

Question 1(a)

Discuss the rationale behind the prohibition of slander in Islam

Weaknesses

This was an evaluation question where candidates were expected to discuss the reasons why slander is prohibited in Islam. They were not able to give correct responses because they did not understand the meaning of slander. They confused it with vain talks.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers need to teach the topic of Akhlaq exhaustively and expose learners to past KCSE questions

Expected Responses

- (i) Slander creates suspicion, dishonesty, in the society. People stop trusting one another, thus it destroys friendship, relationships.
- (ii) It hurts the people on whom the slander is directed to leading to hostilities between people of the same religion, community, house e.t.c.
- (iii) It encourages dishonesty and creates hatred and enmity in the society.
- (iv) It leads to defamation of noble character e.g. lady Aisha.
- (v) It causes disunity, conflicts among members of the same community.
- (vi) It is against the teachings of Islam and Allah hates those who engaged in this vice hence will lead to hell fire.
- (vii) Spoils people's reputation and can lead to loss of trust, jobs, livelihood/ lowers dignity.
- (viii) Can lead to marriage breakup due to suspicion and false rumours.

Question 2(a)

State seven benefits of writing a will before a Muslim dies.

Weaknesses

This was an evaluation question. Very few candidates were able to come up with the correct responses; most of them gave the importance of mirath clearly showing that they have not been taught about wassiya.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should teach the topic of mirath exhaustively and also expose learners to higher order thinking skills. There is need to train learners on how to answer analysis, synthesis and evaluation questions.

Expected Responses

- (i) Writing a will attract rewards from Allah.
- (ii) It reduces conflicts among the heirs after the death of a person since each heir will know their share
- (iii) Declaration and writing of Wasiyya prevents injustice to those who were supposed to benefit from part of the estate of the deceased.
- (iv) It clearly indicates who should be the administrator of the estate and his mandate.
- (v) Family members are able to refer to the will and know the debtors so as to pay them before sharing the tarka (estate).
- (vi) It facilitates the rightful distribution of the wealth of the deceased.
- (vii) A Muslim is able to benefit non-heirs by willing his property to them, hence assisting them.
- (viii) Writing of a will enables Muslims assist other members of society e.g. through contributing to build schools, boreholes, hospitals e.t.c.
- (ix) It designates what fraction of the estate should be set aside for the beneficiaries before distributing to the heirs.
- (x) It can be used as a guideline for inheritance in a non Muslim country.

Question 4(a)

Discuss ways in which Muslim city states on the East Coast of Africa facilitated the spread of Islam in the region between 1700 and 1900 AD.

Weaknesses

Candidates gave the effects of the spread of Islam along the Coast of East Africa

Advice to Teachers

Teachers need to teach the topic of Islam in East Africa exhaustively

Expected Responses

Inhabitants of the city states were Muslims intermarried with the local people who converted to Islam.

- (i) The Swahili/Islamic civilization and culture thrived in the city states, this attracted neighbouring communities who easily embraced Islam.
- (ii) Mosques and madrassas in the city states was an attraction to the local people who converted to Islam.
- (iii) Through trade, inhabitants of the city states interacted with local people in the region leading to conversion to Islam.
- (iv) People in the region left their homes to seek employment from Muslim inhabitants these workers eventually embraced Islam.
- (v) Those who sought employment in the city states occasionally travelled to visit relatives in the villages and they took Islam with them.
- (vi) Businessmen from the city states who ventured into the mainland, established Muslim centres such as Taveta, Ujiji, Mumias which were responsible for the spread of Islam.
- (vii) The city states were ruled by Muslims/Sultans who extended their authority into neighbouring local communities who accepted Islam.

Advice to Teachers

- Students should be trained in higher order thinking skills e.g. application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. It is evident from the answers given that majority of I.R.E students are only exposed to questions that require them just to recall answers.
- Teachers should use the recommended text books by K.I.C.D, and not the revision books that have flooded the market, because they tend to have wrong information that misleads the students.
- Teachers require training in the setting of I.R.E examination questions.
- Teachers must go an extra mile and teach these candidates on how to answer application questions.

Conclusion

- Performance in paper two has continued to decline year after year, there is an urgent need for teachers to change their style of teaching and to train students on how to answer application questions as these form the majority of the questions in this paper.
- Teachers in IRE require in-servicing so as to acquire techniques and BEST practices in the teaching and examining of IRE.
- All teachers handling KCSE candidates need to acquire this feedback report so as to know the weaknesses of the previous candidates and prepare theirs better.
- The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development need to ensure that the IRE course books are accessible to all schools that offer IRE.
- Teachers should strive to teach all topics as stated in the syllabus, not just give students answers to possible examination questions.