CHALLENGES OF TEACHING ISLAMIC STUDIES BY NON-MUSLIMS IN KENYAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

Abstract

Islamic studies are offered as an academic subject in Kenya’s tertiary institutions. Since its inception in the education system as Islamic Religious Education (IRE), Islamic studies have had a chequered history. On the down side, it has been plagued by problems, such as shortage of teachers, lack of textbooks and sometimes controversies regarding non-Muslim teachers. This paper is confined to the challenges of teaching Islamic studies by a non-Muslim teacher in a tertiary institution. It is argued that, since Islamic studies is an academic discipline like any other subject offered in the institution, then a qualified/trained person could teach the subject regardless of his/her religious affiliation. Yet there is a counter argument that a person who does not practice the faith should not teach the religion. This implies that a Christian should not teach Islam. The views for and against a non-Muslim teaching Islam and the attendant challenges, forms the discourse of this paper. The primary data for this paper was mainly gathered from Islamic students of Kenyatta University and Tangaza College where the author has taught Islamic studies for many years. In this paper, Islamic studies is synonymous with IRE.