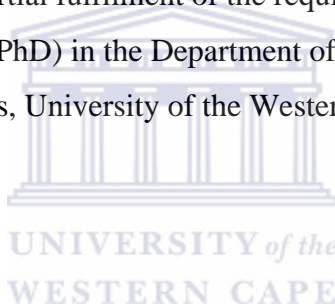


**An assessment of the curriculum and implementation of the subject
Religious and Moral Education in Namibia: A case study
of perceptions of *Religious and Moral Education* teachers
in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the Department of Religion and Theology,
Faculty of Arts, University of the Western Cape (UWC)



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Supervisor: Prof. Christoffel Lombard

May 2014

Declaration

I, Ananias Iita, hereby declare that: *An assessment of the curriculum and implementation of the subject Religious and Moral Education in Namibia: A case study of perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region* is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

Signature

Ananias Iita

Student Number: 3174698



.....

Date

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank the Almighty God for providing me with strength, courage and hope to undertake this research project.

Secondly, I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Prof. Christoffel Lombard, for his guidance, dedication, intelligence and advice throughout my research study.

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With thanks to God, I remember my late first wife Josefina Ndinomukwathi Iita who was a very good gift to me; a faithfully hard working wife who encouraged the family to pursue our dreams. I believe her spirit is still among us. Thank God!

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father Paulus Asino Iita and my mother Kaarina Dhiginina Nangombe for their love and care for us.



Abstract

This research study investigated the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers in Namibia with regard to the implementation of the RME syllabus, Grades 5-10 in actual teaching and learning situations. It also examined to what extent pre-service and in-service training prepare these teachers to deal with the demands of the subject in their professional classroom situations.

The relevance of the study was that the continuing process of curriculum development would benefit from specific knowledge of the perceptions of teachers and learners, regarding their problems and problem-solving, shortcomings in the system, pre-service and in-service training, and support services.

The study took place amidst a global debate on paradigms in the teaching of religion and moral formation. It could therefore also contribute to a growing canon of literature with specific contributions based on empirical research.

The study reviewed literature in the field of religious and moral education, the official curricula and syllabi, as well as all other policy and training documents relating to the subject. A carefully sampled case study of teachers in public schools in the Ompundja Circuit of the Oshana Region was carried out.

In 1990, under the new constitution, Namibia was declared a secular state, recognising all religions. This was contrary to the colonial period in which Christianity was the only recognised religion and taught under a Christian national ideology in an apartheid political setup. The new dispensation brought new challenges to the subject teachers because, in the past, most of them were only trained to teach Biblical Instruction/Biblical Studies. In the new constitution, the state neither favours nor neglects any of the religious orientations.

The context of the study was, thus, the appropriate choice for a particular paradigm in which religion and morality are studied at school level, based upon the principles of a multi-religious and multi-cultural society where both teachers and learners gain knowledge and understanding of other faiths and values; a culture of tolerance is encouraged and fostered; the rights of different religions and their moral values are respected and promoted; and learners are prepared for responsible citizenship.

The relevance of the study was that the goals set for the implementation of the new subject could be assessed against empirical data. Depending on the outcome of the study, new curricular insights and objectives might empower both teachers and learners to actively work together to enrich the spiritual and moral lives of all those involved as well as bringing the religious dimension of life more potently into the community.

The study was based on the assumptions that: the teaching of RME in Namibian schools might be weakened because most designated RME teachers are not fully trained to teach the subject; there is a lack of RME teaching materials in schools and inadequate in-service training for ill-equipped teachers; some teachers prefer to teach Biblical Instruction; others prefer to use the old RME syllabus of 1991; others prefer to teach RME according to the new syllabi of 2005 and 2007; some teachers do not have the necessary qualifications or experience to handle either of these syllabi and lesson preparations; others experience problems about the methods and strategies used in the planning and delivery of RME lessons; schools in the Ompundja Circuit do not have adequate resources; monitoring and class visits are not properly done in RME lessons, as is customary in other subjects.

The significance of this study was that new insights into problems and possibilities for the subject could be used in bringing about change and effectiveness in the RME curricula and their implementation.

The rationale for this study was to fathom the experiences and perceptions of RME teachers in teaching and learning situations in order to fill out some of the existing gaps or constraints and to motivate other researchers to conduct more research in the field of RME, in Namibian schools as well as globally, where similar issues are hotly debated.

The information generated from this study would be used to inform and update the Ministry of Education and the University of Namibia (UNAM) in helping both current and future RME teachers in the proper implementation of the RME syllabus.

A specific case study carried out in the Ompundja Circuit in the Oshana Region was used in this research. The Ompundja Circuit was selected for the study because it consisted of rural and urban schools and because of its accessibility to the researcher who was working at the University of Namibia - Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus.

The population of this study was RME teachers. The sample consisted of fourteen (14) RME teachers from seven rural and urban schools in the Ompundja Circuit. Criteria for selecting these schools and teachers are given in the study.

Research procedures and research methodology suitable for the research question and the nature of the study (case study) were used. This study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods of collecting and analysing data. The researcher developed research instruments: questionnaires; interview guide and observation schedule.

Permission to conduct this research was secured from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education. Confidentiality was guaranteed throughout the study. All schools and participants who were selected were allocated pseudo names.

Key words: Religious and Moral Education, curriculum, Namibia, Biblical Instruction, Religious Studies, perceptions, multi-faith, secular state, shared values, tolerance, respect.

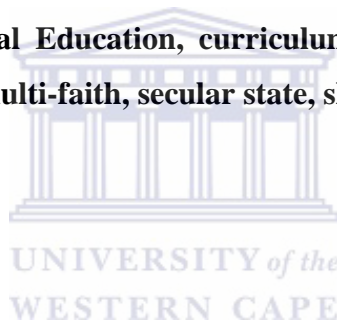


Table of Contents

<i>Declaration</i>	ii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	iii
<i>Dedication</i>	iv
<i>Abstract</i>	v
<i>List of tables</i>	xiv
<i>List of figures</i>	xv
<i>List of charts</i>	xv
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 The purpose of Religious and Moral Education as a school subject	1
1.2 Four education systems prior to Namibia’s independence	3
1.2.1 Non-formal education	4
1.2.2 Missionary education.....	4
1.2.3 Education under German colonialism.....	4
1.2.4 Ethnically disaggregated South African education system.....	5
1.3 The introduction of RME into the Namibian school curriculum after independence	5
1.4 Context and relevance of the study	9
1.4.1 Significance of the study.....	9
1.4.2 Scope and limitation of the study.....	10
1.5 Delimitation and statement of the research problem	10
1.5.1 Problem statement and objectives.....	10
1.5.2 Research questions.....	11
1.6 Assumptions	12
1.7 Literature review towards an appropriate theoretical framework	12
1.7.1 Goals and objectives of Religious and Moral Education	13
1.7.2 The teacher of Religious and Moral Education	14
1.7.3 Religious and Moral Education as part of the Namibian school curriculum	16
1.7.4 Alignment of goals and objectives.....	17
1.7.5 Approaches to teaching and learning	18

CHAPTER 2: CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS	22
2.1 Religion	22
2.2 Religious identity.....	24
2.3 Norms and values.....	24
2.4 Attitudes and behaviour	25
2.5 Theories on the origin of belief	25
2.6 Education.....	27
2.7 Religious education	28
2.8 Morality	30
2.9 Moral education	31
CHAPTER 3: MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS.....	33
3.1 The roles and responsibilities of parents	33
3.2 The roles and responsibilities of teachers	35
3.3 The roles and responsibilities of religious institutions.....	36
3.4 Personality	39
3.4.1 Theories on personality.....	39
3.4.2 Theories/perspectives on developmental tasks	41
3.4.3 Theories on cognitive development	43
3.4.4 Theories on the psychology of thinking (the achievement of learning).....	44
3.4.5 Views on child behaviour	45
3.5 Strategies for teaching Religious and Moral Education.....	48
3.5.1 Teaching methods for Religious and Moral Education	48
3.5.2 Resource materials for teaching Religious and Moral Education	50
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	52
4.1 Research design.....	52
4.2 Research methodology.....	53
4.2.1 Data collection instruments.....	53
4.2.2 Population and sampling.....	55
4.2.3 Document analysis.....	56
4.2.4 Data analysis.....	56

4.2.5	Ethical considerations	57
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS & REGIONAL CONSULTATION. 58		
5.1	Introduction.....	58
5.2	Document analysis	58
5.2.1	The Namibian RME Curriculum	58
5.2.2	Rationale for RME.....	59
5.2.3	Cross curricular issues	61
5.2.4	Teaching methodology	63
5.2.5	Summary of the learning content for Grades 5-10.....	64
5.2.6	Assessment.....	65
5.2.7	Recording of grades	66
5.2.8	Continuous assessment	67
5.2.9	Bloom's taxonomy.....	68
5.2.10	Religious and moral values in the Upper Primary and Secondary curricular	69
5.3	Regional consultation	71
5.4	Interpretation of data	81
5.4.1	Relevance of themes and topics to the syllabus.....	81
5.4.2	Content of the syllabus	82
5.5	Discussion	87
5.6	Conclusion	89
CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS FROM THE CASE STUDY (QUESTIONNAIRE)..... 92		
6.1	Introduction.....	92
6.2	The purpose of a case study	92
6.3	Research results for the questionnaire.....	93
6.3.1	Biographical information (Questions 1-4).....	94
6.3.2	Grades taught (Question 5)	96
6.3.3	Employment position (Question 6).....	96
6.3.4	Professional training (Question 7)	96
6.3.5	Experience and comfortableness in teaching RME (Question 8)	98
6.3.6	Constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME (Question 9).....	98
6.4	Interpretation of the research findings for the questionnaires	100

6.4.1	Teachers teaching RME (by sex).....	100
6.4.2	Teachers teaching RME (by age group)	100
6.4.3	Teachers' qualifications	101
6.4.4	Teachers' experience	101
6.4.5	Grades taught	102
6.4.6	Employment position.....	102
6.4.7	Professional training in teaching RME	103
6.4.8	Teachers' experience and comfortableness in teaching RME	103
6.4.9	Constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME.....	104
6.5	Conclusion	106
CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS		107
7.1	Introduction.....	107
7.2	Presentation and analysis of the findings from the interviews	108
7.3	Understanding data and data analysis.....	109
7.4	Procedure of the interviews	110
7.5	Findings from interviews.....	111
7.6	Discussion	118
7.6.1	Teachers' perceptions	118
7.6.2	Application of RME in teaching and learning situations	119
7.6.3	Constraints hindering the processes of teaching and learning RME.....	120
7.6.4	Overcoming the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process of RME	120
7.6.5	Support received by the teachers	121
7.6.6	Responding to the needs of the learners	122
7.6.7	Participants' perceptions.....	127
7.7	Conclusion	131
CHAPTER 8: FINDINGS FROM THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS		134
8.1	Introduction.....	134
8.2	Procedure of the classroom observations	134
8.3	Issues emerging from classroom observations	135
8.3.1	Class management skills.....	135
8.3.2	Implementation of the RME syllabus	135

8.3.3	Classroom environment, resources and discipline	136
8.3.4	Time management.....	137
8.3.5	Lesson presentation.....	137
8.3.6	Teaching strategies	141
8.3.7	Communication.....	142
8.3.8	Learner tasks	143
8.3.9	Handling of RME by teachers.....	143
8.4	Interpretation of the findings of the classroom observations	144
8.5	The role of school principals during class visits	146
8.6	Conclusion	147
CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RME SYLLABUS		150
9.1	Applying appropriate teaching methods	150
9.2	Lack of training and experience for RME teachers.....	153
9.3	Constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME	153
9.4	Overcoming constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME	156
9.5	The needs of the learners.....	157
9.6	The role of the teachers in implementing the curriculum	160
9.7	Support for RME teachers by school principals and fellow teachers	163
9.8	Teachers as agents for promoting good religious and moral behaviour in learners.....	164
9.9	Insufficient period allocations.....	165
9.10	Differentiating between what is right and what is wrong	166
9.11	Suggestions for effective curriculum implementation by RME teachers	168
9.12	The nature of Religious and Moral Education.....	168
9.13	Assessment of RME	169
9.14	Summary	170
CHAPTER 10: DEBATES IN NAMIBIA ON THE NEED FOR MORAL FORMATION.....		174
10.1	Introduction.....	174
10.2	Defining and approaching moral formation.....	174
10.3	Factors influencing moral formation... ..	181
10.4	Namibian society in the context of moral formation.....	181

10.5	The Namibian education system and moral formation.....	183
10.6	Mass media and moral formation.....	184
10.7	RME as a challenge to Christianity: the CCN on the religion of the majority.....	184
10.8	Morality and Religious and Moral Education.....	188
10.9	Biblical Instruction in Namibia's curriculum - then and now?.....	189
10.10	The purpose of teaching Religious and Moral Education in schools.....	190
10.11	The place of Religious and Moral Education in the Namibian curriculum	191
10.12	Benefits of learning Religious and Moral Education	192
10.13	Conclusion.....	194
CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		197
11.1	Introduction.....	197
11.2	Findings.....	198
11.3	Themes emerging from consultation, questionnaires, interviews and observations.....	200
11.4	Research questions.....	201
11.5	Methodology.....	202
11.6	Recommendations.....	202
<i>Bibliography.....</i>		204
<i>Appendices.....</i>		216



List of tables

Table 1: Links in the Grades 5-7 syllabus to cross-curricular issues	62
Table 2: Links in the Grades 8-10 syllabus to cross-curricular issues	62
Table 3: Summary of learning content for Grades 5-7	64
Table 4: Summary of learning content for Grades 8-10	64
Table 5: Letter grade description	66
Table 6: Types of tasks that can be considered for assessment	67
Table 7: Bloom's taxonomy - action verbs.....	68
Table 8: Responses to the regional consultation question on training	82
Table 9: Representation of participants by sex	94
Table 10: Representation of participants by age	94
Table 11: Representation of participants by qualification	95
Table 12: Representation of participants by teaching experience.....	95
Table 13: Representation of participants by Grades taught	96
Table 14: Representation of participants by employment position.....	96
Table 15: Representation of participants by professional training in teaching RME	96
Table 16: Reasons/explanation given for response to question on professional training in teaching RME.....	97
Table 17: Responses on experience and comfortableness in teaching RME	98
Table 18: Responses on constraints hindering RME teaching and learning	99
Table 19: No. of participating teachers and schools	108
Table 20: Teachers' perceptions regarding religious education	111
Table 21: How teachers apply RME in teaching and learning situations	113
Table 22: Teachers' perceptions regarding constraints hindering RME teaching and learning	114
Table 23: How teachers overcome constraints.....	115
Table 24: Support teachers receive in teaching RME.....	116
Table 25: How teachers use RME to respond to learners' needs.....	117
Table 26: Teachers' comments on lack of teaching materials/aids.....	153
Table 27: Teachers' comments on lack of training.....	154
Table 28: Teachers' suggestions for overcoming constraints	156
Table 29: Teachers' comments regarding support.....	163
Table 30: Teachers' perceptions regarding moral values in relation to RME curricula	166
Table 31: Themes emerging from the study	201

List of figures

Figure 1: The thirteen educational regions of Namibia before 2013 3
 Figure 2: Sample of assessment grid..... 67
 Figure 3: Important relationships for RME teaching 89

List of charts

Chart 1: Teachers teaching RME (by sex) 100
 Chart 2: Number of teachers in different age groups 100
 Chart 3: Teachers teaching RME (by qualification) 101
 Chart 4: Teachers teaching RME (by experience) 101
 Chart 5: Teachers teaching RME (by grades taught) 102
 Chart 6: Teachers teaching RME (by employment position)..... 102
 Chart 7: Professional training of teachers 103
 Chart 8: Teachers’ experience and comfortableness in teaching RME 103
 Chart 9: Constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME 104



Abbreviations

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CCN:	Council of Churches in Namibia
CS:	Combined School
EHRD:	Education, Human Rights and Democracy
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JPS:	Junior Primary School
NIED:	Namibia Institute for Educational Development
PS:	Primary School
RME:	Religious and Moral Education
SSS:	Senior Secondary School
UNAM:	University of Namibia
UWC:	University of the Western Cape

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 The purpose of Religious and Moral Education as a school subject

Religious and Moral Education (RME) has been developed according to the latest syllabus of the Namibian Ministry of Education for Upper Primary (2005) and Junior Secondary (2007) levels. The focus of RME is on teaching and promoting tolerance and understanding among learners toward the values and beliefs of people from different cultural backgrounds and religions.

The aim of RME is to help learners to become aware of their own thoughts and responses to certain moral, religious and social issues, aiming at establishing a strong moral code and respect for other cultures and religious traditions. It is the responsibility of RME teachers to teach learners the importance of RME regarding religious, moral and social issues in life.

The researcher of this study argues that in all communities in Namibia almost everyone is a worshiper and everyone has some attitudes to religion. The study does not claim that one religion is true and another false or to convert learners to a particular religion. The aim of Religious and Moral Education is that all learners should understand the religious and moral values of all religions.

Morris (1987:171) opines that if teachers have positive attitudes towards religious beliefs and moral values, they will find it much easier to pass these attitudes on to the learners. Therefore, the teaching of RME helps learners to understand different religions and values by facilitating acquisition of religious knowledge conveyed in such an empathetic way (Yeats 1991:86). For this reason, RME teachers should teach this subject in a responsible and accountable manner.

The researcher understands that RME gives meaning to learners' life questions, such as: Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?

Through RME, learners' lives may be transformed because religion and life belong together. The subject gives meaning to life; it allows interaction to take place, informs values and changes behaviour.

Le Roux (1992:71) cites that although children do not necessarily know what religion is all about, parents should involve children in worship from an early age because dependence and worship take shape in children's development. Le Roux is supported by Pringle (1997:57) who argues that with proper education, children can recall moral implications even though they may not apply them in real life situations.

Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to find the place of Religious and Moral Education in schools and communities and the criterion of the RME curriculum. In teaching this subject, learners are not expected to agree with the teachers. However, tolerance should be shown towards learners who come from minority faiths and ethnic groups.

Thus, the focus of this study was to investigate the perceptions of RME teachers with regard to the curriculum and the implementation of the RME syllabus in the Ompundja School Circuit in Oshana Region, Namibia. This *inter alia* included questions about: how the curriculum was understood and approached; how the selection of RME themes was being done in terms of teaching and learning processes; constraints experienced by the teachers of RME; and successes and failures of teaching this compulsory subject.

The study could provide crucial information which would be disseminated to the following organisations: the University of the Western Cape (UWC), the Ministry of Education in Namibia, and the University of Namibia (UNAM), where student-teachers for the Ministry of Education are trained.

The study was needed in order to update the Ministry of Education, as well as the University of Namibia, about the current implementation of RME in Namibian schools.

By evaluating current didactical practices against the intentions of the curriculum and in the context of global discourse on the place and paradigm for RME in school curricula, especially in public schools, the researcher also intended to make a contribution to the theoretical aspects of this important debate.

The study was done in the relevant context considering the fact that Namibian education was shaped decisively by the previous colonial regimes of Germany and South Africa.

1.2.1 Non-formal education

Teachers for non-formal education were parents and community members. Non-formal education was taught as an integral part of daily life activities, and the education covered religious as well as all social aspects of life. This education was carried out in the evenings by parents at home - in the kitchen for girls and at the kraal for boys - as well as around the fire place. It was taught as a way of socialisation and education.

In all Namibian ethnic groups, all adults had the responsibility to educate and shape children through folk tales, games, poetry, songs and dance. The main aim of education was to transmit a community's cultural heritage and religious and moral values.

1.2.2 Missionary education

When missionaries (Finnish and Rhenish missionaries) arrived in Namibia, they established schools with the purpose of converting Namibians to Christianity.¹ Biblical Instruction (or Biblical Studies) became one of the core school subjects in the education system. In addition to school subjects, girls were trained in domestic chores, for example, how to prepare food, make clothes and work as servants in the houses of Europeans, while at some mission schools boys were taught to make bricks, do carpentry, build houses, construct roads and to do gardening.

1.2.3 Education under German colonialism

During the German colonial rule in Namibia, Blacks were taught under an education system aimed at serving the masters, and to keep Blacks inferior, without critical thinking skills (Möwes 2002:90).

Avoseh (1999:2) and Katjavivi (1988:11) comment that although the missionaries provided education, the curriculum was prescribed by the German rulers. The missionaries, therefore, had to simply focus on biblical knowledge and minor German communication skills.

¹ See Kritzinger 1972:25-43; 1972b:b73-216; Shejavali 1970; Strassberger 1969; Beris 1996.

1.2.4 Ethnically disaggregated South African education system

During South African apartheid rule in Namibia, education was based on ethnic segregation that continued until 1990 when Namibia gained independence. While the education of Namibian black children was based on ethnic groups, white children in Namibia were educated in separate white schools or sent to study abroad.

The apartheid regime of South Africa as from 1948 encouraged the recommendation of segregated education for Whites (superior) and Blacks (inferior).

Bantu education was aimed at increasing the general literacy of workers and deliberately suppressing secondary and tertiary education in order to prevent Blacks from rising to higher social and economic levels (Möwes 2004:89). Therefore, no secondary education was offered for Blacks in Namibia until 1953. In the northern part of Namibia, secondary education was only offered from 1961, according to the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF 1989:47).

One may conclude that though missionaries brought about many changes in Namibian communities - for example, nomadic people settled in the regions of the mission stations and small settlements developed - the Christian religion clashed first with the traditional religions, causing some unhappiness, but later on Namibian communities accepted it.

1.3 The introduction of RME into the Namibian school curriculum after independence

Initially, religious and secular education was based on mission education. Firstly, Germany colonised Namibia in 1884 and recognised Christianity as the state religion. After 1920, South Africa was given the mandate by the League of Nations to rule Namibia and prepare the country for independence. South Africa controlled Namibia until independence in 1990. South Africa's constitution stated that Christianity was the state religion. It was used in Government ceremonies and was an integral part of the national curriculum for schools. The subject Biblical Instruction/Biblical Studies was offered to all learners of all Grades. Other religions were not forbidden, but not recognised by the Government. The indigenous Namibians lost their ancestral religions and converted to Christianity. Their religions were not forbidden, but were not recognised by the South African government.

Contrary to what happened during the colonial era, the Namibian Constitution was accepted in 1992. Chapter 1, Article 1.1 of the Constitution states that: “The Republic of Namibia is hereby established as a sovereign, secular, and unitary State”. Secular means not connected with spiritual or religious matters. Further, Article 21, Paragraph (b) under Fundamental freedoms that can never be changed (it is an entrenched article), states that all persons have the right to thought, conscience and beliefs; which means that the Constitution safeguards the rights of individuals and their respective religions. (The Republic of Namibia, 1990)

Within a secular state such as the one guaranteed by the Namibian Constitution, it is quite likely that teachers in Government schools may have learners from religious backgrounds very different to their own. There may also be learners belonging to no religious group at all. It is the teachers’ duty to make learners aware of morals and values, regardless of their religion. Education helps learners to accept people with different value systems and it also helps them in developing and understanding their own personal value systems. It is the right and responsibility of teachers and learners to exercise their religious freedom, but at the same time they should be tolerant of the religious views of others. Most religious people live good lives and try to treat others well because their religion tells them to do so.

The aim of the RME syllabus is to help teachers teach learners to accept and live by the values, morality and spirituality that all of them find in their respective religions. Different religions and political systems tend to adhere to similar or comparable values and moral perceptions.

All people are equal before the law and each individual’s morality, religion and value system is respected by the Constitution. Every Namibian is challenged to turn this country into an example of morality, spirituality and tolerance to the rest of the world (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1991:1).

With the new Constitution, the state adopted a policy of teaching a multi-cultural religious and moral education (Lubbe 1997:17; Republic of Namibia, 1990). With the adoption of the new Constitution, the teaching of RME was introduced and it replaced Biblical Instruction in the Namibian curriculum. Teachers are now required to teach and make their learners aware of different multi-faith religious and moral values of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, African traditional religions, Bahai and others (Schultz 2001:4).

Thompson (1988:89) refers to a system that recognises more than one religious beliefs and comments on the quality of their co-existence in a given context, as well as their interaction.

One may argue that learners' religious and moral values arise out of their experience through interaction with adults and peers (Reimer, Paolitto & Hersh 1983:85). When learners play together, they develop attitudes of learning how to live with each other, how to collaborate and co-operate in interfaith activities.

These views are supported by Braybrooke (1975:171) who states that people from various religious and moral backgrounds need to sit together at one table, discuss, argue, debate, disagree and agree on certain issues pertaining to human life, sharing information and finding solutions to religious conflicts.

In this way, religious and moral education deals with the issues of mutual respect for and recognition of each other's faith, as well as with joint co-operation and service; acknowledgement of the existence of the other, taking an interest in them and inviting them for cooperation, for example, assisting people affected by floods and other natural disasters (Thompson 1988:92).

Therefore, religious and moral education is taught with the purpose of helping both teachers and learners to understand people of other faiths and values better, in order to contribute to the creation of a peaceful community where religious groups live in harmony, share, cooperate and co-exist with one another (Kruger 1995:136).

Although Namibia is a secular state with 90% of the population claiming to be Christians; Article 19 of the Constitution provides for the right to religious freedom. Therefore, the aim of the RME curriculum is to enable learners to understand their religious beliefs and practices and to accept other groups whose values and traditions are different from their own. In such a context it should be understood that RME aims at enabling learners to:

- better understand themselves and the changing multicultural world in which they are growing up;
- understand the diversity of religious beliefs and practices in the wider community and explore and value African traditional religions.

Thus, the RME syllabus covers different religions, with central themes across the syllabus being family and community life, worship, rules and laws, self and others' personal values.

Before the colonial government of South Africa took over education in Namibia, religious education was in the hands of missionaries (Katsao & Mbumba 1992:43). In fact, both forms of education, religious and secular, were basically taken care of at missionary centres during the German period, and initially also during the South African regime (Katsao & Mbumba 1992:46). Missionaries promoted their religious beliefs in exchange for the provision of education, health care and work. Most of the recruited people were teachers, nurses and police officers. In order to work for the missionaries and benefit from their "civil" work, it was necessary to be converted to Christianity (Katsao & Mbumba 1992:25).

Biblical Studies was part of the teacher education curriculum and basic education curriculum (Grades 1-12) during the South African colonial rule, and was by and large restricted to the reading of the Holy Scriptures and understanding church history from a Protestant perspective.

However, when Namibia gained independence, a new subject, Religious and Moral Education (RME), was introduced into the school curriculum (Ministry of Education 1991). This subject (with a focus on Judaism, Christianity, Islam and African traditional religions) replaced Biblical Studies, which only allowed the study of Christianity. Unlike the former Biblical Instruction/Biblical Studies, RME embraces the study of many different religions and forms of morality. In this way, RME teaches learners to live in a society that is characterised by religious and cultural diversity (Knitter 1985:206).

Therefore, RME teachers need to be aware of these different religions/worldviews and accommodate them in their daily preparations for RME lessons. Thus, religion and morality relate to each other and are joined together to form Religious and Moral Education (Baelz 1977:67).

The literature in this field of study has grown significantly, especially through various case studies, for example, in Germany, England, the Netherlands, South Africa and Scandinavia.²

² See the publications of the Inter-Religious and Inter-cultural Education group working under the auspices of Prof Wolfram Weisse of Hamburg University in Germany; see Weisse 1996; Andree, Bakker and Schneider 1997; also Sporre and Mannberg 2010; Lombard 1996; 1997; 2011a and 2011b.

However, very little has been researched on the perceptions and implementation of Religious and Moral Education in Namibian schools.

It is hoped that this study will fill some of these existing gaps. It is important to ascertain whether theory and praxis are on the same page, whether well-intended multi-cultural emphases are understood and implemented in the spirit of human rights and tolerance in which they were developed.

In order to deal with these educational issues a carefully circumscribed case study was carried out against the necessary theoretical backgrounds in the field of study.

1.4 Context and relevance of the study

1.4.1 Significance of the study

The study contributes to a better understanding of the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers and how the RME syllabus is being implemented in Namibian schools.

The relevance of the study lies in finding out how RME teachers perceive the implementation of the syllabus in order to achieve the intended objectives. The main significance of this study is an evaluation of the RME teachers' application of educational and didactical knowledge of "Religious Education" and "Moral Formation" within the teaching and learning situations in Namibia, which could be used in considering changes/adjustments in the RME syllabus.

Therefore, the rationale for this study was to fathom the perceptions of RME teachers in teaching and learning environments in order to address existing gaps. The researcher hoped that this study would motivate other researchers to conduct similar research in the field of religious and moral education in schools³, and that this exercise would also stimulate further work on theoretical aspects of curriculum development in this important developing educational field.⁴

³ See Isaak 1991; Lombard 1996; 1997; 2011a.

⁴ This is important for debates on Life Orientation in South Africa; see Steyn 2000; Lombard 2011a.

1.4.2 Scope and limitation of the study

The research was conducted in the Ompundja Circuit, Oshana Region, Namibia. The first reason for selecting Ompundja Circuit was that it consisted of both rural and urban schools, thus providing a range of attitudes regarding religion in a secular state.

Another reason for selecting Ompundja Circuit was its accessibility to the researcher, who works at the University of Namibia - Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus, Ongwediva Town, in close proximity to this circuit.

The study investigated the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers in seven schools in Ompundja Circuit in order to gain an understanding of how the Religious and Moral Education teachers perceived religious education and morality, and how these teachers applied RME in real teaching and learning processes in a specific context.

Another limitation was that the results could not be generalised as it was a case study, but it could be used as a source of information for further interpretation and conclusions (Patton 1990:24). As with all research involving the study of perceptions, it would depend on the participants' ability and willingness to reflect honestly on their perceptions of religious education and morality, and the implications thereof (Bailey 1982:17).

The researcher's biases and the effects thereof might be present because the researcher has taught most of the RME teachers teaching in this region. However, the study used multiple instruments to collect information in order to minimise the researcher's biases (Patton 1990:37).

1.5 Delimitation and statement of the research problem

1.5.1 Problem statement and objectives

With the adoption of the new Constitution of the Republic of Namibia immediately after independence in 1990, Namibia became a "secular state". This was contrary to what happened during the colonial era when Christianity was the only recognised religion.

In the past, most teachers in Namibia were only trained to teach Biblical Instruction (for all students) or Biblical Studies (as an examination subject), but in the new dispensation, the new multi-cultural paradigm posed a new challenge to such teachers.

Under the new and current Constitution, the state neither favours nor neglects any of the religious orientations (Lubbe 1997:12; Republic of Namibia 1990). Religious and Moral Education was adopted and replaced Biblical Instruction (as Religious Studies replaced Biblical Studies as a matriculation subject) in the new Namibian school curriculum where teachers are now required to teach different religions, such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, African traditional religions, Baha'i and other faiths (Schultz 2001:18).

Before Namibia's independence, the religious education system was dominated by Christianity, which was taught in all Namibian schools at the expense of other religions. After independence, the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia stated that all religions should be given equal treatment [Article 21(c)].

As a result, Religious and Moral Education (RME) was established as a new subject in the Namibian school curriculum. However, little was known about the perceptions of RME teachers in teaching and implementing the RME syllabus in schools. Therefore, there was a need to investigate the perceptions of RME teachers in schools, to determine whether they are implementing the RME syllabus as intended by the official curriculum.

Given this background, the objective of this study was to investigate the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers with regard to the curriculum and the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus in the teaching and learning situations in the Ompundja School Circuit in the Oshana Region of Namibia so as to draw empirical data against which further development of the curriculum could be assessed and undertaken, and to identify new insights which could be integrated in the Namibian teaching and learning environments, taking into account the global debates in the field.

1.5.2 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers with regard to Religious and Moral Education?
2. How do Religious and Moral Education teachers implement Religious and Moral Education in teaching and learning situations?
3. What are the constraints that hinder the proper implementation of Religious and Moral Education in the teaching and learning process?
4. What new insights in developing the Religious and Moral Education curricula, theoretically and practically, can be gleaned from this case study?

1.6 Assumptions

The researcher of the study assumed the following as factors contributing to a “hypothesis”: some teachers prefer to teach Biblical Studies (the matriculation subject); others prefer to use the old Religious and Moral Education syllabus (1991) in teaching RME (with a more multi-cultural scope); still others prefer to teach Religious and Moral Education according to the new RME syllabi of 2005 and 2007 (with a stronger focus on Christianity); some teachers do not have the necessary qualifications or experience to handle the RME syllabus and lesson presentations; others may not be clear about the methods and strategies to use in the planning and delivery of RME lessons; schools in the Ompundja Circuit do not have adequate resources; and finally, irregular monitoring and class visits in RME lessons will also impact negatively on teaching praxis.

1.7 Literature review towards an appropriate theoretical framework

This section discusses an appropriate theoretical framework for evaluating Religious and Moral Education as a subject, by means of a review of relevant literature on religious education and morality in schools, as well as a discussion on didactical issues, including teaching methods.

1.7.1 Goals and objectives of Religious and Moral Education

The study was guided by a model developed by Kitshoff (1996:1) as a framework. The model is relevant to Religious and Moral Education in the sense that it serves as a guide to assess the teachers' spirit of lesson preparation and presentation, monitoring the progress of the learners by means of assessment tasks, as well as addressing unique and diverse needs of the learners (Kelly & Melograno 2004:112).

This model helps teachers and administrators to determine the effectiveness of the lessons and eventually know how to overcome shortfalls. Therefore, Kitshoff's theory, which focuses on the subject, teacher, teaching and learning environment, was utilised in this study.

In this context, the teaching and learning of RME was viewed on the basis of the following aspects: educational activity, religious activity, learner behavioural change (through learning and sharing religious and moral values), as well as application of the learner-centred approach (teaching methodology).

One of the major goals of RME is that learners will express and share their experiences of religious and moral values with one another, with the purpose of contributing to the development of building a peaceful community where people from different religious groups live in peace and harmony. This means that effective teaching and learning of RME brings about necessary behavioural changes in the lives of the learners (Ministry of Education and Culture 1991:1-4; Kitshoff 1996:2).

Literature studies in the field of religious education revealed that religious education tends to include not only strictly religious aspects, but moral aspects as well, being concerned with religious and moral living. It is thus emphasised in the literature that the teacher should be a role model of moral attitudes and behaviour inside and outside the classroom situations for Religious and Moral Education to introduce behavioural change in the lives of the learners.

The teacher should know how to plan, organise and inter-relate teaching and learning, including teaching and learning materials, as well as teaching methods (Kitshoff 1996:3). An overarching goal of RME is to help learners to live a life characterised by tolerance, cooperation, sharing, peace and unity amidst a reality of religious diversity.

Therefore, it is expected of teachers to facilitate learners in the following: teaching learners about religious and moral knowledge to helping them to be accountable for their religious and moral behaviour; teaching learners to acquire a sense of perspective, even humour, *vis-a-vis* various aspects of life, such as human needs and human values; assisting learners to make good decisions and choices about religious and moral values; helping learners to express their religious and moral experiences in words and actions; and helping learners to act in accordance with what they have experienced in religious worship, social activities and personal choices (Kitshoff 1996:3-4).

1.7.2 The teacher of Religious and Moral Education

Since the case study focused to a large extent on the role and performance of RME teachers, the literature study includes profiling an equipped and performing teacher in this role. The RME teacher, it is emphasised, should possess knowledge of the teaching and learning process, such as the learner, the subject matter, the teaching and learning environment, teaching principles, the methods of teaching, as well as the process of assessment and evaluation.

Thus, the teacher should possess knowledge associated with the head (cognitive), and the heart (affective, i.e., feelings, emotions, attitudes and values) (Kitshoff 1996:5). However, the environment may also affect the teaching and learning situations, either positively or negatively. Kitshoff (1996:13) describes the environment as “the total of all conditions or stimuli to which the learner responds”. This can be immediate or “removed” environments.

Moral maturity is more than just knowing what is right. Any particular community is full of people who know what is right, but who nevertheless frequently set moral considerations aside when they find it suitable to do so. To be moral means to value morality, that is, to take moral obligations seriously. To be able to possess the will, competence, and habits needed to translate moral judgment and feeling into effective moral action.

Reimer et al (1983:4) consider issues of fairness, justice and responsibility as moral issues, whether they exist in the classroom or outside the classroom. In this he is supported by Isaak (1997:123) who sees teachers as having a deep sense of responsibility to discern (with their learners) what is beautiful and what is bad, ugly and evil and to develop the freedom to act accordingly.

In religious and moral education, a teacher is challenged to help the learners to generate more effective and more creative learning experiences (Reimer et al 1983:119). The RME teacher acts as a role model, particularly in the interaction between him/her and the learners. Modelling includes the way the teacher reveals religious and moral principles and reasoning in his/her practical interaction with learners.

For example, if a teacher wishes for the learners to demonstrate dedication, commitment and respect, these qualities should characterise their own relations with the learners. Watson (1993:3) suggests that there is a need for well-qualified religious and moral education teachers to act as coordinators, helping and encouraging learners to foster and sustain interests in what should be the focus of religious and moral education, such as tolerance, respect, reciprocity, fairness and mutual understanding. Teachers invariably influence learners' religious and moral development in these areas.

For example, the teacher models a culture of socialisation when he/she accommodates and positively fosters the diversity of the learners, for instance, by inviting visitors from different religious and cultural backgrounds into the classroom to promote unity in diversity of learners who come from different religious and cultural backgrounds. Teachers should exemplify various aspects of respect: self-respect, respect for others, respect for the natural and cultural environment, respect for beauty and respect for the truth (Watson 1993:4).

Teachers can introduce learners to religious and moral issues in other ways, for example, in situations involving loyalty, conflict resolution, gender roles, friendship, peer pressure and self-esteem - providing opportunities for exploring religious and moral understandings and commitments.

Similarly, dramatising parliament or court sessions could help learners to see the value of democratic processes and the obligations of citizenship. This view is supported by Watson (1993:5) who argues that the teacher should help learners to develop openness and tolerance towards others to become kind and compassionate, and promote good citizenship.

Teachers can also foster habits of responsibility and caring, for example, caring for the environment and taking responsibility for specific classroom activities. This may give greater

responsibilities in the teaching and learning situations. Teachers may reprimand learners for calling others derogatory names, for taking someone else's property without permission or for excluding another learner from a game.

Teachers' impact as religious and moral role models is demonstrated by the way they carry out their work. The example they set as professionals speaks profoundly to learners. Thus, teachers must model high standards of work and apply those standards equally to themselves and to the learners.

All these aspects of being a role model of specific values are accentuated in the literature on religious and moral education in general, and form an integral part of the goals and objectives of the Namibian RME curriculum. These aspects were assessed in this study by means of appropriate instruments.

1.7.3 Religious and Moral Education as part of the Namibian school curriculum

In the Lower Primary syllabus (Grades 1-4), the concept of religious education is not explicitly developed, but rather implicitly manifests in themes such as belonging, phases of life, the sacred, festivals, social values and children's rights and responsibilities (Ministry of Education 2005). In the Grades 5-7 syllabus, the concept is clearly spelled out. Themes on Judaism, African traditional religions, and Christianity are part of this school phase (Ministry of Education 2005). In the Grades 8-10 syllabus, it is also clearly spelled out in themes such as Islam, Baha'i faith, Buddhism and Hinduism (Ministry of Education 2007).

The aims of teaching these themes within specific religious traditions to the Namibian learners are to develop learners who will respect and foster the values of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia and to develop and enhance respect for and understanding and tolerance of other people's religions, beliefs, cultures and ways of life (Ministry of Education 2007).

Tony (2001:207) indicates that religious education "involves instruction in beliefs and practices". It is an education aimed to help learners to respect and gain knowledge and understanding of others' faiths and cultures, attempting to create a peaceful community where various religious groups live in harmony (Baelz 1977:67).

In the same way, the Ministry of Education says that “learners from different religious and cultural groups should share religious experiences and religious responsibilities; express their own spirituality and morality differently and teachers should assist them to work through ethical problems, learn to live with high moral standards and draw comfort and hope from religion” (Ministry of Education 1996).

As a result, religious and moral education takes into consideration the moral and ethical development of a learner; encourages respect for feelings and opinions of other faiths and demonstrates that problems can be solved together (Reimer et al 1983:123).

Thus, RME encourages a culture of tolerance, where the rights of different religions and morals are respected and promoted (Ministry of Education 2004).

Reimer et al (1983:4) argue that “when religious and moral issues arise in the classroom or outside the classroom, they should be addressed to help learners develop religious and moral respect”. Seeing that religion and morality are major forces in the lives of people, RME teachers should educate learners in religious and moral issues concerning humanity, honesty in dealing with one another, respect for property and other people’s religion, and encourage learners to share their religious and moral experiences, knowledge and skills in the classroom and outside the classroom. Such a process would lead to the appreciation of the differences in our religious groups, and the success of democracy.

Reimer et al (1983:45) state that “learners acquire religious and moral values from their social environment, experiences that might be useful in the teaching and learning situations”. One should also take note that religious and moral values differ from person to person, and from community to community. However, some values are universal, such as a common recognition of the value of life and a common concern for preserving human life (Reimer et al 1983:36).

1.7.4 Alignment of goals and objectives

The Religious and Moral Education Curriculum Panel of 8-10 July 2008 noted with concern that the RME content in the Social Sciences College syllabus was not properly aligned with the RME school syllabus. As a result, the Panel requested the Social Sciences departments of the four Colleges of Education in Namibia to align the content of the RME syllabus, Grades 5-7 and

Grades 8-10 with school syllabi as had been done with all other subjects. This would help the teachers graduating from the colleges to implement and use the school syllabus more effectively.

An additional aim of this study was to investigate the alignment of all teachers with the real intentions of the curricula of RME, as endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

1.7.5 Approaches to teaching and learning

Instructional methods and teaching methods, regardless of what people call such processes, are primarily descriptions of the learning objective-oriented activities and flow of information between teachers and learners (Eble 1972:146).

The two main categories of instruction are direct and indirect instructions, which many teachers find useful for classifying teaching methods, but a bit more complicated (Vrey 1990:7). Any instruction method a teacher uses has advantages and disadvantages, and requires some preliminary preparation.

Often times, a particular teaching method will naturally flow into another, all within the same lesson, and excellent teachers have developed the skills to make the process faultless to the learners.

Eble (1972:22) is of the view that “learners were most put off by teachers who did not care or who did not seem to care”. Teachers need to be tolerant, encourage learners to ask questions and state their points of view and permit them to think independently about the subject; they should not become irritated or defensive towards learners.

Knowledgeable and skilful teachers relate new learning material to current experiences in order to enable learners to solve immediate problems and concerns they experience. In this way, learning becomes more successful as learners regard the activities as relevant and useful.

However, the right instructional method for a particular lesson depends on many things, and among them are the age and developmental level of the learners; what the learners already know and what they need to know to succeed with the lesson; the subject-matter content, the objective of the lesson; the available people, time, space and material resources; and the physical setting.

According to Van Rooy (1997:18) new material can be linked to prior experiences in many different ways in order to establish similarities and differences between the old and new and trying out new applications. However, before this can be done, the teacher should establish learners' prior experiences.

Van Rooy is supported by Tennant and Pogson (1995:152) who point out that new material can be related to learners' prior experiences by testing learners' knowledge formally or informally and conducting individual interviews.

Another, more difficult, problem is to select an instructional method that best fits one's particular teaching style and the lesson situation. This means that there is no one right method for teaching a particular lesson, but there are some criteria that pertain to each lesson that can help a teacher to make the best decision possible.

The teacher can provide group experiences where the experience itself becomes the focal point of learning. This type of teaching experience can be created through simulation, games and role plays in which the shared experiences result in learning. In such situations learners learn from direct experiences, but not from prior or current experiences from outside the classroom.

Any teacher should be aware of his/her classroom teaching behaviour and his/her skills to communicate the knowledge in a positive, communicative way, ensuring maximum interaction and integration of teaching material and insights. Kitshoff (1996:8) cites that teachers should be aware of classroom behaviour in order to be able to control and adapt to it successfully.

Effective teachers of RME are expected to make full use of the available tools, including the syllabus, books, materials, audio-visual aids, etc., to design each lesson thoroughly and methodologically and to identify and formulate the aims of each RME encounter, as well as the instructional objective of each lesson in order to enhance the meaningfulness of all religious and moral education learning activities (Kitshoff 1996:8).

Teachers also need to constantly pursue those aims and objectives, translate specific RME content and messages into real life situations, as well as use teaching media effectively. An effective RME teacher also creates a warm and inviting teaching and learning environment and atmosphere, motivates the class, positively reinforces learner reaction and behaviour, pays

special attention to the crucial role of teacher behaviour in the teaching situation, properly evaluates themselves and learners, and show positive willingness to correct mistakes (Kitshoff 1996:9).

The teacher is required to have knowledge and understanding of the learner, as well as the learner's environment such as overall cultural setting, home, religious connections, peer groups, school and classroom; i.e., the outer and immediate/inner environment (Kitshoff 1996:13).

Harrison and Blakemore (1989:78) argue that spiritual and moral growth, intellectual and emotional development, social skills and behavioural factors all affect the way in which learners learn. Therefore, different methods of learning need to be adopted for the implementation of the RME syllabus in schools in order to achieve the intended outcome.

In the context of this study, teaching and learning would be based on a paradigm of the learner-centred approach as described in ministerial policy documents, curriculum guides and the conceptual framework. This approach ensures optimal quality of learning when the following principles are put into practice: facilitating learning with understanding; developing skills and attitudes that contribute to the development of community; and allowing learners to bring to school their knowledge and social experiences gained from family and community, as well as through interaction with the environment, seeing that learning involves building on learners' prior knowledge and experience, participation, contribution and production (Swart 1999:132; Ministry of Education 1991:5-9).

The teacher should sense the needs of the learners and the nature of the learning process, and shape the learning experience accordingly. Teachers should help learners to work in groups, pairs and individually by way of encouraging cooperative and collaborative learning. As learners develop personal, social and communication skills, they can gradually be given increasing responsibility to participate in the planning and evaluation of their work under the teacher's guidance (syllabi for Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10).

In summary, teachers should employ all the skills, knowledge, capabilities and enthusiasms they have available to highlight the relevance of values incorporated into RME, take learners' needs and experiences as the starting point for learning and link them to the teaching of RME. Teachers

should also make sure that the teaching matter and teaching media used are suitable for the particular age group of learners, create a conducive teaching and learning environment, and remove all stumbling blocks hampering the teaching and learning process.

There is a consensus in literature in the field of religious and moral education that RME teachers must:

- be thoroughly acquainted with the subject matter, the learner and the learning environment;
- give assessment tasks that facilitate the specific objectives of the subject;
- give learners opportunities to use their prior knowledge and learning experiences, that is, revisit and review certain learning activities;
- assist learners to get a firm grasp on the lessons in terms of cognitive, affective and life-related aspects; and
- work with appropriate teaching methods.

All these aspects, underlined again and again in the literature, formed the basis of the class visits, and the questionnaires/interviews with teachers in the study.

CHAPTER 2

CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The researcher of this study is of the opinion that in order to study something effectively, abstract concepts must be clarified. In this chapter, terms such as religion, religious identity, norms and values, attitudes and behaviour, the origin of belief, education, religious education, morality, and moral education are defined.

2.1 Religion

The concept of “religion” and human thoughts, feelings and attitudes about religion requires clarification as precisely as possible on how it is used in RME.

Religion is the belief in one God (monotheism) or many gods (polytheism), found in all human societies, and it has an influence on the lives of people. Therefore, people have always had the desire to worship a higher power, whether it is a single God or multiple gods. One of the early church bishops of North Africa, namely, St. Augustine, is famous for stating that “people’s hearts are restless until they find their rest in God”.

The Oxford English dictionary defines religion as “a particular system of faith and worship or thing that one is devoted to or bound to do.” This definition implies that whatever is the most important aspect of one’s life can be regarded as one’s religion.

In reality, no one is certain regarding the origin of the modern word “religion” or what the word actually means, but people have always had the desire to worship a supernatural power or powers.

Document analysis indicated that the English word “religion” is derived from the Latin word “*religio*”, but it is not clear which of the three verbs the noun is most closely linked to: “*relegere*” - to turn to constantly or to observe conscientiously; “*religari*” - to bind oneself; or “*re-eligere*” - to choose again. The analysis of these words points to three possible religious attitudes, but in the final accounting of a purely etymological origin of a word, this probe does not resolve the uncertainty of what the word means. (See <http://www.academic.regis.edu/> accessed 16 May 2012, 10:30).

This researcher understands religion as simply referring to issues of faith and belief. However, there is an important difference between faith and belief. Faith is acting on belief. For example, one can believe that there is God; but unless that belief leads to commitment to God, the belief remains a belief and does not become faith. In the same vein, Fowler (1981:14) debates that faith is an orientation of the total person, giving purpose and a goal to one's hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions.

In this study, religion is defined as a complete system of faith and rituals of worship, which is institutionalised within a society. It encompasses styles of expression of sacred beliefs, obedience and social practices found within a given racial and cultural context. Religion therefore refers to a particular system of faith and practices, while morals are the actual standards or norms of right and wrong by which people live from day to day. Therefore, RME teachers teach learners to accept the values, morality and spirituality that they find in their respective religions and live accordingly.

Various authors have defined religion in different ways. De Gruchy (1991:13) defines it as “beliefs and practices in relation to whatever is held to be sacred or set apart from ordinary life”. This definition is unique in the sense that religion is viewed as extraordinary, and different from any ordinary practice, for example, worshipping the ancestors.

According to Isaak (1997:2) “religion is a belief in something greater than ourselves”.

Mayled (1987:5) sees religion as a “human recognition of supernatural controlling power”. Similarly, Kitshoff (1996:2) defines religion as “a form of behaviour expressing a relationship with a transpersonal being, known as God”.

Cole and Morgan (2000:314) view religion as a “belief in a transcendent, ultimate reality, also known as God”. This definition is unique in the sense that the name of this ultimate reality does not matter, but what matters is the fact that there is God.

Thus, basic to defining religion is a personal commitment to God and being faithful to divine commands (which brings in the moral aspect of believing).

In this study, the religious and moral development of the learners should be understood in the context of teachers, in the sense that teachers cannot direct learners' religious and moral development on a theoretical basis only, but the teachers should influence learners by their practical example (Du Toit & Kruger 1994:98).

In the same vein, Yeats (1991:86) is of the view that sometimes learners ask about religious and moral issues, and the manner in which teachers respond to learners' questions determines the learners' beliefs and moral behaviour, and thus moral development.

2.2 Religious identity

Religious beliefs and identities of people are often as much an integral part of their cultural awareness as racial and ethnic heritages. Culture also influences people's lifestyles; the way they walk, talk, eat and prepare their children for adulthood.

Children belong to families and communities (Isaak 1997:39). From birth, children grow in family relationships and interact with adults and other children, friends and community members through whom they build their identities. When children feel a sense of belonging and a sense of pride in their families, their peers and their communities, they can be emotionally strong, self-assured and able to deal with challenges and difficulties (Isaak 1997:41). This creates an important foundation for their learning and development.

2.3 Norms and values

In daily life, human interactions are guided by social norms and values which determine what to do and what not to do. Therefore, social values are acts that are considered good by the society. However, social values are not the same in every society because values that are considered good in a particular community can be considered to be not good in another community (Kretzschmar 1998:14).

This researcher views social values as a living guide that contains prohibition and commands, while social norms are rules or guidelines; rules of behaviour to realise the wishes and aspirations of the society. In this way, values can be seen as a pattern to be achieved, while

norms are the rules that develop and abide in a society as a binder, and controlling human life in the community.

The researcher defines values as beliefs that guide personal conduct and an individual's interaction with others. Values help people to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, and to know how to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner.

De Klerk & Rens (2003:356), following Plunkett, view values as positive choices about how to behave. They believe that in every choice, some group of moral values would influence human behaviour and decisions.

In view of the points mentioned above, the researcher argues that all communities set guidelines, principles, norms and rules for behaviour depending on what is acceptable in the community. In this way, moral norms can be described as the norms which communities follow with regard to behaviour (Crain 1992:25).

2.4 Attitudes and behaviour

Attitude constructs an individual's likes or dislikes, positive or negative view of a person, place, thing or event. The attitudes and behaviour of a person are influenced by values. Values reflect a person's sense of right and wrong or what ought to be; answer the question why people do what they do; help people to solve common human problems for survival and become the roots of traditions that groups of people find important in their day-to-day living. Therefore, values, morals and behaviour form people's attitudes, either for good or for bad.

2.5 Theories on the origin of belief

Van Rensburg, Landman and Budenstein (1994:553) define theory as "a mental view formulated to explain behaviour". It is a plan or scheme existing in the mind only, but based on principles, and defined by observation; it explains facts and has influence on practice. In this way, religion comes from the heart of human beings.

Marx (1964:41 ff.) believes that man makes religion; religion does not make man. Again, a scientific researcher, namely Charles Darwin with his theory of evolution, argued that every area

of life is progressing; meaning that religion has evolved from a lower/primitive stage to a higher stage.

This researcher understands the evolution theory as attempting to state that a person consists of a body and a soul, but the soul is invisible. In the olden days people believed that while sleeping the soul could leave the body and move to communicate with other souls.

Sigmund Freud, the father of modern psychology and founder of psychoanalysis, believed that religion is a projection, an illusion, a fantasy.

In view of religious life, Durkheim (1961) saw God as society, debating that religion is not something supernatural, but something that ensured the continuation of society.

This study criticises the theorists cited above. Despite the credibility or incredibility of these theories, religious believers are challenged. Each individual has to justify why he/she is or is not a religious person.

The researcher acknowledges that there are many different religions in this world and each religion claims to be the true one. However, the question arises: how can one religious tradition be regarded as the true one, while another religious tradition is regarded as false?

Again, the researcher has had experiences where some people became members of certain religious groups because of their place of birth, i.e., one is born into a religion. All over the world, disagreements over religious beliefs, in most cases, lead to hatred, conflict, violence and war.

Therefore, Religious and Moral Education should be approached with the spirit of listening to one another, being tolerant to religious differences and accommodating all religions in this very important subject.

This approach requires that in a multi-religious and multicultural society, a person's own religious belief must be temporarily suspended, while the religious beliefs of others should be taken into consideration. Such an approach would be shaped both by facts about religion and by an appreciation of others' feelings or moral values. This is the way to study and understand the

religious beliefs, moral values, minds and feelings of others, and to discover what they mean to them.

Having discussed religion from a general perspective, it is important to also look at religion from a sociological point of view, which in the researcher's view deals with the relationship between religion and society. It looks at the effects that religious and moral values have on the lives of the people or society. It deals with the issues between religious groups and society, and between religious groups and government; for example, in Namibia's case, the effects of secularisation on religious beliefs and moral values.

Another important aspect is the psychological approach to religion, which focuses on the interaction between the individual and religion, and looks at the positive and negative impact that religion has on people. Does religion help or hinder people in the way they conduct themselves in society? Why do people have to follow certain attitudes in life? What do religions have to say on the socio-economic and political arena? With those questions in mind, this study now attempts to define the concept of "education".

2.6 Education

Education is defined as an interaction between a child/learner and parent/teacher in order for the teacher/parent to educate or guide the learner/child towards responsible adulthood. It refers to teachers/parents attempting to influence learners/children to grow in mature moral behaviour so that they become socially and morally accountable persons in life (Ballantine as cited in Prinsloo & Du Plessis 2006:28).

Again, education can be defined as a socio-entity concerned with the relationships between learners and teachers and the quality of education, guidance and support which learners receive from their teachers during the time of learning. These relationships are shaped by features such as mutual trust, effective communication and support towards adequate education (Mariaye 2006:111).

In this study, the researcher emphasised the role of teachers as transmitters of moral values in the education system because learners spend most of their time with teachers. Therefore, teachers

have more influence on the learners than parents. This fact emphasises the need for a relationship of trust, honesty and open communication between teachers and learners.

It is the researcher's view that the school is the learners' second home. This means that the way teachers conduct moral values in their own lives is a determining factor in the way learners internalise and practise moral behaviour.

Education is the process whereby someone learns something. This means that people's experiences are in one way or another educational, seeing that whatever people experience somehow introduces changes in their behaviour (Kitshoff 1996:2). On the other hand, formal education can be seen as a system of planning, organising and interrelating teaching and learning experiences which are constructed to bring about desired behavioural changes in the learner.

From a teacher's perspective, religious education can be described as the process whereby a situation is deliberately structured in order to modify learner behaviour along desired religious and moral lines (Kitshoff 1996:2).

2.7 Religious education

The term religious education refers to a system that recognises more than one religious belief (Thompson 1988:89). It does not only refer to the general awareness of religious diversity, but will also influence the quality of religions' co-existence in a given context, as well as their interactions (Thompson 1988:92).

Religious education deals with mutual respect for and recognition of each other's faiths, as well as with joint cooperation and service. It is a matter of acknowledgment of the existence of others, taking an interest in them and inviting them for cooperation, for example, assisting people affected by floods or other natural disasters. It requires participation and engagement, and it comes into existence when people start relating to their fellow citizens, irrespective of their faiths.

Religious education is not a matter of mere tolerance, but the seeking of understanding, knowing about each other, inviting each other to live together as neighbours and building bridges of exchange and dialogue (Kruger 1995:102). However, people from different religions should also

understand that different religions have different practices, norms and principles. Hence, they need to enter into a relationship with one another even if they disagree or differ. They need to work together in a society of religious differences, and create “a platform for dialogue and encounter, give and take, constructive criticism and self-criticism” (Berger 1969:297).

Knitter (1985:206) argues that “inter-religious dialogue can serve as an understanding of doing before knowing”. Thus, unity in diversity should play a major role in an inter-religious society because people from different religions, cultures and traditions are living in the same area, travelling with the same transport, working at the same offices and factories, and using the same recreational facilities.

However, one may argue that a wider view of religious education is to help learners to respect and have knowledge and understanding of others’ faiths. It attempts to create a peaceful community where religious groups live in harmony. The purpose of religious education is not to convert learners to one’s faith, but to encourage mutual co-operation and respect among various groups.

Religious education takes into consideration the moral and ethical development of a child whereby learners are involved in moral and ethical situations where tolerance, responsibility, honesty, justice and fairness are necessary.

Thus, religious education usually turns in the direction of religious and moral education by encouraging a culture of tolerance, based on shared values, where the rights of different religions should be respected and promoted (Ministry of Education 2007b:37 and 2008: introduction).

Rossiter (1981:14) is of the view that:

- the school may sponsor the study of religion, but should not sponsor the practice of religion;
- the school may expose learners to all religious views, but may not impose any particular view;

- the function of the school is to educate about all religions, but not to convert learners to any religion;
- the school should study what all people believe, but should not teach a learner what he should believe;
- the school should strive for learner awareness of all religions, but should not press for learner acceptance of any one religion;
- the school should seek to inform the learners about various beliefs, but should not seek to make them conform to any one belief;
- the school can provide opportunity for discussion of religious questions, but should not impose religious answers.

2.8 Morality

Kretzschmar (1998:14) views morality as referring to principles, rules or reasoning by which behaviour is judged to be acceptable, right or wrong. Morality gives meaning to people's life and provides solutions for social problems. According to Kotze and Nesbitt (1996:32), morality refers to correct moral conduct, both for an individual and for members of a community. Schultz (2001:106) defines morality as "a system of principles and values concerning people's behaviour, which is generally accepted by a society or by a particular group of people". Lovelace & White (1996:15) define morality as "a measuring instrument to regulate and sensitize humans on whether some behaviours are right and acceptable and whether other behaviours are wrong". According to Mwamwenda (2004:134), morality refers to the way children/people learn to determine what is right and what is wrong, because humans regularly find themselves in situations where they have to weigh up everything and decide what is right under certain circumstances.

One may define morality as the actual standards by which people live and which are based on the values and ideals that people treasure. In this regard, Mbiti (1991:174) states that morals deal with "the question of what is right and good, and what is wrong and evil in human conduct."

The views of Kotze and Nesbitt (1996) and Mbiti (1991) are supported by Lovelace and White (1996:11) who argue that “most people have some belief and understanding of what is considered to be right and wrong”. Hence, people may find themselves in situations where there is little doubt about the actions being right or wrong.

This means that morality is not always a simple matter and people often find themselves in situations where they have to weigh up various factors to decide what is right in different circumstances. Sometimes an action may seem wrong by some standards, yet the intention may be good. For instance, it is wrong to break road rules, but there might be an occasion when it seems the right thing to do, for example, when a husband is rushing his pregnant wife to hospital and decides not to stop at a red light.

The researcher believes that morality goes hand in hand with values. Values refers to that which people attach worth, value or significance to; that which is good, beautiful, effective or just; that which is worth having, worth doing or worth striving to achieve (Woodbridge & Barnard 1990:56).

2.9 Moral education

In general, moral education enhances the development of good moral conduct in the society. It is also the responsibility of moral education to strengthen the idea of morality as an important foundation for social order. Moral rules are the same throughout the whole world. It is for this reason that moral rules are referred to as being general or universal. For example, morality throughout the whole world is against cheating and stealing; generally speaking, morality supports honesty, truthfulness, fair play, respect for others, kindness, hardworking patriotism and so on.

The objectives of morality strive to ensure the survival of a society and to restore and promote human dignity. A person with good morals is not likely to be involved in cheating, dishonesty, fraud, armed robbery, drug abuse, disrespect for oneself, disrespect for authority, disrespect for colleagues or age mates, disrespect for elders, or disrespect for other people’s rights.

To teach good morals in school, the school should include in its curriculum religious and moral values. In addition, parents should not only set a good example for their children, but should also

instil moral values in their children. Also, religious institutions should stress the religious and moral virtues can promote peace and unity among children/societies.

The researcher acknowledges that every society, no matter how small or large it may be, has moral rules and regulations, specifically made for members of the society to enable that society to survive.

In view of what has been said above, the word “moral” refers to the ability to distinguish between the right and the wrong. Therefore, moral education can be regarded as the process of guiding the character development of an individual in the society in order for that individual to be able to do what is right or just. Also, moral education can be regarded as the teaching or an attempt to teach the standards of right and wrong. It is also concerned with the establishment of principles of right and wrong, as well as their application to individual lives.

According to Mariaye (2006:23), moral education is concerned with the process by which relevant knowledge, attitudes, values and skills are transmitted and developed in the learners. In this study, the terms “moral values” and “moral education” have been used interchangeably. Therefore, moral education can be defined as the process by which relevant knowledge, attitudes, values and skills transmit and develop in a child/learner. It focuses on the development of the cognitive, social and emotional skills which are needed for moral thinking, feeling and behaviour (Mariaye 2006:23).

Iita (2012a:236) perceives religious and moral education as dealing with our religious beliefs, values and morals that cover aspects such as respect, discipline, honesty, trust, love, justice, right and wrong, good and evil, keeping promises, praise and blame, crime and punishment, character and integrity and so on. Our religious beliefs, values and morals help us to live with one another, to settle differences, to maintain peace and harmony, and to have a healthy relationship with our total environment.

In this study, “religious education” and “moral education” are used interchangeably. The focus is on both religious and moral values.

The clarification of concepts in this chapter leads to the discussion of learners’ moral development in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS

An important question is: Who is responsible for the development of learners: parents, teachers or religious institutions? It is recognised all over the world that parents, schools and religious institutions are very important in the religious and moral development of learners (Du Toit & Kruger 1994:3). This chapter attempts to shed light on the roles and responsibilities played by parents, schools and religious institutions in the moral development of learners. Also, the concept of “personality” is discussed in detail and some strategies for teaching RME are presented.

3.1 The roles and responsibilities of parents

In all spheres of life, parents are considered to have the greatest share in the education of children, as well as in the quality of children’s upbringing to become adults. Du Toit and Kruger (1994:3) note that when children go to school, teachers complement what parents have taught their children. Parents are therefore primarily responsible for the religious and moral development of their children.

Most children of ages five or six have developed basic components of conscience, a sense of guilt and the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, as well as the ability to be responsible (Berkowitch and Grych 1998:371 ff.). However, none of these elements of a child’s moral development will become fully functional for years. Therefore, the first moral education teachers in the life of children are their parents, who are expected to lay a solid moral foundation and to be role models for the children (Narvaez 2002:155 ff.).

Lindon (1998:151) states that in their moral reasoning (grasping of different moral concepts) younger children look and think from their own point of view, but are able to learn and look through the eyes of others and build up a more general framework.

In the same vein, Papalia and Olds (1992:253) argue that formal education changes the level of moral reasoning of the foundational phase of the learner. At this early age, parents have the opportunity of teaching respect for life and for others to the child, the teaching which occurs as parents explain and reason with their children. Parents teach children about good moral

behaviour and character traits that they want to see in their children; appropriately raise their children when discussing life events with them; and teach them about things which the community would not like to see or hear.

In the researcher's view, the approach used by parents determines the results in the moral development of the learners. The researcher concurs with other researchers who suggest that the quality of the parent-child relationship affects many facets of children's development (De Vries & Zan 2003). Findings from studies examining the family interactions that facilitate Kohlbergian moral reasoning stages revealed that affective components such as parental warmth, involvement and support are related to moral reasoning development (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings 2002; Nucci 2001), and as a result, a warm and supportive relationship between parents and children might enhance the likelihood that children would listen to and respond positively to parental teachings.

In the religious and moral education of children, parents should explain to the children the aims of family, school and community rules and also facilitate moral development by stimulating children to think reflectively about their actions. These views imply that parents' reasoning, discussing and explaining social events to their children and why certain behaviours are expected or why an action is wrong, might be more effective than other types of disciplinary strategies in facilitating children's moral development (see Coles 1997).

To effectively facilitate the moral development of children, parents need to explain moral rules to them. They also need to teach their children appropriate ways of responding to moral violation, by weighing the consequences of their actions on others' rights and welfare. This indicates that parental reasoning is associated with greater moral internalisation and the development of concern for others (Hansen 2001:826 ff.).

Thus, parents are a very important tool in the moral development of children. They do so by providing affective relationship, interaction with their children, responding to children's wrong doings and moral disputes, and by telling the children the reasons for having family, school and community rules (Hayes 1990:148).

3.2 The roles and responsibilities of teachers

A teacher is one who teaches and takes the responsibility of coaching learners through each stage of development towards their professional career. A professional teacher is, therefore, a highly qualified teacher, practising teaching on a scientific level; he/she chooses teaching as a calling and service to the nation.

A true teacher is concerned with learners in a holistic way, subject-wise, as well as with learners' moral development (Hayes 1990:73).

Teachers are educators who assume the responsibility of leading learners to adulthood. However, the primary instructors of children are the parents, who from the early stages of the child's life are involved in the child's education (Baldwin 1998:11). Therefore, while parents maintain the primary responsibility for the education of their children, school teachers and other concerned adults supplement parents' efforts as they together lead the children into adulthood.

These views are supported by Hayes (1990:73) who argues that an educator is more than a mere teacher of knowledge, because an educator seeks to impart to the learner qualities, such as norms and values, in order to enable the learner to live a responsible life.

The society views the school as a field of professional instruction, rich of norms, customs and ways of thinking coming from different learners of which the teachers are instructors. Like parents, school teachers are also very influential and significant in the lives of the learners (Le Roux 1992:28). Teachers help learners to understand character traits and moral values, and model desirable character traits for the learners, both within the school arena and in the community at large. In the process of teaching and learning, learners often try to be like or imitate the behaviour of their teachers. Thus, teachers are role models to the learners. Learners view their teachers as experts in the subject and seek their advice on many issues related to religious and moral values. In this way, teachers could help by remaining in touch with learners; using the learners' classroom learning experience that reflects good moral values and positive actions, as well as referring learners to moral lessons that they learn at home (Levine 1995:14).

This is the reason why moral lessons are included in the curriculum so that teachers can contribute to the moral development of the learners by effectively implementing the RME

syllabus in school. RME teachers are directly involved in teaching learners regarding behaviours that are right and correct, as well as behaviours that are wrong. Moral development is addressed by character education, which is a dialogical process (see Nucci 1989).

Although teachers are role models for learners, this does not mean that all teachers are good role models or that all teachers are teaching good morals, but the fact remains that teachers have a very important role to play in the moral development of the learners.

Teachers teach learners to respect the rights of others, promote the acceptance of responsibility for one's actions; teach the importance of honesty, dedication and right behaviour, including religious tolerance so that learners grow as good and responsible citizens; and teach learners to live in peace with one another.

3.3 The roles and responsibilities of religious institutions

A religious institution can be described as a social group of people shaped by common beliefs and moral values (Haralambos 1985:325); it can also be seen as a social system having religious structures, laws and rules (Branshaw 1996:1).

Le Roux (1992:73) is of the opinion that the opportunity for interaction with members of different religious groups is very important in learning to be a moral person. Such interaction plays an important role in the learners' moral development as it provides them with standards of socially approved behaviour and a source of motivation through social approval and disapproval of certain behaviours. With interaction, learners can learn what socially approved behaviour is, and can be motivated to behave according to what their social groups regard as right or wrong behaviour (Hurlock 1987:389).

Religious institutions therefore play a very important role in the religious and moral development of learners. Historically, religious and moral education centred around religious institutions in order to teach their followers religious and moral lessons. Today, this is not the case in Namibia. It is impossible to say that the moral development of the learners is the sole responsibility of a certain religious institution.

This study, therefore, refers to a multi-religious approach in schools, where the RME curriculum is implemented, and where all religions are taken into consideration for the moral development of the learners.

For this to be realised, the researcher deemed it fit to suggest some strategies to be implemented by every institution that has an interest in the moral development of the learners. Therefore parents, teachers and religious leaders must see themselves as moral models (behave in a way that reflects moral values) for learners, and behave accordingly because children pick up values from them. They should live as an example for learners to follow.

The teacher should not just teach morals, but he/she must live it and be a good example for the learners he/she is teaching; the same applies to religious leaders and parents. These leaders should create a moral community in the classroom, home and religious centres, one in which learners are involved in decision making and the rights and responsibilities of all are discussed and explained. In this way, moral discipline will foster fairness and opportunities for moral reasoning and self-control, and everyone is respected.

According to Lickona (1991), the teacher and other significant adults in a child's life must discover, affirm and develop each child's special talents and strengths, building the child's self-respect and self esteem. Character building, self-respect and responsibility are educationally intertwined. Only when a child values him/herself is he/she likely to show respect for and empathise with others.

The schools, religious institutions and parents should provide learners with opportunities for social action and sensitise learners about moral issues that teach them about good behaviour and social action. They should also help learners to develop the coping skills of self-control in order to learn to say "no" to evil, or to use skills of conflict resolution, rather than opting for unethical or immoral ways of handling undesirable situations.

The methods for teaching religious and moral education have the best chance of success if the importance of knowing the good, doing the good and internalising the good is stressed. There are many challenges in today's society, and if our society is not committed to leading good moral lives, our children will follow such immoral ways of life.

Religious and Moral Education (RME) as a school subject teaches moral values to learners in order to avoid evils prevailing in human societies. Every child comes to school with different life experiences behind him/her that affect his/her learning. If an RME teacher is not well prepared, he/she may create wrong impressions in the minds of the learners, and learners may not take the subject seriously. Learners may consider unprepared teachers as ignorant of what happens in the community if the teachers do not take those issues affecting learners into consideration.

Learners of today are intelligent due to their exposure to different things in life. Teachers must be mindful that each learner sets his/her own background, creates her/his own values, decides on her/his own actions and makes contribution to life experience accordingly.

Teachers should take note that among the learners there are some who are coming from good families, while others may be coming from bad families. Therefore, in the process of education, learners might influence each other for good or bad. In this way, a clash of values might arise and if not carefully checked, learners might act without much conscience and respect for fellow learners. Teachers should act as an example for learners, irrespective of colour, creed or religion; knowing that life is not dependent on petty pride and contentment illusions. Instead, one should examine the deepest desires of one's heart and go for the truth (Roehlkepartain 2000:210). One should also be able to complement emotions with good thoughts and sincere intentions.

The researcher believes that every learner is a living human being with the potential to love and to hate, to succeed and to fail; he/she has within him/her a spark of talent, accomplishments, creativity and love for his fellow learners. The task of teachers, parents and religious leaders is to find that spark and nurture it to its fullest measure. In order to do this professionally, these leaders need to speak the same language and behave accordingly so that they do not give contradictory messages to learners as the learners begin to establish their principles, values and morals in life.

In addition, the researcher believes that teaching RME in schools is basically a matter of reinforcing values practised at home and in the community. It is advised that teachers, parents and religious leaders should team up to teach moral values for the development of learners.

All parents wish for their children to grow up with high moral standards, but failure to provide an enabling environment for the achievement of this endeavour can lead to inability to reach that

goal. Therefore, all stakeholders in moral education should work together to provide an environment where the learners thrive and emerge victorious in all aspects of life.

Having discussed the responsibilities of parents, teachers and religious institutions in learners' moral development, the concept of "personality" is discussed in detail below.

3.4 Personality

Various theorists, such as Watson (1993) and Kemp (1996), have defined personality differently. Thus, there is not a universal definition of the term.

Personality is generally defined as the characteristics of a person, and it involves the whole person. These characteristics include aspects such as abilities, talents, habits, strengths, weaknesses and many others. Personality refers to how the perceptual, cognitive, emotional and motivational systems are organised for a specific person and how these determine that person's unique response to his/her environment.

3.4.1 Theories on personality

Sigmund Freud (psychoanalysis)

Freud's view of humanity (see Freud 1949; 1969) was that people experience conflict related to meeting sexual needs or sexual instincts (*eros*) and death or aggressive drives/instincts (*thanatos*) in a manner as required by society in different circumstances. He distinguished three dimensions of human consciousness, namely, the conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious. He further described personality structure in terms of three constructs: the *id*, which functions without proper consideration of various options; the *superego*, which tells the person the difference between right and wrong; and the *ego*, which strives to maintain the balance between the *superego* and the *id*. Freud also found that a problem arises when an appropriate object of satisfaction for an immediate need is not available, as this may result in engaging in unacceptable ways of satisfying the need. He considered this to be a situation that arises when there is constant conflict between the *id*, the *ego* and the *superego*. Freud further identified different defence mechanisms employed by a person to defend the personality, for example, regression, rejection, compensation and many others.

As far as personality development is concerned, Freud suggested that the early life experience plays an important part in the development of a personality, particularly, depending on whether basic human needs are met (*The adult as learner*, 2000:47 ff.).

B.F. Skinner

Skinner's view of humanity was based on the belief that all human behaviour is learned and that it is shaped through reinforcement in the environment (see Skinner 1978). He regarded personality as an inaccessible "black box" that cannot be studied scientifically. Skinner found that some behaviours are presented by stimuli, which he referred to as "conditioned responses", while other behaviours are emitted/produced freely by the individual without having been presented by any stimuli. He called these "operant behaviour". According to Skinner, operant behaviours are those behaviours that are reinforced by development (*The adult as learner*, 2000:50).

Carl Rogers

Rogers (1951, 1961, 1969)⁵ focused on the development of individuals and their personality, with little emphasis on their environment because, to him, the environment only inhibits or facilitates the individual's potential. He acknowledged that it is important for individuals to have a close person, who can give input (positive or negative) that will shape personality.

Three important elements in Rogers' theory are the organism or person, the phenomenon or field (frame of reference) and the self concept. He believed that the behaviour of individuals is determined by their subjective perception of themselves and their experience.

When a learner has to conform to the values of significant others in order to gain their positive regard, these values are internalised into the self-concept. Sometimes the acceptance of the learner is conditional. As a result, the child incorporates only acceptable feelings and needs into his or her self-concept, denying those that are unacceptable to significant others. The learner's self concept in this case will therefore be incongruent with his/her true potential (*The adult as learner*, 2000:53).

⁵ In these works Rogers' client-centred approach, his view of the person and the 19 theses about psycho-therapy, and his views on education, respectively, are dealt with.

3.4.2 Theories/perspectives on developmental tasks

3.4.2.1 Charlotte Bühler's developmental phases

Bühler (1933) and her followers divided the total period of human life into a number of developmental phases according to the research they had done. They divided the life of a human being into the following phases:

- Phase 1:* 0-15 years, which is characterised by progressive growth, school and family life;
- Phase 2:* 16-27 years, which is the beginning of independent activities;
- Phase 3:* 28-47 years, a phase of professional and active work;
- Phase 4:* 48-62 years, which is characterised by reduced activity; and
- Phase 5:* 63 years and above, which is characterised by a decline in socialisation, but an increase in hobbies and personal interests.

Bühler asserts that human beings set goals for themselves, which are established gradually during the first two decades of life, and they pursue the goals in order to achieve fulfilment and reach self-realisation (*The adult as learner*, 2000:75ff.).

3.4.2.2 The developmental tasks of youth

Gerdes, Moore, Ochse and Van Ede (1988:73), Kimmel (1990:14) and Rice (1986:9) describe the developmental tasks of youth, which include:

- establishing a sense of identity;
- developing the capacity for intimacy and commitment;
- defining basic values and moral standards;
- choosing and preparing for a career; and
- setting objectives to reach the adulthood goal and adjusting to adult life as well as acquiring psychological and economic independence.

Gormly and Brodzinsky (1989:363) identified the following developmental tasks for the youth:

- accepting responsibility for the self;

- forming an identity;
- acquiring emotional stability;
- beginning a career; and
- establishing intimacy and deciding to become a parent.

Chickering (1969:20) identified the following developmental tasks of learners:

- acquiring competencies in intellectual, physical and interpersonal spheres;
- handling emotions, especially relating to aggression and sexuality; and
- acquiring autonomy, which starts with emancipation from the parental home, and ends in establishing personal convictions and developing integrity by clarifying values, convictions and commitments.

3.4.2.3 The developmental tasks of adulthood

The developmental stages of the adult are early adulthood (22-40), middle adulthood (41-59) and late adulthood (60 years and above) (The adult as learner, 2000:102). The developmental tasks of early adulthood and middle adulthood are discussed below.

Early adulthood

Gerdes et al (1988:342) divided the developmental tasks of early adulthood into four categories, namely: tasks relating to the self; tasks relating to the family; tasks relating to the community; and tasks relating to work and leisure.

Those tasks relating to the self include:

- achieving independence and responsibility;
- establishing an identity and stabilising;
- outlining values; and
- developing the capacity to be committed to others.

The tasks relating to the family include:

- choosing a partner;
- becoming a parent and rearing children; and

- establishing and managing a home.

The tasks relating to community include:

- finding a place in the community; and
- making contributions.

Those relating to work and leisure include:

- becoming established in a career; and
- developing a pattern of relaxation.

Middle adulthood

Gerdes et al (1988:391) also divided these tasks into four main categories: tasks relating to self; tasks relating to the family; tasks relating to work and leisure; and tasks relating to community.

Like the tasks of early adulthood, the specific types of activities in middle adulthood include:

- developing new interests, such as hobbies;
- accepting responsibilities; and
- becoming involved in community and civil affairs.

3.4.3 Theories on cognitive development

Piaget

Piaget (1932) believed that the mind stores and organises *all* impressions and experiences into structures called *schemata*, which later become part of the human being's cognitive structure. New information is assimilated through a process called "accommodation". Piaget identified three developmental phases, namely, sensori-motor, preoperational and operational phases (The adult as learner, 2000:117).

Guilford

Guilford (1989) identified three dimensions of human behaviour, in which intelligence plays a part. These are:

- a process of operation;

- a specific content; and
- a product.

Content may be in the form of figures, symbols, words or behaviour, and these are processed through cognition, memory, thoughts (divergent or convergent) and evaluation. This processing results in a product, which may be a unit, class, relation, system, transformation or implication (*The adult as learner*, 2000:124).

Arlin

Arlin's theory (1975; 1984) is rather an extension of and advancement on Piaget's post-formal operational thought. It implies that cognitive development takes place after adolescence and continues through adulthood. Post-formal operational thought includes relativistic, dialectic and problem tracing thoughts. Relativistic thought is characterised by conscious self-referral, consciousness of various points of view, pragmatic decision making, awareness of contexts and observing reality. Dialectic thought refers to thinking, not only of the complete whole, but also considering the smallest parts of that whole. In problem tracing, the emphasis is on the importance of being open to new information and being prepared to adopt a world view based on the new information (*The adult as learner*, 2000:134).

3.4.4 Theories on the psychology of thinking (the achievement of learning)

Four schools of thought on the psychology of thinking are usually distinguished (*The adult as learner*, 2000:146 ff.):

The Wurzburg school emphasises the importance of introspection regarding phenomena of the higher mental processes, as applied by Oswald Külpe (1978) and his followers. This school of thought asserts that consciousness has imageless content as well as images; ego activity plays a major role in the phenomena of thought; and the problem at hand determines the thinking direction.

The Cologne school distinguishes three layers of consciousness during the thinking process, namely, the visual/observable layer, the schematic layer and the abstract layer. This means that when thought is engaged with a problem, it can operate dynamically on all the three layers.

The Mannheim school emphasises the fact that thinking is always goal oriented. This means that thinking is directed and given impetus by the task or problem; thinking is an abstract exercise; the unique characteristics of the problem determine its goal; and thinking is logical and task oriented. Finally, the Amsterdam school emphasises the application of thinking in the teaching situation.

3.4.5 Views on child behaviour

At birth, a child is incapable of distinguishing between what is right and what is wrong. As the child develops, he/she will become aware of certain behaviours of people. However, the child could do considerable harm to him/herself because he/she is still not able to make a clear distinction between right and wrong (Peters 1981:35).

As children grow, they need laws, rules and social interaction to guide their moral behaviour so that they will be able to distinguish between right and wrong and avoid harming themselves or other people. When they become aware of laws and rules as they grow, they will be able to distinguish between good and bad moral values, which are influenced by teaching and learning (Gouws & Kruger 1994:174).

Moral awareness is the ability to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:50) agree that moral awareness urges people to do what is considered to be right and avoid what is considered to be wrong.

The inner feelings (conscience) of a person determine his/her action in a particular situation (Bell 1980:419). A person's conscience makes him/her feel guilty or ashamed when he/she has done something wrong. Inner feeling is an inborn thing in every person, which develops as the person grows (Schuster & Ashburn 1992:337).

As children/learners grow, they imitate what their parents/teachers do. Du Toit and Kruger (1994:97) argue that the development of learners' conscience based on values does not just originate from prescribed norms, but is also influenced by the behavioural example set by their teachers. Minnet (1995:164) opines that teachers should set a good example for learners to learn and copy good manners from them. Wanda (2006;60 ff.) deals with parent-educator partnership in moral formation.

Vrey (1990:90) claims that learners learn from an early age that certain moral behaviours are acceptable, while others not; but when learners go to school, they learn that good and bad are norms of conduct. Thus, learners imitate the moral behaviour and conduct of parents and teachers, and they internalise them and act accordingly.

At primary school level, learners cannot make sound moral judgment because their moral experience still rests on concrete reality. They interpret things literally and stick to specific rules, for example, rules prohibiting cheating in tests and examinations or taking something without permission from the owner (Papalia & Olds 1992:250; Du Toit & Kruger 1994:128).

Thus, the moral judgment of the learners develops gradually from one level to another as they grow. It develops from a set of fixed rules and norms to an inner moral sense based on learners' convictions and moral judgments (Vrey 1990:181).

Roehlkepartain (2000:8) maintains that children do not steal because parents forbid it, but they do not steal because of their moral judgment, seeing that their parents obey the rules and norms, and the child agrees with the principles underlying the rule that people should not steal.

Du Toit and Kruger (1994:129) are in agreement with Roehlkepartain when they argue that the example set by parents and teachers is the most successful method of moral education, because learners develop their moral behaviour and moral beliefs based on that of their parents and teachers. Therefore, both parents and teachers should equally try to transfer positive moral behaviour to the learners.

Van Rensburg et al (1994:444) state that as the child is born into the world and tries to find ways to live in the world, the child's inclination/preference for a determined set of values such as honesty, respect and discipline becomes fixed and constant.

Johnson (2009:62) is of the opinion that children's behaviours are determined by the way they are raised by their parents, in agreement with the proverb that says "an apple does not fall far away from the tree". When a child is taught to respect and to behave well, he/she will not stray far from such teaching. Therefore, rules should be set for children to follow and to create order in children's lives.

Holford (2004:87) maintains that parents should spend time with their children, which is a vital part of showing children that they are valued. When children begin to express themselves, it is the parents' responsibility to inhibit too much autonomy and teach children how to behave. In this process, children will know what is right and what is wrong so that they do not disturb themselves and others.

If parents or teachers do not take responsibility for learners' education, the learners may become rapists, robbers and murderers (*The Namibian*, March 5, 2013:5).

Learners should be praised when they have behaved well or have done something good, as this will encourage them to continue doing so. Responsible action is a learning process; learners believe what their parents teach them and learn to practise it.

As for punishment, teachers should apply it taking the learners' age into consideration. Giving heavy punishment to very young learners will not teach them any positive behaviour, but will rather destroy them. Mwamwenda (2004) cites that parents can teach children to behave well by telling them what is right and what is wrong, but punishment should be given to those who misbehave so that they understand that the result of misbehaving is unpleasant.

Woolfolk, Malcolm and Walkup (2008) suggest that parents should take away privileges, after a child has behaved inappropriately. They apply "removal punishment" such as withholding pocket money or keeping the child from going to a party, so that the child will not repeat the same mistake.

Another way of discipline is for teachers to apply the rewarding system on learners who behave well in order to maintain good behaviour and conduct. This will help other learners to see that good behaviour produces good results, thereby promoting good behaviour in the learners.

Teachers and parents are responsible for helping learners to grow in the right direction. Learners imitate what adults do and say. For learners to be positive and well behaved, they need to be brought up in an environment which supports such qualities (Van Rensburg et al. 1994:444).

In order for teachers to assist in producing useful and responsible learners, they must start teaching the learners from an early stage to ensure that the learners acquire right and acceptable

moral behaviour before they leave school. This will help learners to cope with life in the wider world (Van Rensburg et al. 1994:444).

Learners who are disciplined with love will learn how to love. Teachers need to help them to live with others in a good and peaceful manner. Teachers are responsible for teaching learners how to greet people, particularly elders and how to live a good life. This will help learners to grow up with good morals and discipline. Teachers should teach learners about respect for adults, for example, kneeling down when greeting adults/elders. They should also teach them how to help elders at home and in the community.

It is the responsibility of teachers to sit and talk with their learners and teach them to be responsible; to behave well; to choose good friends who will help them to achieve their goals, to strive for excellence and good moral standards; and to avoid bad friends, as bad company corrupts good character (Lowman 1984:12).

3.5 Strategies for teaching Religious and Moral Education

In traditional classroom teaching, learners work primarily alone, learning is achieved through repetition, and the subject is strictly adhered to and guided by textbooks. Contrarily, in modern teaching practices learners work primarily in groups, and learning and knowledge are interactive and dynamic.

In Obanya's (1984) view, a good teaching practice should begin with the teacher having a clear picture of the changes he/she needs to bring through the lesson. To achieve this goal, the teacher should be familiar with the topic he/she is going to teach; aware of the objectives to be achieved; aware of the age group he has to teach; knowing the teaching materials to be used for such lesson topic; able to provide suitable answers to learners' questions; and knowing the methods he/she is going to use for the lesson topic.

3.5.1 Teaching methods for Religious and Moral Education

There are different methods for teaching RME in schools. Below are some of them as identified by the Namibian Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996 (see also Iita 2012a and 2012b):

Project method: Arrangements can be made for learners to work in groups. Each group should have a leader who will ensure project completion. The disadvantage of this method is that not all learners will participate in the process of the project because some learners are lazy.

Dramatic expression: Drama/mime/dance maybe introduced to groups in short exercises. For example, learners can express their understanding of reading feelings or attitudes. This method is good for breaking down barriers and boundaries that limit the group's cohesion or development.

Literary expression: This method encourages learners to write poems, songs or stories, and motivates learners to become creative. The method can be used for evaluation. Stories can be worked through in groups.

Visual expression: Through drawing, learners can express themselves better than using words. Teachers should allow learners to tell their drawings to others. Drawings can be used to explore hopes, expectations and present situations.

Research project: Learners research on a topic and they can present their findings to the class.

Field trip: Learners can take a trip to explore what they have discussed in class and write a report on their education tour.

Educational broadcasting: RME teachers may use radio and television as teaching tools, whereby learners will have an opportunity to hear and see how the subject is being taught.

Dramatisation/role-play: Dramatisation or role-playing may be suitable for religious and moral teaching whereby learners will act and speak as they dramatise/role-play the story or event.

Demonstration: The teacher may carry out an activity to demonstrate action with some objects in order to clarify certain points for the learners. This teaching method can also be used to teach some important topics regarding different religions.

Story telling: Learners love stories if such stories are interesting. It would be good if teachers linked stories with learners' life experiences or taught some important religious and moral topics.

Problem solving: The teacher may present a problem situation to the learners. The problem should be related to the purpose of the lesson, suitable and interesting for the learners' age group.

The problem should be defined and analysed. The teacher should allow learners to discuss questions related to the problem, suggest possible solutions to the problem, and discuss the implications of the solutions for those involved.

Simulation: The teacher designs, directs and de-briefs the simulation. The learners complete a task and discuss how they did it, how they worked, what went well and what they need to improve. The purpose of the simulation exercise is to have a common group experience, which is analysed according to the aims of the lesson.

Discussion: This requires learners to be familiar with the content relevant to the topic being discussed and to be aware of the aim of the discussion. The teacher presents materials that are interesting to the learners, focused on the purpose of the lesson and suitable for the age group.

Group discussion: The teacher uses small groups to explore identified issues. Group discussion helps to generate discussion and stimulate participation. The teacher decides on an issue, provides very specific discussion questions, sets the time limit, assigns a reporter to each group, and encourages learners to respect one another and stay on the topic.

Buzz group: The teacher sets a question or topic for discussion. The learners collect their thoughts on this topic and make brief notes. The learners exchange their views in pairs and then in small groups. The groups then seek consensus on the topic and then one person from each group makes a brief report to the rest of the class. This method is used to warm up a group, collect information or encourage participation by developing contact. The teacher organises the lesson or sequence of lessons so that effective work takes place in the groups. The teacher presents learners with materials for group work, clear instructions for understanding the work and a set of expected outcomes.

3.5.2 Resource materials for teaching Religious and Moral Education

Religious and Moral Education uses three types of teaching resources: resource person, material resources and the education resource centre.

RME teachers should familiarise themselves with the RME syllabus from where the topics to be taught will be taken. The teachers should take into consideration learners' age groups, as well as

learners' grade levels when selecting teaching materials in order to enable learners to grasp the materials.

Teachers need to make sure that the teaching materials for RME are readily available and to be aware that time allocation for the subject determines which teaching aid to choose. The teacher should take into consideration the school location and determine whether all relevant materials/teaching aids can be utilised at that specific school, for example, schools where there is no electricity, because some teaching aids, such as projectors, require the use of electricity.

On the question of human resources, the teacher may utilise experts from various religions to teach on specific topics under RME. Such experts include religious leaders from any of the religions in general. These resource persons may be invited by the school to complement the teacher's knowledge. An expert from traditional religions may also be invited by the school to talk about issues such as priesthood, worship, festivals, deities, shrines, temples, sacrifices and so on.

RME teaching materials can also be found in resource centres where teachers for this subject can get instructional materials, such as visual aids, audio visual aids and so on.

Resource centres help teachers to have access to highly expensive, as well as electronically operated instructional aids. Teachers need to learn from experts who are in the resource centres and get assistance on how to utilise some complex instructional aids.

The RME teacher can also make use of the material resources in his/her classroom, such as chalkboard, maps, charts, pictures, film, radio, tape recorder, text books, journals, newspapers, projectors and so on.

This chapter discussed the roles of the teachers, parents and religious institutions in the moral development of children; theories on personality at different developmental stages; and teaching strategies and methods. The next chapter looks at the research design and methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design

A research design is “a master plan specifying the methods and procedures” (Zikmund 1991:42) or a “detailed plan which you will use to guide and focus your research” (Hussey& Hussey 1997:114).

This study is by and large based on Bailey’s (1982:13) understanding of a research design. According to Bailey, the “research design tells how the data will be gathered and analysed, what the sample size will be, where the research will take place, and for how long, or what the experimental design will be, for example”.

This study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods of collecting and analysing data. The researcher found the qualitative approach to be more useful for this case study, as the purpose of the study was to gain a deeper understanding of the implementation of Religious and Moral Education by teachers in the teaching and learning situations.

Johnson (2009:4) is of the opinion that those who are involved in education should engage in research that probes for deeper understanding rather than examining surface features. Again, Johnson argues that qualitative methods enrich the understanding of the classroom teaching and learning, listening to what participants say and observing what they do, is a major step in portraying the issues of actions and experiences being investigated in the study.

Qualitative research methods require the researcher to hear, to see and to write of what was witnessed and understood during field work (Van Maanen 1998:3).

This study intended to investigate perceptions on “religious education” and “morality formation” of RME teachers. This study attempted to collect information by spending time to interview and observe (Hoberg 1999) RME teachers in the Ompundja Circuit in the Oshana Region of Namibia.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) believe that it is important to spend time at the place of study in order to better understand and analyse people’s feelings, social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions.

This case study was based on qualitative research methods. The researcher was interested in describing RME teachers' perceptions of the subject, using the participants' own words, coupled with the researcher's observations in the participants' own classrooms (John 2008: 221).

In addition to qualitative methods, the study also used the descriptive statistical method in describing basic features of the data in the study, as well as summarising the results. For example, a demographic information sheet for each RME teacher who participated in the study was administered in the first stage to elicit information regarding sex, age, qualifications, years of teaching experience, grades being taught, employment position, professional training in teaching RME, and constraints that hinder the teaching and learning of RME in schools.

4.2 Research methodology

Research methodology in this study was understood in the generic sense of the techniques that the researcher used to secure and collect data that provided him with the relevant research data which enabled him to write the thesis (Hoberg 1999:75).

4.2.1 Data collection instruments

Interviews and classroom observations were the instruments used to collect data, supplemented with questionnaires.

4.2.1.1 Interviews

The researcher developed interview questions (*see Appendix E*) in order to provide answers to the research questions stated in Section 1.5.2. The interviews were formal and gave participants an opportunity to describe their own perceptions of religious and moral education as a concept and their application of it in teaching and learning situations. The interview comprised of open-ended questions, which addressed RME teachers' perceptions regarding the subject in teaching and learning situations, as well as their perceptions regarding the constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME in teaching and learning situations.

Hopkins and Hammersman (1993:145) state that interviews provide ample opportunities for the researcher to verify what has been said by participants. They also provide the researcher with other necessary information that could not be obtained through other instruments.

The views of Hopkins and Hammersman are supported by Gay and Airasian (2003:223), who commented on the importance of conducting interviews because “there are certain things which simply cannot be observed, including past events, events which occur outside of the researcher’s observation and mental processes”.

4.2.1.2 Observation

The researcher observed the teachers and learners, but did not participate in class activities. Each teacher was observed at least once in his/her own classroom during a Religious and Moral Education lesson.

Although Spindler and Spindler (1992) state that observations should be prolonged and repetitive, and chains of events should be observed more than once to establish the reliability of the observation, each teacher was observed once only.

The researcher used an observation checklist (*see Appendix F*). The purpose of this checklist was to confirm what the RME teachers had said during the interviews and in the questionnaires, and to see whether this corresponded with what they said and did in the classroom.

The main purpose of classroom observations was to complement the questionnaire and the interviews, as well as to give the researcher an opportunity to see things that participants were not comfortable with or did not want to discuss (Patton 1990:79).

Thus, the observations described how the teachers interacted with their learners; any barriers in teaching and learning, and how they were handled; the teachers’ teaching styles; as well as the content/learning objectives of the lesson taught.

4.2.1.3 Questionnaires

The questionnaire used in this research asked for biographical information, such as age, sex and years of teaching experience. The questionnaire elicited responses that answered the research questions regarding the RME teachers’ perceptions of Religious and Moral Education in teaching and learning situations, as well as their perceptions regarding the constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME.

Participants were requested to fill out a questionnaire that the researcher had developed (*see Appendix D*) to probe their perceptions regarding the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education.

4.2.2 Population and sampling

The population of this study were Religious and Moral Education teachers teaching in the Ompundja Circuit in Oshana Region. In order to investigate the perceptions of these teachers, and by careful extrapolation get an idea of trends in a sample where both rural and urban schools are involved, it was necessary to work intensively with interviews and observations of selected RME teachers within the Ompundja School Circuit.

The sample of the study was fourteen (14) Religious and Moral Education teachers from seven schools in the Ompundja Circuit. The researcher used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is the process of selecting individuals who would present relevant information on the research topic and who would be considered to share adequate widespread experiences with others and to represent others.

Patton (1990:184) cites that there are no prescribed procedures for selecting a sample size in a qualitative research process because the sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the research and what can be done within the available time and resources.

The sample of this study was drawn from Religious and Moral Education teachers, following Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2002:92) who suggest that “the representativeness and parameters of the sample, access to the sample and the sampling strategy to be used” are the criteria for selecting a sample size. Cohen et al (2002:104) argue that “the choice of strategy to be adopted must be mindful of the purposes of the research, the time scales and the constraints on the research, the methods of data collection and the methodology of the research.”

Purposive sampling was used for this study to select RME teachers who could represent the average RME teacher in Namibia in terms of background, training, qualifications and experience. Best and Khan (1998:186) argue that careful consideration in choosing a sample is more important than the size of the sample.

The participants were selected using the following criteria: the teacher must be teaching Religious and Moral Education as a school subject; the teacher should have taught Religious and

Moral Education for a minimum of one year; the teacher must have a minimum of Basic Education Teachers' Diploma qualification.

The criteria for selecting schools were as follows: the school must be in the Ompundja Circuit, and must be within a 10 km radius from the University of Namibia - Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus, where the researcher was based; the school must be a Government school and should follow a Namibian school curriculum; and the school must have been in existence for a minimum period of 3 years.

4.2.3 Document analysis

Documents related to the study, such as policy documents, minutes of Religious and Moral Education curriculum meetings, workshop and training seminar reports, curriculum materials related to Religious and Moral Education lessons, hand-outs, as well as other relevant documents that were useful for the study were consulted. The analysed documents helped the researcher to gain an insight into the contextual framework under which instructional activities took place, in addition to the extensive literature survey in the field.

4.2.4 Data analysis

The researcher followed the suggestions of Bogdan and Biklen (1982:145) concerning the analysis of qualitative data in terms of “working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what you will tell others.” Bogdan and Biklen’s views are supported by Miles & Huberman (1984:68), who state that the basis for categorisation has four important functions: reducing large amounts of data into smaller analytic units; getting the researcher into analysis during data collection; helping the researcher build a cognitive map - an evolving scheme for understanding what is happening locally; and laying the groundwork for cross-site analysis by surfacing common themes and causal processes.

Following a common practice in writing up qualitative reports, the researcher used the voices of participants in the text in the form of quotes, which is vital in describing phenomena from the point of view of the participants.

4.2.5 Ethical considerations

It is the Namibian Government's requirement that a person conducting research in Namibia must secure permission in order to carry out his/her research. Therefore, permission to conduct this research was secured from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education (*see Appendices A, B*).

A copy of the permission to carry out this research was sent to the Inspector of Education in the Ompundja Circuit and to the Principals of selected schools, together with a letter introducing the purpose of the study and any other ethical issues related to the study.

Confidentiality was guaranteed throughout the study, and participants were assured of their right to participate or withdraw if they so desired. Thus, participation in this research was voluntary. This issue was made clear to the participants, right from the beginning of the study.

The participants were assured that information received from them would be kept confidential and would only be used for the purpose of the study. This was to protect the identity of the participants as advised by Bogdan and Biklen (1998:95) so that the information collected would not embarrass or in other way harm the research participants and the schools.

All participating schools and teachers were allocated *pseudo-names*, for example, School A, B, C, or Teacher 1, 2, or 3.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS AND REGIONAL CONSULTATION

5.1 Introduction

The previous four chapters focused on the introduction and background to the study, clarification of concepts, discussion of moral development of learners, and the research design and methodology. This chapter presents analyses and interprets the research findings on Religious and Moral Education (RME) curriculum development from the document analysis and from the regional consultation.

5.2 Document analysis

5.2.1 The Namibian RME Curriculum

The current RME curriculum is designed in such a way that it introduces RME teachers and learners to various religious beliefs, practices and insights, as well as the moral values of those various religions. The curriculum gives an opportunity for teachers and learners to become aware of their own responses to the moral, social and religious issues that arise, and to reflect on their own beliefs and values. The curriculum also challenges and helps teachers and learners to be open to possibilities of understanding other religions and culturally diverse societies (Iita 2012b:i).

The two existing syllabi of RME describe the intended learning and assessment for RME in the Upper Primary phase (Grades 5-7) and the Junior Secondary phase (Grades 8-10). As a subject, Religious and Moral Education is within the spiritual, moral and ethical areas of learning within the curriculum, but has thematic links to other subjects across the curriculum.

The spiritual area of learning is about the way people celebrate, reflect and ask questions about the meaning and value of life. It involves inquiry into and appreciation of the spiritual dimension of humankind and serious consideration of religious and other views that guide people in their lives.

Moral and ethical development is not only dealt with in various subjects, but is also dependent on the social atmosphere of the school. Learners have to cope with moral and ethical issues involving principles such as tolerance, responsibility, honesty, justice and fairness.

Learning about moral and ethical issues helps to develop moral convictions and attitudes. The school should foster respect for the feelings and views of others, and show that problems can and should be solved in a rational and empathetic manner. The school system should foster a culture of tolerance where the rights of others are respected and promoted.

The RME teachers' guide for Grades 5-7 states that "the aims, learning objectives, and competencies which overlap between subjects are amongst the essential learning within the curriculum as a whole; under optimal circumstances, this subject would need at least one period per week" (Ministry of Education 2005:1).

5.2.2 Rationale for RME

The syllabi for Grades 5-10 describe the rationale for RME as follows:

"Religion is a way of making meaning out of life. Children are brought up in the feelings, values and relationships of their home culture from earliest childhood, and wonder about the mysteries of life. The aim of Religious and Moral Education is to enable learners to understand their religious beliefs and practices, and to accept other groups whose values and traditions are different from their own. Religious and Moral Education enables learners to better understand themselves and the changing multi-cultural world in which they are growing up. In the Upper Primary and Secondary phases, the learners are enabled to understand the diversity of religious belief and practice in the wider community" and to explore and value African Traditional Religions (Grades 5-7), or some world religions (Grades 8-10). This work leads to focusing on moral issues and on taking responsibility for their own lives (Ministry of Education 2005:1; 2007a:1).

The objectives of Religious and Moral Education are to:

- expose learners to knowledge of the beliefs and practices of different religions;
- help learners to be able to establish religious and moral values that they have in common and those where they differ;

- teach learners to be able to live in the society that is being shaped by religious and cultural diversity;
- enable learners to develop tolerance and respect for others, to practice and live their own cultures;
- contribute to the creation of a peaceful community where religious groups live in harmony, share and co-operate with one another (Iita 2012b:i).

The curriculum is designed in such a way that upon entry into the two phases of Religious and Moral Education, Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10, all learners are expected to have a basic understanding of their own beliefs, be tolerant of the beliefs of others and share common positive values; but on completion of these two phases of Religious and Moral Education, “all learners are expected to be able to compare and contrast the values of their own faith with those of other faiths and be responsible for their own well-being and other people’s well being, as well as to sustain the environment” (Ministry of Education 2005:1; 2007a:1).

At the Grade 5-7 level, learners are invited to explore Judaism, African Traditional Religions and Christianity; while at the Grade 8-10 level, learners are invited to explore Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and other belief systems relevant to the Namibian society.

At all Grade levels (5-10), all learners are expected to work together by using what is known already about faith in a local context, as a means of understanding and interrelating what is unfamiliar. Learners use what has been discovered about other faiths as a means to reflect on and deepen their own religious experience and understanding. Learners will also be enabled to become more aware of the inner world and of mystery. The teacher’s approach must not be to impose his/her religious doctrine, but he/she must be ecumenical, academically embracing all religions and moral values (Ministry of Education 2005:2; 2007a:2).

One of the central objectives of the curriculum is to help learners to be aware of the discrimination against different social or ethnic groups that exists in people’s minds and to learn how to actively tackle the discrimination, as well as other social ills such as domestic and gender based violence (Ministry of Education 2005:2; 2007a:2).

In the learner-centred curriculum, learners are expected to learn the virtues of caring and nurturing, regardless of whether the person is a male or female. Therefore, RME emphasises learning with caring and with relatedness between humans and the rest of the environment.

The syllabus recommends that teachers should invite an outsider to come and talk with the learners about some aspects of their faith and why they value it. Through asking the visitor questions, learners may begin to realise what that person's faith means to her or him.

For the success of the syllabus, the teacher is expected to establish good contact with learners' parents so that they trust and willingly co-operate with the teacher, even though the religion or ethnic background may differ (Ministry of Education 2005:2; 2007a:2).

5.2.3 Cross curricular issues

Cross-curricular issues have been introduced to the formal curriculum to be dealt with in each subject, including Religious and Moral Education, because each of the issues deals with particular risks and challenges in the Namibian society. Therefore, all the learners need to:

- understand the nature of these risks and challenges;
- know how they will impact on society and on the quality of life of people today and tomorrow;
- understand how these risks and challenges can be addressed on a national and global level; and
- understand how each learner can play a part in addressing these risks and challenges in their own school and local community (Ministry of Education 2005:3; 2007a:3).

5.2.3.1 Risks and challenges in the Namibian society

The Namibian society faces some risks and challenges. Below are some of the main ones:

- the risks and challenges people face if they do not care for and manage their natural environment;
- the risks and challenges caused by HIV/AIDS;
- the risks and challenges to health caused by pollution, poor sanitation and waste;

- the risks and challenges to democracy and social stability caused by inequity and governance that ignores rights and responsibilities;
- the risks and challenges people face from globalisation (Ministry 2005:3; 2007a:3).

5.2.3.2 Links in the syllabi to cross-curricular issues

Tables 1 and 2 below show the cross-curricular links in the Grades 5-7 and in the Grades 8-10 syllabi.

Table 1: Links in the Grades 5-7 syllabus to cross-curricular issues

Environmental Learning	HIV and AIDS	Population Education	EHRD
<p>Grade 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules and laws of Judaism • Personal values • Ubuntu <p>Grade 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family life in African Traditions and Religions (ATR) 	<p>Grade 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness and health • Pain and suffering • Helping in need • Sickness in society <p>Grade 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help in bereavement • Issues around life and death 	<p>Grade 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The human community • Growing up in ATR <p>Grade 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cycle of life and death in Christianity 	<p>Grade 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules and laws of Judaism • Zionism • Exploitation <p>Grade 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and punishment <p>Grade 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues around life and death

Table 2: Links in the Grades 8-10 syllabus to cross-curricular issues

Environmental Learning	HIV and AIDS	Population Education	EHRD	ICT
<p>Grade 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam: World environment • Living in a community 	<p>Grade 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World trade • Marriage and parenthood 	<p>Grade 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth and marriage in Buddhism and Hinduism • Marriage and divorce 	<p>Grade 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community life • Authority <p>Grade 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom and responsibility • Law and justice 	<p>Grade 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting strangers <p>Grade 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media and technology

5.2.4 Teaching methodology

The RME syllabi for Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10 describe the teaching and learning approach as based on learner-centred education in order to develop learning with understanding, and the skills and attitudes to contribute to the development of society. Such approach to teaching and learning takes into account knowledge and experiences which learners gain from their families and communities, as well as through their interaction with the environment. This approach helps teachers to sense the needs of the learners and the nature of learning to be done, and to shape learning experiences accordingly.

This learner-centred approach uses a variety of teaching strategies in order to help learners to discover information for themselves when working in groups, pairs, as individuals or as a whole class. The approach employs co-operative and collaborative learning methods, encouraging learners to develop personal, social and communication skills. The learners can gradually be given responsibility to participate in planning and evaluating their work under the guidance of their teachers (Ministry of Education 2005:4).

Isaak (1997:6) maintains that the Religious and Moral Education curriculum is designed to provide learners with participatory and interactive learning experience and to stimulate self-activity and self-motivation, not only to enhance an evaluative and critical spirit, but also to foster a creative and imaginative way of thinking and doing.

Therefore, RME teaching methodologies should not only focus on knowledge, but should be concerned with meaning as well. The RME teachers should guide learners to honour their own religious experiences and moral values, while simultaneously taking the experiences and moral values of others seriously, involving them in creative activities such as drama, drawing, music, dancing, writing and crafts, as well as focusing on skills such as analysing concepts and interpreting material.

5.2.5 Summary of the learning content for Grades 5-10

Tables 3 and 4 below summarise the RME learning content for Grades 5-10.

5.2.5.1 Grades 5-7

Table 3: Summary of learning content for Grades 5-7

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
Judaism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jewish home and family • Rules and Laws • Jewish festivals • People and history Beyond everyday life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The self • Those around me • The human community • Ubuntu 	African Traditions and Religions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The human community • Forces of life • Phases of life Sickness and health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The self • Those around me • Social health and social sickness 	Christianity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we know about Jesus • The Bible • Christian worship • Christians and persecution Life and death: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The self • Those around me • Issues around life and death

5.2.5.2 Grades 8-10

Table 4: Summary of learning content for Grades 8-10

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Islam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Five pillars of Islam • The Qur'an and Hadith • The Prophet and his successors • Festivals and fasting • Pilgrimage – The Hajj • Special occasions Common values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community life • Authority 	Other religions/belief systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baha'i Faith • Rastafarianism • Jehovah's Witnesses • The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (Mormons) • Other religions or beliefs in the community Freedom and responsibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal freedom • The concept of freedom • Rights and responsibilities 	Buddhism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship and beliefs • Special occasions Hinduism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship and beliefs • Special occasions Morality and law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage • Freedom and responsibility • The wider community

5.2.6 Assessment

Copple and Bredekamp (2009:2) describe assessment as any form of measurement and appraisal of what learners know and can do, including tests, observations, interviews, reports from knowledgeable sources and other means.

For Religious and Moral Education, Grades 5-10, assessment is conducted through informal continuous assessment over a period of time and is done during normal classroom activities. No end of term tests or examinations are to be written for RME in schools. The assessment is carried out to test how learners have achieved the basic competencies required by the RME syllabus. The assessment is based on learner-centred education, with the purpose to assess the progress and achievements of each learner.

This study focused on the classroom assessment of learners, the gathering and documentation of information that RME teachers need to identify the strengths, needs and progress of the learners in their classrooms in order to help those learners to learn.

Copple and Bredekamp (2009:1-2) explain that teachers observe learners at work and play and record information about what they observe; collect and analyse learners' work and set up portfolios to display learners' competences.

The information gathered by teachers about the learners' progress and achievements are used to give feedback to the learners about their strong and weak points (where they do well and where they need assistance). Teachers use school reports to inform parents about the progress of their children.

At the end of each main theme of the syllabus, as well at the end of each term, the teacher, together with learners, evaluate progress in terms of tasks completed, participation, what the learners have learnt and what can be done to continually improve the teaching and learning atmosphere and achievements of the class.

Thus, the observations made and information gathered is used to guide the learners and to help shape and direct the teaching and learning process. Assessment is also used to motivate learners to expand their knowledge and skills, to establish sound values and to promote healthy study habits.

Assessment tasks help learners to solve problems intelligently by using what they have learned. On the other hand, the teacher uses the information to improve teaching methods and learning materials. Marks gained by learners from class activities, assignments, or other tasks upon completion of a topic should be recorded for continuous assessment.

Assessment can be done informally through structured observation of each learner's progress in learning and practice situations as they investigate things, interpret phenomena and data, apply knowledge, communicate and make judgments, and in the learners' participation.

In this way, the teacher will be able to assess how well each learner masters the basic competencies described in the RME syllabus and to gain a picture of the overall progress of the learner.

Copple and Bredekamp (2009:2) observe that teachers assist in identifying learners who need special attention because of a disability. They work with families to get families' understanding of their children's development and with other teachers and specialists to share information and knowledge. They compile and study the information they have obtained and seek to understand what it means for a learner or a group of learners.

5.2.7 Recording of grades

The learner's level of achievement in relation to the basic competencies should be shown in letter grades, A-E (A being the highest and E the lowest grade). The table below gives a detailed description of the letter grades.

Table 5: Letter grade description

Grade	Description
A	Achieved basic competencies exceptionally well. Learner is outstanding in all main areas of competency.
B	Achieved basic competencies well. Learner is highly proficient in most of the areas of competency, e.g. showing quicker mastery of some competencies, or being able to apply competencies to unknown situations or contexts, or showing new insight.
C	Achieved basic competencies. Learner has mastered the competencies satisfactorily in known situations and contexts.
D	Achieved the minimum number of basic competencies to be considered competent. The learner may not have achieved all the competencies, or may sometimes need help.
E	Not achieved the majority of basic competencies. The learner has not been able to reach the minimum level of competency.

Assessing learners' development and learning is very important for teachers and programs in order to plan, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom experiences they provide (Copple & Bredekamp 2009:21).

For RME, not more than two assessments should be done per learner per term. At the beginning of each year/term, the teacher should identify the themes/topics in the RME syllabus to be assessed, through any of the informal methods mentioned in Table 6 below. The grades obtained by the learners through continuous assessment must be systematically recorded throughout the term, and used to inform the learners and parents on progress and achievements. The following tasks can be considered for assessment:

Table 6: Types of tasks that can be considered for assessment

Group tasks	Creative performance tasks (individually or in groups)	Written tasks/assignments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying (collecting pictures and/ or information) • Designing a poster • Researching on a topic • Case study • Project work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama • Role-play • Mime • Movement/dance • Making a model • Picture making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheets • Drawing a map/table • Creative writing • Project work

5.2.8 Continuous assessment

The sample in Figure 2 below was in use during the time of the study for RME continuous assessment.

Religious and Moral Education

Grade: _____

Year: _____	First Term Theme No. _____						Second Term Theme No. _____						Third Term Theme No. _____						End-of-year mark		
	Topic No. _____	Topic No. _____	Topic No. _____	Total Term 1	Average	Grade for Term	Topic No. _____	Topic No. _____	Topic No. _____	Total Term 2	Average	Grade for term	Topic No. _____	Topic No. _____	Topic No. _____	Total Term 3	Average	Grade for Term	Total Term 1-3	Average	Grade for year
Date completed >																					
Name																					

Figure 2: Sample of assessment grid

(Source: RME Teachers' Guide, Grades 5-7, Ministry of Education 2005:66)

This study focused on classroom assessment to find out what the learners knew and could do, their attitudes, interests and approach to learning, with the purpose to guide and assist learners' growth, development and learning. Thus, the aims of the RME curriculum should go beyond the acquisition of knowledge and cognitive skills, targeting the promoting of growth and development of the whole person. The curriculum expects RME teachers to employ Bloom's taxonomy of assessment techniques as shown under the next heading.

5.2.9 Bloom's taxonomy

Table 7: Bloom's taxonomy - action verbs

Definition	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Bloom's definition	Remember previous learned information.	Demonstrate an understanding of the facts.	Apply knowledge to actual situations.	Break down objects or ideas into simpler parts and find evidence to support generalizations.	Compile component ideas into a new whole or propose alternative solutions.	Make and defend judgments based on internal evidence or external criteria.
Verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange • Define • Describe • Duplicate • Identify • Label • List • Match • Memorize • Name • Order • Outline • Recognize • Relate • Recall • Repeat • Reproduce • Select • State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classify • Convert • Defend • Describe • Discuss • Distinguish • Estimate • Explain • Express • Extend • Generalized • Give example(s) • Identify • Indicate • Infer • Locate • Paraphrase • Predict • Recognize • Rewrite • Review • Select • Summarize • Translate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply • Change • Choose • Compute • Demonstrate • Discover • Dramatize • Employ • Illustrate • Interpret • Manipulate • Modify • Operate • Practice • Predict • Prepare • Produce • Relate • Schedule • Show • Sketch • Solve • Use • Write 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze • Appraise • Break down • Calculate • Categorize • Compare • Contrast • Criticize • Diagram • Differentiate • Discriminate • Distinguish • Examine • Experiment • Identify • Illustrate • Infer • Model • Outline • Point out • Question • Relate • Select • Separate • Subdivide • Test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange • Assemble • Categorize • Collect • Combine • Comply • Compose • Construct • Create • Design • Develop • Devise • Explain • Formulate • Generate • Plan • Prepare • Rearrange • Relate • Reorganize • Revise • Rewrite • Set up • Summarize • Synthesize • Tell • Write 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraise • Argue • Assess • Attach • Choose • Compare • Conclude • Contrast • Defend • Describe • Discriminate • Estimate • Evaluate • Explain • Judge • Justify • Interpret • Relate • Predict • Rate • Select • Summarize • Support • Value

The curriculum urges RME teachers to articulate the possibilities of schools', parents' and religious institutions' role in promoting learners' full personal development. This is the area where society considers that the experience of RME teachers has much to offer (moral values) to the learners. It may help learners to look at their experience of education with a greater sense of its value and help them to develop as individuals who are proud of and happy with the knowledge and skills they acquire, and able to see ways in which their school learning can be integrated into their lives.

The Ministry of Education, parents and communities have high expectations of teachers, as assessors of the learners' progress. They expect teachers to be competent in assessing the progress of the learners. However, it takes time and effort to develop the knowledge and skills to assess well, to integrate sound assessment practices into teaching and to use those results to help learners to learn.

Through assessment, teachers assist in identifying learners who may need special attention because of disability (Copple & Bredekamp 2009:44).

5.2.10 Religious and moral values in the Upper Primary and Secondary curricular

The aim of this study of RME teachers' perceptions on the subject and the implementation of the RME syllabi for Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10 was to identify the approach used in the teaching of religious and moral values at Upper Primary and Secondary levels, and to determine the weight of values found in these syllabi with regard to various aspects such as tolerance, responsibility, honesty, justice and fairness.

To do this, the wider approach of the curriculum to moral values has been identified in the relevant literature and programs. The curriculum for RME tends to move towards the teaching of multi-religious and cultural values, instead of teaching Christianity only as was the case during Namibia's colonial rule by Germany and South Africa.

The researcher was interested in finding out how RME teachers were being prepared for teaching and how they were teaching the subject in the actual teaching and learning environment.

The study discussed an appropriate theoretical framework for evaluating Religious and Moral Education as a school subject by means of relevant literature on religious education and morality, as well as didactical moral issues, including teaching methods.

The study used a model developed by Kitshoff (1996:1) as a framework because it serves as a guide to assess teachers on how they prepare lessons for RME, how they present the lessons for the subject, how they monitor the progress of the learners by means of assessment tasks, and how they address unique and diverse needs of the learners (Kelly & Melograno 2004:112).

Kitshoff's model helps teachers to determine the effectiveness of the lessons and to know how to overcome shortfalls. Thus, Kitshoff's theory focuses on the subject, the teacher and the teaching and learning environment.

Therefore, religious and moral values in the curriculum of Religious and Moral Education in the context of Kitshoff's theory enable teachers to determine how to deal with arguments/debates that have been experienced regarding multi-religious education or globalisation. One such debate was: Which religious and moral values should be taught and be respected in the RME program?

Lickona (1991) maintains that religious and moral issues in Upper Primary and Secondary education with regard to the teaching of multi-religious and cultural values in modern society are gaining new dimensions. Therefore, RME also gets its share from teaching multi-religious moral values, while at the same time encouraging the spirit of belongingness and togetherness and strengthening the spirit of living in harmony and peace with one another in a diverse religious and cultural society.

Schwartz (1992) notes that, considering multi-religious and moral values and their effects on values, the question now is: What kind of values should be taught in schools? Also, how is it going to be possible to establish balanced values in education without sacrificing the society or the individual?

The approach that has been suggested in order to provide balance is the one that sees the need to combine multi-religious and moral values from different religious groups and teach one subject - Religious and Moral Education (see Lickona 1991).

In teaching multi-religious and moral values, RME lesson programs would provide learners with the necessary knowledge, skills, manners and values in order to raise good and responsible citizens.

Adopting a mixed approach on values education and strongly emphasising different moral values education would promote modern and traditional moral values together, as opposed to teaching

the religious and moral values of only one religion. This is an indication that the current curriculum on RME for Grades 5-10 is trying to establish a balance among various religious groups (Isaak 1997:6).

5.3 Regional consultation

For this study, research questions were sent to principals of schools offering Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10 to help administer the questionnaires for RME teachers in their respective schools. The data collected from this consultation were meant to determine the level of implementation and to identify areas of support the Ministry of Education can offer to schools for meaningful implementation (teaching, learning and assessment) of the RME curriculum.

For this regional consultation of RME teachers, the researcher used a questionnaire as an interviewing tool to collect data from the participants (*see Appendix C*). A total of twelve (12) questions were given to the participants (via school principals). The questions included themes and topics of the syllabus, level of development, content of the syllabus, materials, training and other general comments from the participants.

Twenty nine (29) respondents participated in this regional consultation. All questions were returned and the findings discussed.

The questions on the questionnaire for the regional consultation on the RME syllabi for Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10 were as follows (the participants' comments are in italics):

Question 1 (Themes and Topics of the syllabus)

1.1 When looking at the Themes and Topics of the syllabus, do you think the Themes and Topics are relevant to the subject?

GRADE 5:	YES; 5	NO; 1
GRADE 6:	YES; 6	NO; 0
GRADE 7:	YES; 4	NO; 0
GRADE 8:	YES; 5	NO; 0
GRADE 9:	YES; 4	NO; 0
GRADE 10:	YES; 4	NO; 0

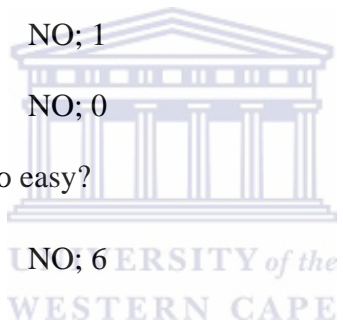
If no, which Themes or Topics should be changed or moved?

Judaism should be changed to teaching/introducing all the religions.

Question 2 (Level of development)

2.1 When working through the syllabus, is the content pitched at the appropriate level of development of the child or grade?

GRADE 5:	YES; 5	NO; 1
GRADE 6:	YES; 6	NO; 0
GRADE 7:	YES; 4	NO; 0
GRADE 8:	YES; 5	NO; 0
GRADE 9:	YES; 3	NO; 1
GRADE 10:	YES; 4	NO; 0



2.2 Is the content of the syllabus too easy?

GRADE 5:	YES; 0	NO; 6
GRADE 6:	YES; 1	NO; 5
GRADE 7:	YES; 0	NO; 4
GRADE 8:	YES; 0	NO; 5
GRADE 9:	YES; 0	NO; 4
GRADE 10:	YES; 1	NO; 3

If yes, what could be done to get the syllabus at the appropriate level of development?

Grade 7: Need a glossary of terms, e.g. pilgrimage.

2.3 Is the content of this syllabus too challenging?

GRADE 5:	YES; 4	NO; 2
GRADE 6:	YES; 1	NO; 5
GRADE 7:	YES; 0	NO; 4
GRADE 8:	YES; 1	NO; 4
GRADE 9:	YES; 1	NO; 3
GRADE 10:	YES; 0	NO; 4

If yes, what could be removed or moved to another Grade?

Grade 5:

- *Learners are more familiar with Christianity, might be taught to cope with Judaism, which is an old religion. It must be shifted to the next grade.*
- *3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.4 moved to another grade*

Grade 6: 1.1-1.4, 2.2-2.4, 3.1-3.3

Grade 8: No ideas, need teacher's guide.

Grade 9: Will be difficult to get learners interested in other religions.

Question 3 (Content of the syllabus)

3.1 Is the range of content of this syllabus appropriate to learners with different abilities?

GRADE 5:	YES; 5	NO; 0
GRADE 6:	YES; 5	NO; 1
GRADE 7:	YES; 4	NO; 0
GRADE 8:	YES; 5	NO; 0
GRADE 9:	YES; 3	NO; 1
GRADE 10:	YES; 4	NO; 0

If no, please indicate what should change to make it more appropriate?

Grade 6: Basic competencies, themes and topics

Grade 7: Teachers need to create conducive environment.

Grade 9: Topics to be arranged from the known to the unknown, learners are more familiar with Rastafarianism and Jehovah's Witnesses.

3.2 Is the content of this syllabus learner friendly?

GRADE 5: YES; 5 NO; 0

GRADE 6: YES; 6 NO; 0

GRADE 7: YES; 4 NO; 0

GRADE 8: YES; 5 NO; 0

GRADE 9: YES; 4 NO; 0

GRADE 10: YES; 4 NO; 0

If no, what could be done to make the content more learner-friendly?

Grade 7: Syllabus is learner-centred and stimulating.

3.3 Is the content of this syllabus boring?

GRADE 5: YES; 0 NO; 5

GRADE 6: YES; 1 NO; 5

GRADE 7: YES; 0 NO; 4

GRADE 8: YES; 0 NO; 4

GRADE 9: YES; 1 NO; 3

GRADE 10: YES; 0 NO; 4

If yes, what should be removed and added to make the content interesting?

Grade 6: The learning objectives

Grade 9: Comparison of religions should be added on.

3.4 Does the syllabus provide sufficient detail for the required coverage and depth of treatment to be clear?

GRADE 5: YES; 3 NO; 2

GRADE 6: YES; 5 NO; 1

GRADE 7: YES; 4 NO; 0

GRADE 8: YES; 4 NO; 1

GRADE 9: YES; 4 NO; 0

GRADE 10: YES; 4 NO; 0

If no, please indicate what should be added or changed.

Grade 5:

- *References and supplementary materials needed*
- *Teachers' guides to be provided*

(Grades 6 & 8 – No reasons given)



3.5 Does this syllabus provide the chance for reinforcement and revision?

GRADE 5: YES; 5 NO; 0

GRADE 6: YES; 5 NO; 0

GRADE 7: YES; 3 NO; 1

GRADE 8: YES; 5 NO; 0

GRADE 9: YES; 3 NO; 1

GRADE 10: YES; 4 NO; 0

If no, please indicate what should be changed

Grade 7: Period allocation of 80 minutes not enough

Grade 9 (no reason given)

Question 4 (Materials)

4.1 Do you have enough materials to facilitate the Themes and Topics?

GRADE 5: YES; 0 NO; 5

GRADE 6: YES; 1 NO; 5

GRADE 7: YES; 0 NO; 4

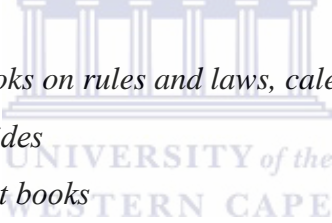
GRADE 8: YES; 0 NO; 5

GRADE 9: YES; 0 NO; 4

GRADE 10: YES; 0 NO; 4

If no, what materials do you need?

Grade 5:

- 
- *Books on Judaism*
 - *Pictures, song cassettes, books on rules and laws, calendars, books on religion*
 - *Textbooks and teachers' guides*
 - *Bibles, teachers' guides, text books*
 - *Materials on African Religion and moral values for contextualisation*

Grade 6:

- *First aid kits*
- *Health pamphlets*
- *TV, video machines and videos*
- *Textbooks, teachers' guides for Christianity, Judaism and Islam*
- *Materials on ART and moral values*
- *Holy book textbooks*
- *Pictures*
- *Teaching resources, e.g. Good News*

Grade 7:

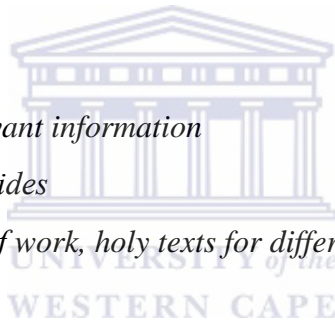
- *Textbooks for Christianity, Judaism and Islam*
- *Books and pictures*
- *Teachers' guides and relevant materials*
- *Bibles*

Grade 8:

- *RME textbooks*
- *Teachers' guides, learners' workbooks and textbooks*
- *Materials to be read and displayed*
- *Teachers' guides, Bibles, and relevant materials*

Grade 9:

- *Prescribed books with relevant information*
- *Textbooks and teachers' guides*
- *Teachers' guides, scheme of work, holy texts for different religions*
- *RME textbooks*



Grade 10:

- *Teachers' guides and relevant materials*
- *All materials*
- *Materials on world trade and international organisations*
- *Marriage customs in different cultures*
- *Constitution*

Question 5 (training)

5.1 Will you need training to implement this syllabus with confidence?

GRADE 5:	YES; 5	NO; 0
GRADE 6:	YES; 4	NO; 2
GRADE 7:	YES; 3	NO; 1
GRADE 8:	YES; 4	NO; 1
GRADE 9:	YES; 3	NO; 1
GRADE 10:	YES; 4	NO; 0

If yes, please indicate the particular area in the syllabus where you might need assistance.

Grade 5:

- *About learning objectives*
- *Judaism and Ubuntu*
- *Teachers lack foundation – RME is a specialised field*
- *Need assistance on whole syllabus*
- *Contextualizing various religions and also moral values*



Grade 6:

- *All areas*
- *Forces for life*
- *3 religions: Christianity, Judaism and Islam*
- *Social health and social sickness*

Grade 7:

- *Whole syllabus*
- *Unfamiliar religions*

Grade 8:

- *Islam common values*
- *All aspects*
- *Teaching methods and displays*

Grade 9:

- *Other religions/belief systems*
- *Freedom and responsibility, evaluation*
- *All topics of grade 9*

Grade 10:

- *World trade, international organisations, law and justice, climate change*
- *Religion and morality*
- *Whole syllabus*
- *Subject content, teaching methods, materials usage*
- *Motivate teachers to take RME more seriously*



Question 6 (General)

6.1 Any other comments concerning this syllabus

Grade 5:

- *Many Namibians are Christians – need to learn only about Christianity*
- *Most learners are Christians – Christianity to be the introduction, Judaism Grade 7*
- *Syllabi, teachers' guides and text books to be sent to schools ASAP*
- *Grades 5-7 too early to start learning about other religions – will confuse them. Ministry to do survey and get approval from parent community – teachers themselves have no background about different religions*
- *Learners to learn in more detail from church, parents, books*

Grade 6:

- *Christianity in Grade 5 for a grass-root experience*
- *Teachers' guide needed*
- *Syllabus is well-planned and learner-centred*
- *Agree with Grade 6 content*

Grade 7:

- *Need for scheme of work and simple references*
- *Syllabus is stimulating. Learner-centred and contents well located from grade to grade*
- *99% of our people are Christians, therefore need training in other religions*
- *Do not have any problems, because it is about Christianity*

Grade 8:

- *Cross-curricular effort visible, link with History Grade 8*
- *Syllabus is flexible and at appropriate level*
- *Content is relevant to our situation*
- *More themes to be covered for one period per week*
- *Need more information on new content*

Grade 9:

- *Workshops need to be enforced*
- *Teachers to be assisted to grow spiritually*
- *Good, but material should be provided*
- *Learners will only have a better understanding if RME is taught in every grade*

Grade 10:

- *Well-drafted, level of learners' understanding*
- *Topics more than allocated periods*
- *Syllabus ok if materials are provided.*

5.4 Interpretation of data

Although all questionnaires for the regional consultation were completed and returned, some participants did not respond to some questions. For example, one participant did not respond to the question: “Is the content of this syllabus learner friendly?”, while two participants did not respond to the question: “Is the content of this syllabus boring?”, and so on.

The regional consultation on Religious and Moral Education was carried out with the purpose to find out whether themes and topics of the RME syllabi were relevant to the subject; which themes and topics should be changed or removed; whether the syllabus content was pitched at the appropriate level of development of the learner or grade and what could be done to get the syllabus to the appropriate level of learner development; and whether the range of content of the syllabus was appropriate for learners with different abilities.

Twenty nine participants participated in this regional consultation. Below is an analysis of the responses:

5.4.1 Relevance of themes and topics to the syllabus

For Grade 5, five participants said “yes”, while only one participant said “no”. For Grades 6-10 all participants said yes.

On the statement regarding which themes or topics should be changed or removed from the syllabus, participants indicated that Judaism should be an introduction to all religions.

For Grade 9, on other religions or belief systems, some participants indicated that it would be difficult to get learners interested in other religions. However, some participants were of the opinion that topics should be arranged from the known to the unknown. Others indicated that learners were more familiar with Rastafarianism and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Table 8: Responses to the regional consultation question on training

Grade 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About learning objectives • Judaism and Ubuntu • The whole syllabus • Contextualisation of various religious and moral values.
Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christianity in Grade 5 for a grass-root experience • Teachers' guide needed • Syllabus is well-planned and learner-centred • Agree with Grade 6 content
Grade 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for scheme of work and simple references • Need for training in other religions • Do not have any problems, because it is about Christianity
Grade 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-curricular effort visible, link with History Grade 8 • Syllabus is flexible and at appropriate level • Content is relevant to our situation • More themes to be covered for one period per week • Need more information on new content
Grade 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops need to be enforced • Teachers to be assisted to grow spiritually • Good, but materials should be provided • Learners will only have a better understanding if RME is taught in every grade

5.4.2 Content of the syllabus

For Grades 5 and 9, two participants out of twenty nine said that the content of the syllabus was not appropriate for learners with different abilities. However, twenty seven participants said that the content of the syllabus for Grades 6, 7, 8 and 10 were appropriate.

This indicates that the participants viewed most of the content of the syllabus to be pitched at the appropriate level of learners' development.

Two participants indicated that they found it easy to cope with the content of the syllabus, while twenty seven participants indicated that a glossary of terms, particularly for Grade 7 was needed.

Seven participants indicated that the content of the syllabus was too challenging, while twenty two saw the content of the syllabus as not too challenging. Participants suggested that some of the content of the syllabus should be either removed or shifted to another Grade.

On the question regarding learners with different abilities, twenty seven participants indicated that the content of the syllabus was appropriate for such learners, while two participants said that the content was not appropriate. The participants suggested that basic competencies, themes and topics should be changed in order to make it more appropriate.

All participants indicated that the content of the syllabus was learner-friendly and that the syllabus was learner-centred and stimulating. One participant showed that the content of the syllabus was boring.

Participants suggested that the learning objectives should be added to make the content more interesting and that a comparison of the religions should be included.

Twenty five participants acknowledged that the syllabus provided sufficient detail for the required coverage, while four participants disagreed.

The participants indicated that for Grade 5, references and supplementary materials were needed, including a teachers' guide.

Twenty seven participants noted that the syllabus provided a chance for reinforcement and revision, while two participants stated that the syllabus did not provide such chance.

The participants raised the concern that the period allocation of 80 minutes was not enough.

On the issue of teaching materials to facilitate themes and topics, twenty eight participants showed that there was a need for teaching materials, but one participant indicated that the teaching materials were enough.

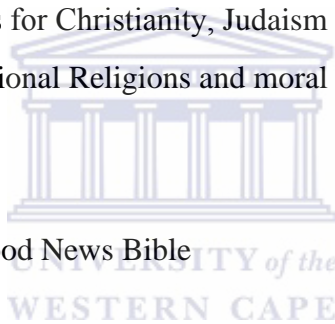
The participants noted that they needed the following materials:

Grade 5:

- Books on Judaism
- Pictures, song cassettes, books on rules and laws, calendars, books on religion
- Textbooks and teachers' guides
- Bibles, teachers' guides, text books
- Materials on African religions and moral values for contextualisation.

Grade 6:

- First aid kits
- Health pamphlets
- TV, video machines and videos
- Textbooks, teachers' guides for Christianity, Judaism and Islam
- Materials on African Traditional Religions and moral values
- Holy books, textbooks
- Pictures
- Teaching resources, e.g. Good News Bible



Grade 7:

- Textbooks for Christianity, Judaism and Islam
- Books and pictures
- Teachers' guides and relevant materials
- Bibles

Grade 8:

- RME textbooks
- Teachers' guides, learners' workbooks and textbooks
- Materials to be read and displayed
- Teachers' guides, Bibles, and relevant materials

Grade 9:

- Prescribed books with relevant information
- Textbooks and teachers' guides
- Teachers' guides, scheme of work, holy texts for different religions
- RME textbooks

Grade 10:

- Teachers' guides and relevant materials
- All materials
- Materials on world trade and international organisations
- Marriage customs in different cultures
- Constitution

The participants said that they needed training to implement the syllabus with confidence in the following areas:

Grade 5:

- About learning objectives
- Judaism and Ubuntu
- Teachers lack foundation – RME is a specialised field
- Assistance on the whole syllabus
- Contextualising various religions and also moral values



Grade 6:

- All areas
- Forces for life
- 3 religions: Christianity, Judaism and Islam
- Social health and social sickness

Grade 7:

- Whole syllabus
- Unfamiliar religions

Grade 8:

- Islam common values
- All aspects
- Teaching methods and displays

Grade 9:

- Other religions/belief systems
- Freedom and responsibility, evaluation
- All topics of Grade 9

Grade 10:

- World trade, international organisations, law and justice, climate change
- Religion and morality
- Whole syllabus
- Subject content, teaching methods, materials usage
- Motivate teachers to take RME more seriously

Participants raised other comments concerning the syllabus:

Grade 5:

- Many Namibians are Christians – need to learn only about Christianity
- Most Learners are Christians – Christianity to be the introduction, Judaism Grade 7.
- Syllabi, teachers' guides and text books to be sent to schools ASAP
- Grades 5-7 too early to start learning about other religions – will confuse them. Ministry to do survey and get approval from parent community – teachers themselves have no background about different religions
- Learners to learn in more detail from church, parents, books

Grade 6:

- Christianity in Grade 5 for a grass-root experience
- Teachers' guides needed
- Syllabus is well-planned and learner-centred
- Agree with Grade 6 content

Grade 7:

- Need for scheme of work and simple references
- Syllabus is stimulating. Learner-centred and content well located from grade to grade
- 99% of our people are Christians, therefore need training in other religions
- Do not have any problems, because it is about Christianity

Grade 8:

- Cross-curricular effort visible, link with History Grade 8
- Syllabus is flexible and at appropriate level
- Content is relevant to our situation
- More themes to be covered for one period per week
- Need more information on new content

Grade 9:

- Workshops need to be enforced
- Teachers to be assisted to grow spiritually
- Good, but material should be provided
- Learners will only have a better understanding if RME is taught in every grade

Grade 10:

- Well-drafted, level of learners' understanding
- Topics more than allocated periods
- Syllabus ok if materials are provided.

5.5 Discussion

What emerged from the regional consultation was a clear indication that the Religious and Moral Education curriculum was at the centre of debate. This study revealed that the aspects of the RME curriculum concerning themes and topics, syllabus content and the implementation of the curriculum were contentious. In the syllabus, some topics needed to be changed or removed. The concern was how classroom teaching could bring about personal change in learners' moral development.

The argument was that RME teachers should be well equipped in order to meet the challenges of the day and should prepare learners to accept their religious and moral responsibilities as members of a democratic Namibia and the world at large. Learners must acquire the knowledge and develop skills, values and attitudes to enable them to contribute to society as active, informed and confident citizens. Therefore, RME should prepare learners for a changing society.

Leedy (1993:14) states that “researchers soon realize that the total research problem is usually too large an investigative area to be managed as a whole”. Research requires critical and analytical thinking in order to identify the sub-problems. Resolving sub-problems means solving the main problems and vice versa.

To solve RME problems, teachers, school principals, parents, religious institutions and communities should exchange views based on situational factors and may come up with good ideas of how to solve certain problems or introduce major changes in the curriculum (Reader for LEDMAN-3, 2000:4).

The subject (Religious and Moral Education) comes across many challenges such as the demand for quality teaching and learning, as well as high expectations of quality life for both teachers and learners. Therefore, RME teachers need energy, intelligence and initiative in teaching and learning situations. They also need to learn how to unite all learners in solving common problems in unity and harmony.

To effectively teach RME, teachers need to, firstly, know their own weaknesses and shortcomings and accept mistakes, and then learn how to work with learners from different religious backgrounds, including those who oppose or disagree with their ideas. Teachers should learn to listen with complete respect and ask empowering questions (Simmons 1993:3).

To empower RME teachers, the researcher of this study suggests that the Ministry of Education should plan meetings with internal and external consultants, make contracts with experts in the subject and make use of facilitators, and plan workshops based on important issues suggested by participants.

The *Reader for LEDMAN* (2000:10) notes that it is very important to involve others in education planning and workshops and gain the support of colleagues. These important relations must be

maintained. The figure below shows the important relations that must be maintained in the teaching of RME:

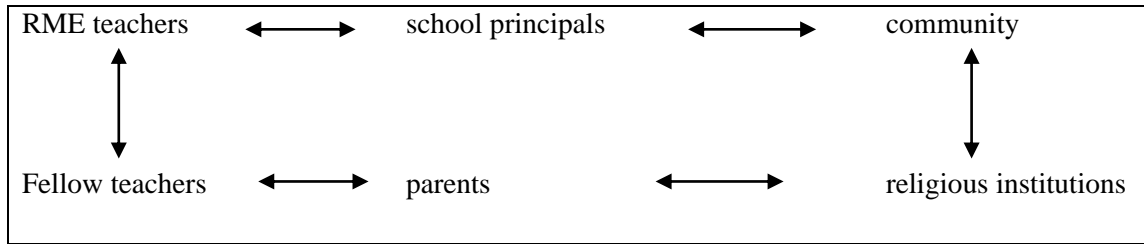


Figure 3: Important relationships for RME teaching

Figure 3 shows how this group of people and institutions works together, consult one another, share ideas and experiences and give each other support in order to improve learners' religious and moral development.

The *Reader for LEDMAN* (2000:10) argues that consultation and support groups contribute to the development of the subject and as a result, a difference will be made within the subject. Thus, RME teachers must aim at total quality education and the development of the subject towards educational excellence, as well as a conducive teaching and learning environment for all people involved. Improved quality education does not only involve teachers, but also takes into consideration other internal and external stakeholders (Hoberg 2000:28).

Teacher-training institutions should therefore produce teachers who are knowledgeable, skilful and intelligent to meet the challenges of life and employment, and able to help their institutions to compete in the marketplace of new technology, innovation, production and service.

5.6 Conclusion

This study, which was an assessment of Religious and Moral Education teachers' perceptions and the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabi for Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10, was a descriptive research that was carried out using Kitshoff's model with qualitative data gathering techniques. In the study, the program content of Religious and Moral Education lessons for the Upper Primary (Grades 5-7) and Secondary (Grades 8-10) phases were analysed using categorical analysis techniques. For categorisation, the following issues were identified from the regional consultation on the Religious and Moral Education syllabus for Grades 5-10:

Themes and topics should be changed or removed; lack of resource materials; lack of training; insufficient periods allocated to the subject; and lack of support for RME teachers from school principals and fellow teachers.

This study revealed that Religious and Moral Education teachers needed teaching resource materials, pre-service education as well as in-service workshops on the subject, and sufficient period allocation to the subject in order to enable them to teach the subject more effectively.

The Religious and Moral Education program provides helpful religious and moral values that enable people to live peacefully in a multi-religious and culturally diverse society.

Although the syllabus provides sufficient detail for the required coverage, the participants indicated areas that needed to be improved, changed or shifted to another Grade. They listed things that they perceived as hindering the teaching of the subject, for example, lack of training for teachers, lack of teaching materials - such as textbooks teachers' guides, as well as insufficient periods allocated to the subject.

The literature review and content analysis on the curriculum of Religious and Moral Education indicated that there has been a tendency from Christians towards the teaching of Religious and Moral Education that they would like to see Biblical Studies reinstated in the Namibian school curriculum in order to instil Christian values on people because Christians feel that the increasing moral decay in the Namibian society is a result of the absence of Biblical Studies in schools.

However, literature revealed that it is impossible to reintroduce Biblical Studies in the Namibian school curriculum because since independence, the country has been declared a secular state, and the constitution has given freedom to all religions to exercise their democratic rights and no religion should be favoured above others by the Government. This study supports the teaching of multi-religious and moral values in schools as indicated in the curricula for Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10.

Actually, literature showed that the majority (Christians) prefer Christian teaching rather than Religious and Moral Education teaching. However, the minority (other religious groups) approve the teaching of religious and moral values in the curricula of Religious and Moral Education, Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10.

The study has also shown that, although RME teachers are eager to teach the subject, they teach the subject from a Christian perspective, particularly in choosing lesson topics.

In order for RME teachers to be able to handle the subject, proper training for them should be conducted and the pedagogical knowledge on moral values education should be increased. At the same time, it is recommended that qualitative and quantitative research be conducted to find out how the RME school syllabus is applied in practice.

An analysis of the curriculum indicated that some improvements have been made in line with RME. The literature review showed that a traditional approach to Christian education was not sufficient to meet the necessities of contemporary social and moral issues (*Namibian Sun*, January 10, 2014).

For this reason, multi-religious and moral values in religious and moral education receive particular attention in today's world. In line with other school subjects, a cross-curriculum approach was introduced into the curriculum of RME for Upper Primary and Secondary schools. It is stated that the new RME curriculum was prepared taking the RME learning theory and practice into consideration.

Thus, the new curriculum was accepted as a response to the demand for multi-religious education and moral values. In this way, the RME curriculum and teaching approach was assessed. An analysis of the curriculum indicated some issues hindering the teaching of the subject addressed through regional workshops for RME teachers. At the workshops, teachers were provided with RME teachers' guides, syllabi and teaching materials.

However, this study revealed that a lot still needed to be done regarding Religious and Moral Education improvement in teaching and learning situations. The review of the literature revealed that there was a lack of qualitative and quantitative research in the field of Religious and Moral Education in schools.

In summary, in the teaching and learning situation, successful teaching is not determined only by teachers' interest in a subject, nor by the quality of their subject knowledge, but it is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the availability of textbooks, study guides, notes and a conducive teaching and learning environment. Therefore, teachers are required to keep themselves informed about things that could affect or hinder their teaching experience.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS FROM THE CASE STUDY (QUESTIONNAIRE)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the case study on the perceptions of RME teachers in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region, Namibia. A case study was chosen as means of collecting data on the perceptions of the RME teachers regarding the implementation of the RME syllabus.

6.2 The purpose of a case study

Evanciew and Rojewski (1999) emphasise that for a case study, the researcher should visit a site in order to conduct interviews and classroom observations. The information provided by participants should also be recorded by hand or mechanically on audiotape or videotape. The data collected from the visits should be analysed in response to the research questions.

The view of Evanciew and Rojewski is supported by Hall (1999) who says that when conducting a research of this nature, the researcher should ensure that he/she has the necessary resources, such as writing pads, tape recorder and so on.

This researcher regarded a case study as a means of gathering data through observation in teaching and learning situations. For this study, the purpose was to examine and describe the interactions between teachers and learners in classroom situations. The researcher therefore selected a case study model because it allowed him to see and understand the types of interactions between teachers and learners in teaching settings (see Evanciew & Rojewski 1999:26-28).

Again, a case study was chosen for this educational research because the research sought to investigate the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers in depth and to assess the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus in schools. It should also be pointed out that the study investigated an area in which little or no prior research had been conducted.

Stake (1998:86-109) argues that the purpose of conducting a case study is to learn as much as possible from that case, but not to generalise beyond the case. He further suggests that a case study is defined by an interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used.

This study was focused on schools and teachers. The schools were given pseudo-names such as School A, B, C and so on, while teachers were given pseudo-names such as Teacher 1, 2, 3, etc., according to the seven schools where the research was carried out.

This study was conducted in seven (7) schools in the Ompundja Circuit in Oshana Region. Fourteen (14) Religious and Moral Education teachers were purposively selected to participate in the interviews and a questionnaire was used. The researcher also visited the seven schools to carry out classroom observations in order to assess the implementation of the RME curriculum.

Out of eight schools in the Ompundja Circuit, only one school did not teach RME as a school subject. Thus, only seven schools responded to the questionnaire and the interviews. Thirteen teachers were observed during classroom observations, while one teacher was not observed.

Fourteen teachers out of the sixteen teachers in the circuit were available for this study. Two teachers could not participate because they were from the school that did not teach RME.

6.3 Research results for the questionnaire

This section presents, analyses and interprets the participants' responses to the questionnaire. The questions were structured as follows:

Questions 1-4: biographical information such as sex, age, qualifications and teaching experience; Question 5: Grades taught by the teacher; Question 6: employment position of the teacher; Question 7: professional training of the teacher; Question 8: experience and comfortableness of the teacher; and Question 9: constraints faced by the teacher.

Below are the combined responses of the participating teachers:

6.3.1 Biographical information (Questions 1-4)

Table 9: Representation of participants by sex

Sex	No of respondents	%
Female	10	71.4%
Male	4	28.6%
Total	14	100%

According to Table 9, females (71.4%) were the majority in teaching Religious and Moral Education in comparison to males (28.6%).

Table 10: Representation of participants by age

Age	Number of teachers
≤18	0
19 – 25	4
26 – 33	2
34 – 43	4
44 – 54	2
55 – 60	2
Total	14

Table 10 above shows six age groups of the participating teachers. The table indicates that no teachers aged 18 and below were teaching RME. The majority of teachers were in the 19-25 and 34-43 age groups, while only two teachers were in each of the other age groups.

Table 11: Representation of participants by qualification

Qualification	No. of teachers	%
Grade 12	1	7.14%
Senior Primary Teacher Education	1	7.14%
Diploma	8	57.14%
Advanced Certificate	1	7.14%
Degree	3	21.42%
Total	14	100%

Table 11 above describes the qualifications of the fourteen participating RME teachers. The research findings indicate that the majority of the RME teachers (57.14%) were Diploma holders, followed by Degree holders (21.42%). The least number of teachers were below Diploma level, one of whom had a Grade 12 certificate (the researcher is of the opinion that such a teacher may not make much impact on the teaching of RME).

These findings are an indication that RME in Ompundja Circuit is being taught by well qualified teachers.

Table 12: Representation of participants by teaching experience

Teaching Experience	No. of teachers	%
1 year and below	1	7.1%
2 - 5 years	4	30.8%
6 - 9 years	1	7.1%
10 - 19	2	15.4%
20 years and above	6	46.2%
Total	14	100%

Table 12 above shows that the majority of the participating RME teachers (8) had more than 10 years of teaching experience, while only one teacher had less than 1 year of experience. This indicates that the participating teachers were very experienced in teaching.

6.3.2 Grades taught (Question 5)

Table 13: Representation of participants by Grades taught

Grades	No. of teachers	%
Upper Primary (Grades 5-7)	10	71.4%
Junior Secondary (Grades 8-10)	4	28.6%
Total	14	100%

Table 13 shows that the majority of the teachers (50%) taught at the Upper Primary level, while the least number of the teachers were teaching at the Junior Secondary level.

6.3.3 Employment position (Question 6)

Table 14: Representation of participants by employment position

Position	No. of teachers
Full Time Teacher	14
Contract Teacher	0
Volunteer Teacher	0

Table 14 shows that all the participating teachers (100%) were full time teachers. There was no contract or volunteer RME teacher.

6.3.4 Professional training (Question 7)

Participants gave the following responses regarding their professional training in RME teaching:

Table 15: Representation of participants by professional training in teaching RME

Professional training	Number of participants	%
Yes	5	35.7%
No	9	64.3%
Total	14	100%

According to Table 15, only five out of the fourteen teachers had received professional training in teaching RME. The majority did not receive any training to teach the subject. This means that 64.3% of the RME teachers were teaching the subject with no relevant training.

Table 16 below shows the reasons and explanations that were given by the respondents for their responses regarding professional training.

Table 16: Reasons/explanation given for response to question on professional training in teaching RME

Yes	No
<i>Reasons/explanation given</i>	<i>Reasons/explanation given</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In my teaching training (Primary Education), I was given methods for teaching RME. 2. It is part of the Humanities field, but I was not taught RME as a specific subject. 3. I received training on teaching RME at the Teachers' Training College, but only a little bit because RME did not receive full attention. 4. Again, I was trained through Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (training preachers) at Engela Parish Institute on how to teach RME. 5. I have studied the Bible from Lower Primary, through the Secondary Phase, up to the Senior Phase. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was no training. 2. No training or training centres available. 3. The subject is new. There is no support at the moment. 4. It is not my major or area of specialisation. 5. I only received training in Lower Primary. 6. Even though text books and syllabi are available, the ministry has not made any arrangements to train the teachers since the subject was authorised. 7. I only use college knowledge. 8. I have never received any invitation. 9. The Ministry of Education is not serious with RME to organise as many workshops as possible in order to equip all teachers teaching RME.

6.3.5 Experience and comfortableness in teaching RME (Question 8)

This question was to be answered on a scale of 1-4.

Table 17: Responses on experience and comfortableness in teaching RME

Rating	Experience	Comfortableness
4 (a lot)	2	4
3 (some)	7	6
2 (little)	0	1
1 (nothing)	2	0
Total	11	11

Table 17 shows that most teachers (7) considered themselves to have “some” experience in teaching the subject. Only two felt that they had a lot of experience, while two indicated that they had no experience at all.

The majority of teachers (6) indicated that they were “somehow” comfortable teaching the subject, while four teachers said that they were comfortable “a lot” in teaching the subject. This means that more than 80% of the teachers were quite comfortable teaching RME.

6.3.6 Constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME (Question 9)

For this question, respondents were requested to tick all answers that were applicable. The results are shown in Table 18 below:

Table 18: Responses on constraints hindering RME teaching and learning

Constraint	Frequency	%
Insufficient period allocations	8	57.1%
Lack of training	9	64.3%
Workload	3	21.4%
Lack of support from school principal	2	14.3%
Lack of support from fellow teachers	2	14.3%
Lack of resource materials	13	92.9%

Table 18 shows that almost all of the teachers (13) considered “lack of resource materials” as a constraint that hindered the teaching and learning process for RME. “Lack of training” for the course and “insufficient period allocations” were also identified by most teachers to be constraints in the teaching and learning of RME. Very few teachers identified “workload” (3), “lack of support from principals” (2) or “from fellow teachers” (2) as constraints.

This study therefore found that the four major constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME were:

- lack of teaching resource materials in schools;
- lack of training for RME teachers;
- insufficient period allocations to the RME subject; and
- lack of RME teaching experience.

6.4 Interpretation of the research findings for the questionnaires

6.4.1 Teachers teaching RME (by sex)

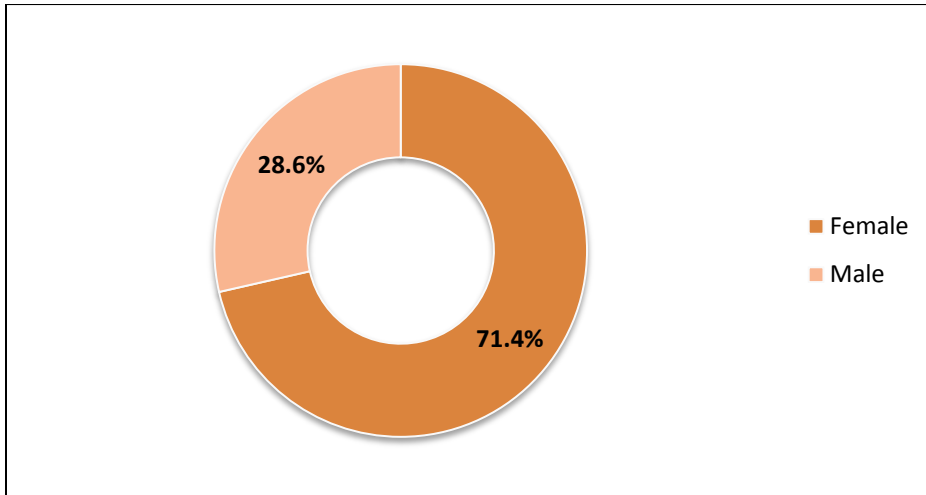


Chart 1: Teachers teaching RME (by sex)

This pie chart shows that out of the 14 teachers teaching RME in schools where this study was carried out, the majority (10) were female.

6.4.2 Teachers teaching RME (by age group)

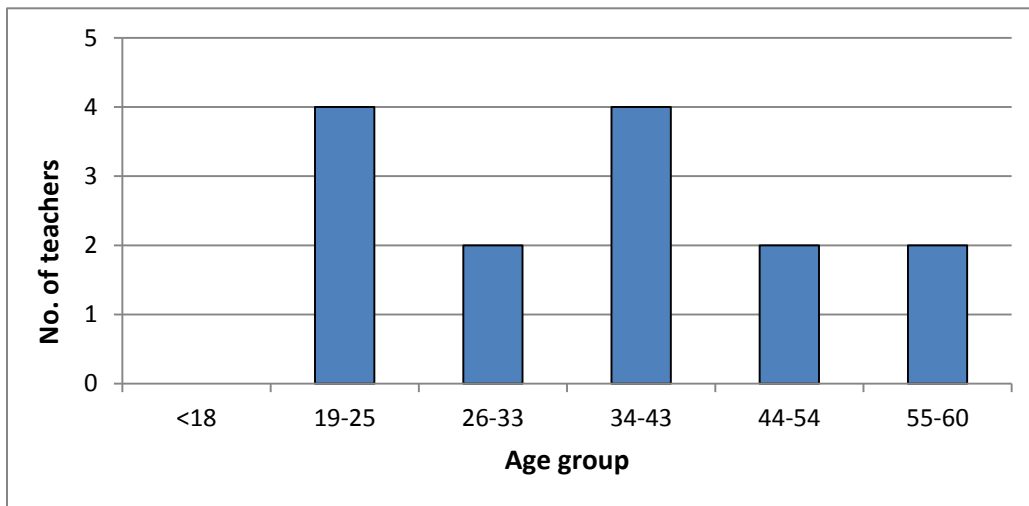


Chart 2: Number of teachers in different age groups

Chart 2 above compares the number of teachers in different age groups. The teachers ranged from 19 years old to 60 years old. Most teachers were in the 19-25 (4 teachers) and 34-43 (4 teachers) age groups, totalling 8 teachers. The other age ranges had fewer (2) teachers each.

6.4.3 Teachers' qualifications

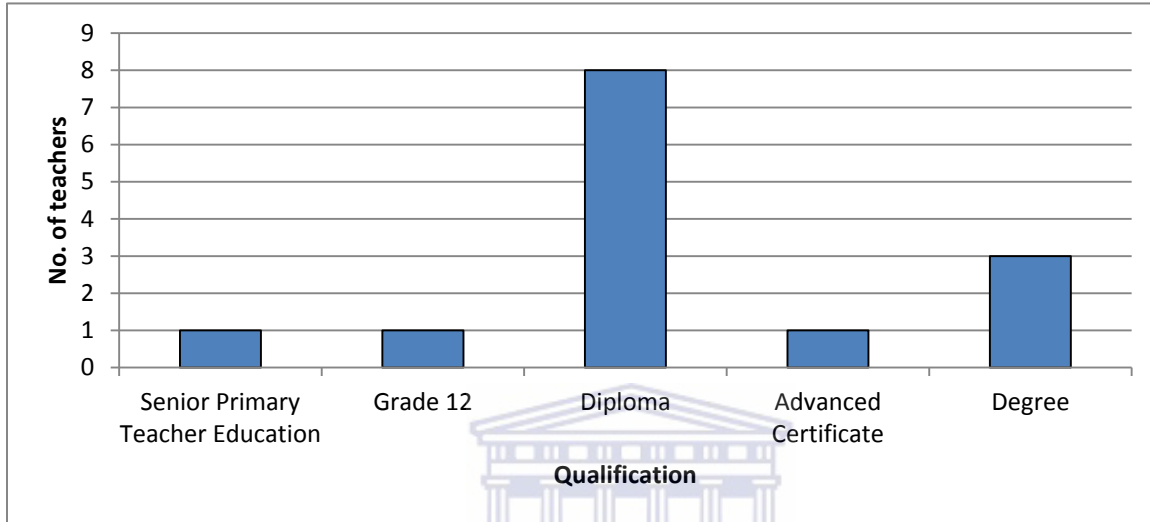


Chart 3: Teachers teaching RME (by qualification)

Chart 3 above shows the different qualifications of the teachers. The data clearly show that most teachers who were teaching RME had diplomas. Many teachers in Namibia are diploma holders.

6.4.4 Teachers' experience

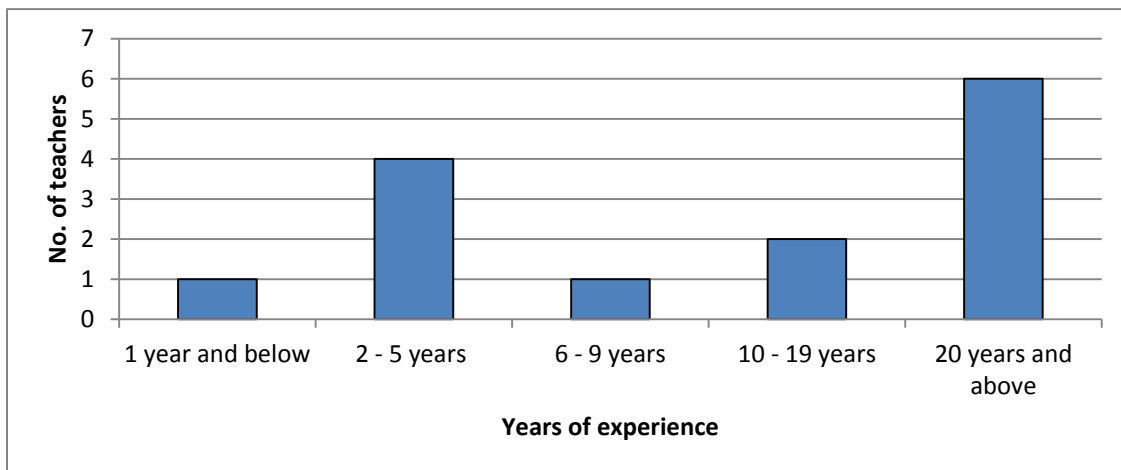


Chart 4: Teachers teaching RME (by experience)

The data in Chart 4 above indicate that the majority of the participating teachers had many years of teaching experience.

6.4.5 Grades taught

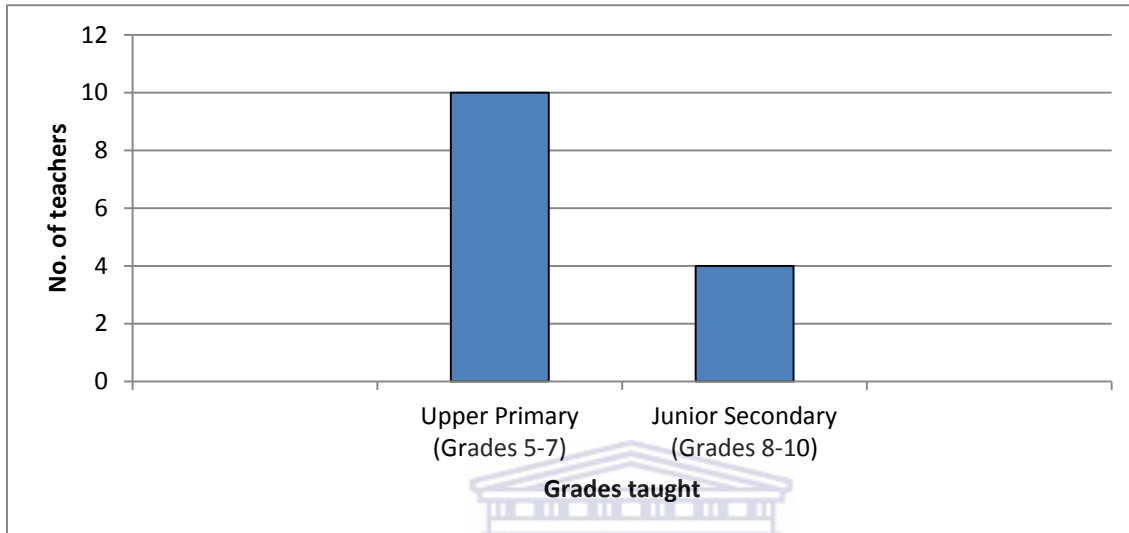


Chart 5: Teachers teaching RME (by grades taught)

According to the findings, the majority of the teachers (71.4%) were teaching Grades 5-7.

6.4.6 Employment position

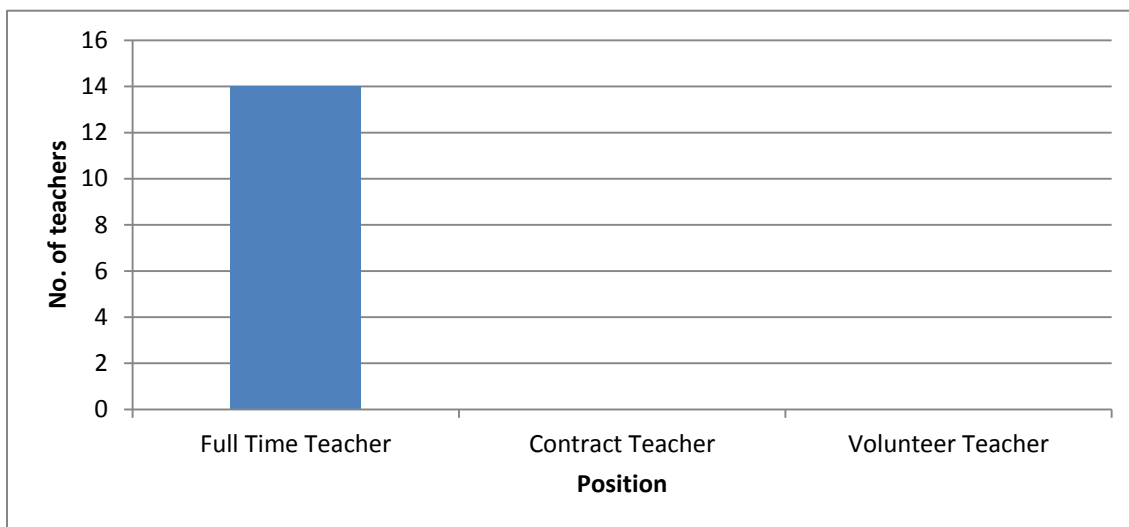


Chart 6: Teachers teaching RME (by employment position)

All (14) of the participating RME teachers were teaching on a full time basis.

6.4.7 Professional training in teaching RME

This question was meant to find out whether or not these teachers had received any professional training in teaching RME.

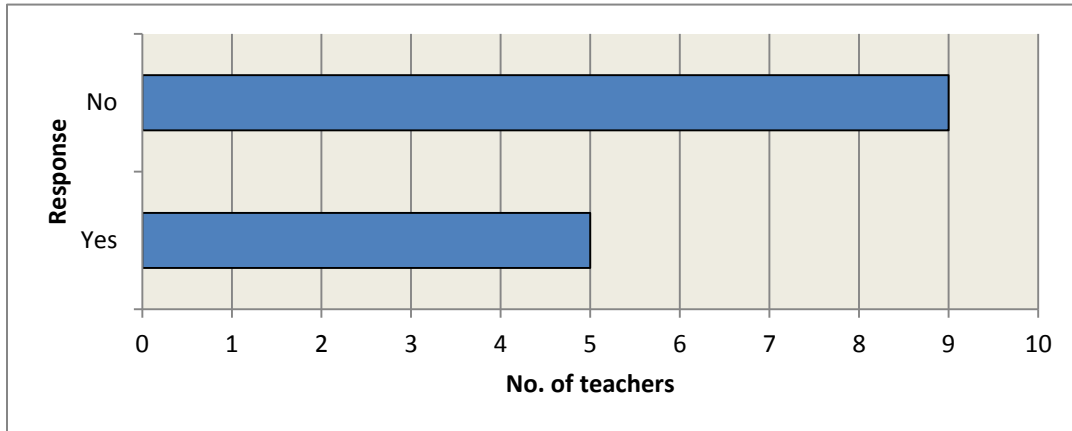


Chart 7: Professional training of teachers

The data clearly shows that the majority of the teachers (9) did not receive any professional training. Only five teachers had received some professional training in teaching the subject.

6.4.8 Teachers' experience and comfortableness in teaching RME

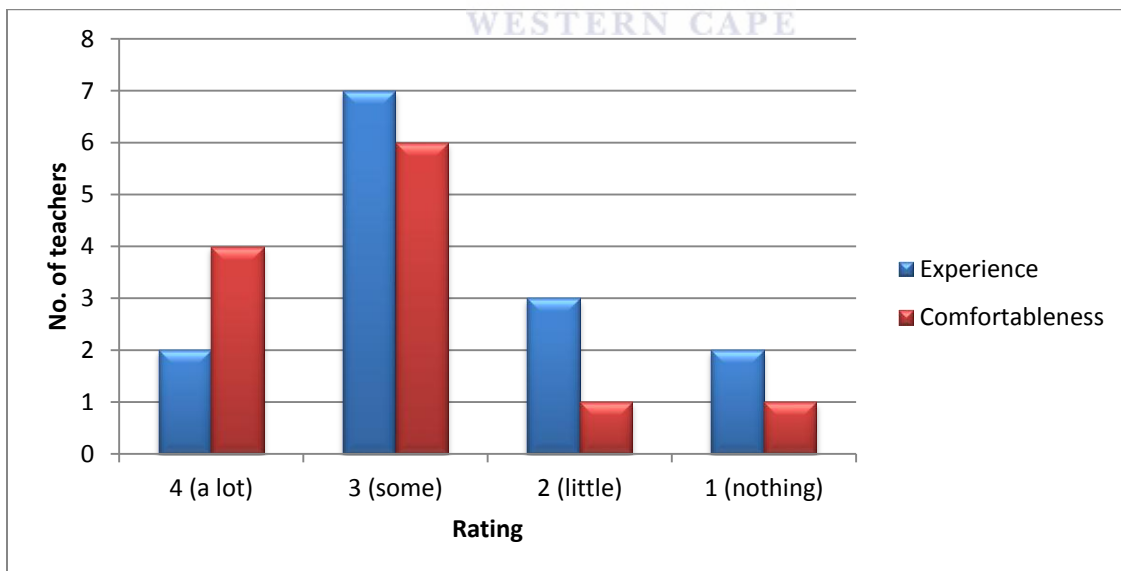


Chart 8: Teachers' experience and comfortableness in teaching RME

Chart 8 above shows the participating teachers' experience and comfortableness in teaching Religious and Moral Education. The chart shows that most of the teachers had "some" teaching experience and were therefore "somehow" comfortable teaching the subject. Very few teachers had little or no experience in teaching the subject, and very few were uncomfortable teaching the subject.

6.4.9 Constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME

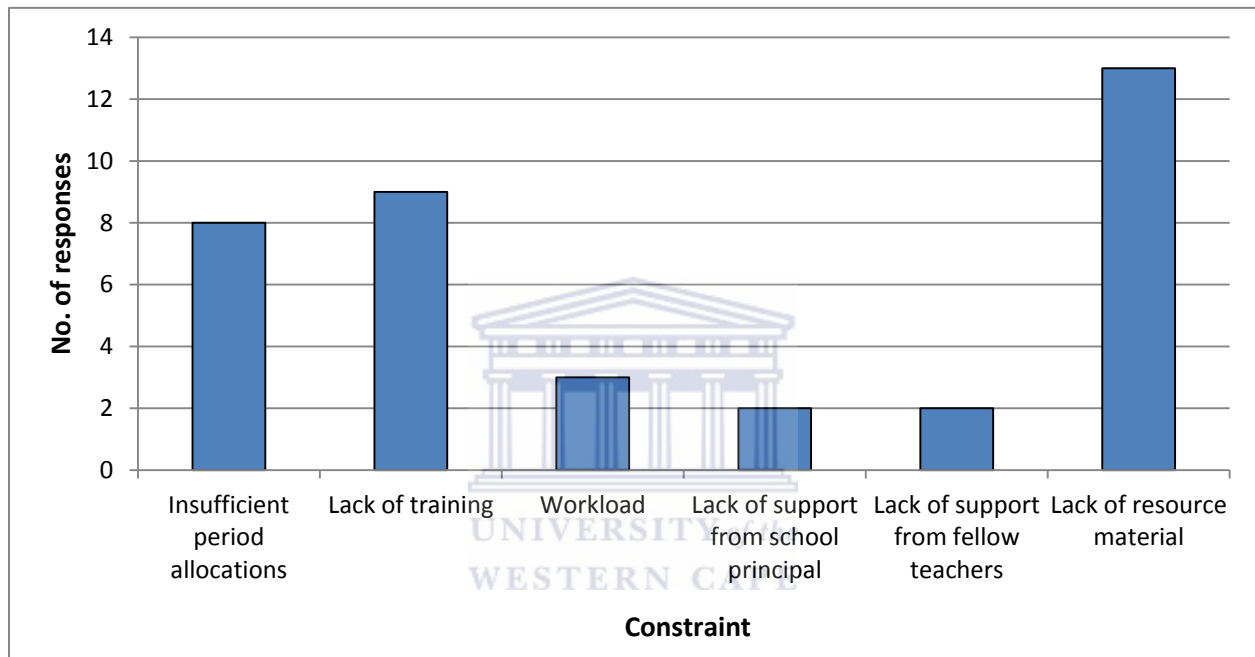


Chart 9: Constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME

Chart 9 shows the constraints that the teachers perceived as hindering the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education. The data clearly shows that the major constraint was lack of teaching resource materials. Thirteen out of the fourteen participants in this study indicated this problem. Other major problems were lack of training and insufficient periods allocated to the subject.

It has been noted earlier that the study found that some teachers were not qualified enough to properly teach Religious and Moral Education as a school subject. Table 11 above showed that, out of the fourteen teachers, only three were degree holders.

Although many of the teachers were diploma holders, one is tempted to debate that some of the teachers teaching the subject did not have the most basic academic qualifications - something that might contribute to the ineffectiveness of teaching and learning the subject.

The researcher believes that qualification plays an important role in the teaching and learning process, as it helps in the proper understanding of the subject. Therefore, a qualified teacher is a person who studied and completed the training in the field of teaching in a recognised institution of higher learning, and is able to practise his/her work as a teacher inside and outside the classroom situations (Mkapa 1987).

In analysing the data, it can be concluded that although most of the teachers had a lot of teaching experience, some of them were not well trained to teach RME as a school subject. This is in agreement with Table 18, where 9 out of the 14 teachers indicated that one of the major constraints that hindered the teaching and learning process of RME was lack of teachers' training. Some of the well trained teachers lacked necessary teaching experience, and this might contribute to the ineffectiveness of teaching RME in schools.

On the other hand, teaching resources are very important for effective teaching in schools, but if the resources are not available, such a situation seriously hinders the teaching and learning of any subject, including RME.

Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2011:244) stress that the use of teaching materials is a means of improving teaching and learning in schools. The researcher understands Jacobs *et al* as implying that teaching materials help teachers/learners to achieve learning objectives, improve teaching skills and reduce unnecessary problems in the teaching and learning process.

This study revealed that lack of resource materials in schools negatively contributed to ineffectiveness in the teaching of RME. Adeyemi (2004) states that the lack of teaching resource materials prevents the teacher from achieving the objectives of the lesson.

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher is of the opinion that where there is a lack of in-service training for teachers, many problems are likely to emerge, which can hinder the teaching and learning process of any school subject.

From the questionnaires, the study identified the following constraints hindering the effective teaching of Religious and Moral Education in schools:

- lack of teaching resource materials;
- lack of pre-service and in-service training for RME teachers;
- insufficient period allocations for RME as a school subject;
- too much workload for teachers; and
- lack of support for teachers from school principals and fellow teachers.

The implications of these constraints in teaching RME are that lack of resource materials can hinder teachers and learners who would like to consult such resources in order to improve their teaching and learning. The teaching and learning materials/teaching aids are needed for effective learning of RME.

This study also showed that effective teaching and learning of RME cannot take place if teachers do not receive appropriate training pre-service and update themselves through in-service training workshops.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the interviews.

The researcher used the qualitative research method to conduct this educational research on the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers and the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus.

Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) argue that qualitative research can be used to conduct educational research studies focusing on holistic descriptions of teachers and learners in naturalistic settings.

This study collected data through interviews and classroom observations, supplemented with a questionnaire. The researcher examined the data and noted themes that emerged from the data (Fraenkel & Wallen 1996; McMillan & Schumacher 2001:41).

Interviews and document analysis were the main methods employed in this study. In-depth interviews were conducted to elicit the cognitive structure leading teachers' perceptions of RME (Marshall & Rossman 1995).

In the sampling process, Government schools were chosen for this study. These were urban and rural schools with a Christian background in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region. In order to collect data from the RME teachers in the urban and rural schools, the researcher used purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling helped the researcher in obtaining information on the Religious and Moral Education teachers' perceptions regarding Religious and Moral Education as a school subject, and the implementation thereof.

Firstly, the researcher administered questionnaires (*see Appendix D*) to RME teachers. After participants completed the questionnaires; they were interviewed (*Appendix E*) and observed (*Appendix F*) according to the grades they were teaching.

Fourteen out of a total of the sixteen scheduled teachers participated in this study. Two teachers were selected from each school (urban and rural schools) for semi-structured in-depth interviews. The data collected from the interviews were discussed and interpreted based on emerging themes from the study. The findings from the interviews were analysed, presented and interpreted based on the questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. Document analyses were also consulted.

7.2 Presentation and analysis of the findings from the interviews

The interviews were conducted with teachers in urban and rural schools as indicated in Table 19 below:

Table 19: No. of participating teachers and schools

Urban	Rural	Total
4 schools	3 schools	7 schools
8 teachers	6 teachers	14 teachers

Table 19 shows that four schools from urban areas and three schools from rural areas were selected for this study. Eight RME teachers from urban schools and six RME teachers from rural schools participated in the study. Therefore, a total of fourteen RME teachers from a total of seven schools participated in the study.

The teachers in these selected seven schools were interviewed at their workplaces. The sample was purposively selected to target information-rich sources.

Maphosa and Mubika (2008), who investigated the influence of clusters on teachers' curriculum practice in Zimbabwe, state that the use of semi-structured questionnaires to collect qualitative data has been used successfully in the past, as such questionnaires managed to gather data quickly and in a cost effective manner. Chireshe (2006) agrees with Maphosa and Mubika by pointing out that semi-structured questionnaires are useful as a data collection instrument in gathering teachers' and learners' views on effectiveness of school guidance and counselling.

To ensure trustworthiness in this study, the questionnaires were in English, which is the official language in Namibia. However, the participants were given the freedom to use a language they were comfortable with.

In most cases the researcher used participants' voices (see subheading 7.5 below) from participants.

7.3 Understanding data and data analysis

Data refer to raw information gathered from different sources with the purpose to know and understand the situation under investigation, but relevant and required for the research topic. The data are collected by using suitable research methods for data collection.

For this study, data were collected by gathering information on Religious and Moral Education teachers' perceptions and how they implemented Religious and Moral Education syllabus in school. The data were collected by using a designed questionnaire, interviews and classroom observation.

The term "data analysis" can be defined as an attempt to make sense of data by trying to explain what is happening in real life situations, or in this case study research, what was happening in the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education teachers in the classroom.

Therefore, the main purpose of data analysis for this study was to look for similarities and patterns and to consider their significance, and to look for meaning in the data in order to draw conclusions from them. The data collected were grouped and put into categories to enable the researcher to look for similarities and differences. The data were grouped under headings, using tables, charts and graphs.

Hancock (1998:16) states that data analysis in the research study involves summarising the mass of data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most important features.

According to Bogdan and Biklein 1992 (see also Hoepfl 1997:6) data analysis in qualitative research studies can be defined as working with data, organising it, breaking it into manageable

units, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others.

Data for this study were collected by way of questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations with participants. After the data were collected, they were analysed, presented and interpreted.

The researcher used inductive analysis of data, particularly major themes emerging from the data (Hoepfl 1997:12), analysed what the participants had said, interpreted the data and tried to understand what was said by the participants (Hancock 1998:17).

7.4 Procedure of the interviews

Interviews were conducted with 14 Religious and Moral Education teachers. This research study found that ten teachers (teacher 1, teacher 2, teacher 3, teacher 4, teacher 5, teacher 7, teacher 8, teacher 10, teacher 11 and teacher 12) were teaching the Upper Primary Phase (Grades 5-7); while four teachers (teacher 6, teacher 9, teacher 13 and teacher 14) were teaching the Junior Secondary Phase (Grades 8-10).

Two teachers from each school participated in the interviews. Teacher 13 only responded to interview Question 1 on teachers' perceptions regarding Religious and Moral Education, and then she withdrew from study as well as from classroom observation. Teacher 14 answered the questionnaires and participated in the interviews, but refused to be observed.

There was good rapport between the researcher and the participants. Participants were free and happy during the interviews. The researcher wrote down in English what the participants said during the interviews. Sometimes the participants were interviewed in their mother tongue, which contributed to the success of the interviews.

Some participants were initially uncomfortable to reveal certain information, but as the interview went on, they began to feel more comfortable and eager to answer the interview questions. The researcher wanted to find out whether the answers given by the participants in the questionnaires were honest. However, the responses of the participants during the interview supported what they had said in their research questionnaires. An example of such answer was Question 3, where

they indicated lack of teaching resource materials, lack of in-service training, and insufficient period allocations to RME as constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME.

7.5 Findings from interviews

The participants responded to the interview questions as follow:

Question 1: What are your perceptions as a Religious and Moral Education teacher with regard to Religious Education?

Table 20: Teachers' perceptions regarding religious education

Participant	Response
Teacher 1	"I understand that people learn about different religions, cultures and moral values".
Teacher 2	"Religious and Moral Education is very important in schools because learners will be exposed to various things in the world. It must be taken very seriously so that learners should sort out what is right and what is wrong".
Teacher 3	"Religious and Moral Education is a very good subject that enriches the knowledge of learners about different religions and helps learners to make correct decisions. Learners also get a chance to be educated about [their] morals".
Teacher 4	"Religious and Moral Education is a good subject because it is an eye opener so that learners should know different religions and moral values. The subject helps learners to differentiate between various religious beliefs and helps them to stick to their own religious beliefs because each religion has its own doctrine".
Teacher 5	"Some of the topics in the Religious and Moral Education syllabus are a repetition. More lessons are allocated for one topic of Religious and Moral Education. There are no teaching and learning materials that facilitate the process of teaching and learning in the classroom".
Teacher 6	"I like Religious and Moral Education, but the Ministry does not put more effort in promoting or bringing attraction to the subject. I think Religious and Moral Education is something that we cannot escape, but we can make it a compulsory subject".
Teacher 7	"In Religious and Moral Education, learners learn morals, values and acceptable behaviours".
Teacher 8	"It is a subject that shapes learners to fit in the society and to behave as expected by society. Learners learn acceptable manners, values and attitudes. Religious and Moral Education has become quite a difficult subject to teach, especially when it is incorporated. I think it can just change to Bible Studies, it will be much easier and better".
Teacher 9	"When it comes to school, Religious and Moral Education is an ignorant subject. At some schools

Participant	Response
	no syllabus is available, including educative materials. This is the way of demoralising the learners, because it is one of the non promotional subjects. Most of the teachers are shy to teach the subject. The guidelines we are having about teaching Religious and Moral Education is based on various religions, but I am teaching Religious and Moral Education according to the Bible because most of the learners we have are Christians. However, in the introduction I let the learners to know about different religions, such as Islam, Hinduism and so on. In teaching Religious and Moral Education I give the scriptures where I based our lesson”.
Teacher 10	“It is a very good subject; changes learners’ behaviours. It links learners, home, school and churches. The subject promotes the spirit of the child to move or wake up. It helps learners to have respect and how to communicate with God through prayers. It encourages and builds the future of the learners, as well as helps the learners to learn other subjects. I think it should be a promotional subject in future”.
Teacher 11	“It is a subject that helps to guide learners towards culture and religious beliefs, values and norms. It deals with many of social problems in our society. The subject helps learners to respect God in relation to how they perceive him. Learners take the subject to enhance their Christianity. Again, the subject helps learners to respect elders”.
Teacher 12	“When talking about Religious and Moral Education, I refer to Christianity. It helps learners to respect their parents, elders and teachers at school”.
Teacher 13	“In general, I did not recognise Religious and Moral Education as part of social life. Even when you visit different families you will find out that people do not take time to pray. Again, Religious and Moral Education is a good subject because learners need to learn about Christianity. Nowadays pastors are not enough and learners need to be encouraged to become the pastors of tomorrow. Since the learners have no more respect, when the teachers are teaching the subject, they (learners) will change their mind and behave according to the Ten Commandments”.
Teacher 14	“Religious and Moral Education is a very enjoyable and interest school subject because it is playing an important part in social events. Schools gather knowledge and skills that are coming from the background of each learner. Parents also play a very important role in teaching their children about religious instruction at home. The churches introduce religious instruction every Sunday in different ways and beliefs”.

Question 2: How do you apply Religious and Moral Education in the teaching and learning situations?

Table 21: How teachers apply RME in teaching and learning situations

Participant	Response
Teacher 1	“I use the Syllabus, Teachers’ guide, the Bible because no other materials are available”.
Teacher 2	“Learners respond in the way that they show interest in the content of the subject. They also wish to compare stories in the Christian Bible with stories they learn in the Religious and Moral Education subject; stories such as that of Stephen in the Christian Bible with modern martyrs like Archbishop Oscar Romero, Martin Luther King, Archbishop Janani Luwum, Manche Masemola of South Africa. Learners question why they are not mentioned in the Bible. They only hear about Judas and others. However, I tried to explain to them that the modern martyrs came after the Bible was written”.
Teacher 3	“Since more or all learners in the classroom are Christians, I emphasise on their own morals. I use different methods to teach them”.
Teacher 4	“I explain to the learners that although each religion is having its own doctrine, all religions are equal. Parents and religious leaders should educate their children about their doctrines at home or churches, but not at schools because Religious and Moral Education is not a subject whereby a teacher has to convert learners from their religions to a certain religion, but to help learners to understand the subject and live as brothers and sisters”.
Teacher 5	<i>(No response)</i>
Teacher 6	“I treat all learners with same treatment because in our school all learners are of the same religion (Christianity). If we could have different religions in our school, I could use different teaching approaches to make it easy so that all learners understand one another’s religion without causing hatred”.
Teacher 7	“Religious and Moral Education is taught separately as a subject. It is not integrated with other subjects”.
Teacher 8	“I mostly use storytelling, question and answer methods”.
Teacher 9	“The guidelines we have on teaching Religious and Moral Education are based on various religions, but I am teaching Religious and Moral Education according to the Bible because most of the learners we have are Christians. However, in the introduction I let the learners to know about different religions, such as Hinduism, Islam and so on. In teaching Religious and Moral Education, I

Participant	Response
	give Scriptures where I base the lessons”.
Teacher 10	“I use the Bible for learners to see that it is the truth. I let learners design questionnaires so that they can write biblical words”.
Teacher 11	“I use both teacher-centred and learner-centred methods. I do not make use of the textbook, but I use traditional methods of religious beliefs of our Ubuntu-people, but not mostly alien religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism etcetera”.
Teacher 12	“I teach according to what I know and understand from the Bible because I do not have books. I can use both teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches. When I teach some learners do understand but others consider Religious and Moral Education as a non-promotional subject and it does not change anything if he/she does not pass the subject”.

Question 3: What are your perceptions as a Religious and Moral Education teacher regarding the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process of Religious and Moral Education?

Table 22: Teachers’ perceptions regarding constraints hindering RME teaching and learning

Participant	Response
Teacher 1	“When I do my preparations is when I face some problems due to lack of materials. It will be better if I can go for in-service training”.
Teacher 2	“I need more time for Religious and Moral Education because time to teach and discuss Religious and Moral Education issues is very little; within a period of 40 minutes per week you cannot do much as is expected by the syllabus; we cannot go in-depth of the subject”.
Teacher 3	“More teachers are not trained at all to teach the subject. More teachers have not got any opportunity to attend any of the workshops about the subject. I think there are no workshops prepared for RME teachers”.
Teacher 4	“I experienced lack of resources or teaching materials and in-service training workshops”.
Teacher 5	“Few periods allocated to the subject; lack of training; lack of resource materials”.
Teacher 6	“I experience lack of teaching materials/aids; lack of workshops for the subject; the subject is regarded as non-promotional subject, which causes learners not to show interest in the subject”.
Teacher 7	“No resources for teaching the subject. Some of the topics are allocated a lot of time, like three to four weeks, but the information provided in Religious and Moral Education Teachers’ Guide [is very little], especially when teaching our hearing impaired learners”.
Teacher 8	“One of the problems is time allocation, because we only have two periods per week. No teaching

Participant	Response
	materials at all. My learners cannot see, therefore they need concrete objects or materials (touch to learn)".
Teacher 9	"I may say that learners are not motivated towards Religious and Moral Education. Some of the learners are influenced by traditional beliefs. For example, some learners may say that at their home they do not pray, but worship according to their culture. That situation threatens the practical teaching the teacher gives to the learners".
Teacher 10	"No resources available for lesson preparation. I discovered that some learners were not aware of some information from the Bible and were not having good relationships with others. I give learners Scriptures in Deuteronomy chapter twenty to read the Ten Commandments. I found out that some families do not have the Bible".
Teacher 11	"Learners are mostly not interest in the subject because they regard it as non-promotional subject. Learners complained that better textbooks are required and information regarding our own religion should be added in the text. They do not regard other religions as strengthen of their gain".

Question 4: How do you as a Religious and Moral Education teachers overcome the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process of Religious and Moral Education?

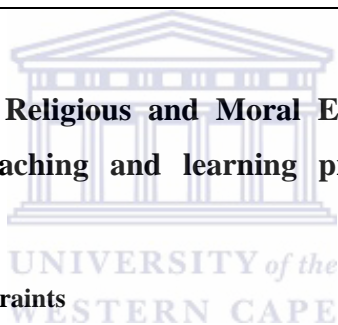


Table 23: How teachers overcome constraints

Participant	Response
Teacher 1	"Once I take an extra mile, for example, doing research regarding Religious and Moral Education as a subject, then I will overcome the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning of the subject".
Teacher 2	"I need more time for the subject because the time to teach and discuss religious and moral issues is very little; within a period of 40 minutes per week you cannot do much, as is expected by the syllabus; we cannot go in-depth of the subject".
Teacher 3	"During the planning of my lessons, I tried to apply the pre-knowledge of learners and then add the content that I want to teach. I try to use different methods to attract learners' interest and to let them understand better".
Teacher 4	"I experienced lack of resources or teaching materials and in-service training workshops".
Teacher 6	"I leave the topics that I do not have information about because of lack of teaching materials and workshops".
Teacher 7	"I need to be provided with materials and text books with activities to test the knowledge and understanding of the learners. We should also be provided with a mentor and training workshops".

Participant	Response
Teacher 8	“To overcome such problems, I need to be provided with teaching materials because some of the topics in the curriculum, it is very difficult to get texts for such topics”.
Teacher 9	“I encourage the learners to throw away the traditional beliefs and explain to the learners the godly and exemplary life Jesus was living. In this way I pull them away from the traditional beliefs and let them understand the values of Christianity and encourage them to make their own decisions”.
Teacher 10	“I duplicate materials from textbook available. I try by all means to design the program to link with the Religious and Moral Education subject. I encourage learners to describe the Lord’s Prayer which other teachers teach as a poem and use it during morning devotions when it’s their turns”.
Teacher 11	“I need better textbooks for our Religious Education. It is necessary to teach a learner his/her religion first than teaching the learner other religious beliefs”.

Question 5: What support do you as Religious and Moral Education teachers receive when teaching Religious and Moral Education?

Table 24: Support teachers receive in teaching RME

Participant	Response
Teacher 1	“I do not receive any support. When I do not understand something I have to go and ask colleagues to render me help”.
Teacher 2	“I do not really receive any support, only when I ask someone to explain for me on certain topics which I do not understand, either a teacher or school principal. Sometimes I even phone my parents in Windhoek to help me. Mostly I use the internet to find the information I need and I have my own computer which I normally use for information searching”.
Teacher 3	<i>(Did not respond).</i>
Teacher 4	“I consult colleagues who also teach the subject to render me help when I experience problems”.
Teacher 6	“At least I can get support from my colleagues who also teach the same subject. Like in our school, we share one book called Religious and Moral Education, Grades 8-10, written by Paul Isaak, but the book does not have all the information we need for the subject”.
Teacher 7	“No support, but what I try to do is to test the learners through drawings, for some topics we get stuck with our hearing impaired learners”.
Teacher 8	“Hardly any support, but sometimes I get support from colleagues”.
Teacher 9	“I do not get support from the educational officers, except the enforcement that the subject must be taught. The only support I get is from the Gideon’s Bible distributor”.
Teacher 10	“No support from colleagues, but just to struggle to look for information”.
Teacher 11	“No support, I teach according to what I understand the subject”.

Question 6: How will you as a teacher use Religious and Moral Education as a subject to respond to the needs of the learners?

Table 25: How teachers use RME to respond to learners' needs

Participant	Response
Teacher 1	"I talk to the learners in order to find out what the problems are, and try to give advice regarding the problem [they] have".
Teacher 2	"I refer to their different religions and learners accepted morals. I also refer to different events that are happening in our society today".
Teacher 3	"I refer to their different religions and learners' accepted morals. I also refer to different events that are happening in our society today".
Teacher 4	"I search information from here and there in order to respond to the needs of the learners. Sometimes I refer learners with problems to Life Skills teachers; for example, learners who are sleeping in the classroom. Most of the learners in this school come from well-off homes; something which causes problems for learners coming from poor families, for example, lack of food for the poor learners, while others enjoy their nice food provided by their parents or guardians".
Teacher 5	"Through the subject we shape learners to become disciplined and trustworthy people in life. I personally like to relate school rules with God's commandments. I teach learners that there is always room for forgiveness. Like God forgives, teachers, principals and parents can also forgive".
Teacher 6	"The subject helps very much in terms of counselling. It encourages learners by telling them about God's loving care".
Teacher 7	"There are some topics, like 'Belonging', whereby learners learn to feel accepted and have a sense of belonging".
Teacher 8	"There are many topics in the subject that cover most aspects of life, like, learners are taught about prayers, forgiveness and reconciliation, as well as the concept of equality in the eyes of God and men".
Teacher 9	"I give counselling to the learners and teachers".
Teacher 10	"The subject strengthens the minds of the learners".
Teacher 11	"I teach learners to respect God, to make Jesus King and to respect elders; also to respect culture, beliefs, norms and values of the society where they belong".
Teacher 12	"As our moral responsibility, we give food to learners".
Teacher 13	"At our school, we have a feeding program and if not provided, learners will not be happy.

7.6 Discussion

7.6.1 Teachers' perceptions

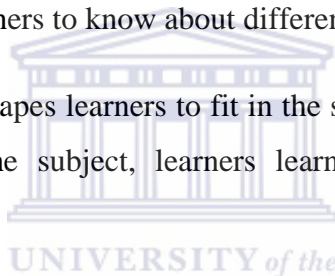
Teacher 1 understood that through the teaching of RME, learners learn about different religions, cultures and moral values.

Teacher 2 saw RME as a very important subject in school that exposes learners to various things in the world and helps learners to distinguish between right and wrong.

Teacher 3 viewed RME as a very good subject that enriches the knowledge of learners about different religions, educates learners about morals and helps learners to make the right decisions.

Teacher 4 and teacher 7 agreed with teacher 2 and teacher 3 that RME is a very good subject because it is an eye opener for learners to know about different religions and moral values.

Teacher 8 noted that the subject shapes learners to fit in the society and helps them to behave as expected by society. Through the subject, learners learn acceptable manners, values and attitudes.



Teacher 10 viewed RME as a good subject that changes learners' behaviour. It links learners, home, school and churches. It moves the spirit of the learners and helps them to respect and communicate with God through prayer. It also encourages and builds the future of the learners and helps them in the learning of other subjects.

For teacher 11, the subject helps to guide learners regarding culture and religious beliefs, values and norms.

Teacher 12 viewed the subject as helping learners to respect parents, elders and teachers at school.

Although teacher 6 indicated that he loved the subject, he also lamented that the Ministry was not putting much effort to promote it. For him, the subject should be promoted.

Teacher 9 cited that while RME embraces all religions, she taught the subject according to the Christian Bible because most of the learners at the school were Christians. She gave Scripture

references to learners, on which the lessons were based. However, in the introduction, she let the learners know about different religions.

7.6.2 Application of RME in teaching and learning situations

Teacher 1 used the syllabus, Teachers' Guide and the Bible because there were no other teaching materials available at the school.

Teacher 2 indicated that learners showed interest in the content of the subject. They compared stories in the Christian Bible with stories they learned in RME. They questioned why modern martyrs were not mentioned in the Bible.

Teacher 3 stated that since the learners were Christians, more emphasis was put on their own morals. The teacher used different teaching methods in teaching.

Teacher 4 asserted that all religions are equal, but each religion has its own doctrine. The teacher stated that learners should be educated about their own religion at home or church, but not at school because the purpose of RME is not to convert learners from their religions to certain religion, but to help learners understand the subject and live as brothers and sisters.

Teacher 6 said that she treated all learners the same way because all learners in the school were Christians. If there were learners from different religions, the teacher would use different teaching approaches.

Teacher 7 argued that RME was taught separately, not integrated with other subjects.

Teacher 8 indicated the use of storytelling, question and answer methods in teaching.

Teacher 10 said they used the Bible, asked the learners to write biblical words and duplicated notes from the Bible for learners to learn.

Teacher 11 used both learner- and teacher-centred approaches.

Teacher 12 taught according to what he knew and used both teacher- and learner-centred teaching methods.

7.6.3 Constraints hindering the processes of teaching and learning RME

Teacher 1 faced problems when doing lesson preparations due to lack of teaching materials. This teacher indicated a need for in-service training to be equipped to teach the subject.

Teacher 2 argued that he needed more time because the time allocated to the subject, a period of 40 minutes per week was too little to teach and discuss issues pertaining to Religious and Moral Education.

Teacher 3 indicated that most teachers were not trained to teach the subject and that they were not given the chance to attend training workshops.

Teacher 4, teacher 6 and teacher 7 experienced lack of teaching materials/aids and lack of training workshops. They indicated that the information provided in the Teachers' Guide was not enough. They also said that there were no teaching aids or Bible storybooks with pictures for their impaired learners. The teachers were concerned that learners did not show interest in the subject because it was regarded as non-promotional subject, a concern which teacher 11 also raised.

For teacher 8, time allocation was a problem because 2 periods per week were too few.

Both teacher 7 and teacher 8 raised their concern regarding teaching materials for their impaired learners.

Teacher 9 noted with concern that learners were not motivated towards RME.

Teacher 10 and teacher 11 agreed that resources such as textbooks and information were not available.

7.6.4 Overcoming the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process of RME

Teacher 1 showed that she was doing research on Religious and Moral Education in order to overcome the constraints.

Teacher 2 said that he gave learners work to do on their own. He gave them summaries and let learners do their own summaries, which they would discuss in the next period in order to cover the syllabus.

Teacher 3 said that during lesson planning, she applied the pre-knowledge of the learners, and then added the content she intended to teach. She also used different teaching methods to attract the interest of the learners and let learners understand better.

Teacher 4 wished to see the Ministry of Education providing teachers with teaching materials/textbooks and training workshops to enable teachers to teach the subject.

Teacher 6 indicated that she omitted the topics for which she did not have resources, but wanted to be provided with materials and to attend training workshops.

Teacher 7 said that teachers should be provided with teaching materials/textbooks with activities to test the knowledge and understanding of the learners. Again, she wanted teachers to be provided with a mentor and to attend training workshops.

Teacher 8 pointed out that teachers should be provided with teaching materials/textbooks because it was very difficult to get information for some topics listed in the curriculum.

Teacher 9 said that she explained to the learners the life of Jesus and helped them to understand the value of Christianity and to make their own decisions.

Teacher 10 duplicated materials from textbooks available and encouraged learners to learn the Lord's Prayer.

Teacher 11 used cultural items which helped the learners to be proud and to feel good. The teacher also wanted to be provided with textbooks and workshops.

7.6.5 Support received by the teachers

Teacher 1, teacher 2, teacher 4, teacher 6 and teacher 8 asked colleagues to render support when they did not understand something. Teacher 2 also used the Internet to source information.

Teacher 6 said that although colleagues were sharing information, not all the information for the subject was available.

Teacher 7 said that there was no support for her in teaching hearing impaired learners, but she tested the learners using drawing for some topics when they got stuck.

Teacher 9 stated that there was no support from the educational officers, but the teacher got support from the Gideon's Bible distributor.

Teacher 10 and teacher 11 said that they did not get support from colleagues. Teacher 10 struggled to look for information while teacher 11 just taught what she understood on the subject.

7.6.6 Responding to the needs of the learners

Teacher 1 said that she tried to help learners with different problems. She tried to talk to the learners to find out what were the problems and gave advice regarding those problems.

Teacher 2 stated that although they did not have enough materials, the office tried to provide them with what they needed to use in class in order to meet the needs of the learners, for example, posters and overhead projectors. The teacher indicated that they got the textbook, which was their guideline in utilising time and making a target to cover the syllabus.

Teacher 3 stated that he referred learners to different events that took place in the society.

Teacher 4 said that she searched for information from here and there in order to respond to the needs of the learners. Sometimes she referred learners with problems to Life Skills teachers.

Teacher 6 indicated that the subject helped very much in terms of counselling learners regardless of their religious backgrounds. The teacher encouraged learners by telling them about God's loving care and help, to boost their faith.

Teacher 7 believed that some topics such as "Belonging" helped learners to feel accepted and to have a sense of belonging.

In the same vein, teacher 8 understood that many topics covered most aspects of life. For example, the learners were taught about prayer, forgiveness and reconciliation and the concept of equality before God and men.

Teacher 9 said that she provided counselling to learners.

Based on the participants' views, this study revealed that RME:

- helps learners to learn different religions, cultures and moral values;
- exposes learners to various things in the world;
- assists learners to distinguish right from wrong;
- helps learners to make correct decisions and gives them a chance to be educated about their own morals;
- helps learners to respect God, elders, parents and teachers;
- shapes learners to fit in the society and to behave according to acceptable behaviour of the society; and
- helps learners to deal with social problems.

However, some topics in the syllabus were a repetition and more lessons were allocated to one topic than the other topics. Sometimes the syllabus was not available and there was lack of teaching materials to facilitate learning.

From the participants' responses, the researcher deduced that if teaching materials are made available, in-service training workshops conducted and sufficient periods allocated to the subject, this will improve the effectiveness of teaching Religious and Moral Education in schools. This might also be a contributing factor in changing moral attitudes of learners, as well as in accommodating the activities and moral values of other faiths in the teaching and learning process.

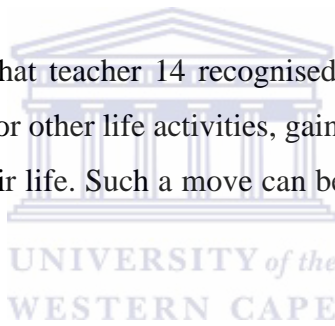
Teacher 1 said, "When I do my lesson preparations is when I face some problems due to lack of teaching resource materials. It would be better if I can be provided with teaching materials and go for in-service training workshops".

This study revealed that there was need for RME teaching materials and more in-service training workshops for the effective teaching of RME in schools. The participants regarded such a move as transformational for seriously teaching the subject, for changing the moral behaviour of learners and for accommodating other faiths.

Therefore, this study suggests that the Ministry of Education should seriously respond to the issue of lack of resource materials for RME in schools.

According to teacher 14, “Religious and Moral Education is a very enjoyable and interesting school subject because it is playing an important part in social events. Schools gather knowledge and skills that come from the background of each learner”. This teacher believed that parents also played a very important role in giving their children religious instruction at home. She also believed that churches introduced religious instruction every Sunday in different ways.

The researcher is of the opinion that teacher 14 recognised that people learn from each other when they gather for social events or other life activities, gaining knowledge and skills from each other, which they can utilise in their life. Such a move can be a motivating factor for teachers to teach RME.



Teacher 10 viewed RME thus:

It is a very good subject; it changes learners’ behaviours. It links learners, home, school and churches. The subject promotes the spirit of the child to move or wake up. It helps learners to have respect and to communicate with God through prayer. It encourages and builds the future of the learners, as well as helping the learners to learn other subjects. It should be a promotional subject in future.

According to teacher 3, “Religious and Moral Education is a very good subject that enriches the knowledge of the learners about different religions and helps learners to make correct decisions. Learners also get a chance to be educated about their morals”.

According to teacher 1, “People learn about different religions, culture and moral values when they study Religious and Moral Education”.

Teacher 11 commented thus: “Religious and Moral Education is a subject that helps to guide learners towards culture and religious beliefs, values and norms”.

Teacher 5 viewed RME as an “important subject aiming at shaping learners’ understanding on how to live responsible lives based on other beliefs and values”.

Teacher 4 regarded RME as “a good subject because it is an eye opener so that learners should know different religions and moral values. The subject helps learners to differentiate between various religious beliefs and help them to stick to their own religious beliefs because each religion has its own doctrine”.

Teacher 2 stated that RME “is very important in schools because learners will be exposed to various things in the world. It must be taken very seriously so that learners should sort out what is right and wrong”.

The above views from the participants show that the participants considered RME as a subject helping in promoting social values such as discipline, respect, equality, freedom and responsibility in the learners.

It is also noteworthy that the participants recognised the role played by Religious and Moral Education in society as they all agreed that it was the duty of RME teachers to nurture religious and moral behaviour of learners so that they grow as responsible people and good citizens of the human society.

Teacher 8 argued that “Religious and Moral Education is a subject that shapes learners to fit in the society and to behave as expected by the society. From the subject, learners learn acceptable manners, values and attitudes”.

Teacher 6 commented as follows:

I love Religious and Moral Education, but the Ministry of Education does not put enough effort in promoting or bringing attraction to the subject. I believe that Religious and Moral Education is a subject which people cannot live without. There is a need to make it a promotional subject. The subject uplifts the moral behaviour of all people in the society regardless of their religious and cultural backgrounds.

According to teacher 7, “In Religious and Moral Education, learners learn morals, values and acceptable behaviours, learn about what God has created, and the difference between what God has made and what is man-made.

Teacher 8 viewed Religious and Moral Education as a subject, “while the Bible is a book with its content of different Bible stories and scriptures”. The teacher considered RME as motivation for learners to read the Christian Bible and learn about Bible stories.

Teacher 9 had the following comments to make:

In general I did not recognise Religious and Moral Education as part of social life. Even when you visit different families you will find out that people do not take time to pray. When it comes to school, Religious and Moral Education is an ignored subject. At some schools no syllabus is available, including educational materials. This is a way of demoralising the learners because it is one of the non-promotional subjects and most of the teachers are shy to teach the subject.

Again, teacher 9 said:

The guidelines we are having about teaching Religious and Moral Education are based on various religions, but I am teaching Religious and Moral Education according to the Bible because most of the learners we have are Christians. However, in the introduction I let the learners know about different religions, such as Islam, Hinduism and so on. In teaching Religious and Moral Education, I give Scriptures where I base the lessons.

The researcher noted with concern what teacher 9 said. It seemed that teacher 9 had a mixed understanding of Religious and Moral Education as a subject. In some cases, the participant viewed the subject as comprised of various religions, but sometimes the participant described Religious and Moral Education as Christianity/Christian Bible. The researcher concluded that teacher 9 did not differentiate between Christianity and Religious and Moral Education subject.

7.6.7 Participants' perceptions

This study investigated RME teachers' perceptions in response to research interviews. The study followed several themes that emerged throughout the interviews, in which RME teachers described their religious beliefs and moral understanding.

A total of 14 RME teachers responded to interviews, which probed their understanding of Religious and Moral Education as a school subject and their perceptions on express religious beliefs and moral values. Structured interviews with the teachers who participated in this study revealed their perceptions of their actual teaching experiences, which they perceived as involving religious beliefs and moral values.

What emerged from the participants' perceptions of Religious and Moral Education was that the subject played a major role in the education and development of the learners socially, morally and spiritually.

The major finding of this research study was the fact that teachers' individual religious and moral values shape the teaching and learning process and the conflicts that concern them as Religious and Moral Education teachers. Because their teaching of RME was dominated by Christianity, the teachers felt a commitment to share their personal religious beliefs and moral values (Christian belief and moral values/behaviour).

The participating teachers believed that the subject was aimed at the religious and moral development of the learners. Therefore, they had concerns regarding:

- how classroom teaching should bring about personal change in the learners behaviour;
- promoting their moral and religious development;
- deepening their moral values and changing their attitudes; and
- instilling a sense of religious identity and improving their interests in RME.

In this way, the teachers understood why the RME syllabus/curriculum was developed. Its aim was that:

Learners from different religious and cultural groups should share religious experiences and religious responsibilities, express their own spirituality and morality differently and teachers should assist them to work through ethical problems, to live with high moral standards and draw comfort and hope from religion (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996).

Religious and Moral Education as a subject aims at helping learners to respect and gain knowledge and understanding of others' faiths and cultures, attempting to create a peaceful community where various religious groups live in harmony (Baelz 1977:67).

In light of the above, RME teachers must prepare learners in order to:

- accept their religious and moral responsibilities as members of the community;
- learn and develop skills, as well as moral behaviour which will help them to contribute to the development of their community and to behave as good citizens;
- grow and develop in a holistic way;
- know how to solve problems and make life decisions;
- look at their educational experience with greater care, as well as
- develop as individuals who are proud of and happy with the knowledge and skills they have acquired through learning and sharing of information and opinions.

RME is a subject that is very important in dealing with life issues such as sex, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and child abuse before the learners leave school. It is a subject relevant to everyday life. It is an important subject like other subjects taught in the school curriculum.

Seven out of the fourteen participants considered Religious and Moral Education to be strengthening the personal moral values of the learners.

Eight participants showed that acceptance of different religious beliefs and moral values resulted in respect for others, and the ability to distinguish between what is right and wrong.

Thirteen participants considered discipline as valuable in contributing to harmony and peace in society.

Participants' views about religious beliefs and moral values, for example, discipline, respect for others and responsibility, were in agreement with the main aim of Religious and Moral Education as stated in the curriculum.

There were some differences in the participants' interpretation of religious beliefs and moral values or Religious and Moral Education. Some participants interpreted Religious and Moral Education in terms of individual religious beliefs and moral values, while others interpreted it in terms of multi-religious and cultural beliefs. They were concerned about the personal growth of individual learners and development of all learners.

Most of the participants interpreted Religious and Moral Education in terms of Christianity. It was clear that most of them did not understand Religious and Moral Education as comprised of different religions. It seemed to this researcher that the participants interpreted Religious and Moral Education according to their Christian teaching experiences.

All of the participants agreed on the importance of teaching moral values and attitudes in school, even though they had different opinions in choosing lesson topics from the curriculum. They all emphasised the same degree of importance for respect for others, responsibility, discipline, distinguishing between right and wrong and commitment in school.

All participants expressed a certain degree of concern regarding the importance of RME in daily life. Below are some examples:

Teacher 4 regarded RME as helping people to live a life of peace and harmony in the community. She believed that teaching RME in schools could help learners to grow as good people in life.

Teacher 5, teacher 6, teacher 11 and teacher 12 raised a concern about the fact that RME was a non-promotional subject and that the learners did not take it seriously. Teacher 5 and teacher 12 added that some learners just did not understand the subject.

Some participants were of the opinion that it was not their responsibility to teach RME because they had not received any training to teach the subject. For example, teacher 3 said, “More teachers are not trained at all to teach Religious and Moral Education. More teachers did not get an opportunity to attend any of the workshops on the subject. I think there are no workshops prepared for the subject”.

Other participants indicated that teachers should play as role models when teaching RME.

Teacher 3 noted that it was necessary to promote Religious and Moral Education in schools, as schooling was not only for knowledge delivery but also for the moral development of the learners. The teacher added that learners learned from teachers how to behave as human beings.

Teacher 6 argued, “The subject helps learners to have good behaviour, to know how to behave towards their teachers, parents and members of the community”.

Teacher 12 viewed the importance of Religious and Moral Education in terms of counselling:

One day a learner came to me and said, ‘Madam, I did something wrong because I went out with a boy’. I read something from the Bible. We talked a little bit and I advised the learner not to do it again, then we prayed. Now I am realising that the learner has changed for the good.

Teacher 2 pointed out that learners in schools needed to be taught RME in order to distinguish right from wrong. This participant was of the opinion that learners should be taught RME from childhood.

The researcher is of the opinion that parents at home do not have time to teach their children about moral issues because learners spend most of their time with the teachers. In most cases, learners obey what their teachers teach them and internalise what they receive from the teachers.

The study found that the participants had a similar understanding of their role in teaching Religious and Moral Education. They all understood that the teacher had a major role in facilitating Religious and Moral Education learning in schools; hence their interest in promoting Religious and Moral Education in their teaching and learning activities.

Teacher 5 debated that religious and moral values were more important than academic knowledge in schooling. This participant was of the view that RME was the most important subject in educating and shaping learners to become disciplined and trustworthy.

The above were the most important issues in terms of the participating teachers' perceptions regarding their understanding of RME in school.

The application of Religious and Moral Education in the teaching and learning situations; constraints hindering the teaching and learning of the subject; how to overcome the constraints; the support received by teachers and how Religious and Moral Education responds to the needs of the learners will be discussed in detail under Chapter 9.

7.7 Conclusion

The purpose of the interviews was to understand the teachers' perceptions, knowledge, skills, and values in teaching RME.

From the interviews, the study revealed that most of RME teachers were not subject-matter specialists, but they made use of personal knowledge of the subject and life experience as they taught and learned the subject.

Therefore, the researcher suggests that in-service training programs for RME teachers be continually organised and implemented.

Another important finding of this study was that all teachers were interested in teaching Religious and Moral Education, but were hindered by lack of teaching resource materials, lack of training workshops for teachers to effectively teach the subject, and insufficient period allocations to the subject.

The research results showed that Religious and Moral Education teachers ranked lack of teaching materials/teaching aids and lack of teachers' training as the biggest challenge for effective teaching, followed by insufficient period allocations to the subject. However, teachers' perceptions on the subject were very positive because they viewed it as an enjoyable and interesting subject; helping in shaping the learners' future.

The study also found that RME played an important part in the spiritual, moral and social development of the learners. Schools gathered knowledge and skills that come from the backgrounds of the learners. Parents also played a very important role in giving their children religious and moral instruction at home. Religious institutions were also teaching people about God's rules and how people should behave in society and live in harmony with one another. Religious and Moral Education therefore helps in encouraging and promoting good moral behaviour, discipline, respect, freedom and responsibility among learners. Hoge (1996) observes that the seed of religious and moral values should be sown in the learners because if moral foundation is not laid, moral development of the learners will not be solid.

As indicated in the interviews, the teachers viewed Religious and Moral Education from a religious and moral view point, but their views were dominated by their Christian perspectives.

All the teachers had a positive view regarding how Religious and Moral Education responded to the needs of the learners: According to the teachers, the subject helped learners to feel accepted and have a sense of belonging; covered important aspects of life such as prayer, forgiveness and reconciliation and equality; helped in providing counselling and comfort for both learners and teachers; helped to deal with personal and family problems; encouraged learners who did not get much encouragement from home; helped learners to have a meaningful future; and strengthened the minds of the learners to study.

This study found that the teachers at school seemed to have greater influence on the learners than parents at home. This might be one of the reasons for RME teachers to consider themselves as role models for learners and to opt to take responsibility in teaching RME, or accept to be assigned by school principals to teach RME since very few were trained to teach the subject. On the other hand, the willingness and ability to teach RME might be one of the factors that led some teachers to teach the subject because some teachers were of the understanding that teaching RME was just like teaching Biblical Instruction/Biblical Studies.

There is a need for further, broader research on teachers' perceptions and curriculum implementation of Religious and Moral Education in Namibian schools because this study targeted only some schools in one educational region, using the few RME teachers in the area.

From the interviews, participants indicated that they needed teaching materials/aids and training workshops for RME teachers for effective teaching and learning of the subject in schools. The participants felt that this would improve the effectiveness of teaching the subject, change the moral attitudes of learners, and help them to accommodate the activities and moral values of other faiths in the teaching and learning process. They viewed RME as a subject that promoted learners' personal and social values such as discipline, respect, equality and freedom.

The next chapter presents the findings from classroom observations.



CHAPTER 8

FINDINGS FROM THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the findings from the classroom observations.

The Ongwediva College of Education School-Based Studies document of 2007 described classroom observation as the process of conducting classroom research in order to answer or solve problems about teaching and learning. It involves gathering and interpreting data to better understand teaching and learning (Komoski 1997).

In the opinion of this researcher, classroom observation refers to an attempt to better understand Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers' perceptions, and also to grasp what these teachers are doing in classroom situations with the purpose of introducing changes or improvement where needed.

8.2 Procedure of the classroom observations

The researcher collected data in naturalistic settings. For example, the researcher sat in the classrooms and observed participants, but he did not take part in regular class activities. However, data were collected by recording what happened in the classroom situations using an observation checklist (see *Appendix F*). The researcher observed how the teacher communicated with the learners about the lessons, while recording the events.

For this study, classroom observations were carried out to assess the RME curriculum regarding RME teachers' perceptions of the subject, and the implementation of the RME syllabus for Grades 5-10. An additional aim was to establish RME teachers' teaching practice regarding assessment and implementation of the syllabus in classroom situations in the seven selected schools in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region.

The researcher found that the participating RME teachers accepted their respective teaching roles of the subject. The study was aimed at identifying areas of improvement in teaching methods and skills and mastery of the subject.

The researcher was of the view that improvement in teaching and learning Religious and Moral Education would lead to teachers' professional growth.

The study used the qualitative research method. This method was suitable for this study because it sought to gain insight into the nature of the participants (Babbie & Mouton 2001). The qualitative research method enabled the researcher to develop an understanding of individuals in their natural settings, taking into account the relevant context (Henning 2005). This was in agreement with the observations of Greswell (2002) and Henning (2005), that rich and reliable data is only solicited from the participants themselves.

This study was aimed at establishing Religious and Moral Education teachers' perceptions on lesson preparation and presentation for daily teaching and learning.

8.3 Issues emerging from classroom observations

8.3.1 Class management skills

The teachers had written lesson plans. Most of them had good class management and discipline skills and good subject content knowledge, particularly when they were teaching on Christianity.

Teacher 1 motivated learners by asking questions on the topic of the day (which was about personal values); attracted the attention of the learners through questions and explanations; demonstrate subject knowledge; and engaged learners in active learning.

However, some teachers had problems with class management. For example, the interaction of teacher 4 with the learners was not very effective because when the teacher asked questions, any learner could stand up and say something, which contributed to learners not listening to one another. Some learners made noise and did not pay attention to the teacher, but the teacher did not discipline them.

Most of the teachers, however, had good class management skills, except two teachers who could not control their undisciplined learners.

8.3.2 Implementation of the RME syllabus

Almost all teachers who were observed were using the current RME syllabus. However, they chose the topics according to their preferences. Each teacher prepared a lesson from the syllabus,

mostly with topics chosen from Christianity sections. This means that the teachers were not following themes as listed in the syllabus. Therefore, the themes in the syllabus played a very minor role during the lessons. Teacher 11, for example, experienced problems in distinguishing between Religious and Moral Education and Christianity.

8.3.3 Classroom environment, resources and discipline

Most of the classrooms in both urban and rural schools were not conducive to teaching and learning. Most classes were over-crowded, had dirty walls and floors, broken chairs, windows and doors. In many classes, learners sat on the floor, classrooms were not displayed with posters, pictures, and other materials related to the subject. Almost all teachers indicated the problem of lack of teaching materials or teaching aids in the schools.

This study found that most of the schools did not have enough RME teaching resource materials, such as textbooks or teaching aids. In most cases, the teachers used chalkboard, flipcharts and posters as the only teaching aids available, particularly for schools in the rural areas. The study did not find teaching aids such as radio, overhead projectors and so on, being used in the teaching and learning situations. However, some participants indicated that computers were available at their schools or they searched information from the Internet, but none of the schools seemed to make use of electronic teaching aids during the classroom observations. Therefore, the unavailability of textbooks/teaching aids did not only affect teachers, but it also prevented learners from learning effectively. The researcher observed that the teaching and learning of RME was not adequate during classroom observations due to lack of resource materials in most of the schools.

While learning is taking place, teachers should regard every learner as responsible for advancing in learning. This will be possible if the activities carried out by each learner are part of the study material. This view is supported by Lowman (1984:2) who cites that teacher must be well organised so that explanation and clarification will be effective; the teacher must constantly try to arouse and retain learners' interest and the learners must be encountered both as individuals and as a group.

If the study materials (textbooks, study guides and notes) are well presented, explained and clarified, the teacher arouses and retains learners' interest. In this way, the teaching and learning

will be effective. Lowman (1984:2) argues that the art of teaching is always linked with critical argumentation, a search for solutions, discovery, finding connections and forming syntheses.

If teachers can bring these features alive for the learners, their style will exert a significant influence on those learners' present and future behaviour. Teachers who, in the teaching situations, develop the ability to hold their learners' attention, stimulate them intellectually, move them emotionally, develop their love for the subject, observe them during discussions and watch them grow in wisdom, will derive great satisfaction (Lowman 1984:2).

The research findings indicated that many teachers were teaching over-crowded classes. For example, one class consisted of more than sixty learners, with one teacher, something which obviously affects the teaching and learning process negatively.

In his history of education in Nigeria, Fafunwa (1974) argues that a teacher is very important in the teaching and learning process, but if the teacher is teaching a large number of learners, one should be concerned about the learners' achievement. Fafunwa is of the opinion that teaching an over-crowded class may constitute serious problems and setbacks in effectively teaching RME.

8.3.4 Time management

Most of the teachers were time conscious, but time allocation to RME was insufficient. The subject was only allocated two forty-minute periods per week.

8.3.5 Lesson presentation

Most of the lesson presentations included an introduction, learners' work, teaching aids (for example, handouts and posters) assessment and homework.

Almost all teachers were professionally dressed.

In most cases, teaching was challenging. The teachers motivated learners to participate in the lesson through group work, dramatisation, etc. Learners participated well during the lessons and showed much interest in learning Religious and Moral Education.

Teacher 1 attracted the attention of the learners through questions and explanations. However, this teacher did not follow the syllabus; the lesson taught was for the Upper Primary Phase, but according to the syllabus, the teacher was supposed to teach the lesson for the Secondary Phase.

8.3.5.1 Visual aids

Most of the teachers approached RME from a biblical viewpoint. Learners participated very well in the lessons. For example, teacher 9 put more emphasis on the fact that fearing God resulted in blessings and rewards, based on the story of Job who, after many temptations, emerged victorious. During this lesson presentation, pictures/drawings of Job's sons and daughters and animals were used as visual aids. The teacher emphasised Job's trust in God and the fact that he rejected temptations from his wife and friends. The teacher related the lesson to real life situations, where many find themselves in similar situations as that of Job, for example, innocent children born with HIV/AIDS because of parents' misbehaviour. The teacher encouraged the learners to trust in God to overcome temptations and to respect their parents.

8.3.5.2 Group presentations

Another example was that of teacher 6 who explained that drugs could damage someone's life and could harm the body organs. The teacher showed a picture of someone's system destroyed by drugs. Learners were divided into groups and asked to identify and list types of drugs they had seen or used, and then present their discussions to others.

The learners presented their work as follows:

Types of drugs: dagga, cocaine, cabarie, marijuana, benzene, heroin, tobacco, madras.

These drugs cause destruction for people who use it; affect the brain system; influence people to steal in order to get money to buy the drugs; people who are supposed to help their families use the money to buy drugs; when people take marijuana, they feel like somebody flying in the sky. That person will be happy for a short period of time, then turns back to normal, experiencing life problems which he/she wanted to escape because drugs work for a certain number of hours.

The teacher commented thus:

You see yourself as if you are no more here on earth, but you will come back to normal and experience life problems. Remember that drugs create lumps in the human body. They cause people to do wrong things. Drugs do not only injure or

cause illness in people's body system, but also cause people to commit crime; cause TB, cancer, as well as violence in the family and community. Drugs bite like poison. Eyes will see stranger things, like being high in the sky, but in the true sense, being high in the sky come from your heart.

So, we have learnt that drugs cause problems in our brain system, for example, when marijuana is in a person's body, that person will see things differently, but in reality things are not different, it is the person who has marijuana in his/her body who is different.

If you use drugs, you ruin your career and you are not going to finish school. It is not advisable to use drugs. Drugs are very dangerous and if you use them you will not be able to pass your examination. If someone is under the influence of alcohol, another person can abuse such a person, have sex with them without their consent, transmitting diseases in the process.

The learners agreed that “the subject helps us to stay away from bad things and bad friends. It teaches us not to use drugs because drugs ruin our future”. One learner said, “Never go for ‘fresh’ things. Never give up your good dreams in order to become someone in life. Education must come first. Never use drugs”.

It is clear from this lesson that RME opened the eyes and minds of the learners to avoid using drugs.

8.3.5.3 Debate

Similarly, teacher 4 introduced the topic, which was a debate on the popular belief that illness comes as punishment from God. At the onset, the teacher informed the learners that they were going to work in groups of three: Group A, Group B and Group C. Learners lined up and called out the first three letters of the alphabet in sequence. The one who said “A” belonged to Group A, the one who said “B” belonged to Group B, while the one who said “C”, belonged to Group C.

The teacher first explained terms such as illness, suffering, HIV and accident, and then asked the learners to give reasons for supporting or opposing that these come as punishment for doing something wrong.

The learners participated. Some learners argued that God would not punish people “because He is a loving God”. Others debated that “HIV comes because partners are not faithful to one another; they cheat on each other”. Others argued that “punishment comes as a result of our own faults, for example, a car accident can be caused by a driver who drives under the influence of alcohol”. Still others debated that, “God has warned us not to do wrong things”, and that “if we do, he will punish us”.

8.3.5.4 Drama

Teacher 3 presented a lesson about the dramatisation of abuse of HIV/AIDS orphans. Learners were given parts to play in the drama. The teacher asked the learners to go in front of the class in order to dramatise their respective parts. Each learner introduced himself/herself before playing their part.

In the drama, the parents (father, mother) abused their child who had HIV, isolated the infected child, to the point of even letting the child to sleep alone. They beat the child, the infected child was bullied, bad-mouthed and isolated by others. Other children in the house were not allowed to use even the cup that the child used. The child was insulted, cursed and mocked by her own family and asked to do difficult work.

The abused child was taken away by other people from her/his parents’ home because the parents were abusing the child. The child missed medication because the caring people who took her did not know that she was HIV positive.

Later on, the parents of the abused child also tested HIV positive. The doctor informed the family that the abused child was born with HIV, which meant that the parents were HIV positive before the child was born.

The drama helped learners to understand the problem of child abuse so that they should not abuse others.

8.3.6 Teaching strategies

Most of the teachers applied learner-centred education, while a few used the teacher-centred approach. Teachers used chalkboard, posters and handouts as teaching aids.

Teacher 2 divided learners into groups of five (5), each group was given responsibility to study one of the martyrs (from Christian literature), prepare a presentation for the next lesson in the form of dramatised confrontation, and to discuss the motivation that led to persecution.

The teacher distributed pictures of martyrs to learners for the discussion and preparation for the next lesson presentation. The teacher showed four pictures of martyrs to the class, passed from one group of learners to another; then placed them on the notice board.

After learners' presentations, the teacher explained that martyrs were killed arbitrarily - without reason, and some of the stories of their killing were changed so that it would appear as if they had been involved in car accidents, even though bullets were found in their bodies.

The teacher gave examples of some martyrs, such as Archbishop Romero, Martin Luther King, Esther John and Janani Luwum, and then asked the learners to define the concept of "persecution".

Learners stated that persecutions meant ill-treatment of other people, unfair treatment of others because of politics, race, gender, colour and so on.

This was an effective and skilful teaching method.

One of the observed classes consisted of visually impaired learners. Teacher 8 (for visually impaired learners) introduced the lesson by asking learners questions on the previous lesson. The learners listened to the instructions given by the teacher and responded to the questions. They participated well in the lesson.

The teacher applied the demonstration teaching method, blindfolded each learner while they were seated at their places and placed a natural object on each table. The learners followed the instructions given by the teacher, picked up the objects and discussed the natural thing given to them according to colour, shape, smell and so on.

The teacher engaged learners in active learning; used natural objects, such as dry beans, for learners to identify/learn and explain the objects. The learners did this through smell, touch and sight.

The teacher was very careful in listening to what the learners said and did. The teacher communicated very well with all the different groups in the class and demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the subject. Sometimes, the teacher used the Bible as a teaching and learning medium.

Teacher 3 used a stick to demonstrate to the learners the way that some parents beat their children or each other as symbol of physical and emotional abuse. The teacher used cleaning the classroom as an example of good discipline for children when they did something wrong.

8.3.7 Communication

The interaction between the teachers and the learners was good. Learners participated well in the lessons, but in some classes learners were making a lot of noise. In most cases, the teachers disciplined the learners by calling their names and letting them stand in the middle of the class or in a corner of the class for a while.

Most of the teachers addressed learners' needs and interests. They interacted with different groups in the class and showed interest by listening to learners.

Learners were assessed in various ways, for example, by answering questions on worksheets.

Some teachers maintained discipline while teaching. For example, teacher 6 politely told the learners who were playing in class not to do so.

Eble (1972:30) argues that a teacher's personal qualities are a vital factor in effective teaching and learning environments; i.e., the personality of the teacher may enhance the learning atmosphere. He further argues that the teacher should have an approachable attitude and respect so that learners sense that the teacher respects them as people. Learners should feel free to speak to the teacher at the end of a class or to contact the teacher after completing an activity.

Similarly, Riley, Ryan and Lifshitz (1969:4) reiterate that learners identify with teachers' general attitudes and the way teachers handle situations in the classroom.

These views emphasise that the learning environment of the learners may improve if the teacher recognises learners' opinions and their academic, social and political involvement, as well as their participation in making decisions.

Again, Riley et al (1969:16) state that knowing and understanding learners' ideas is very important, and this can be achieved through direct contact with learners in classroom situations.

Vrey (1990:225) adds that teachers may visit parents at home in order to find out more about the learners.

8.3.8 Learner tasks

The majority of the teachers gave learners class activities and homework to do based on competencies as indicated in the subject syllabus. Some teachers gave learners the criteria for task assessment.

8.3.9 Handling of RME by teachers

Teacher 1 and teacher 3 handled RME very well. The drama and role plays motivated the learners to actively participate in the lesson. The activities performed conveyed the message against abuse and harm of others. Teacher 3 advised learners that abusing or harming others was not good and that it negatively affected others physically, mentally and psychologically. The teachers corrected the learners when they made mistakes.

However, most of the teachers handled RME from a Christian perspective. For example, teacher 10 introduced learners to Christian worship. The teacher explained that worship meant respect and that people worship in the church, home and so on. The teacher also described prayer as worship and that prayer meant personal contact with God. The teacher tried to teach learners to understand different churches in Namibia and to know their ways of worshipping God; to identify their church's way of worshipping; and to understand that all churches were using the same Bible. When the teacher asked the learners to state any church they knew, the learners mentioned the following churches: Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Pentecostal churches, but they did not indicate any other religion, such as Islam, Hinduism and so on. The teacher emphasised that the different Christian congregations found in Namibia were worshipping the same God and using the Bible; "the source that drives all people to the way of light". The teacher concluded the

lesson by encouraging learners to pray to God in order to be good people in future; to pray together at home; to pray before eating; and to pray for God's blessing. This teacher stressed that RME was here so that all people worship God.

Teacher 9 taught learners that sometimes people found themselves in situations such as that of Job, and that they should trust God to overcome temptations.

8.4 Interpretation of the findings of the classroom observations

The researcher sat quietly in the classrooms and took notes of what was going on. Themes that emerged from the classroom observations included lesson preparation, classroom environment, resources, discipline, lesson presentation, teaching strategies, communication, learner's tasks and handling of the RME lesson.

According to the research results from the classroom observations, all teachers put great emphasis on moral development and moral behaviour/discipline of learners. Teacher 3 gave the example of cleaning the classroom as a good form of discipline for learners when they did something wrong.

Participants in this study believed that before learners understood discipline and moral obligations, they had to understand the rules set by schools and society. Teacher 2 emphasised that RME should be taken very seriously to enable learners to distinguish what is right from what is wrong. In the same vein, teacher 5 commented that RME was a very interesting subject shaping learners to become disciplined and trustworthy.

From the teachers' comments, the researcher concluded that moral discipline is not inborn, but learners have to acquire it and develop it, both for their own good and for the good of others. Once learners have learnt what is right and what is wrong, they behave accordingly when they interact with others. In this way, learners learn to respect class rules and rules set by their society. Moreover, for teachers to have a disciplined class, the teacher must serve as a role model and a guide for learners to follow. This view is supported by Durkheim (1961) who argues that moral discipline is not only part of moral life, but also plays an important function in forming character and personality in general. Following this logic, we can say that teachers not only train learners to know about all aspects of life, but also to become good people in life.

Teacher 5 stated that learners must learn to communicate well with different religious groups in the class.

Another participant raised a concern that learners were not disciplined and lacked politeness; they disturbed others during lessons. This participant believed that learners must learn to respect their classmates, and that it was the responsibility of the teachers to teach learners to understand moral discipline and responsibility.

This study found that although the participating teachers taught RME as an academic subject, they also focused on individual behaviour of the learners, trying to mould them and to address their needs. For example, when one of the learners disturbed the class, the teacher told the learner to either clean the classroom or stand in the middle of the class for a while. The teacher then explained to the learner not to repeat the mistake because it was wrong and totally unacceptable. The teacher also explained to the whole class the importance of following the rules set by the school and the community.

Another example was when a learner bullied a classmate while the teacher was teaching. The teacher stopped teaching and asked the learner to stand up. As the learner was standing up, the teacher explained that it was wrong to harm other learners and it disturbed the class. The learner felt ashamed and changed his bad behaviour.

Fung (2001) observes that in the process of acquiring moral values, learners do not have the tendency (or even the capacity) to disturb others. Rather, the learners learn to conform and to be part of a group and society in general. Here, Fung seems to be agreeing that in the process of teaching and learning, even outside the classroom, learners do not have any right to bully others.

Iita (2012a) describes bullying thus:

“Most bullies have excellent self-esteem, but feel great shame when their failures or shortcomings are exposed. Emotional bullying is the most common form of bullying in Namibian schools and it includes: name calling, gossiping and spreading rumours, insults, teasing and exclusion from the group. Bullying is a form of violence and cannot be tolerated in our society”.

Teachers should condemn bullying and teach learners to refrain from bullying others because it is a violent and very bad practice, which cannot be tolerated by any society. Bullying in schools is not just a problem for the victim, but it makes all learners feel unsafe and it makes the school environment unsafe for everyone. It is a type of immoral and undisciplined practices.

Therefore, school principals are expected to visit classes in order to assist teachers in handling some crucial issues hindering the teaching and learning process inside and outside classroom situations.

8.5 The role of school principals during class visits

The role of school principals is to observe and monitor teaching and learning in schools. This involves inspecting teachers' professional documents, such as schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes, records of marks, and observing teachers while they teach.

One of the main functions of school principals is therefore classroom observation, which should be carried out for different purposes: to assist teachers; to ensure quality teaching in the schools; and for performance appraisal.

The researcher is of the opinion that if school principals properly guide, support and direct teachers, classroom observation will be seen as a means to achieve meaningful learning outcomes.

The researcher suggests that the data collected from this study can be used for the improvement and implementation of the RME curriculum, and strategies can be designed to enhance learning by improving teachers' classroom behaviour.

Olivia (1993) suggests that, "one of the most important functions of a school principal in any school is that of being an instructional leader". This means that the role of the school principal is to supervise teaching and learning in school in order to ensure that quality instruction takes place, to equip the school with teaching resource materials, as well as to ensure that teachers give feedback on what learners have learnt.

Olivia is supported by Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) who argue that effective instructional supervision affects the quality of teaching and learning.

A school principal is expected to be an educational visionary, offering direction and expertise to ensure that learners learn effectively (Hoerr 2008:84-85).

Based on the views mentioned above, school principals should play an observational and monitoring role in schools to ensure that teachers do their work as expected and as stated in the curriculum. Therefore, principals should render support to teachers through lesson observation and monitoring for the following reasons: quality assurance by observing and monitoring the quality of teaching; ensuring effective implementation of the subject curriculum; identifying constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process; and finding ways of improving teaching and learning, thereby improving the quality of the learning experience in school. Classroom observation is therefore very important in education.

According to Komoski (1997:105), “lesson observation is a directive act whose ultimate goal is to improve classroom instruction”. If classroom observation is seen as a directive act, it will be beneficial to teachers and learners. It will serve its purpose for curriculum improvement. Classroom observation is a prescribed requirement in the teaching profession designed to help improve teachers’ performance in the classroom.

In the light of the above, Acheson and Gall (2003) argue that classroom observation should not be an autocratic exercise, but collaborative and interactive. This means that school principals should support (interact with) teachers, provide them with the necessary resources to enable them to carry out their work and effectively address the needs of the learners.

8.6 Conclusion

In this study, the classroom observations were aimed at finding out what teachers did in the classrooms. The observational data were regarded as authentic and reliable because observational data were collected in natural settings.

The researcher quietly observed teachers in their classrooms during lessons and recorded what was happening. The researcher did not take part in any class activities.

The themes emerging from the study were identified and categorised. The researcher wrote down all aspects of the learning process, including discipline, distinguishing right from wrong, respect, bullying, etc.

The presentation of the research results was done in light of the responses from individual interviews, observations and questionnaires. The results of this study included teachers' perceptions regarding Religious and Moral Education, moral values being taught to learners, and methods used in teaching RME.

The sub-topics under "moral values being taught to learners" were discipline, distinguishing right from wrong, freedom and responsibility, honesty and trustworthiness, while the sub-topics under "methods of teaching Religious and Moral Education" included individual and group activities, storytelling, cooperative learning etc.

The study found that Religious and Moral Education as a subject played a very significant role in the personal, moral and spiritual development of the learners, as well as instilling positive attitudes in the lives of the learners in a multi-religious and culturally diverse society.

Almost all the teachers who were observed taught Religious and Moral Education as if they were teaching Biblical Instruction, except teacher 9 who differentiated between Religious and Moral Education and Biblical Studies/Biblical Instruction. Although this teacher based his lessons on the Bible since his learners were mostly Christian, he acknowledged that RME was based on various religions, and discussed different religions in lesson introductions.

All participants agreed that the religious and moral development of the learners should be the main focus of RME. Religious values such as discipline, respect, freedom and responsibility among learners were regarded as the dominating issues in teaching the subject.

Some participants indicated the importance of religious values and moral behaviour and that these aspects should not only be viewed on a personal level, but also from a social point of view. They emphasised that social issues such as crime, corruption, domestic violence, gender equality were important topics in teaching RME. This is an indication that the teachers regarded Religious and Moral Education to be an instructional subject dealing with individual moral development for the benefit of the society.

Although all participants agreed on the importance of promoting Religious and Moral Education, most of the participants did not have enough knowledge of the different religions stated in the RME curriculum. Therefore, the participants' understanding of Religious and Moral Education

was insufficient. The teachers did not know the different themes listed in the RME curriculum, except Christianity, which they were familiar with from their childhood.

In the interviews, participants were asked to state the difference between Christianity and other religions, but they were not able to do so. One example is teacher 12, who said, “When talking about Religious and Moral Education, I refer to Christianity. It helps learners to respect their parents, elders and teachers at school”.

During the class observations, this researcher observed that the teachers did not follow themes/topics as listed in the syllabus, but made preferences in choosing topics for the lesson. The teachers preferred to choose topics from any theme in the syllabus as they deemed fit. For example, teacher 10 said, “I use the Bible for the learners to see that it is the truth. I let learners design questions so that they can write Biblical words”.

This chapter discussed the results of the class observations. The next chapter focuses on the implementation of Religious and Moral Education by RME teachers.



CHAPTER 9

DISCUSSIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RME SYLLABUS

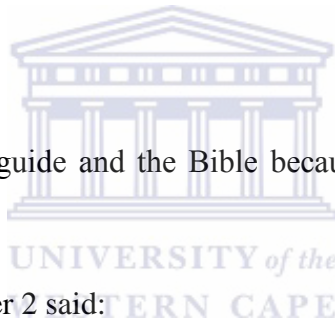
This chapter focuses on the perceptions of the RME teachers regarding their implementation of the syllabus.

9.1 Applying appropriate teaching methods

The previous chapters have shown that the participating teachers tried their best to apply appropriate teaching methods in teaching Religious and Moral Education. However, some participants experienced problems in teaching the subject. The reasons were found to be influences from their Christian background, lack of training in the subject and lack of teaching resource materials for the subject.

Teacher 1 said:

“I use the syllabus, the teacher’s guide and the Bible because no other teaching materials are available”.



In agreement with teacher 1, teacher 2 said:

“Learners respond in the way they show interest in the content of the subject. They also wish to compare stories in the Christian Bible with stories they learn in the Religious and Moral Education subject, stories such as that of Stephen in the Christian Bible with modern martyrs like Archbishop Oscar Romero, Martin Luther King, Archbishop Janani Luwum, Manche Masemola of South Africa, and question why some stories are not mentioned in the Bible. They only hear about Judas and others. However, I try to explain to them that the modern martyrs came after the Bible was written”.

It was clear from the findings that the RME teachers were influenced by their Christian backgrounds in teaching the subject. Even when they were teaching, in most cases they taught the subject as if they were teaching Biblical Studies. This is evidenced by the following quotations of some of the participants.

Teacher 3 said:

“Since more learners in the classroom are Christians, I emphasise on their own morals. I use different methods to teach them”.

Teacher 6 had this to say:

I treat all learners with same treatment because in our school all learners are of the same religion (Christianity). If we could have different religions in our school, I would use different teaching approaches to make it easy so that all learners understand one another’s religions without causing hatred.

I try by all means to accommodate all learners, irrespective of their different religions and beliefs. I apply various methods in teaching the subject; methods like group work and debate. These methods provoke learners to challenge each other.

The second paragraph by teacher 6 contradicts the first paragraph. This might be because the teacher did not differentiate between Biblical Studies and Religious and Moral Education.

Teacher 9 said:

The guidelines we have on teaching Religious and Moral Education are based on various religions, but I am teaching Religious and Moral Education according to the Bible because most of the learners we have are Christians.

However, in the introduction I let the learners know about different religions, such as Hinduism, Islam and so on. In teaching Religious and Moral Education I give Scriptures where I base the lessons.

The researcher observed that there were also some teachers who understood the subject and tried to teach RME as a multi-cultural religious subject in applying the appropriate teaching methods, as indicated by the following participants:

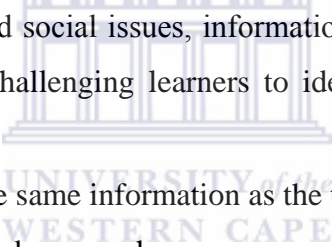
Teacher 5: “I apply the learner-centred approach where learners take part in most of the activities through discovering knowledge”.

Teacher 8: “I mostly use storytelling, question and answer methods”.

Teacher 11: “I use both learner-centred and teacher-centred methods. I do not make use of the textbook, but I use traditional methods of religious beliefs of our Ubuntu-people, but not mostly alien religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism etcetera”.

Teacher 12: “I teach according to what I know and understand from the Bible because I do not have books. I use both teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches. When I teach, some learners do understand. But others consider Religious and Moral Education as a non-promotional subject, which does not change anything whether they pass it or not”.

The study showed that the teachers realised that Religious and Moral Education as a subject focused on appropriate teaching methods about religious beliefs and moral values in classroom situations. These methods include:

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- teaching about personal and social issues, information that enlarges learners’ horizontal and vertical dimensions, challenging learners to identify and evaluate arguments and evidence;
 - giving learners access to the same information as the teacher;
 - avoiding the teacher-centred approach as a means of presentation of information, but employing the learner-centred approach as a way to help learners to find and sift information for themselves;
 - employing discussion of issues in the learning process,
 - avoiding discussing problems that may harm others, respecting learners’ views without expecting personal or faith responses;
 - engaging in controversial issues and conflicting views with constructive responses;
 - encouraging religious and moral values that make educational contribution to the lesson;
 - applying religious and moral education strategies, for example, conflict resolution activities, role-plays, etc.

The researcher concluded that teachers knew when and how to effectively use these various RME strategies, as well as their possibilities and limitations.

9.2 Lack of training and experience for RME teachers

One should take note that some of the concerns regarding Religious and Moral Education as a subject were that few teachers chose to teach the subject and that some of them were not trained to teach the subject. Even at teacher training institutions, only few teachers chose to study the subject, something which contributed to the shortage of RME teachers in schools. The main issue here was that religious and moral topics needed to be taught by teachers who were confident and happy in their teaching; teachers who wished to see their teaching valued by learners, colleagues and the community.

9.3 Constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME

This study revealed that lack of teaching materials/teaching aids, lack of pre-service and in-service training, insufficient period allocations, and workload were some of the major problems that teachers were facing in teaching RME in schools. The following comments from the participants allude to this fact:

Table 26: Teachers' comments on lack of teaching materials/aids

Teacher 1	"When I do my preparations is when I face some problems due to lack of teaching materials. It will be better if I can be provided with teaching materials, and attend in-service training workshops for Religious and Moral Education".
Teacher 2	"We do not have learning and teaching materials, but the office is trying all the best to provide us with what we need to make use in the class to meet the needs of the learners, for example, posters and overhead projectors. Currently, it is good that the textbook has come. Sometimes we go overboard, it is not bad, but when you have the guideline, like text books, you will know how to utilise time and to set a target to cover the syllabus".
Teacher 6	"I experience lack of teaching materials/aids; lack of workshops for the subject; the subject is regarded as a non-promotion subject, which causes learners not to show interest in the subject".
Teacher 7	"No resources for teaching Religious and Moral Education. Some of the topics are allocated a lot of time, like three to four weeks, but the information provided in Religious and Moral Education Teachers' Guide is inadequate, especially when teaching our hearing-impaired learners. No teaching aids or Bible story books with pictures are available because our learners learn through seeing/touching".
Teacher 8	"No teaching materials at all. My learners cannot see, therefore they need concrete objects or materials (touch to learn)".

Teacher 10	“No resources available for lesson preparation. I discovered that some learners were not aware of some information from the Bible and did not having good relationships with others. I give learners Scriptures in Exodus chapter twenty to read the Ten Commandments. I found out that some families do not have the Bible”.
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Another major problem in teaching the subject was lack of pre-service and in-service training workshops for RME teachers.

Participants (teacher 2, teacher 3 and teacher 4) raised this concern:

Table 27: Teachers’ comments on lack of training

Teacher 2	“We need in-service training for Religious and Moral Education, like the training we receive in Life Skills”.
Teacher 3	“Most teachers are not trained at all to teach Religious and Moral Education. Many teachers did not get any opportunity to attend any of the training workshops on Religious and Moral Education. I think there are no workshops prepared for RME teachers”.
Teacher 4	“I experienced lack of resources or teaching materials and in-service training workshops”.
Teacher 8	“There is lack of support, like when we go for workshops there is always nothing like Religious and Moral Education workshops, but workshop trainers are concentrating on other subjects, for example, Languages”.
Teacher 12	Also cited the problem of lack of training workshops and teaching materials.
Teacher 13	Also emphasised the issue of lack of training for teachers to teach the subject; that teaching and learning materials were sometimes not available; that sometimes the syllabus was not clear; and that advisory teachers for the subject were not available.

Some participants considered insufficient time allocation to Religious and Moral Education as one of the constraints that affected the teaching and learning of the subject. Teacher 2 pointed out, “Teachers need more time for Religious and Moral Education because the time to teach and discuss Religious and Moral Education issues is very little; within a period of 40 minutes per week you cannot do much as is expected by the syllabus; we cannot go in-depth with the subject”.

Teacher 11 was the only participant, who said, “Learners are not mostly interested in the subject because they regard it as non-promotional subject. Learners complain that better textbooks are

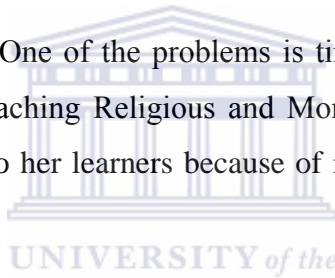
required and information regarding our own religion should be added in our text. Learners do not regard other religions as strengthening or of their gain”.

This researcher therefore concludes that the main constraints affecting teachers’ implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus in school are:

- lack of teaching resource materials;
- lack of training workshops for teachers; and
- the non-promotional status allocated to the subject.

The study also found that participants also encountered problems from the curriculum because most of them did not have enough time to teach Religious and Moral Education due to their heavy teaching workloads and the insufficient period allocations to the subject.

One participant (teacher 8) said, “One of the problems is time allocations because we do only have two periods per week for teaching Religious and Moral Education”. She added that she would have loved to teach RME to her learners because of its special nature, but unfortunately she could not due to limited time.



In the researcher’s view these issues raised show that Religious and Moral Education was designed to address the needs of the learners. However, the subject cannot serve its purpose because of lack of resource materials, insufficient periods allocated to the subject and other constraints affecting the implementation of the subject.

In line with the constraints of heavy workloads and insufficient period allocations, teacher 2 commented thus:

Teachers need more time for Religious and Moral Education because the time to teach and discuss issues is very little; within two periods of 40 minutes per week you cannot do much as is expected by the syllabus; we cannot go in-depth with the subject.

Again, the content related to Religious and Moral Education is not deep enough. I know there are some teaching kits of Religious and Moral Education in the staff

room. I think they could be used in teaching Religious and Moral Education. I know there is a lot of teaching information in the teachers' guide. However, there is no time to use these Religious and Moral Education teaching materials because my schedule is very tight. I do not have time to use these teaching materials in the classrooms.

9.4 Overcoming constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME

The teachers made the following suggestions to overcome the abovementioned constraints:

Table 28: Teachers' suggestions for overcoming constraints

Teacher 1	"Once I take an extra mile, for example, doing research regarding Religious and Moral Education as a subject, then I will overcome the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education".
Teacher 2	"Giving learners work to do on their own; giving them some topics to prepare themselves for the coming lesson; and letting them do their own summaries and discuss what they have summarised in the next period, will help to cover the syllabus.
Teacher 3	"During the planning of my lessons, I try to apply the pre-knowledge of learners and then add the content that I want to teach. I try to use different methods to attract learners' interest and to help them understand better".
Teacher 4	"If the Ministry of Education provides Religious and Moral Education teachers with Religious and Moral Education books/materials and workshops, it will be very helpful to overcome problems related to the teaching of the subject, and teachers will be keen to teach the subject.
Teacher 5	"Encouragement and motivation for learners to study for the next time and giving learners activities based on the subject under discussion for assessment purposes will help to overcome problems, as well as giving reports to the learners. Grades seem to be a motivation for the subject".
Teacher 6	"Leaving the topics that I do not have information about due of lack of teaching materials and training workshops is a solution to the constraints that hinder the teaching of the subject".
Teacher 7	"Teachers need to be provided with materials and text books with activities to test the knowledge and understanding of the learners. Teachers should also be provided with a mentor and training workshops".
Teacher 8	"To overcome such problems, we need to be provided with teaching materials because it is very difficult to get textbooks for some of the topics indicated in the curriculum".

Teacher 9	“I encourage the learners to throw away the traditional beliefs and explain to the learners the life Jesus was living. In this way I pull them away from the traditional beliefs and let them understand the values of Christianity and make their own decisions”.
Teacher 10	“I duplicate materials from the textbook available; try by all means to design the program to link with the Religious and Moral Education subject; encourage learners to describe the Lord’s Prayer, which other teachers take as a poem and use it during morning devotions at their turns”.
Teacher 11	“I need better textbooks of our religious education. It is necessary to teach a learner his/her religion first than teaching the learner other religious beliefs. More workshops should be conducted with practical examples of what our ancestors used to do in the olden days. Also our cultural heritages must be part and parcel of our practice at school where we as traditional customs play drums/oongoma and our traditional rituals should be exercised (cultural items make learners proud and feel good”.
Teacher 12	“When teachers attend training workshops and the need for textbooks is addressed, the problem will be solved”.
Teacher 13	“I ask for information from cluster teachers regarding the subject”.

9.5 The needs of the learners

The Religious and Moral Education subject in the school curriculum was designed in such a way as to address the needs of the learners and to help them to solve life problems. The subject was aimed at developing knowledge and skills of the learners so that they gain hope in addressing life problems. Cross-curriculum subjects such as HIV/AIDS education, career education, sex education and environmental studies were also introduced to respond to life problems and taught alongside employment-oriented subjects to develop new interests in life.

In this way, the subject Religious and Moral Education attempts to address the needs of the learners and promote their personal change. The subject helps learners to open their eyes for various careers so that they will not have to stay at one job when employed, but can move from one career to another career before their retirement. Therefore, learners need knowledge and skills, which they can apply and benefit from, both for themselves and for others. The subject responds to the needs of the learners as participants in this study indicated:

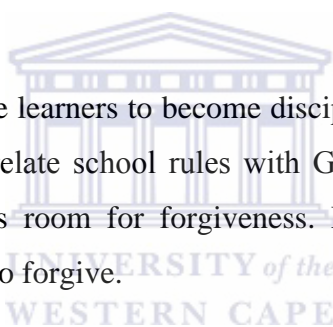
Teachers 1 pointed out that they had different learners at their schools with different problems, but they tried by all means to help them where they could. They talked to the learners in order to find out what the problems were, and tried to give advice regarding the problems.

Teacher 4 said,

I search for information from here and there in order to respond to the needs of the learners. Sometimes I refer learners with problems to Life Skills teachers; for example, learners who are sleeping in class”. Most of the learners in our school come from well off homes, which causes problems for learners coming from poor families, for example, no food box for the poor learners, while others enjoy their nice food provided by their parents/guardians.

Teacher 5 stated thus:

Through the subject we shape learners to become disciplined and trustworthy people in life. I personally like to relate school rules with God’s commandments. I teach learners that there is always room for forgiveness. Like God forgives, teachers, principals and parents can also forgive.



In teacher 6’s view:

“Religious and Moral Education subject is the subject helps very much in terms of counselling learners regardless of their religious backgrounds. It encourages learners by telling them about God’s loving care, and helps to boost someone’s faith”.

The subject helps learners to have good behaviour; to know how to behave towards their teachers, parents and members of the community. It teaches learners to obey God’s commandments, as well as school rules and regulations. Learners see God’s commandments not far from school rules and regulations. They believe that obeying school rules and regulations is closely related to obedience to God’s commandments.

Teacher 7 said, “There are some topics, like ‘Belonging’, whereby the learner will learn to feel accepted and develop a sense of belonging”.

Similarly, teacher 8 said, “There are many topics in Religious and Moral Education that cover most aspects of life. For example, learners are taught about prayer, forgiveness and reconciliation, as well as the concept of equality in the eyes of God and men”.

Teacher 9 used Religious and Moral Education as a subject to give counselling and comfort both to learners and teachers in different situations, either related to work or to family.

Teacher 10 viewed Religious and Moral Education as very important with regard to all subjects and as the mother of all subjects because learners who are not encouraged at home got encouraged from Religious and Moral Education. According to this teacher, there was a link between RME topics, which helped the learners to understand. Teacher 10 said, “The subject helps learners to become meaningful in future through passing all the subjects. It also strengthens the minds of learners to study. In my teaching, I am not specific on one subject but I link subjects through my teaching experiences”.

Teacher 11 said:

“I teach learners to respect God, to make Jesus King and to respect elders and also to respect culture, beliefs, norms and values of the society where they belong. I do not encourage them to take the resurrection of Jesus just as a historical fact, because Jesus was crucified because of our sins and his resurrection only happened once. Learners should know this and tell the next generations”.

Teacher 12 said:

When learners have problems, the teacher can help by talking to individual learner. The teacher can give assistance by taking some texts from the Bible, explaining the texts to the learner, and praying. Like, one day, a learner came to me saying: “Madam, I did something wrong because I went out with a boy”. I read something from the Bible, we talked a little bit and I advised the learner not to do it again, then we prayed. Now I realise that the learner has changed for the good. As our moral responsibility, we also give food to learners.

Teacher 13 commented as follows:

Religious and Moral Education encourages learners to cope with life situations, like Jesus who suffered but at the end inherited the kingdom of God. Teacher teaches learners that good things are ahead. At our school, we have a feeding program and if we do not provide, learners will not be happy.

Religious and Moral Education's contribution to the school and community's efforts to address life problems is effective when it is educational, giving relevant information about problems; identifying religious and moral issues; evaluating issues; and helping learners to learn methods for studying life issues and finding solutions. These are some of the reasons for parents to send their children to school.

Parents send their children to school for education purposes so that at the end their children get good jobs. On the other hand, parents believe that through education their children will grow as good citizens. Also, parents send their children to school to develop good moral growth and human qualities. Both teachers and parents expect learners to learn things that will help them in life. This can only materialise if parents, teachers and school principals work together for learners' moral development and if adequate support is given to Religious and Moral Education teachers.

9.6 The role of the teachers in implementing the curriculum

This study noted various dimensions of a curriculum, such as: curriculum as content or subject matter; curriculum as a program of planned activities; curriculum as intended learning outcomes; and curriculum as experience, etc.

In view of the RME curriculum, this study concentrated more on the learner-centred approach. This view is supported by Dewey (1902) who argued for the present experience of the learner in education and advocates for a learner-centred curriculum. Therefore, the role of the teacher is to implement the curriculum as a facilitator for individual growth, development and self-realisation of the learner.

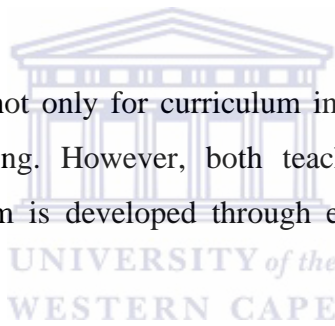
According to Becker (1992:31), research is a way of investigating people's experiences of life events and the meanings these events have to them. Therefore, experience is a valid, rich and rewarding source of knowledge.

The role of the teacher in implementing the curriculum is to incorporate learners' experiences in teaching and learning because the instructional curriculum is a framework for education.

Experience is the source of knowledge and the basis of behaviour. "Experience of what we are aware of at any point in time is the foundation of our knowledge of ourselves, of other people and the world in general." (Becker 1992:11)

Becker comments that daily events are a valuable and productive source of knowledge, and people can learn much about them and gain key insights into the nature of the events in their daily lives.

Again, the role of the teacher is not only for curriculum implementation, but the teacher also plays the role of decision making. However, both teachers and learners co-develop the curriculum because the curriculum is developed through every act of teaching and learning (Grundy 1998:33).



As stated earlier, this study focused more on learner-centred education, whereby the teacher plays a facilitative role, while the learners are more actively participating in the teaching and learning process. In this case, the teacher is a mediator to transmit information from the curriculum, while learners are doing what the teacher expects them to do. In fact, the role of the teacher is to encourage and motivate learners to participate in the lesson. Therefore, if the teachers play the facilitative role in the learning process, learning will be more effective.

In agreement with this, Brunner (1966) suggests using more intrinsic rewards than extrinsic incentives in order to enhance learners' motivation for learning. Brunner's view is a good teaching strategy for teachers' intervention in the teaching and learning process in classroom situations. In this way, the teacher would apply learner-centred education, instead of a teacher-centred approach. The learner-centred approach is the teaching methodology currently expected for all teachers in education. This implies that good teachers play an important role in improving

and reinforcing desirable learning behaviour by encouraging and exposing learners to various ways of studying.

Kolstoe (cited in Lowman 1984:3) argues that the example set by the teacher's behaviour is of the utmost importance in reinforcing learners' motivation. Teachers can motivate learners through their involvement in cultural activities, academic dedication, good social behaviour, showing professional responsibility, serious attitudes towards their responsibility, healthy relations with colleagues and other members of the community; inviting learners to share their learning experiences regarding the subject and encouraging learners for independent and group learning.

Religious and Moral Education teachers can use learner activities to get them involved in the teaching and learning situation and to encourage them to learn.

Lowman (1984:12) argues that it is very important to arouse the right emotions during the time of learning, emotions linked with appropriate cognitive activity, regarding new ideas and understanding in connection with the relevance of textbooks, study guides and notes for real life. Teachers can do this by acknowledging learners' learning experiences, helping learners to visualise the final goal of their education, encouraging learners to talk about their problems, and allowing learners to suggest solutions to problems.

If teachers and learners know each other and work together in developing the curriculum through teaching and learning, it would help them to meet learners' needs and enrich their learning process. Schubert (1986:421) argues that it is very important for the teacher to engage in dialogue with learners during the teaching and learning process because teachers influence learners on how to learn, while learners influence teachers on how to teach. This means that teachers and learners are interdependent.

The above discussion shows that RME teachers have a significant impact on learners' learning behaviour and motivation.

9.7 Support for RME teachers by school principals and fellow teachers

The study revealed that in most cases, Religious and Moral Education teachers did not receive support from school principals or from fellow teachers. Below are their comments regarding support:

Table 29: Teachers' comments regarding support

Teacher 1	"I do not receive any support. When I do not understand something I have to go and ask colleagues to render me help".
Teacher 2	"I do not really receive any support, only when I ask someone to explain for me on certain topics which I do not understand, either a teacher or school principal. Sometimes I even phone my parents at home to help me. Mostly I use the internet to find the information I need, and I have my own computer which normally I use for information searching. On my computer I download a program called Encarta, which is good for students and research papers, as well as for projects. This is actually the program I use even when I am at home because the program is full of information".
Teacher 5	"I do not get any support from the school principal or from colleagues in order to prepare for lessons".
Teacher 6	"I get support from colleagues who also teach the same subject. We share one book called Religious and Moral Education, Grades 8-10, written by Paul Isaak. However, the book does not have all the information we need".
Teacher 7	"No support, but what I try to do is to test the learners through drawings, for some topics we get stuck on, with our hearing impaired learners"
Teacher 8	"Hardly any support, but sometimes I get support from colleagues".
Teacher 9	"I do not get support from the educational officers, except the enforcement that the subject must be taught. The only support I get is from the Gideon's Bible distributor".
Teacher 10, teacher 11 teacher 12	Did not receive support, but they struggled to get information and taught what they knew and understood about the subject.

Eight out of the fourteen participants stated that they did not receive any support from school principals, but some of them received support from fellow teachers.

When some of the teachers did not understand certain issues, they consulted others for help. Although some schools had computers, some teachers preferred to use their own computers where there was a wider choice of good programs for learning and for research.

9.8 Teachers as agents for promoting good religious and moral behaviour in learners

The aim of teaching Religious and Moral Education in schools is to develop and promote good religious and moral behaviour in the learners and values such as respect for others, freedom and responsibility, discipline etc. In the teaching of RME, teachers are expected to put more emphasis on these moral values. Teachers should take into an account that the life-event teaching approach is a helpful strategy in enhancing religious and moral education for the holistic development of the learners. Therefore, the main function of the RME syllabus is to teach Religious and Moral Education themes in order to close the gaps in cross-curricular areas and to develop values (Minutes of Curriculum Panel meeting of 8-10 July 2008).

In the current RME syllabus there are assessment tasks set for RME learners and for teachers to give learners feedback in order to develop learners' values and attitudes, as well as self-reflection abilities in their day to day lives. The assessment is an interactive process involving teachers, learners and parents.

School principals and teachers are therefore the main actors in Religious and Moral Education teaching and learning. The curriculum clearly stated that the school principals should facilitate better connections among RME teachers so that the subject informs discipline in school and society (Ministry of Education 2005; 2007a; 2007b; 2007c).

Bull (1969:20) observes that discipline imposed on learners by adults is needed as a preparation for self-discipline. This is true because learners' moral development needs to be guided by teachers.

The requirements of RME teachers as mentioned in the curriculum are related to their professional development regarding knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes towards the subject. The implications of RME themes are indicated in the RME syllabi for Grades 1-10, focusing on individual personal growth and communal living in order to help learners to

maintain good religious and moral behaviour, become confident in what they do in life and grow as responsible citizens.

Thus, RME provides teachers with some teaching strategies and examples for promoting the subject through teaching and learning. In this way, the RME syllabus paves way for teachers to implement the subject through the medium of instruction as given in the syllabus for the development of learners' competencies, skills, good values and attitudes in the personal, social, academic and spiritual areas. This should make it easier for RME teachers to implement the syllabus.

This study revealed that Religious and Moral Education learning themes were determined according to three Grades: Lower Primary Phase (Grades 1-4); Upper Primary Phase (Grades 5-7) and Junior Secondary Phase (Grades 8-10).

Although Religious and Moral Education was designed as one of the non-promotional subjects in the Namibian Curriculum, the research findings found that the majority of participants were of the idea that RME should become a promotional subject, arguing that it is a good subject affecting all areas of study and helping learners to become good people in life.

This idea was supported by teacher 10 who stated that RME is a good subject that could change learners' behaviour. According to this teacher, "the subject links the learners, home, school and churches. It helps learners to have respect; it encourages and builds the future of the learners, as well as helping learners to learn other subjects. Therefore, it should be a promotional subject".

9.9 Insufficient period allocations

On the problem of insufficient period allocations (one period of 40 minutes per week) for RME, this study found that there was need for the schools to make flexible use of the teaching time for RME classes. Such flexibility includes single period lessons, double period lessons, or additional lessons in order to cater for the learners' development needs. In line with this idea, teacher 2 lamented that teachers needed more time for RME because teachers covered very little in the allocated time of one period of 40 minutes per week.

If learners are to benefit from this subject, they should be given an opportunity to learn both for personal benefit and for service, whereby they get involved in community service, such as visiting elderly people, HIV/AIDS victims, etc. This requires time and resources. In this case, schools can apply for government funding in order to enable RME teachers to expose their learners to community service. Such outdoor learning experience can add value to the learning process, in addition to the interaction between teachers and learners inside the classroom.

The research findings showed some coherence in the interpretation of religious education and moral values by all participants. Generally, the perceptions of the participants regarding religious and moral values were in line with the RME curricula for Grade 6 of 1999, Grades 1-4 of 2005, Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10 of 2007. The moral values include human rights, respect for others, freedom and responsibility, discipline, population, love, sex and marriage.

9.10 Differentiating between what is right and what is wrong

The table below shows participants' responses in relation to the values stated in the Religious and Moral Education curriculum for the mentioned grades.

Table 30: Teachers' perceptions regarding moral values in relation to RME curricula

Grade 6 of 1999	Grades 1-4 of 2005	Grades 5-7 of 2005	Grades 8-10 of 2007
Sex outside marriage is wrong	A sense of belonging to family, religious groups, community and environment	Distinguishing between right and wrong	Responsibility
It is good to start having sex when you finish your education	Phases of life, the sacred and festivals	Demonstrate good action and bad action, e.g. respect for others; appreciate and tolerate views and beliefs different from their own;	Involvement in community service; well-being of an individual coupled with the collective well-being of the community
Everybody in Namibia will agree that sex before puberty is wrong	Social values and children's rights and responsibilities	Getting along well with others; accepting different opinions; accepting different religions, beliefs and values	Caring for elders, orphans and vulnerable children

During the interviews, most participants interpreted moral values in line with the RME curriculum. However, some participants did not accept an open teaching and learning culture. For example, teacher 4 was worried about misleading ideas raised by undisciplined learners.

The researcher is of the view that if a learner does something wrong, the teacher should correct the learner.

Most participants in this study had good ideas on developing teaching and learning attitudes regarding the implementation of Religious and Moral Education as a school subject.

Teacher 2 stressed the interaction between teachers and learners as something very important in the educational development of the learners. She argued that learning activities were used in RME because learners could learn from others.

Teacher 13 also agreed that sharing learning activities by learners was very important for RME. She said, “I use the learner-centred approach, divide learners in groups, give them activities and feedback. I also give them assignments to ask parents for information”.

Some participants, e.g. teacher 6, were of the view that “learners cannot play a passive role in the Religious and Moral Education subject because moral development of the learner is linked to their knowledge, but not to their ages due to their personal experiences. Therefore, individual differences exist among learners regarding religious and moral learning. As a result, teachers need to provide learners with more opportunities to express their ideas in order to understand them”.

It is clear from the above lesson that RME opens the eyes and minds of learners to avoid using drugs.

The participants’ responses revealed that teaching religious and moral values was very important for the development of the learners. Participants understood and agreed on the need to promote Religious and Moral Education in schools. The participants also recognised their role in teaching RME. They had a high degree of concern regarding the subject, and a positive attitude towards it.

9.11 Suggestions for effective curriculum implementation by RME teachers

From the results of this study, the researcher suggests that in order to strengthen the promotion of Religious and Moral Education as a school subject, the Ministry of Education (policy maker, curriculum designer and implementer), as well as the University of Namibia (UNAM) (student-teachers trainer), should put more emphasis on the provision of teaching resource materials for the subject and for professional training of RME teachers.

This means that the Ministry of Education and UNAM should spend more money on producing and acquiring teaching resource materials for schools and for the university.

The two institutions should also spend more money on professional training of RME teachers for effectiveness of teaching the subject in schools.

On the other hand, this researcher discovered that some teaching kits/electronic teaching aids relevant for the teaching of RME were found in some staff rooms, but the teachers were not making use of them. RME teachers are practitioners in implementing the curriculum and utilising all the resource materials at their disposal. The none-utilisation of available resource materials by the participating RME teachers was a matter of great concern that should be immediately addressed.

9.12 The nature of Religious and Moral Education

The researcher discovered that there are different issues to be considered in order to understand the nature of Religious and Moral Education. According to Kerr (2002:232), the nature of Religious and Moral Education should be determined according to its breadth, depth and complexity.

This study found that RME should be understood in terms of religious and moral values because the subject is chiefly composed of religious and moral issues. The role of the teacher regarding religious and moral values is discussed below:

According to Hansen (2001), education as such is a moral endeavour, which makes teaching a thoroughly moral activity. The teacher should teach learners good moral behaviour in order to grow as good religious and moral people in life.

Piaget (1932:1-10) posits as a main thesis that in order to develop the conscious realisation of learners' moral thought, theoretical or verbal moral reflection is an effective means of moral development. For this reason, he is of the opinion that in the classroom situation, the teacher as an instructor should teach learners in order to help them to act and think in good moral ways. This means that teacher, who is seen by the society as an educator is a role model for the learners. Therefore, teachers should do what the society is expecting them to do as educators, curriculum developers and teachers of the learners. They should make decisions on what to teach and how to teach and determine what is important for which group of learners.

The researcher expected teachers to understand the curriculum and to know the needs and interests of the learners as providers of religious and moral education due to their involvement in the curriculum.

As mentioned earlier, the implementation of the RME curriculum is determined by teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the teaching and learning of the subject. Accordingly, the study of teachers' understanding and attitudes towards RME revealed the degree of implementation of RME curriculum and the constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of the subject.

9.13 Assessment of RME

Some teachers and learners perceive certain subjects as having a higher value and as more important than Religious and Moral Education. Although some teachers did not like to teach the subject, they were forced to teach it because of its compulsory, yet non-promotional nature in the Namibian school curriculum.

In Namibia, RME is assessed like other subjects and learners are accorded marks. Also because the subject is examinable, for example, at the University of Namibia (UNAM), where the student-teachers are trained, the importance of RME is counted.

However, some schools do not take the subject very seriously. It can be concluded from the study that, in schools where RME is assessed through various tasks, learners see the importance and value of the subject and seriously study it, while learners in schools that do not assess the subject do not take it seriously. Because some schools engage in assessment and evaluation, while others do not, this has created a huge gap regarding the importance of RME in schools and

in the actual implementation of the subject in the classroom. Although RME is a compulsory subject in the school curriculum, the subject is still not taken seriously by some teachers and learners. As a result, some teachers see it as a nominal adjunct to the curriculum, and assessment and evaluation are seen as a rubber stamp rather than a genuine exercise.

If teachers neglect the subject, learners will not value it; neither will the learners see it as making a significant contribution to their quality of life. Regardless of these dilemmas, most of the teachers and learners who participated in this study accepted and believed that RME was very important and made significant contribution to the quality of their lives. Therefore, Religious and Moral Education needs meaningful recognition and support from all stakeholders in education in order to contribute to the betterment of schools and communities.

9.14 Summary

From the interviews and classroom observations, this study observed that teachers were approaching religious and moral issues in different ways.

Regarding teaching methods, teachers selected teaching materials according to their preferences. This was revealed in the teachers' responses to the interviews and in the classroom observations. The participants selected teaching materials based on the curriculum or in relation to the teaching and learning environment. Personal growth education for learners was the main determining factor for teachers' choice of teaching and learning materials for RME.

Apart from the abovementioned issues, the Bible was the main source for teachers to select teaching and learning materials from. Many participants stated that they taught RME in terms of Biblical Studies or Biblical Instruction.

Some participants preferred teaching RME to learners at the morning school assemblies or at meeting times, while others used extra-curricular activities as a way of teaching the subject.

The study has shown that the teaching and learning environment can also affect teachers' implementation of RME in schools. Above all, lack of teaching resource materials, lack of training workshops for teachers and insufficient period allocations to the subject can negatively affect teachers' implementation of the curriculum.

The behaviour of learners, e.g. indiscipline and lack of politeness or respect for fellow learners and for teachers, is another factor affecting the teachers' implementation of RME.

Some participants considered the teaching of RME as a life issue. They liked to discuss different issues with the learners, issues they had picked up from newspapers, televisions, magazines etc.

It is interesting to note that the participating RME teachers used social events to promote the subject in school. They emphasised religious and moral values in their implementation of the subject.

Again, this study noted that lack of support from school principals and fellow teachers was one of the constraints affecting teachers' implementation of RME. It has been shown from the study that school principals should support the teachers and provide them with the resources needed for teachers to be able to carry out their work. School principals should ensure that teachers receive guidance and support to enable them to teach effectively. Also, it is the task of school principals to ensure that teachers attend upgrading courses in order to update and enrich their teaching and learning skills.

On the other hand, teachers are expected to teach and assess learners, and to use the results to provide support to learners to improve, and to help parents to understand where and why improvement is needed.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that in situations where learning is exciting, where teachers and learners are supported and where there is a shared sense of purpose, learning will not be difficult (Parker & Day, as cited in Kruger 2003:207).

With regard to RME teachers' perceptions and implementation of the curriculum, the researcher was convinced that the participants' knowledge and understanding of the subject was insufficient. Religious and Moral Education was generally understood as being the same as Biblical Instruction or Biblical Studies. Some of the RME teachers regarded Christianity as the entire Religious and Moral Education. However, Christianity is merely a part of the subject, and should be considered as a religion among other religions. Religious and Moral Education is different from Biblical Instruction because Christianity is one religion among other religions such as Islam, African Traditional Religions, Hinduism, etc. It is important for teachers to realise

that all the major religions form the subject Religious and Moral Education. The RME curricula of 2005 (Grades 5-7) and 2007 (Grades 8-10) show different religions and their moral values, based on themes which should be taught in school. Teachers should perceive these themes as coming from different religions because Religious and Moral Education is diverse in nature; composed of African traditional religions, Christianity, Hinduism, Baha'i faith, Islam and so on.

The research findings of this study revealed that all participants belonged to Christianity. Therefore, they taught RME from a Christian viewpoint. From multi-religious beliefs and moral values, these teachers have put more emphasis on Christian education rather than religious and moral education. This finding regarding teachers' perceptions of RME was new, although they had similar perceptions regarding the interpretation of RME. They all agreed on the need for correctly teaching and promoting Religious and Moral Education in school.

The participating teachers perceived the subject as having an instructional purpose advocated in the concept of quality teaching and as important for providing a quality learning environment to learners. Teachers' expectations of the learners are an influential factor affecting their behaviour towards religious and moral education at the implementation level in schools. The participating teachers expressed a high degree of concern regarding the implementation of the subject in schools. They recognised their roles and understood the need for implementing the RME curriculum at school level. These teachers considered the issue of religious and moral values to be the most important part of Religious and Moral Education, and regarded discipline, respect, tolerance, freedom and responsibility as major components in teaching RME.

In terms of the constraints affecting teachers' implementation of the RME syllabus, this study noted that the curriculum and the teachers' perceptions competed with each other. While teachers took the responsibility to teach religious and moral values to learners, the syllabus controlled its implementation. Teachers tried to teach within certain periods of time, taking into account the assessment tasks assigned to the subject. At the same time the teachers needed to compete with the curriculum framework. Therefore, although the teachers seemed to understand the individual needs of the learners, the syllabus was not flexible enough to allow them to take care of learners' individual differences. The teachers found themselves in difficult situations.

The behaviour of the teachers towards Religious and Moral Education therefore depends on their decision making abilities. Although they face some constraints in teaching the subject, they are required to implement RME syllabus as stipulated. Also, the disciplinary problems of learners cause teachers to want to teach religious and moral values in schools. The influence of teachers by learners is not something new in education, but it is something which teachers have to live with (Gordon 1978).

In addition to regional consultation, interviews and observations, the researcher also made use of various documents in answering guided questions. These documents provided additional insight or information to the study. The documents included those used by curriculum panel members, consultation of teachers and learners, syllabi, teaching materials, minutes of meetings, school records and other kinds of written materials related to this study (Genzuk 2001).

Genzuk (2001) and Hoepfl (1997) agree that a researcher should consult documents containing qualitative data. From the document analysis, the study found that the RME curriculum included themes for Grades 1-10. However, these themes were allocated insufficient periods, for example, two periods of 40 minutes per week for RME. This period allocation was according to the Ministry of Education for the Religious and Moral Education syllabi of 2005 and 2007. However, at the University of Namibia level where student-teachers were currently being trained, Religious and Moral Education as a subject was allocated 4 periods per week (UNAM Prospectus 2011).

The amount of periods allocated to the subject by the Ministry of Education is too little in light of the themes in the curriculum. As a result, teachers cannot pay adequate attention to the teaching of RME.

Despite these constraints that hinder the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education in schools, the attitudes of the teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum should be considered as promising.

CHAPTER 10

DEBATES IN NAMIBIA ON THE NEED FOR MORAL FORMATION

10.1 Introduction

People develop morally as they grow in understanding and will power. However, the abilities of people to know what is right and what is wrong and act in accordance with it are encountered by factors that diffuse moral principles. These social factors do not allow people to live up to their moral potential as they may wish or expect.

In life people make choices and while doing so also rate their actions as good or bad. People make remarks such as “that is a good thing to do”; “that is a bad thing to do”; “I do not think that is right” or “it is forbidden”. This is an indication that people constitute and use “conscience” which needs to be formed so that people grow morally.

In this chapter we shall focus on “moral formation” and how to apply insights into this important educational task to the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education programmes within the Namibian school curricula.

10.2 Defining and approaching moral formation

The term morality is derived from the Latin word *mos* or *mores* (plural) which means customs, principles or rules of right conduct. However, there is a difference between the word “moral” and the word “ethics”. Ethics codify morals into a normative study in a way that human actions can be assessed in relation to an ethical system or code of conduct such as a teaching profession (Titus 1953:367).

Formation is the act of creating or forming moral habits. The term formation refers to the operations of bringing things together, shaping or giving a form. Formation comes from the word form which shows a particular way of being or giving something its nature. Thus, moral formation is the operations of bringing about the principles of right human conduct (McKechnie 1983).

One way of approaching moral formation is the development of moral reasoning for making decisions, while the other way is the formation of character. Gula (1989) prioritizes character

formation: just as the application of laws depend on a good judge, so do the character and moral reasoning depend on each other. Musonda (2006:185) goes further to say that reasoning without character will be hollow.

Personally I find Van der Ven's approach to moral formation as set out in his comprehensive study, *Formation of the moral self* (1998), very meaningful since he incorporates a multitude of tested perspectives into a versatile approach to moral formation. He distinguishes two modes of moral formation, the first of which is the *informal* mode which includes "discipline" and "socialization", basic processes that take place in informal settings, such as family, culture and society. Secondly he distinguishes the *formal* mode, which is taken care of by means of more formal settings such as school and religious formation institutions. In the formal setting "transmission of values", "cognitive development", "self-clarification of values" and "emotional development" take place. These six forms of moral development, together, culminate in the seventh, which has been the goal of moral formation since Aristotle: the "formation of character" (Van der Ven 1998:35-42).⁶

a) **Discipline** is instilled from a young age by means of habits or a process of "habituation" (1998:52-55), with the goal of "self-regulation" (1998:55-62), which entails self-observation, self-judgment and self-reaction. Van der Ven uses Durkheim's notion of "the spirit of discipline" (Durkheim 1961:17-55), which starts with respecting the groups the child belongs to and the values and norms of these groups. This helps the child to be embedded in a three-fold spirit of discipline which includes a spirit of communitarianism, multi-culturalism and joint wisdom (Van der Ven 1998:62-79). Discipline is a basic virtue which incorporates the individual into shared values and a shared culture where moral boundaries can be established and critically tested.

b) Moral **Socialization**, according to Van der Ven (1998:85-89) takes place along similar lines as Berger and Luckmann's theory of the socialization of knowledge (1967), i.e. by means of *primary* socialization (the induction of the individual into the world of moral meaning in general), and *secondary* socialization (induction into the world of moral principles and professional roles in society). The "institutionalization" of moral conduct, on the macro-level of society, is based on successful induction into the meso-level of social interaction, and the micro-

⁶ For Van der Ven's definitions of morality, religion and education, see 1998:2-41.

level of the individual “in dialogue” with himself or herself (Van der Ven 1998:89-109). The moral self, in dialogue with its own “conscience” and with the world of informal and more formal social norms, learns to sort out how to handle moral conflicts, difficult choices in moral perspective and eventually also possible compromises in moral perspective. (1998:109-124).

c) *Transmission* of values, especially via cultural traditions, according to Van der Ven (1998:125-179) is filtered through different processes, such as “plurality” (there are various traditions in dialogue, sometimes in harmony and sometimes in conflict); different forms of “rationality”⁷, and different “critical questions” at different stages of the process (e.g. about what constitutes “the good life”; what does it mean to follow “the golden rule”, and what kind of practical wisdom or “phronesis” can help us follow the good life while also taking care of our neighbour?).

d) In order to find a way between the extreme possibilities in addressing the child’s *cognitive development* - that of either indoctrination or relativism (either we tell the child what is right or the child simply chooses what is right) - Van der Ven aligns himself with Kohlberg’s tested theory of stages in moral formation (1998:181-185). In the early childhood or *pre-conventional* stage two sub-stages should be distinguished: 1. obedience and avoidance of punishment and 2: individual instrumental purpose and exchange. In the *conventional* stage another two sub-stages function: 3. mutual interpersonal expectation and 4. social system and conscience maintenance. Finally, in the *post-conventional* stage another two sub-systems are in play: 5. the social contract and 6. universal ethical principles (in a few extra-ordinary cases).

Van der Ven, however, also tries to soften Kohlberg’s rigid application of “stages” (which for Kohlberg ends in the dilemma that true moral development comes (only for a few) at the end of a life full of moral learning. Van der Ven does so by visiting the four main “*stade*” (“stages” or actually “types” of moral formation) of Piaget, and then applies all of this to the Kantian challenge to discern justice for “the other”, and Rawls’ conception of “justice as fairness” in a “blind” situation. (See Van der Ven 1998:186 ff.). Piaget’s keen observations of young children developing remains relevant, according to Van der Ven, and helps anchor our theorising in the “reality” of the “natural tasks” of children at different ages:

⁷ Habermas (1984) distinguishes e.g. between *substantive* rationality – developed along diverse lines of e.g. Aristotle, Kant, Locke, Bentham, Mill, etc, and *procedural* rationality]

1. In the *sensimotor stage* (0-2 years) the child acquires environmental knowledge through sensory stimulation and motor activity, by developing preverbal behaviour and own “rituals”.
2. In the *pre-operational stage* (2-7 years) the child learns language, play, imitation and imagination by employing symbolic behaviour, and in this stage the child learns to “obey” and “respect” rules that apply, but still in a very egoistic, self-centred way.
3. In the *concrete-operational stage* (7-11 years) a de-centric view develops in which proper dialogue, mutuality and cooperation becomes possible, but this is all still “concrete”, i.e. directly linked to personal contact with objects and thus not yet on an abstract level.
4. In the *formal-operational stage* (11 years and older) the child is capable of inductive and deductive thinking, theorising and experimenting. In this stage the “rules” are not only followed out of fear of punishment or self-centred expectation of reward, but they are seen as necessary for the game itself, and they may be changed by mutual agreement. Social contract thus becomes possible. (Van der Ven 1998:186-199)

By applying Piaget and Kohlberg to moral questions of *justice*, Van der Ven confronts the challenges of Immanuel Kant (how can I act in such a way towards others in all circumstances that my behaviour may serve as a norm of justice? and John Rawls (how can a truly utilitarian interest in justice for oneself be combined with a kind of social contract justice for all?). Van der Ven shows how Kohlberg’s analysis of justice in terms of *equality* (distributive justice), *reciprocity* (commutative justice), *equity* (corrective justice) and *universalizability* (procedural justice), “fits” the build-up of his stages towards true universal moral maturity – even though this “final” stage seems out of reach for mere mortals (Van der Ven 1998:202-234). Van der Ven thus affirms the movement from “conventional” to “critical” morality latent in most theories of moral development, including the work of Erikson (see Erikson 1959; 1968).⁸

Erikson’s approach to the “stages of moral development” is interesting in that he identifies specific “tasks” for each stage: a specific *virtue* must be applied to overcome a generic challenge or *crisis*, which leads to the development of appropriate *relationships* in the quest to answer specific *existential questions*. For instance, the first crisis, at age 0-2, is to overcome mistrust in the mother with trust to generate “hope” and to answer the question about trust in the world in general; the second crisis, at age 2-4, is to overcome shame and doubt with “autonomy” vis-à-vis

⁸ For Erikson’s “stages” of psycho-social development, see the table on the next page.

the parents to generate the “will” to be “me”; the next crisis, at age 4-5, is to overcome guilt with initiative in the family, to foster “purpose” (“it is OK for me to do, move, and act”); the challenge at age 5-12 is to develop “competence” in school and vis-à-vis neighbours and others, through industry versus inferiority. It is not difficult to insert Erikson’s “stages” into “Kohlberg”.

Approximate Age	Virtues	Psycho Social Crisis	Significant Relationship ¹	Existential Question	Examples
0–2 years	Hopes	Basic Trust vs. Mistrust	Mother	Can I Trust the World?	Feeding, Abandonment
2–4 years	Will	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Parents	Is It Okay To Be Me?	Toilet Training, Clothing Themselves
4–5 years	Purpose	Initiative vs. Guilt	Family	Is It Okay For Me To Do, Move and Act?	Exploring, Using Tools or Making Art
5–12 years	Competence	Industry vs. Inferiority	Neighbors, School	Can I Make It In The World Of People And Things?	School, Sports
13–19 years	Fidelity	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Peers, Role Model	Who Am I? What Can I Be?	Social Relationships
20–39 years	Love	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Friends, Partners	Can I Love?	Romantic Relationships

40–64 years	Care	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Household, Workmates	Can I Make My Life Count?	Work, Parenthood
65-death	Wisdom	Ego Integrity vs. Despair	Mankind, My Kind	Is It Okay To Have Been Me?	Reflection on Life

e) The *clarification of values* represents Van der Ven's fifth stage (1998:235-282). Issues such as trust, equality, sympathy and empathy, justice and shame and guilt have to be clarified. For this an appropriate hermeneutic needs to be developed by each individual (1998:257 ff.) and an appropriate "authority" established (1998:262 ff.).

f) Van der Ven's sixth "stage" is *emotional development*. Using the willingness of Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu to consciously opt for an attitude and practice of forgiveness against the equally strong emotions of resentment, hurt, anger, elicited by the injustices of apartheid, Kohlberg himself opts for a specific theory of emotional development, the so-called *cognitive interaction emotion theory* (1998:294-301).⁹ He agrees with Frijda (1986; 1993:106-132) who distinguishes several "appraisal exercises" by which the extent and depth of emotions may be measured: for instance using the "law of appeal" to fathom the depth of appeal of an emotion; the "law of the strength of reality" to gauge the subjective intensity of the emotion; the "law of change" to find out what effect a change of situation brings about in emotions; the "law of emotional momentum" to determine which emotions fade away easier, etc. All these exercises are cognitive in nature and deals with interaction with others or with changing circumstances. Van der Ven also follows Kohlberg in his thinking on the need to "manage" emotions. This can be done by means of suppression, control, neutralising, re-directing, or processing of emotions. (1998:302-308). Van der Ven then proceeds to indicate how emotional growth can take place: by

⁹ He thus chooses against alternative theories such as Thomas Aquinas' classic theory of "passions" in which desire or flight, hope and despair, fear or audacity, satisfaction or anger, are played off against each other; or the phenomenological theories of e.g. Scheler (where different layers of emotion are distinguished, e.g. sensual, bodily, psychic or spiritual) or Strasser (where an evolutionary, psychological and subjective layer are distinguished); or thirdly various behaviourist theories - from Pavlov to Lazarus. See Van der Ven 1998: 288-293.

developing of a strong ego identity, basic trust, empathy and sympathy, a sense of justice, and ways of dealing effectively with shame and guilt, and sex and love (1998:309-331).

g) On the matter of virtue ethics and character formation as the goal of all moral formation, Van der Ven sides with the “positive virtue ethics” proponents, linking up with Platonic and Aristotelian ideas about *desires* for goodness, *goodness* or goods as such, and *reasons* for striving towards goodness. Instead of the three negative “M’s”, *moralising* (by invoking guilt), *manipulating* (by reward or punishment), or *modelling* (by expecting the child to strictly follow examples), positive virtue ethics form character by asking questions about choice of identity (“who am I or we?”), choice of action (“what is good for us, rather than which rules are we to follow?”), and facing challenges (“what can we do to change things?”). (See Van der Ven 1998:339-357) However, realising that character ethics tend to be substantive, Van der Ven agrees with Ricoeur that duty ethics (which tend to be procedural) should be combined with character ethics, via situation or contextual ethics (Ricoeur 1992:169-296).

Van der Ven develops his own brand of virtue ethics, stressing an interactive model of character formation, in which narrative and judgement or discernment play a crucial role. He agrees with Aristotle that *friendship* (based not on utility or pleasure, but on goodness) is the most important intrinsic good. Such intrinsic “goods” are embodied in moral virtue, which also forms the *condition sine qua non* for happiness. Crucial to Van der Ven’s idea of character is that the subject of moral action needs to be able to shift from first person, to second person to third person perspectives in narrating, dialoguing the story of goodness, and interacting with others morally.

In this study and in the RME curricula implemented in Namibia, this approach (of a vision of the good life, the values needed for such a life, the virtue to be formed in the person through character building, and the ability to make choices, in specific situations, in view of moral traditions that already embody truths tested over time and in history) is indeed followed. Good moral decisions are needed in people’s daily life, such as when buying and selling things; when playing and having leisure; when making friends or joining social groups, and when interacting with people in community. Thus, people’s moral life determines who they are and how they should act to be fully human and fulfilled human beings (Aumann 1980:277).

10.3 Factors influencing moral formation

The development of character and moral reasoning for making decisions, as ways of approaching moral formation, helps to understand that moral formation is a necessity because it is a reality that people not only make mistakes but that social factors frequently contradict moral values.

There are several ways in which the development of the moral person is affected by social factors (society). Some of the ways in which society influences people's moral conduct are *assimilation*, *socialization* and *manipulation* (see Fromm 1949:59 ff.).

Assimilation is the person's unique way of experiencing the environment, while socialization is the transmission of values and experiences to a developing a person into the society. It is a way in which children are raised in society.

However, manipulation is an attempt to influence the process of a person and social development without people affected being entirely conscious of the process or clued up about the aims and methods involved (see Garrett 1971:7). In this way human conduct is easily affected by bad example; a person's good will can be demoralized and twisted towards doing evil things which will eventually exclude the person from society. In life, good people assimilate bad behaviours from bad people, who frequently manipulate others through their influence.

10.4 Namibian society in the context of moral formation

In order to understand how Namibian society influences people's moral development, we need to understand Namibian history. The first period of Namibian history is the *pre-colonial era* which denotes the period of "undisturbed" traditional moral norms. In this period, each ethnic group or tribe mastered and applied its own morality without much interference from outside.

However, this form of morality was interrupted and replaced during the second period of Namibia's history, namely, the *colonial era* in which the white settlers and missionaries had strong and deliberate influence on human conduct, which steadily undermined traditional moral values in the name of religion or western culture or both.

The morality of Namibia today is shaped by influences from the *post-independence era*, the period from 1990 to the present; the period in which different ethnic groups have been unified

into one Namibia, under pressures and values of the so-called modern period. Today's morality is being shaped by modern (and post-modern) historical forces (good and bad); international agreements and globalization. This means that a pure Namibia, free from the influence of any external forces, does not exist, despite the desire for our people to have a society characterized by good values, by a good moral life. There are elements and factors that do not help Namibians to become what they are meant to be in the sight of God and men.

In any society culture plays a major role. It pertains to abilities, philosophies and forms of behaviour people acquired as members of society, since culture refers to the acquired, cognitive and symbolic aspects of existence. Any given culture teaches its people moral responsibility. Culture is found in images, symbols and proverbs which represent meaning, values and ideals that shape and govern people; moral values such as love, justice, respect, generosity, cooperation, and human dignity, which are practised when working, hunting, and celebrating, via customs, ceremonies, songs, penalties for crimes, etc - all of which show the existence of moral values in traditional Namibian culture (Mwewa 1977:124).

Speaking about the Namibian society today, it is important to observe that the whole society is in transition from a more rural life to a more urban one. The Namibian people circulate between these living worlds, making major adjustments in their behaviour and expectations. Namibians are very mobile people and the culture and societies in towns, city and villages are inextricably interlinked. There is a major interaction amongst and between people living in city, towns and villages. Coming to town does not mean a total rejection of rural life or estrangement from relatives left in rural areas. Nor does dwelling in rural areas mean living as our forefathers and mothers lived. Today telephones/cell phones are everywhere and media reach in all corners of Namibia.

Modern culture, schools, religions, wage labour and cash crops have introduced changes in the villages, towns and city. The Namibian society today reflects a mixture of indigenous and foreign cultures; an emerging new culture with its own values and behaviour. Even though people are often unsure of the future, they are forced to reformulate roles and expectations. The social and personal dislocation implicit in such a rapid cultural transformation is difficult for people at all socio-economic levels. The confusion creates tensions for everyone and problems

for the government. Equally, conflicting cultures allow exciting and energetic social innovations, especially for the youth (Burdette 1988:34).

Apart from social problems, in some traditional Namibian cultures there are certain values that do not help people morally. Certain beliefs and ritual practices include evil acts, such as incest and even murder. In traditional Namibian culture there are for instance certain traditional practices, sayings and taboos that permeate gender-based violence and gender injustice.

10.5 The Namibian education system and moral formation

Education as such is one of the major factors and challenges vis- á-vis moral formation in Namibia. In Namibia, education is distinguished from traditional education of imparting values and life skills; it includes skills of reading, writing and mathematics. The Namibia education system is by and large a product of the Western education systems through colonialism and missionary activities (Lloyd 1967:78).

Missionaries established schools in Namibia to promote Christianity, as well as European culture. Educated people assimilated the western ways of conduct. They interpret the process of teaching and learning as a departure from Namibian traditional values. They see a great competition between the traditional culture and what people have learnt about values from European cultures, largely through education. In this vein, Mwanakatwe (1986:1) has the following to say:

“In the past there was keener interest in the proper behaviour of children at school, in the same ways as our forefathers accepted responsibility for the proper upbringing of children with emphasis on good manner, obedience to elders, hospitality to friends, and cooperation in the common task”. However, according to Mwanakatwe today there is not the same enthusiasm or cultural urgency to provide moral teaching for children.

Changes in the pattern of education of moral values that have been promoted under the influence of western ideologies, such as the notion of rights and freedoms as adopted by United Nations in 1948 (*The Declaration of Fundamental Human Rights*) has opened up Namibia to new challenges in the pedagogy of moral formation. In this context people, including learners or students, claim rights in regard to what has previously been seen as “immoral acts”, such as sex

work, abortion, drugs and alcohol abuse. Such issues pose new challenges to moral formation in Namibia, and require new adjustments to the school syllabuses and programs.

10.6 Mass media and moral formation

Mass media has effects on moral development of the learners. It cannot be excluded from factors that influence people's moral perception, evaluation and decisions. Mass media, like education, can drive people to bad or good actions via its informative and formative role (Garrett 1971:55).

People are challenged to overcome the errors caused by mass media in their personal search for the truth; to escape the negative influence of mass media which frequently misguide public opinion, while trying to reach informed views, based on sound reasoning (Hennessy 1979).

While mass media may be a positive force for moral formation they can also be manipulated to promote certain beliefs, such as one-sided understanding of human rights, abortion, and freedom, for instance by emphasising the rights of the mother and overlooking the rights of the unborn child and the father. Sexual ethics pose a serious agenda for the new Namibia!

10.7 RME as a challenge to Christianity: the CCN on the religion of the majority

There has been a growing debate in Namibia concerning the teaching of Religious and Moral Education (RME) in schools. The debate was sparked by an increase in immoral activities prevailing in the society. Certain sectors of society are blaming the decline in morality on the absence of Biblical Studies as a subject in schools. They see Biblical Instruction as a moral foundation in the education of children in public schools.

The public debate has crossed religious boundaries. While Christian leaders are mostly silent on the issue of reintroducing Biblical Instruction in school, some members of the Namibian society are in support of the reintroduction of Biblical Instruction in public schools. Mutjavikwa (New Era, March 15, 2013:3) has called for the reintroduction of Biblical Studies in Namibian schools "to instil God's values in our society" and "to win the war on the rampant abuse of women and children".

In responding to the questions regarding the debate on reintroducing Biblical Studies in public schools, Shikongo (New Era, March 15, 2013:3), a member of the Muslim society, finds it

fascinating that in the secular state of Namibia, where one would expect that democracy would respect the reality that the majority of the population claim to be Christian, rigid secularism seems to be more important than democracy. Shikongo argues that democracy dictates that the views and feelings of the majority should be respected. Such views and feelings include the views of Christian Namibians on Biblical Studies in schools. The Namibian Constitution already permits private schools to include their unique religions in their curricula without any interference from the State. He is fully aware of what the Constitution says about Namibia, which is established as a sovereign, secular, and unitary state. This, he argues, “has most certainly made Namibia a religiously neutral state, which should not be promoting any particular religion, despite being a democratic state with a majority of its citizens professing Christianity” (*The Namibian*, March 15, 2013:5). Of course, when the Bible is taught in schools within such a situation, other religions will also need attention.

In a country like Namibia, with a democratic constitution, one would have to take into account what the majority thinks about Religious Education and here the churches are the best representatives with the deepest insight and are trusted by the people. The case here is the question: What is Religious and Moral Education in Namibia today and does RME answer the questions of the Christian churches regarding moral decay in Namibian society?

On these questions the Christian churches in Namibia raised their concern through the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), specifically about the problem of moral decay, which is not fully addressed by Religious and Moral Education as a school subject. The Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) had listened to the concern of its members regarding the inclusion of Biblical Studies in the school curriculum. Although the subject Religious and Moral Education includes Christianity (the religion followed by the majority of the Namibian people), Christians strongly would like to see Biblical Studies taught as a school subject in the school curriculum.

The Council of Churches in Namibia was mandated by its Annual General Meeting held in 2008 to present the CCN Biblical Studies curriculum to the Namibia Institute for Educational Development (NIED), and NIED agreed in principle to accommodate the Biblical Studies project as advocated by the CCN.

As social decay continued to increase, various Christian denominations and organisations in Namibia called on the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) to approach the Government for Biblical Instruction to be reintroduced in Namibian schools. During this period, society experienced serious problems related to discipline and work ethics. The Council of Churches in Namibia tried to seek ways to bring back discipline, values and morals in our homes, schools and society. CCN resolved that there was a need for Christian Education and Biblical Instruction to be reintroduced in the school curriculum and in teacher training programs. The purpose of CCN was to use the Bible as a source for moral education to address the growing threat of moral decay in the Namibian society.

A Steering Committee for Biblical Instruction was approved by the Namibia Institute for Educational Development (NIED). The argument was that Biblical Instruction would not replace the RME curriculum, but would complement it. The agreement was reached to teach Biblical Instruction alongside RME in schools, as a means to develop knowledge of the diversity of religious beliefs as a source for moral education, with approval from the Ministry of Education.

The call for the reintroduction of Biblical Instruction was made for the following reasons:

- Ninety percent of Namibians are Christians (*New Era*, June 30, 2011).
- To restore the declining moral values, because biblical teachings promote wisdom, order, discipline and freedom.
- To help learners and young adults not to fall victim to temptations and not to be influenced by immoral behaviours.
- To motivate parents and community leaders to empower young people with appropriate behaviour and necessary life skills and to give them opportunities to be involved in activities that will help organise their lives and give meaning and value.

Although the CCN appealed for the Biblical Studies and Moral Education (BSME) as a parallel (and thus alternative) curriculum for RME, based on the Namibian Constitution (Article 21.1(c), NIED advised that the Biblical Studies curriculum be used alongside the existing Religious and Moral Education (RME) curriculum for Grades 1-10.

It is quite obvious that there are important differences between the two curricula: the one proposed by government and the other by CCN. The government's Religious and Moral Education (RME) curriculum was developed with the purpose of allowing learners to have knowledge of and to appreciate and tolerate the diversity of religious beliefs, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, African Traditional Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism and so on. Affirming these original considerations, Government is still of the opinion that the teaching of the subject RME would assist learners in fostering a spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding of religious differences.

However, the purpose of the CCN curriculum, on the other hand, is to use the Bible as a source document for moral education, in order to instill God's values on learners. The other purpose is to help prevent the growing threat of moral decay in the Namibian society, through strengthening Biblical Studies in the school curriculum. The CCN curriculum addresses the same moral values listed in the Government RME curriculum. The main difference between the two curricula is that the CCN curriculum refers the diversity of other religions to the Senior Secondary Phase of education, Grades 11-12.

The CCN submitted two BSME syllabi to NIED; one syllabus for Grades 1-7 for Primary Schools and one for Grades 8-10 for Junior Secondary Schools. NIED accepted the significance of the Biblical content and values infused in the BSME programme. The curricula was accepted in principle and referred to the Ministry of Education for formal approval. This never happened because the Ministry of Education has been reluctant to approve it in that format.

In assessing these debates it is important to note that the CCN views can be supported by reference to the Namibian Constitution, which guarantees freedom to practice any religion and to manifest such practice. In addition to that the Education Act No. 16 of 2001 (40) states that a learner at a state school or hostel has the right to practice any religion which is not against public policy. Non-Christian communities are free to request that the government RME curriculum continues to be offered to their learners, while private schools and church schools in Namibia can use the BSME curriculum of the CCN. Government schools should wait for formal approval of the BSME curriculum from the Ministry of Education and the National Examinations, Assessment and Certification Board before it can be offered as a program to complement the RME curriculum.

The reintroduction of Biblical Studies in the school curriculum as a measure to curb immorality is however not well taken, generally, in view of the secular nature of the state.¹⁰ While some individuals regard Biblical Studies as a strong weapon to fight moral decay, and to instil good morals, others opt for Religious and Moral Education to accommodate learners from non-Christian backgrounds. The Minister of Education concurs with the latter option, by stating that Biblical Studies cannot be a railroad for all Namibian children since this will infringe on the constitutional rights of Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist children, among others, because constitutionally, Namibia is a secular state.

10.8 Morality and Religious and Moral Education

As indicated above, the issue of increasing moral decline has raised great concern in Namibia. There seems to be a wide-spread understanding that morality can only be brought back through teaching Biblical Studies. Kretzschmar (1998:14) defines morality as “principles, rules or reasoning by which behaviour is judged to be acceptable as right or wrong”. Morality gives meaning to people’s lives and provides solutions for social problems. Therefore morality is a system of principles and values concerning people’s behaviour, which is generally accepted by a society or by a particular group of people (Schultz 2001:106).

I agree that morality goes hand in hand with values. Values are those aspects to which people attach worth or significance; that which is good, beautiful, effective, or just; that which is worth having, worth doing or worth striving to achieve (Woodbridge and Barnard 1990:56).

Moral rules, based on basic values, are the same throughout the society and the world. They are general and universal as they exist in all religions. The philosophical standpoints of all religions converge on many points, as each religious community is directed by what is acceptable or not. People from different religions therefore share common values and norms, which are equally acceptable by society.¹¹ For example, morality throughout the world is against cheating and stealing; it supports honesty, truthfulness, fair play, respect for others, kindness, hard work, patriotism, tolerance, responsibility, justice and fairness. Through religious and moral education,

¹⁰ In fairness, it should also be noted that in 1990 the subject Biblical Studies was developed as a matriculation subject (based originally on the Cambridge offerings on Judaism, Christianity and Islam, supplemented with African Religion), but very few schools chose that as an option.

¹¹ This view has been forcefully consolidated in the work of Hans Küng (1991; 1997) and others on a “global ethic”.

learners will understand that wherever they go, there will be ethical rules, regulations and principles to abide by, and to guide their lives.

In general, education enhances the development of good moral conduct in the society. Religious and moral education strengthens the idea of morality as an important foundation for social order.

10.9 Biblical Instruction in Namibia's school curriculum – then and now?

Before the colonial government of South Africa took over education in Namibia, Religious Education was in the hands of missionaries (Katzao and Mbumba 1992:43). Their mission was to promote their religious beliefs in exchange for the provision of education, health care and work. Conversion to Christianity was a prerequisite for benefiting from their civil work.

During the South African colonial period, Biblical Instruction (as religious formation, not as objective Biblical Studies) was part of the Basic Education and Teacher Education curricula for Grades 1-12. It was by and large restricted to the reading of the Holy Scriptures and understanding Church History from a Protestant perspective.

However, when Namibia gained independence, Biblical Instruction was done away with in Namibian schools, because Namibia had become a secular state. A new subject, Religious and Moral Education was introduced into the school curriculum (Ministry of Education 1991), and Religious Studies (with a focus on Judaism, Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions) replaced Biblical Studies, which only allowed the study of Christianity.

Unlike the former Biblical Studies, RME embraces the study of many different religions and forms of morality. In this way, RME teaches learners to live in a society that is characterised by religious and cultural diversity (Knitter 1985:206).

What has become clear through the debates as reflected above, but also through this study, is that an important distinction should be made between Biblical Instruction (which includes religious formation which is usually a denominationally based education for life) and Biblical Studies (which should be a historical, comparative and contextual study of the Bible in all its variety as scripture for a world religion, circa 2 billion people). It is difficult to see how Biblical Instruction (which belongs in the home and in church or Sunday school) can again be revived in school, while Biblical Studies (which can contribute to understanding a major source of moral formation alongside other scriptures) can be part of the subject Religious Studies and can support and

supplement Religious and Moral Education which has been developed along sound educational and didactical lines.

10.10 The purpose of teaching Religious and Moral Education in schools

Despite the call for the reintroduction of Biblical Instruction in schools, the Ministry of Education reviewed the Religious and Moral Education curricula for Grades 5-7 in 2005 and Grades 8-10 in 2007. The current aims of teaching RME in schools are as follows:

- To promote the spiritual, religious and moral development of the learners;
- To promote and foster the highest moral and ethical values;
- To develop and enhance respect for and understanding of tolerance of other people's religions, beliefs, cultures and ways of life.

According to Mariaye (2006), moral education is concerned with the process by which relevant knowledge, attitudes, values and skills are transmitted and developed in the learners. Religious and Moral Education (RME) introduces learners to different religious beliefs and traditions, as well as moral values of those religions. It gives opportunity to learners to become aware of their own responses to the rising moral, social and religious issues, as well as to reflect on their own beliefs and moral values.

Religious and Moral Education challenges learners and helps them to be open towards understanding of other religions and culturally diverse societies (Iita, 2012b). The aim of RME is that all learners should understand the religious and moral values of all religions. Therefore, the teaching of RME helps learners to understand different religions and values by facilitating acquisition of religious knowledge (Yeats 1991).

The study of Religious and Moral Education contributes to minimising tension between religious, cultural and political viewpoints. The subject, by exposing learners to knowledge of the beliefs and practices of different religions, helps the learners to establish common religious and moral values and to understand those that differ from theirs. It also teaches learners to live in a religiously and culturally diverse society, where individuals tolerate and respect each other, practise and live their own cultures and contribute to the creation of a peaceful and harmonious community (Iita 2012b).

Schools' approaches to teaching Religious and Moral Education is therefore one of education, and not indoctrination; an academic, but not a devotional one. Schools should strive for learners' awareness of all religions, but not swaying them into acceptance of any specific religion.

10.11 The place of Religious and Moral Education in the Namibian curriculum

The RME curriculum covers different religions, with the central themes across the curriculum being family and community life, worship, rules and law, and self and other's personal values. In the Lower Primary syllabus (Grades 1-4), the concept of religious education is not explicitly developed, but rather implicitly manifested in themes such as belonging, phases of life, the sacred places, festivals, social values and children's rights and responsibilities (Ministry of Education 2005).

The Grades 5-7 syllabus clearly spells out themes on Judaism, African Traditional Religions, and Christianity, while in Grades 8-10, themes such as Islam, Baha'i faith, Buddhism, and Hinduism are taught (Ministry of Education 2007). The aims of teaching these themes within specific religious traditions are to develop learners who will respect and foster the values of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, as well as to develop and enhance respect for and understanding and tolerance of other people's religions, beliefs, cultures and ways of life (Ministry of Education 2007b).

Tony (2001:207) says, "Religious education involves instruction in beliefs and practices". It is an education aimed at helping learners to respect and gain knowledge and understanding of others' faiths and cultures, attempting to create a peaceful community where various religious groups live in harmony (see Baelz 1977).

In the same vein, the Ministry of Education (2005:131) states that,

Religious and Moral Education is an education aimed to help learners to understand their religious beliefs, practices and values and to accept other people and groups whose values and religious traditions differ from their own; enable learners to better understand themselves and the changing multi-cultural world in which they are growing up; foster the highest moral, ethical and spiritual values such as integrity, responsibility, equality and reverence for life.

As a result, Religious and Moral Education takes into consideration the moral and ethical development of a learner; encourages respect for the feelings and opinions of other faiths and demonstrates that problems can be solved together (as advocated by Reimer, Paolitto & Hersh 1983). Thus, RME encourages a culture of tolerance, where the rights and morals of different religions should be respected and promoted (Ministry of Education 2004).

Reimer et al (1983:4) argue that “when religious and moral issues arise in the classroom or outside the classroom, they should be addressed to help learners develop religious and moral respect”. Seeing that religion and morality are major forces in the lives of the people, RME teachers should educate learners in religious and moral issues concerning humanity, honesty in dealing with one another and respect for property and other people’s religions, and encourage learners to share their religious and moral experiences, knowledge and skills in the classroom and outside the classroom. Such a process would lead to the appreciation of the differences in our religious groups, and the success of democracy.

Reimer et al (1983:45) further state that “learners acquire religious and moral values from their social environment, experiences that might be useful in the teaching and learning situations”. One should also take note that religious and moral values differ from person to person, and from community to community. However, some values are universal, such as the common recognition of the value of life and a common concern for preserving human life (Reimer et al, 1983).

Through RME, learners’ lives may be transformed because religion and life belong together. The subject gives meaning to life; it allows interaction to take place, informs values and changes behaviour.

10.12 Benefits of learning Religious and Moral Education in a secular setup

Religious and Moral Education has cognitive (knowledge) and affective (feelings, attitudes, value) dimensions, which provide benefits for individuals and communities. The subject helps people to understand their own culture and history; helps people to be aware of the existence of a supernatural being and leads to the development of religious and moral values. It also helps people to develop a spirit of compassion for human life.

In situations where learners study only to prepare for careers, without religious and moral education, such learners would lack life skills. Religious and Moral Education sets high moral

standards and values. The society in which learners live must be measured against commonly accepted religious norms and values.

For Namibians living in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society, the study of RME brings to people an attitude of respect, tolerance and acceptance. Knowledge gained from the study of RME would enable learners to see things from different perspectives, and help them avoid situations where ignorance and disrespect for others' customs and beliefs may lead to conflicts.

Moral education can be regarded as the teaching or an attempt to teach the standards of right or wrong. It is also concerned with the establishment of principles regarding right or wrong, as well as their application to life.

In all communities, almost everyone is a worshiper and everyone has some attitudes towards religion. It is not the purpose of this study to claim that one religion is true and another false or to convert learners to a certain religion.

Namibia is regarded as a secular state and education and employment are therefore independent from religion. Article 19 of the Namibian Constitution provides the right to religious freedom. The state neither favours nor neglects any of the religious orientations (Lubbe 1997:27-29; Republic of Namibia, 1989). Public or state schools should therefore not take up the task of converting or forcing people to believe in a certain religion (Isaak, 1997:1-5). The inclusion of formal Biblical Studies in the national curriculum would therefore be offensive and unacceptable to other religions. Lubbe (1997:30-37) regards this as indoctrination and as imposing one's religion onto people, which disrespects other people's beliefs.

The most appropriate way to accommodate all religions in a multi-religious society, without fear of imposing one's religious belief onto people of different beliefs, is to offer Religious and Moral Education (RME) to all learners. RME introduces learners to various religious beliefs and values. It also gives them an opportunity to understand that society is composed of values, some of which are common to all while others differ. Having knowledge of other religious beliefs will foster recognition and respect of others' beliefs, faiths and values, thereby enabling a peaceful co-existence.

10.13 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the issues related to moral formation. In general, the main aim for moral formation is to develop people's character and moral reasoning for good decision making. Moral formation intends to nurture people's intellectual faculties, as well as training an individual to be exposed to good influences and to perform good actions. Character and moral conscience are always exercised in the public, and they are both to great extent products of social influences. Social influences determine people's moral character and reasoning to a great extent. Such moral development depends normally on how well informed and formed a person's conscience is in relation to the truth. If conscience is not formed, it can error, it is not an infallible judge. Furthermore, it depends on how morally permitting one's environmental factors are.

This research has observed how values from culture, education, mass media, economics, politics, various religious practices and globalization challenge moral formation in Namibia, as well as how European cultures influence Namibian cultures; how mass media, if not regulated and supported by good moral values, can morally mislead people.

This study concludes that all social factors which have a decisive effect on people's behaviour should be tuned to good moral ethos in order to promote citizens' abilities to be good people, good human beings, in all aspects of life.

Again, this chapter discussed issues related to the importance of teaching Religious and Moral Education in public schools, as well as Christian views regarding the reintroduction of Biblical Studies in the Namibian school curriculum with the purpose of instilling God's values in people. However, the call for the reintroduction of Biblical Studies into the school curriculum has been regarded as contradictory to the Namibian Constitution which declares Namibia a secular state. The absence of Biblical Studies in public schools is blamed as a contributing factor to lack of discipline in young people and the increase of moral decay prevailing in our society today.

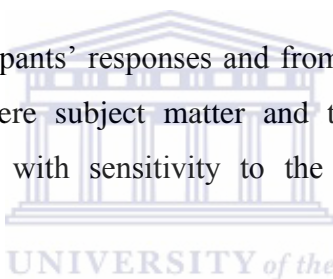
The researcher is of the opinion that the teaching of Religious and Moral Education (different moral values) in schools is more effective and comprehensive in moral formation within a secular context, than the teaching of Christianity (Christian moral values) only. RME embraces more moral values for social order in society, and attempts to create a peaceful community where

different religious groups live in harmony; encouraging a culture of tolerance based on shared values where the rights of different religions should be respected and promoted.

The subject helps learners to grow as religious and moral persons in life, to discover the truth and to develop good moral behaviour and skills needed to grow as good citizens in this changing world.

RME is designed in such a way to promote religious and moral values that will help learners to become life-long learners in relation to their multi-religious and moral values in the community and to recognise the fundamental dignity of human beings and the existence of ethical norms in life. RME as a subject provides learners with learning opportunities for the development of their knowledge of religious and moral education concepts and ideas, which enable learners to gain more knowledge and skills for living in a multi-religious and culturally diverse society.

It has been shown from the participants' responses and from the curriculum that learning takes place within an environment where subject matter and teaching strategies are planned in accordance with age-groups and with sensitivity to the personal dimensions of learners' experiences.



Religious and Moral Education seeks to develop academic knowledge and discipline and to develop in the learners good behaviour and values as expected by the society.

The effective teaching of RME helps learners to accept and learn the subject as a multi-religious subject and to learn moral values for life, to respect human dignity, to integrate the religious and moral values of all religions, and to live good moral lives.

This study found that there is need to integrate Religious and Moral Education content and the life experiences of the learners, whereby learners are given an opportunity to recognise and utilise the various ways in which RME affects human growth, development and understanding.

For the effective teaching of RME in schools, a variety of learner assessments and evaluation strategies must be planned alongside learning activities including the criteria by which learner performance should be measured, clearly stated and made known to learners in order to help learners to develop high standards for their own work.

Therefore, the researcher suggests that an assessment of the RME curriculum and implementation thereof in Namibia be carried out by other researchers in other schools or regions so that a comprehensive and representative picture can be drawn as a basis for future curriculum development and implementation.

The next chapter concludes the study and gives some recommendations.



CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to assess Religious and Moral Education teachers' perceptions of Religious and Moral Education and how the Religious and Moral Education syllabus is being implemented in schools at the level of Grades 5-10, as well as investigating the constraints hindering the teaching and learning process for Religious and Moral Education.

The literature review showed that there were no research studies that had been conducted on Religious and Moral Education teachers' perceptions on the implementation of Religious and Moral Education syllabi of 1994, 2005, 2007 and the curricular design thereof. This study was aimed at filling this gap. Therefore, the first purpose of this study was to investigate Religious and Moral Education teachers' understanding of Religious and Moral Education and the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus.

Secondly, this study attempted to identify factors (constraints) affecting the teaching and learning process of Religious and Moral Education.

In order to establish the teachers' understanding of RME, this study investigated their perceptions regarding RME concepts, curriculum implementation, constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of the subject and ways to overcome the constraints.

This study also looked at various religious and moral values, such as respect for others, freedom and responsibility, discipline and the need for promoting these values in the Upper Primary Phase, Secondary Phase and, to a lesser extent, Lower Primary Phase.

To achieve all these goals, the study included the concerns of RME teachers about the implementation of curriculum/syllabus in schools.

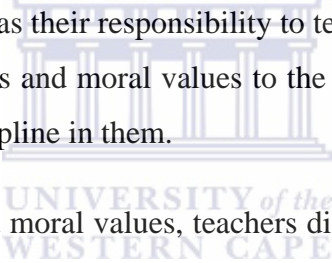
According to Hoepfl (1997:1) qualitative research is a type of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification; it seeks to make sense of feelings and experiences as things occur in the real life situations of the participants and

to study these feelings and experiences in the participants' natural settings over a specific period of time.

The findings of this study have significant theoretical and practical implications for teachers' professional training, curriculum implementation and the development of teaching resource materials. Therefore, the study drew together major issues regarding RME teachers' perceptions about the subject, curriculum implementation and religious and moral values as required by the Religious and Moral Education curriculum.

11.2 Findings

Based on the research findings which were obtained through regional consultation, questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations, this study revealed the following significant factors:

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- Participants agreed that it was their responsibility to teach Religious and Moral Education in order to transmit religious and moral values to the learners, as well as instilling moral socialisation skills and discipline in them.
 - In teaching on religious and moral values, teachers did not only promote moral values of the individual learners, but they also emphasised adherence to rules, good behaviour and growing as good citizens.

This study revealed that Religious and Moral Education teachers have the capacity to teach the subject. However, they need teaching resource materials/teaching aids; in-service training workshops, and enough period allocations to the subject for effective teaching.

From class observations, the researcher observed that learners in all grades were mature enough to capture, understand and apply what they learned in class to their daily life.

The study focused on the following areas:

- Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers' perceptions about the subject;
- teaching strategies used by RME teachers in teaching the subject;
- constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME as a school subject;

- ways to overcome the constraints hindering the teaching and learning of the subject;
- support that RME teachers need;
- ways in which RME responds to the needs of the learners;
- lesson preparations;
- classroom environment, resources and discipline;
- lesson presentations;
- communications;
- learner tasks; and
- handling of RME lessons.

The study revealed that there were a number of constraints hindering the teaching and learning of the subject. The following four major constraints emerged from the study:

- lack of teaching resource materials/teaching aids for RME;
- lack of training for RME teachers;
- insufficient period allocations to the subject; and
- lack of RME teaching experience for RME teachers.

This study therefore challenges the Ministry of Education (curriculum designer, policy maker and implementer), as well as the University of Namibia, which trains student teachers for the Ministry of Education, to seriously look at these problems and find immediate amicable solutions. The study also challenges school principals, teachers and learners to seriously teach and learn the subject as the subject helps people to grow as good religious and moral persons.

It has been found from the study that more in-service training workshops are necessary for RME teachers in order to update their knowledge and skills in teaching the subject. This will help the teachers to cope with challenges facing them in the teaching and learning process.

The need for subject materials was another finding of the study. Materials should be made available in order to enhance the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education. RME teachers should also be trained on how to make use of the new and modern teaching materials/aids and learn how to design new teaching aids for themselves.

Teachers should also play as role models for learners as they teach them to be responsible citizens.

There should be cooperation between teachers and parents in educating learners for effective teaching of the subject. Parents should go through the learners' progress reports after school. Parents also need to be role models for their children, so that what they learn in school will not conflict with what they see in the life of their parents.

The aim of Religious and Moral Education is to enhance and foster the teaching of religious and moral values. There should therefore be effective ways of evaluating the extent to which the RME lessons are applied in daily life by learners. For example, if a learner shows a particular negative moral behaviour, the teacher should either re-teach the topic/s dealing with that behaviour or put more emphasis on the expected positive behaviour.

Teachers should engage learners in activities that produce good moral behaviour and help them to become responsible members of society so that they also contribute to morality in society. In this way, learners are exposed to the teaching and learning and working together with their teachers in order to achieve the objectives of Religious and Moral Education.

If the above factors are well considered for Religious and Moral Education implementation, it will alleviate the constraints that are hindering the teaching and learning of the subject in schools.

11.3 Themes emerging from consultation, questionnaires, interviews and observations

The following themes, as indicated in the table below, emerged from the study:

Table 31: Themes emerging from the study

Regional consultation	Questionnaires	Interviews	Classroom observations
Teaching resource materials	Lack of teaching resource materials	Teachers' perceptions on RME	Lesson preparation
Training and workshops	Training and workshops	Teaching strategies used by RME teachers in teaching the subject	Classroom environment, resources & discipline
	Insufficient period allocations to the subject	Constraints hindering the teaching and learning process of RME in school	Lesson presentation
	Workload	Ways to overcome constraints	Teaching methods
	Lack of support for teachers from school principals and fellow teachers	Support that RME teachers need	Communication
			Learner tasks
			Handling of RME lessons

The themes that emerged through using the different instruments helped the researcher to see the patterns and similarities in the responses, thereby strengthening the study.

11.4 Research questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

- How do teachers perceive Religious and Moral Education?
- How do teachers apply Religious and Moral Education in classroom situations?
- What methods do the teachers use to teach Religious and Moral Education?

All these questions were answered during the study as shown in the findings.

11.5 Methodology

The population sample for this study was comprised of fourteen teachers for Grades 5-10. Seven schools were chosen from urban and rural areas in the Ompundja Circuit in the Oshana Region.

Instruments, namely, interviews and observations, supplemented by questionnaires were used in this study. The study investigated perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers, hence semi-structured interviews were used. A number of questions were designed for participants to answer. Participants responded to closed questions and open-ended questions, which gave them freedom to express their views as they wished.

There were twenty eight (28) items in the questionnaire:

Six (6) items were related to the syllabus;

Nine (9) items were related to the teachers' biographical information;

Six (6) items were related to the teachers' perceptions on RME and how they implemented the syllabus in classroom situations;

Seven (7) items were designed in relation to classroom observations.

This methodology was effective in answering the research questions and in achieving the objective of this study.

11.6 Recommendations

Based on the research findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The Ministry of Education, University of Namibia (UNAM) and all stakeholders in education should address the issue of lack of Religious and Moral Education teaching resource materials in schools as a matter of urgency.
2. The Ministry of Education and UNAM should design and offer pre-service and in-service training programs for Religious and Moral Education teachers.
3. Religious and Moral Education teachers should teach the subject from a multi-religious and multi-cultural perspective, and avoid teaching from a Christian perspective.

4. Student-teachers should be admitted not only based on their academic achievement, but also based on their moral behaviour.
5. The Ministry of Education must compel schools to play an active role in teaching Religious and Moral Education as a school subject.
6. Religious and Moral Education teachers should discuss with parents moral values which should be taught to their children because it is only with the support of parents and other stakeholders in education that the success of teaching the subject in schools can be achieved.
7. Both teachers and learners should take Religious and Moral Education seriously. The Ministry of Education should monitor and evaluate all schools to ensure that the teaching and assessment of Religious and Moral Education subject is taking place as spelt out in the syllabus.
8. There needs to be a self-regulating process within the teaching profession to ensure that high standards of competence and professional commitment are achieved and maintained. This will help in avoiding the risk of implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus by unqualified teachers who may damage learners in the process.

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Appendices

Appendix A

P.O. Box 1549
Oshakati
12 August 2011

Mr. Haipanda
The Deputy Director
Oshana Education Region
Private Bag 2020
Ondangwa

Dear Sir

**Subject: Permission to conduct an educational research project in eight schools in Ompundja Circuit,
Oshana Education Region**

I am a PhD (Religious and Moral Education (RME)) student at the University of Western Cape (UWC). I am intending to conduct an educational research for my dissertation in order to fulfill the PhD requirements. The envisaged visits to schools are from January-April 2012. The aim of my research project is to investigate the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers with regard to Religious Education and how the RME teachers implement Religious and Moral Education in teaching and learning situations.

I hope that the findings of this study may benefit all RME teachers in this country and more specifically in this region, Ministry of Education, as well as UNAM who is training the teachers for the ministry.

Furthermore, I hope that the study may reveal valuable information on how RME teachers plan and implement the RME Syllabus. The collection of data will be done through interviews and observations, as well as questionnaire. The study is focused on RME teachers only, Grades 5-7 and 8-10.

I would be very grateful if favorable consideration is made at your earliest possible convenience.

Yours sincerely

Ananias Iita



PhD Student: Faculty of Arts: University of the Western Cape (UWC)
Student No. 3174698



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Appendix B



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION
Aspiring to Excellence in Education for All

Tel: 065 - 229800
Fax: 065 - 229833
E-mail: imanuelaipanda@hotmail.com
Enquiry: Immanuel S Aipanda
Ref: 12/2/6/1

Private Bag 5518
Oshakati, Namibia

Rev Ananias Iita
University of Namibia
Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus
Ongwediva

Dear Rev Iita

Permission to conduct research at eight (8) schools in Oshana


We are pleased to inform you that permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research at the following schools in Oshana Region:

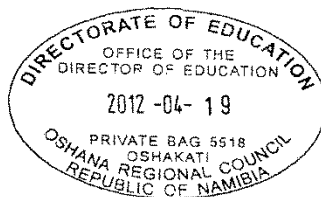
1. Charles Anderson CS
2. Eluwa Special School
3. Hashiyana PS
4. Mewshipandeka SSS
5. Ompundja PS
6. Omuhama CS
7. Ondjora CS
8. Nehulilo Omagano Private School
- 9.

Kindly note that your research activities should not interfere with the normal school programmes and participation of either the learners or teachers should be on voluntary basis.

We wish you success in your research studies.

Yours sincerely


Mrs Dutte N Shinyemba
Regional Director



All official correspondence should be addressed to the Chief Regional Officer

Appendix C

Questionnaire for the Regional Consultation on Religious and Moral Education (RME) Syllabi, Grades 5-7 and Grades 8-10:

Question 1: Themes and Topics of the syllabus

1.1 When looking at the Themes and Topics of the syllabus, do you think the Themes and Topics are relevant to the subject?

If no, which Themes or Topics should be changed or moved?

Question 2: Level of development

2.1 When working through the syllabus, is the content pitched at the appropriate level of development of the child or Grade?

Is the content of the syllabus too easy?

If yes, what could be done to get the syllabus at the appropriate level of development?

2.3 Is the content of this syllabus too challenging?

If yes, what could be removed or moved to another Grade?

Question 3: Content of the syllabus

3.1 Is the range of content of this syllabus appropriate to learners with different abilities?

3.2 Is the content of this syllabus learner friendly?

If no, what could be done to make the content more learner-friendly?

3.3 Is the content of this syllabus boring?

If yes, what should be removed and added to make the content interesting?

3.4 Does the syllabus provide sufficient detail for the required coverage and depth of treatment to be clear?

If no, please indicate what should be added or changed.

3.5 Does this syllabus provide the chance for reinforcement and revision?

If no, please indicate what should be changed.

Question 4: Materials

4.1 Do you have enough materials to facilitate the Themes and Topics?

If no, what materials do you need?

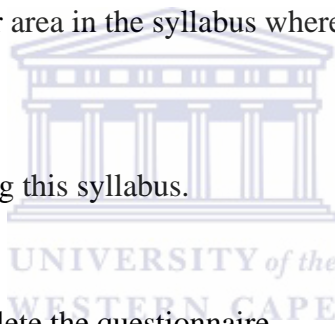
Question 5: Training

5.1 Will you need training to implement this syllabus with confidence?

If yes, please indicate the particular area in the syllabus where you might need assistance.

Question 6: General

6.1 Any other comments concerning this syllabus.



Thank you for taking time to complete the questionnaire.

Appendix D

Questionnaire for Religious and Moral Education teachers

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers and the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education Syllabus, Grades 5-10 in actual teaching and learning situations.

Confidentiality: Please answer all the questions. Documents collected and all information collected through either the interview or questionnaire will be held confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Your response to this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

Biographical information (*Please tick*):

1. Sex: Male: Female:
2. Age: <18 18-25 26-33 34-43 44-54 55-60
3. Qualifications.....
4. Teaching experience: (*Indicate years of teaching*).....
5. In which Grades do you teach Religious and Moral Education? (*Please tick all that apply*):

Lower Primary Phase: Grades 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upper Primary Phase: Grades 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Junior Secondary Phase: Grades 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How do you classify your employment position at the school? (*Please tick*).

- 6.1 Full-time teacher
- 6.2 Contract teacher
- 6.3 Volunteer
- 6.4 Other (Please specify).....

7. Have you received any professional training in teaching Religious and Moral Education?
(Please tick one):

Yes No

If, no why? If yes, specify:

.....

.....

.....

8. Rate your experience and comfortableness level in teaching Religious and Moral Education using a scale of 1-4:

Experience	Comfortableness
4. (a lot of experience)	4. (very comfortable)
3.(some experience)	3. (moderately comfortable)
2. (little experience)	2. (would need some help to feel comfortable)
1. (no experience)	1. (would need a lot of help to feel comfortable)

9. What are the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning of Religious and Moral Education at the school? *(Please tick all that apply):*

insufficient periods allocated to Religious and Moral Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
lack of training	<input type="checkbox"/>
workload makes it impossible to put more effort in lesson preparations	<input type="checkbox"/>
lack of support from school principal	<input type="checkbox"/>
lack of support from other teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>
lack of resource materials	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Please indicate your perceptions regarding the teaching of Religious and Moral Education in teaching and learning situations.

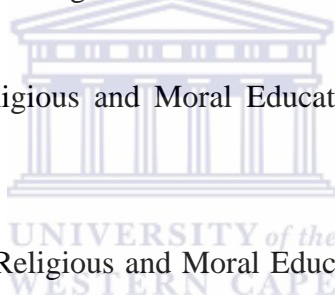
.....

.....

Thank you for taking time to complete the questionnaire.

Appendix E
Interview schedule for Religious and Moral Education teachers

1. What are your perceptions as a Religious and Moral Education teacher with regard to Religious Education?
2. How do you apply Religious and Moral Education in the teaching and learning situations?
3. What are your perceptions as a Religious and Moral Education teacher regarding the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process of Religious and Moral Education?
4. How do you as a Religious and Moral Education teacher overcome the constraints that hinder the teaching and learning process of Religious and Moral Education?
5. What support do you as a Religious and Moral Education teacher receive when teaching Religious and Moral Education?
6. How will you as a teacher use Religious and Moral Education as a subject to respond to the needs of the learners?



Appendix F
Observation checklist

<p>Lesson preparation:</p> <p>Motivating introduction prepared</p> <p>Key questions prepared</p>	<p>Comments:</p>
<p>Lesson presentation:</p> <p>Gains immediate attention and directs learners towards lesson objectives</p> <p>Makes insightful use of subject knowledge</p> <p>Engage learners in active learning</p>	<p>Comments:</p>
<p>Teaching and learning media:</p> <p>Effective and skilful use of teaching/learning media</p>	<p>Comments:</p>
<p>Communication:</p> <p>Shows interest in listening to learners</p> <p>Communicates with different groups in the class</p>	<p>Comments:</p>

<p>Handling Religious and Moral Education lesson</p>	<p>Well</p>	<p>Not too well</p>	<p>Lack of understanding</p>
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Appendix G
Consent Form

Project Title: An assessment of the curriculum and implementation of the subject Religious and Moral Education in Namibia: A case study of perceptions of Religious and Moral Education teachers in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region.

Researcher: Ananias Iita, Cell phone 0812134059

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers and the implementation of the Religious and Moral Education syllabus, Grades 5-10 in actual teaching and learning situations.

Procedure: As a participant in this study, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire at the place of your work. This instrument contains biographical information of the participants, as well as years of teaching experience of Religious and Moral Education and their qualifications.

You will also be requested to participate in the interview. You will be observed once in your classroom during a Religious and Moral Education lesson regarding lesson preparations, teaching and learning media and communication.

Documents collected and all information collected through either the interview or questionnaire will be held confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Risks: There will be no risks involved in participating in this study. If a participant does not want to answer a specific question, he/she may choose to do so. Also if the participant later on decides to withdraw from the study he/she may do so.

Financial Statement: Participants will not be paid to participate in this study.

Consent: The purpose of the research described above has been made clear to me. I, therefore sign below to indicate that I have agreed to participate in this study.

.....
Participant's Name and Signature

.....
Date

Appendix H

Schedule of the research

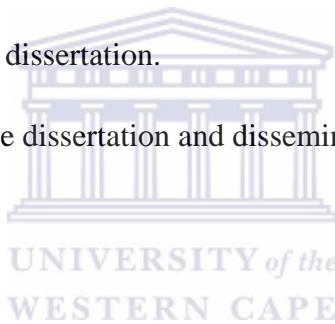
March 2011 - October 2012: Literature survey, ground work preparing the practical side of the research, preparing the proposal for submission at the University of Western Cape for approval.

Second semester 2012: Applying for permission to conduct research at Ompundja Circuit in Oshana Region, Namibia from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education; writing to School Inspector at Ompundja Circuit and Principals to inform them of the intention to conduct research at their schools; preparing logistical details, school visits, interviews, questionnaires.

First semester 2013: Phase of collecting data begins and at the same time analysis begins; data analysis continues and follow up visits take place if there is a need.

Second semester 2013: Writing of dissertation.

First semester 2014: Finalising the dissertation and dissemination of the research.



Intended schools for research:

1. Charles Anderson PS
2. Eluwa Special S
3. Hashiyana CS
4. Mweshipandeka SSS
5. Ompundja JPS
6. Omuhama CS
7. Ondjora CS
8. Nekulilo Omagano PS