UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

IMPLEMENTATION OF GHANA'S STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULUM BY RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN THE KWAHU WEST MUNICIPALITY

SAMUEL AYETEY CHAITEY

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BY

SAMUEL AYETEY CHAITEY

Thesis submitted to the Department of Arts Education of the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Arts Education

NOVEMBER 2023

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: …….. Date: …….

Name: Samuel Ayetey Chaitey

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature:…… Date:……

Name: Rev. Prof. Seth Asare-Danso

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the fidelity of implementation of Ghana's Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC)by Religious and Moral Education teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern Region, Ghana,as well as assess the challenges to the implementation efforts by the teachers. The convergent parallel design under mixed method was adopted for the study. Using the census and purposive sampling procedure, 181 respondents consisting of 175 RME teachers and six (6) head teachers from the public primary schools in the Kwahu West Municipality were selected for the study. Questionnaire, interview guide and observation guide were used to gather the requisite data for the study. The data was analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation, and thematic approach. The study found out that the RME teachers were somewhat prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum. Again, RME teachers were to a very large extent implementing the key features of the Standard-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum. Teachers were confronted with a number of challenges in the implementation of the standards-based RME curriculum including: inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation,inadequate head teacher support, unavailability of ICT tools, among others. The study recommended that, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ghana Education Service (GES), and the head teachers organise detailed and frequent in-service training programmes for the RME teachers. Again, ICT tools should be made available to teachers andit should be ensured that teachers have adequate knowledge on application of ICT tools.

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To my wife, Bertha Anima Chaitey, and our children Juanita, Bertha, Marilyn and Franklin, I say “thank you” for your support and understanding.

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DEDICATION

To my father, Mr. Vincent Meryi Chaitey and mother, Mrs. Rose TiwaaChaitey

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The proper implementation of a curricular programme is crucial in ensuring that the curricular content and learning intentions are delivered to students consistently and reliably**.** There is no doubt that the real test of teacher efficacy is the effective implementation of a new curriculum, and consequently an increase in student learning. On Thursday, 21st February 2019, the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo in his third State of the Nation Address announced that a new Standard-Based Curriculum (SBC) is to be rolled out by government from Kindergarten to Primary 6 by September, 2019. The new SBC which was developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), is a change from the objective-based curriculum. The new curriculum focuses on strengthening the acquisition of the 4Rs- Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic and cReativity as foundational skills for life-long learning and national development. The introduction of the SBC in Ghanaian Primary schools certainly presents a challenge for teachers in terms of the need for improved performance through quality lesson delivery that ought to lead to the attainment of various competencies stipulated by the new curriculum. Thus, instruction is critical to ensuring students receive the curriculum as intended, and the Fidelity of Implementation (FOI) of a curricular programme must be carefully monitored to ensure that instruction is aligned to the curricular programme's standards. This study was therefore carried out to explore how Religious and Moral Education teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region, Ghana are "faithfully" implementing the features of Ghana's Standards-Based Curriculum as well as

assess the challenges to implementation efforts by the teachers, who undoubtedly are the most important variable affecting students' achievement (Reeves,2004).

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and limitations as well as organisation of the study.

Background to the Study

Countries all over the world try to modify and make changes to their educational curriculum to suit relevant context or contemporary challenges. Thus, the vision of any country is expressed in many ways, including the implementation of the school curriculum and other academic programmes offered by schools in that country. Implementation plays a key role in determining whether an intended curriculum achieves its desired outcomes. To attain the desired outcomes of a curriculum reform (i.e., students' development and application of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) therefore necessitates more than changing teaching and learning outputs. It involves making coordinated, multifaceted changes at the classroom, school, and policy level (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2019). A multidimensional and complex mixture of ingredients determine the extent to which a curriculum change is implemented in a way that reflects the curriculum's intent. Policies (e.g., goals, targets, and tools), people (i.e., all of those who play a role in curriculum design and implementation), and places (e.g., where curriculum implementation unfolds)

affect implementation, along with how these various policies, places, and people interact (Honig, 2006).

However, starting a process of curriculum implementation will largely be influenced by the kind of curriculum model adopted by the state or country. For instance, the adoption and development of a standards-based curriculum has become a feature of most educational reforms in the world. Thus, instead of most teachers developing their own goals, they are now required to have their students meet standards at the state, district, or national levels. Doolittle (2003) has however stated that Standards-Based curriculum represents a huge paradigm shift for many teachers, although it is generally believed that it helps teachers to link the taught curriculum to the required standards. Thus, the introduction of a Standards-based curriculum means moving teachers into unfamiliar territories, where lessons are different, new content is encountered as well as an encounter with unfamiliar teaching strategies. It also means facing strange problem sets, different assessments and an altered scope and sequence. Generally, the role of the teacher is seriously altered in standards-based curriculum. For instance, Standards-based instruction involves shifting from a reliance on the teacher as a "sole authority of right answers" towards the use of logic and verification as evidence (Bay, Reys&Reys,1999). Moreover, standards-based approach to curriculum implementation forces teachers to select activities based on their contribution to meeting the standards required by the state rather than based on teacher preference (Lund &Tannehill, 2015).

In the United States of America, A standards-based vision was enacted in federal law under the Clinton administration with the 1994 reauthorization

of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and carried forward under the Bush administration with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Studies on the implementation of this vision by states showed positive changes in instructional practices. However, some researchers have also documented significant negative effects. For example, it was detected that tests have had a stronger impact on teaching than standards(Hamilton et al.,2007).Thus, Tested subjects received much more instructional time than non-tested subjects. It is in line with this and some other factors that some policy advocates have observed that Standards-Based reforms in the United States of America have had limited success because underlying incentive structures have not been well enough understood and implemented(U.S.A National Academy of Education, Education Policy White Paper, 2009).These imperfections and costs notwithstanding, policy makers felt an urgent need to use standards as a tool for improved education. They believe that insights about how reforms have fallen short can lead to improvements in the design and implementation of standards and may serve to influence much needed reforms.

A study on how Standards-Based Senior Secondary School Chemistry curriculum materials have been implemented in the classroom in China, revealed that distinct discrepancies existed between the operational and intended curricula among the five cases they chose(Wei &Chen, 2015). Furthermore, for the three levels, “teaching objectives” exhibited a smaller degree of discrepancies, whereas “teaching activities” presented a larger degree of discrepancies, with “teaching strategies” being between the two. Similarly, a study carried out in Papua New Guinea on the implementation of

a new curriculum revealed that the curriculum change was challenging as policy expectations failed to align with practices. Moreover there were little shared meanings between teachers' views and classroom practices (Joskin, 2013). These challenges in standards-based curriculum implementation no doubt calls for a major overhaul in provisions for teacher preparation, induction, and continuing development. It therefore calls for placing serious and sustained teacher learning at the centre of school reforms. This is because teachers are unlikely to teach in ways that meet demanding new standards for students' learning unless they have access to serious and sustained learning opportunities at every stage in their career (Ball & Cohen, 1999).

One of Ghana's visions is to provide a curriculum that can address the moral and social needs of its citizens (Ganusah, 2002) and also help in solving national, political and social problems (Tamakloe, 1992). Religious and Moral Education (RME) has thus been described as a vital and indispensable part of human growth and development in the Ghanaian society (MOE/NaCCA, 2019). The introduction of RME as a subject in Ghana's basic schools is therefore aimed at assisting the youth to acquire sound religious and moral principles as well as develop appropriate attitudes and values that will help them to make good choices and decisions in their adulthood for the good of society.

The government of Ghana, identifying the fact that RME could be a good means for national growth and personal development, reintroduced it into the basic school curriculum in 2008 (after the 2007 Education reform removed it from the curriculum) to equip young people with relevant knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (Asare-Danso,2018). It was intended to

contribute to pupils' "academic achievements and to make them useful and God-fearing citizens through appropriate religious and moral training" (MOE, 1998, 2000: Gyamerah, 2001: Ganusah, 2002). This was very necessary because one of the major reasons for implementing any school curriculum is to provide better opportunities for learners to solve problems, reason, and to do critical thinking (Asare-Opoku, 1978; Quarcoopome, 1987 ; Fullan, 1991a;). The subject deals with the development of the person in relation to self-awareness, relationship with others, and the understanding of different beliefs, values and practices. It is probably due to the importance of the subject that individuals and social groups continue to show their desire for, and interest in the Religious and Moral Education curriculum; expecting that its implementation will lead to the attainment of the set goals and result in many benefits for the good of the citizenry.

The Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessments (NaCCA) since September, 2019 begun the implementation of a standards-based curriculum (SBC), which aims at making students able to direct their own learning process and be actively involved in knowledge building. The new curriculum has maintained Religious and Moral Education (RME) as a stand-alone curriculum with features that makes the teacher a facilitator of knowledge (NaCCA/MOE, 2019). The new curriculum is a shift from the objective-based curriculum to a standards-based curriculum. The introduction of the SBC was to ameliorate thesetbacks in the objective-based curriculum such as disjointed scope and sequence, overloaded content, more theoretical than practical, less emphasis on the application of moral values to shape the life of learners and more

teacher-centred than child-centred (Asare-Danso& Mensah, 2021). The SBC sought to foster the development of national core values and skills required for long term development and learning. This reform was triggered by the Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2018-2030) which outlines Ghana's strategic educational reforms for the pre-tertiary level (MOE, NaCCA, & GES, 2022).Ghanaian teachers largely acknowledged the importance of the SBC and its influence on learning outcomes for learners. However, some researchers have indicated that lack of teaching and learning resources, insufficient teacher professional training and unavailability of textbooks impacted negatively on implementation efforts within the first two years of implementation (Apau, 2021, African Education Watch in Ghana News Agency [GNA], 2022, Arthur &Obeng, 2023).

Implementing a curriculum requires the involvement of many different people who play pivotal role in the implementation process. It requires a coordinated effort and the active involvement of teachers, head teachers, students and parents. Teachers are considered the most important elements of the education system because they share in the overall task of general curriculum planning, design and implementation (Cochran- Smith &Zeichner, 2005; Agormedah et al, 2022). Any curriculum which has been constructed is essentially a set of proposals of intended learning and it is the teacher who in the final analyses determines which of the proposed experiences learners must acquire. Their education and qualification levels play a decisive role in facilitating students' learning (Hama, 1998; Darling–Hammond &Bransford, 2005; Kennedy, 2008). Moreover, teachers' competence is significant in the implementation of the RME curriculum because the more competent teachers

are, the greater the degree of implementation. Researchers (Bossu, et al, 2022; Gross, et al, 1971) considered lack of teacher knowledge and skill to meet the challenges as one of the inhibiting factors to curriculum implementation. Flynn (1985) found that the quality of teachers is integral to the effectiveness of the school. In a study of curriculum implementation, Fullan (1991a) found that the conditions which ensure effective implementation of a curriculum include adequate use of materials, effective teacher preparation, effective management systems as well as effective pupil participation and adequate parental support. Fullan (1991b) therefore produced a list of factors affecting implementation and suggested that the process could be analysed in terms of characteristics of the curriculum innovation or change, characteristics of the school, characteristics of the school district, and characteristics external to the school system.

The Fidelity Model (Approach) is the initial and most extensively documented approach to curriculum implementation that has the aim of determining the extent to which curriculum implementation corresponds to goals and objectives (Fullan, 1991b). The approach was used in this study to help determine the degree to which teaching and learning of RME corresponds to intended goals and to determine factors which facilitate or inhibit such implementation efforts with specific reference to the standards-based curriculum currently in use in Ghana's primary schools. The teacher has always been central to every education reform processes around the world. Thus, this study sought to explore the fidelity of implementation of Ghana's Standards-based RME curriculum by teachers. This is because irrespective of how well a curriculum of any subject is structured, designed and documented,

its implementation becomes critical because problems of many educational endeavours arise at the implementation stage (Marsh & Willis, 2007).

If the teacher is to be able to translate curriculum intentions into reality, it is imperative that the teacher understands the curriculum document or syllabus well in order to implement it effectively (Chaudhary, 2015). Bay-Williams, Reys and Reys (2003) have emphasised that while standards-based curriculum offer great promise for students, they introduce challenges for teachers unfamiliar with the materials and instructional approaches that facilitate active student-learning. They emphasised further that adopting a standards-based curriculum is a distinctively different experience than "replacing an existing textbook with a similar newer one'' **(**p. 14). Thus, to them, the content, presentation within context, instructional recommendations, and assessment strategies are noticeably different in a Standards-Based curriculum, requiring much adjustment and learning on the part of teachers.

In Ghana, a nationwide effort to implement the pre-tertiary standards-based curriculum from kindergarten to basic six was launched at the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year. Prior to implementation, attempts were made by policy makers to train teachers who were tasked with effectively implementing the new reform at various districts, municipalities and Metropolis. The teachers were trained on curriculum change and policy expectations in the various teaching subjects as they implement the standards-based curriculum. A study by Apau (2021) observed that though teachers have adopted and are implementing the curriculum, they would like to develop working relationships with administrators and other change facilitators to bring about expected change required in the new educational reform. In a

fidelity of implementation assessment carried out by NaCCA and GES (2022) in some selected areas of Ghana, some challenges such as inadequate staffing, inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of internet connectivity for research, inadequate teacher knowledge on pedagogical and assessment strategies, difficulties in getting materials and resources, and poor attitude of teachers towards Professional Learning Communities were among the challenges identified with implementation of the SBC in Ghana. It is in view of these and some other factors raised in relation to curriculum implementation that this study sought to research into the fidelity of implementation of Ghana's standards-based Religious and Moral Education curriculum by teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region. The study therefore considered the extent of teacher preparation prior to SBC implementation as well as how RME teachers are faithfully implementing key features (i.e, learner-centred pedagogy, inclusion and equity, differentiation and scaffolding, integration of I.C.T and development of core competencies) of the RME standards-based curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

The introduction of a new curriculum requires enough teacher preparation and readiness. Since implementation takes place through the interaction of the learner and the planned learning opportunities, the role and influence of the teacher in the process is indispensable.

Prior to the commencement of the 2019/2020 academic year for basic schools in Ghana, teachers in the basic schools were taken through training all over the country to familiarise themselves with the new curriculum(Kale-Dery, 2019). However, during the implementation process, realities in terms of

challenges relating to the curriculum content, alignment of teaching and learning philosophies to aims of the curriculum, as well as the adoption of learner-centred pedagogies and assessment coupled with the unavailability of textbooks set in. This resulted in a lot of teachers and other stakeholders in education complaining and seeking immediate redress to the identified challenges. (Agormedah, et al, 2022 ;Bosu, et al, 2022; Kpedator, 2019). Moreover, the tendency for teachers to continue in their "old ways of doing things" in the face of the change in curriculum was high. For instance, in the Kwahu West Municipality, lesson observation of some RME teachers as a requirement for the a three-semester Top up Bachelor of Education Sandwich programme unearthed some challenges in relation to the standards-based RME curriculum implementation. It was observed that although the RME teachers identified and indicated the competencies to be developed by learners in their lesson plans by the close of the various lessons, most of the activities carried out by the teachers during the teaching and learning process were not activities that could lead to the attainment of the specified competencies. Moreover, the implementation process saw the frequent use of paper and pencil assessment procedures which waslargely in-line with the previously used objective based curriculum rather than competency-based assessment procedures required of standard-based curriculum.

This study was therefore based on the premise that the interaction of the teacher with the curriculum materials determines what happens in the classroom. Thus, the study explored and provided a detailed description of how religious and moral education teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality

of the Eastern Region of Ghana are 'faithfully' implementing the Standards-Based RME Curriculum after two years of implementation.

Some studies have been done on the implementation of RME curriculum at the basic school level, with a focus on either general factors that influence curriculum implementation or mainly on the learner factor in curriculum implementation (Anderson, 2017;Annobil, 2018). In a most recent study, Aboagye and Yawson (2020) sought the perception of some Ghanaian teachers on the implementation of the new curriculum. However, with the introduction of the standards-based curriculum in Ghana since September, 2019, it appears that little or no empirical study has been conducted in the area of teacher implementation of RME standards-based curriculum, hence this study. This study therefore examined how RME teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality are 'faithfully' implementing key features (i.e, learner-centred pedagogy, inclusion and equity, differentiation and scaffolding, integration of I.C.T and development of core competencies) of the newly introduced standards-based curriculum.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the fidelity of the implementationof the Standards-Based RME Curriculum by teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region of Ghana.

Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. examine how RME teachers were prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education curriculum

2. explore how RME teachers are implementing the key features of the Standards-Based curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality.
3. investigate the support systems head teachers provide to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME Standards-Based Curriculum in the Kwahu West municipality.
4. assess challenges that are hindering the effective implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education curriculum from the perspectives of teachers and head teachers.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. how were RME teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum?
2. how are teachers implementing the key features of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum ?
3. what support systems do head teachers provide to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools in the Kwahu West Municipality?
4. what are the challenges hindering the effective implementation of the Standards-Based RME curriculum from the perspectives of teachers and head teachers?

Significance of the Study

This study would lead to an assessment of RME teachers' pedagogical practices in SBC implementation which could be used to make adjustment in future training programmes for RME teachers in the municipality or elsewhere.

Since the Standards-Based curriculum is in its formative stage of implementation, it is envisaged that the results of this study would trigger any quick adjustment in terms of misconceptions on parts of teachers with regard to the aims and objectives of the curriculum. Thus, curriculum planners might initiate further interactions with teachers to correct any misconceptions with regard to the new curriculum.

Head teachers act as teacher and student advocates and agents of change, and provide educational leadership in the schools. This study may assist leaders in directing and enabling teachers to engage in professional development activities which will, in turn, assist them in becoming efficacious in implementing the new curricula. The results of the study will guide head teachers to adopt appropriate measures that can help to overcome the challenges of the teaching and learning of RME in their schools. They will encourage RME teachers to prepare adequately before going to teach, supervise the teaching and learning of RME, assist their RME teachers to overcome problems associated with the teaching of RME, and help to ensure that the required periods are allocated for RME.

The findings are to help to unearth specific challenges that militate against the teaching and learning of the subject so that suggestions and recommendations would be made to appropriate stakeholders. Thus, it may alert policy makers and other professional bodies such as teacher educators about the challenges faced by RME teachers in their classrooms as they respond to educational policy reforms initiated by governments.

Finally, findings of the study are expected to serve as a knowledge base for future research in Ghana. For instance, the study might add to the

already existing literature on the factors that influence implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools, most especially the Standards-Based curriculum. Moreover, the study hopes to add to the theoretical and practical knowledge about how a curriculum innovation is implemented in a local context.

Delimitation of the Study

Although the Religious and Moral Education curriculum is being implemented in all public basic schools across Ghana, this study was confined to primary schools in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. A reason for selecting the municipality is that it consist of both rural and urban schools, thus, providing a range of attitudes that can be generalized.

Again, even though RME is being taught at different levels of Ghana's education system, this study focused only on primary schools because all the different levels could not have been covered as that would have made the scope too broad and wide. Moreover, the newly introduced Standards-Based curriculum currently focuses on the primary schools with the exception of the Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools.

Although there are many other factors that can influence implementation of the RME curriculum, this study was limited to teachers and head teachers. Teachers and head teachers were used for the study because they are seen to be more suitable to serve the purpose of the study and to provide the required data as compared to pupils and their parents. The study also involved only in-service teachers, who may have experienced the implementation of Ghana's standards-based curriculum since its inception in September, 2019.

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Limitations of the Study

As with the majority of studies, this research is subject to some limitations. The study adopted the convergent parallel design under mixed method designs, where the researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and then compares the two databases to determine if there is convergence, differences and some combinations. Such a design has some short comings such as the researcher having a difficulty of comparing the results of two analyses using data of different forms as well as being unclear as to how to resolve discrepancies that arise in comparing the results (Creswell & Plano Clarke,2007 in Creswell, 2009). Moreover, qualitative data require the subjectivity of respondents, their opinions, attitudes and perspectives which often contribute to some degree of biases, thus eventually influencing outcomes of the study (Jackson, 2009). To minimize the biases, data from the questionnaire, observation and the interviews were all put together to provide detail results.

Another limitation was the difficulty in recruiting teacher participants for the qualitative study (Observations and interviews) because of their fear that the data collected will be used for evaluation purposes. Participants were however assured as purpose of the study was explained further to them, thus reducing fear and increasing their confidence to participate in the study.

The seeming uncertain times for vacations and reopening dates for the basic schools for the 2021/2022 academic yearseriously affected data collection, thus slowing the pace of the data collection. For instance the Ministry of Education published a semester systemfor the basic schools in Ghana, with dates. However, it was opposed by some stakeholders including

the teacher unions such as the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) leading to a revision into a trimester system. This new arrangement therefore led to a modification in the earlier semester dates which the researcher intended to follow.

Organisation of the Study

The thesis is organised into five chapters. Chapter One introduces the study by setting the background, identifying the main issue to be investigated (statement of the problem), the purpose of the study, and formulates research questions which provides a guide for the study. It also outlines the significance of the study, the delimitation (scope) and limitation of the study, definition of terms as well as organisation of the study. Chapter Two is devoted to the literature review. The review covers the theoretical, conceptual as well as the empirical framework of the study. The theoretical review deals with topics such as Fidelity of Curriculum implementation and the case for Fidelity of Implementation. The conceptual review deals with basic concepts relating to the topic understudy such as meaning of Curriculum and Curriculum implementation, Religious Education, Moral Education, Aims of the standards-based RME curriculum, nature and scope of the standards-based RME curriculum. The chapter further presents empirical review on the study. The Chapter Three deals with the methods which were adopted in the study. Topics covered include research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, as well as data collection and data analysis procedures. Chapter Four is devoted to the discussion of the results and findings of the study. The findings from the study are presented and discussed in relation to the four research questions. The research questions are discussed

based on quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data collected. The Chapter Five provides a summary of the research findings and conclusions; and makes recommendations on how they influence educational theory and practice.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of literature pertaining to the topic under understudy. The chapter incorporates theoretical review, conceptual and empirical issues. The theoretical review focused on the theories of Curriculum implementation as well as the models of Curriculum Implementation. The conceptual issues centered on the concepts of curriculum and curriculum implementation, Standards-based curriculum, Religious Education, Moral Education as well as Religious and Moral Education. The empirical review then focused on reviewing the works done by other researchers which are related and have a bearing on this study.

Theoretical Review

Theories of Curriculum Implementation

This study was guided by the theory of curriculum implementation (Fullan, 1991; Glatthorn, Boschee, & Whitehead, 2006; Leithwood, 1991). The topic of curriculum implementation is of paramount interest in discussions that have to do with the open use of a programme throughout an entire school system. Implementation involves enacting the curriculum instructional plan or programme produced during a previous stage. It is the "process of reducing differences between existing practices and practices suggested by the innovation"(Leithwood, 1991, p. 445). Leithwood(1991) explained implementation to imply either modifications being made in an existing set of practices or a completely new set of practices being carried out whiles

Lewy(1977) sees it as the open use of a programme throughout an entire school system.

On the other hand, curriculum implementation involves putting a change into practice, an idea, programme, or set of activities and structures new to the attempting or expected to change. The change may be externally imposed or voluntarily sought, explicitly defined in detail in advance or developed and adapted incrementally through use, designed to be deliberately planned so that users can make modifications according to their perceptions of the needs of the situation (Fullan, 1991). Curriculum implementation focuses on the extent to which actual change in practice occurs and those factors which influence the extent of change. Implementation is critically important, in that it is the means of accomplishing desired educational objectives (Fullan, 1991a; Berman & McLaughlin, 1975).

Researchers like Berman (1981) suggest that the educational change process consists of three major phases – initiation, implementation and institutionalization. Fullan, Bennett and Rolheiser-Bennett (1989) reviewed the professional literature on curriculum implementation since the 1950s and emphasised four themes, which they labeled adoption, implementation, standardization, and restructuring. House (1979), a prominent researcher on curriculum implementation in the 1970s and 1980s explains curriculum implementation to include specifically what happens in schools be it technical, political or cultural. Hargreaves, Earl, Moore and Manning (2001) have built on and extended on these three perspectives. The technical perspective assumes that systematic planning and a rational approach to implementation can overcome the typical problems teachers face, such as lack of time and

expertise. According to House (1996), the political perspective emphasises the balance of power among stakeholders as what determines the success or failure of an innovation. On the contrary, the cultural aspect reflects the beliefs and values of stakeholders which are socially shared and shaped and ultimately affect what happens in classrooms. It is on the bases of this that Lusi (1997) argued that state officials faced extremely difficult task in curriculum implementation because they were required to improve the academic achievement of all pupils in all schools. According to him, this required changing the core processes of teaching and learning which in turns requires changing the behaviours of teachers (Lusi, 1997, p. 10).

Rogers (1983) classifies the implementation process into three stages. He calls the first stage re-invention and said it was the period during which the implementers made changes or modifications to the programme so that the changes could fit their organisation or institution. On the other hand, the structure of the organization may have to be changed to suit the new programme. For example, in implementing the RME curriculum in basic schools, a new organisational unit such as an RME department or centre will be created with responsibility for the new programme. The amount of re-invention that takes place and why it takes place depends on a number of factors, which have to do with the nature of the innovation itself and the individuals implementing it. In the first place, innovations that are relatively more complex and not easily understood are more likely to be re-invented (Larsen &Agarwala-Rogers, 1977a, 1977b). In the second place, re-invention takes place when the implementer lacks detailed knowledge about the new idea, perhaps due to relatively little contact between the implementer and

theprogramme developer (Evaland, 1977; Larsen &Agarwala-Rogers, 1977a; Rogers, 1977a). In the third place, he emphasises that when an innovation is implemented in order to solve a wide range of users' problems, re-invention is more likely to occur (Rogers, 1983).

Finally, re-invention may occur when programme developers encourage implementers to modify or adapt the innovation as is often the case in a decentralised educational system or under an adaptation and/or enactment approaches to implementation. It is however worthy to mention that even under a strictly fidelity approach, some amount of re-invention takes place because implementers are not passive acceptors of new ideas but active modifiers and adapters of new ideas.

According to Rogers (1983), the second stage of implementation is the stage of clarification. Here, the relationship between the innovation and the institution implementing is defined more clearly as the new idea is put into full and regular use. The meaning of the new idea then becomes clear to the implementers. The final stage of implementation given by Rogers (1983) is reutilization. According to Rogers (1983), "this is the point the new idea becomes an institutionalized and regularized part of the adopter's on-going operation" (p.175). This means that at this stage the new programme finally loses its distinctive quality because the separate identity of the new idea disappears. Rogers (1983) maintains that at this stage the problem might have been overcome, criticisms and opposition to the new programme abated and the programme's features internalized by the implementers.

As indicated earlier, curriculum implementation is the process of using an instructional programme (whether revised or newly designed) in all the

educational institutions and at all levels targeted to use that programme. It is associated with changes in the behaviour of people, especially the implementers, in the direction suggested or implied by the programme, and that such changes will depend on the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The effect is that a process of re-organising and adding to what one is able to do, and how one feels, is immediately set into motion. One characteristic feature of this process is that it is slow and gradual. Leithwood (1991) found that "in it, the implementers grow from their existing practices through immature approximations of practices suggested by the innovation, to relatively sophisticated use of the innovation" (p. 446).

Implementation also involves certain changes in an existing programme or within the educational system. For example, there is every reason to adjust the Basic School Programme to the requirements of the new programme by modifying pre-service and in-service training activities which are expected to shape teachers and or update their competences in the objectives, content area, teaching/learning methods, assessments and class management practices of the new programme. Changes must also be effected in the national examination system, if there exists one, otherwise teachers may not have the motivation for changing the focus of their teaching (Aboagye, 2003; Lewy, 1977; Leithwood, 1991).

In an attempt to use any new programme, problems may crop up at the initial stages of implementation. This may be due to lack of knowledge and skills required, negative feelings about the programme and implementation activities, unavailability of particular resources and the nature of the existing institution. With respect to the school system, these problems are likely to be

more serious because a large number of people are involved in the implementation, and also the implementers are often a different set of people from the programme developers or designers (Leithwood, 1991). The organization structure that provides stability and continuity to the school may also be a resistant force to implementation efforts. All these make individuals entertain a certain degree of doubt about the expected consequences of the programme. It will be quite reasonable that effective pre-implementation measures are taken to restore the problems.

Many curriculum specialists contend that for any implementation of an instructional programme to yield a high degree of success, certain conditions need to be met (Fullan, 1999). As the design of an instructional programme proceeds, it is tried as and when necessary in the classroom situation at the level for which it is intended. Tamakloe (1992) explained that this is done to ensure that what has been designed meets the desired objectives. At this stage it may become necessary to take another look at the objectives stated, the content selected, the learning experiences suggested and the ways of organising them. It may also be necessary to re-consider the resources suggested for use in the classroom.

Another pre-implementation measure which Bloom (1977) has suggested is the try-out. He recommended that as soon as self-contained sections or chapters of the programme are ready for use, they should be tried out in a few classes, about six to ten. According to him, these classes should be selected in accordance with the principles of judgmental sampling so that they represent the separate sub-groups of the population for which the programme has been designed. In addition, the schools and classes

selectedshould be those in which the teachers have undergone the recommended teacher training programme and are willing to work together with the programme development team (Fullan&Pomfret, 1975).At the time of the tryout, three major types of data are collected (Adentwi&Sarfo, 2009; Bloom, 1977). These are judgmental data, observational data and data on student learning. With respect to the judgmental data, opinions of those who have used the instructional programmes: teachers, students, experts, supervisors, psychologists and subject organisers are sought. The information is obtained through the use of questionnaires, interviews and ratings to get the various persons to provide judgment on the suitability or otherwise of instructional programme (Tamakloe, 1992, p. 173). The observational data are collected in the classroom through careful observation of the teacher-learner interaction. The observation takes into consideration the degree of learner response, attention, involvement in the programme and the extent of success of the methods of teaching. Thus in the short term, information from the observation is used to redesign appropriate teaching methods in a revised instructional programme, while in the long term, it helps to determine the problems which are posed in Basic Education (Tamakloe, 1992). The third type of data is data on students' learning, and this is obtained through tests taken by the students on each unit of the programme, examination of students' products (e.g. work sheets) and students' self-report of what they experience in class. Such data help to establish the extent to which students acquire the knowledge, skills, generalizations and values, as required by the programme.

Following the preliminary try-out, Bathory (1977) suggests that there should be a large-scale try-out before the programme is considered ready for

wide spread use in the system. He calls this a field trial and justifies its necessity thus: “the use of a new programme throughout an educational system may unfold problems that do not appear at the preliminary try-out stage. It is important to extend the try-out to a wide-scale field trial. Such a field trial is very necessary to determine the conditions under which the programme will work and those where it may be less than satisfactory for teachers and students in particular schools and colleges” (Bathory, 1977, p. 105). Put in different words, a field trial allows for the observation of the operation of the whole programme in a situation that is typical of its actual expected use in the entire system. By this way problems that remained unseen and therefore unresolved in the small preliminary try-out are dealt with. It also gives a better evidence of the programme’s suitability and appropriateness than the tryout.

A fourth strategy which plays a useful role with regard to the success or failure of the implementation of an innovation is the dissemination of the innovation (Kelly, 1989; Tamakloe, 1977). In a study of dissemination of the innovation, Tamakloe (1992) found that before implementation of the instructional programme that has undergone purging and refinement through the tryout and field trial stage, there is the need for implementers to have an effective dissemination strategy and carry it through as thoroughly as possible. Dissemination in this sense refers to “planned pathways to the transmission of new educational ideas and practices from their point of production to all locations of potential implementation” (MacDonald & Walker, 1976, p.26). These pre-implementation measures lead to improved channels of curriculumchange, increase the speed of curriculum change, improve the

quality of the curriculum, and also ensure greater cost effectiveness and enhanced curriculum implementation.

Four major components of dissemination have been identified namely translocation, animation, re-education and communication (MacDonald & Walker, 1976). Translocation implies the planning and transfer or movement of both people and materials required for the implementation of a new aspect of, or a new instructional programme. Issues here that need consideration include whether teachers should undergo in-service training and what type; whether people in the education system should perform different roles through changes in posts; whether inspectors or programme designers should visit schools, and how equipment, books and other materials are to reach the various schools.

Animation involves the provision of incentives, which will urge the implementers (teachers) to discharge their duties with all the zeal that they can exhibit. The incentive is also meant to develop in teachers desirable attitudes towards the programme; to bring about self-generated and individual changes towards the implementation of the instructional programme (Tamakloe, 1992); and "to increase the degree of relative advantage of the new idea" (Rogers, 1983, p. 219). Incentives may be direct or indirect payments of cash or in kind and this constitute the strength of the desire to implement a particular policy or practice.

Re-education implies an in-depth understanding and a high degree of commitment required to make the programme of instruction to be implemented effectively (Rogers, 1983). In this regard, there is the need for a deep co-operative experience among teachers in trying to carry out the

programme of instruction and the establishment of an intimate rapport between the designers and the teachers. Communication involves passing on information about the instructional programme from one person or school to another (Rogers, 1983). This may have to do with personal contact through visits or the use of the radio, television, newspapers and itinerant information vans. Mass media channels are often the most rapid and efficient means to inform an audience of potential implementers about the existence of an innovation. On the contrary, interpersonal channels are more effective in convincing an individual to accept and implement a new idea, especially if the interpersonal channel links two or more individuals who are near-peers. Rogers (1983) explains that most individuals do not evaluate an innovation on the basis of scientific studies of its consequences, but rely more upon a subjective evaluation of the innovation which other individuals convey to them. This means that awareness must be created through intensive communication before implementing a new programme.

In the first place, when a thorough dissemination has been done, there is the need to find out if there is adequate equipment and materials such as tools, books and other teaching and learning resources, to sustain the implementation process. In the second place, it is necessary to ensure that the teachers who will implement the curriculum are adequately prepared to handle them effectively. According to Tamakloe (1992), a short-time measure is to run an in-service training programme for serving teachers. The long-term one is to re-design the pre-service teacher education programme so that the teachers who come out are equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills for an effective implementation of the instructional programme. This involves

knowledge of the content of the instructional programme, the appropriate methods to use to bring about effective learning and the use of the requisite resources to ensure a stamping in effect of what has been learnt. In 1975 for example, the Teacher Education Programme was restructured to meet the needs of the junior secondary schools, which were established in 1976. Student teachers were made to do a 3-year post-secondary course, specializing in the teaching of the subjects in the junior secondary schools.

In the third place, there was the need to redesign the end of course examination to suit junior secondary schools so that it will help provide the needed motivation for both teachers and students who use the programme. Thus, there should be re-designing of the examination system so that it will be in tune with the goals and objectives of the new curriculum. This is to ensure an effective use of well-designed curriculum programmes and materials.

The last and final condition has to do with quality control. This involves a systematic follow-up to ensure that some or all aspects of curricula are quickly replaced when it is realised that they have outlived their usefulness or are not serving the purposes for which they were designed. These four components of dissemination highly complement each other as not any one of them is adequate without the others (Tamakloe, 1992).

Models of Curriculum Implementation

Schon (1971) distinguishes three modelsfor the dissemination of innovation: the Centre–periphery model; the Proliferation of centres model; and the Shifting–Centre model.

In the center periphery model, the process of implementation of the curriculum is centrally controlled by government and the related agencies, the

guide to lesson preparation and presentation is directed from a center (Ministry, Resource Center, etc).The centre is therefore charged with the management of the resources required for the implementation. In addition, the centres provide training programmes on long and short terms for the human resources that are to be used in the implementation process. This may involve ascending all the personnel from the different schools from the periphery to a point where relevant information and instructions are provided on how the implementation of the curriculum is to be carried out. It is important to note that the success of this Model would require adequate communication network, adequate supply of material and human resources for the training, and regular monitoring of the programme in schools in order to have required feedback from the periphery.Schon, has thus emphasised that the scope of centre periphery model varies directly with the level of technology governing the flow of men, materials, money and information. Moreover, the scope of centre-periphery model depends on its capacity for generating and managing feedback. Since, the process of diffusion is regulated by the centre, its effectiveness no doubt depends upon the way in which information flows back to the center. Schon views this first model as being potentially inefficient, as both funding and motivation must stem from the centre. It is also a model which according to him is likely to create the greatest resistance.

The proliferation of centres model is an elaboration of the centre-periphery model, in which there are secondary as well as primary centres, designed as though to extend the limits and overcome the source of failure inherent in the centre periphery model.Ratnavadivel (1995) explains further that thesystem retains the basic cater-periphery structure but differentiates

primary and secondary centres. Secondary centres engage in the diffusion of innovation as the primary centre support and manage secondary centre. Thus, in the proliferation of centre approach, more than one center are used in the process of implementation. He emphasised that "The model of the proliferation of centres makes the primary centres a trainer of trainers. The central message includes not only the content of the innovation to be diffused, but a pre-established method for its diffusion. The primary centre now specialises in training, deployment, support, mentoring, and management" (1995:84-86).The structure may therefore involve schools being managed by zones in the implementation process. The zones serve as primary centres, while the schools are the secondary centres. All the centers are provided with training materials and other necessary items for effective implementation of the curriculum. The head teachers, teaching and non-teaching staff are similarly mobilised at the school level for the implementation of the curriculum. The success of this model also depends on adequate funding, supplying of adequate instructional materials and training facilities at the various levels of implementation. Besides, there should be an effective monitoring network and regular supervision of the entire process.

In the shifting centre model, the implementation of the curriculum involves movement from one center to another. In other words, the implementation does not cover the entire area at the same. It should, however, be noted that this model could be best practiced when engaging in pilot testing of the implementation strategies to ensure adequacy of the relevant components. But it is generally assumed that this model could be problematic because the entire process could be abandoned by thosecentres that are not

financially stable to find the various aspects involved in the implementation process.

AdaptationModels of Curriculum Implementation

Since the mid-1970s, the design of traditional implementation strategies has been divided into three perspectives: (i) fidelity (ii) mutual adaptation and (iii) enactment and all these approaches are based on different assumptions about curriculum knowledge, curriculum change and the role of the teacher (Cho, 1998).Therefore, Teachers may adopt a fidelity, mutual-adaptation or enactment approach when they implement curriculum.

Fidelity of Curriculum Implementation (FOI)

The Fidelity Approach to curriculum implementation was the theoretical base of this study. The fidelity orientation as the label suggests, is concernedwith the measurement of the degree to which a particular instructional programme is faithfully implemented as planned (Fullan&Pomfret, 1977; Synder, Bolin &Zumwalt, 1992). In other words, Fidelity of implementation is defined as "a determination of how well a programme is being implemented in comparison with the original program design" (Mihalic, 2002, p. 2), "a way of determining the alignment between the implementation of a treatment and its original design" (Furtak et al., 2008, p. 362), or "the extent to which teachers implement an intervention, curriculum, innovation, or programme as intended by the developers" (Pence, Justice, & Wiggins, 2008, p. 332). In summary, fidelity of implementation can be defined as the degree to which teachers or stakeholders abide by a curriculum's original design when implementing it. Advocates of this approach to implementation view the role of the teacher as a passive consumer

who receives the 'wisdom' of the developers or experts. Since improved outcomes in education are said to be the products of effective innovations and implementations efforts, the teacher's role as implementing agents is key under this approach. Moreover, the effectiveness of curricula depends critically on how well teachers understand and implement them.

However, Johnson, Mellard, Fuchs & McKnight (2006) identified four factors that influence fidelity of Implementation ; *Complexity* (the more complex the intervention, the lower the fidelity because of the level of difficulty), *Materials and resources required* (if new or substantial resources are required, they need to be made readily accessible), *Perceived and actual effectiveness* (Even with a solid research base, if teachers believe the approach will not be effective or if it is inconsistent with their teaching style, they will not implement it well) and finally *Interventionists* (the number, expertise, and motivation of individuals who deliver the intervention).

Similarly, Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco and Hansen (2003) also identified four main factors that affect curriculum fidelity: teacher characteristics (emphasising that self-confidence and teaching enthusiasm increased fidelity whiles authoritarian personality decreased it), programme properties (i.e. whether the programme is simple or complicated, sincerity of programme implementation, programme's sufficiency and effectiveness, then institutions and agencies supporting the programme), teacher training (teacher preference for very detailed and clear instruction during training as well as professional development activities including observation and support) and institutional features (the openness of an institution to innovations, with emphasis on teachers' self-efficacy levels, school culture, opportunities and support

provided by directors, effective leadership, staff morale as well as the effectiveness of the institution at problem solving). However, for Wallace, Blasé, Fixsen and Naoom (2008) the identification of the concept of "core components" in a curriculum is another element affecting Fidelity of Implementation (FOI). They described the "core components" as the "essential and indispensable" elements of a practice-those that were critical to the likelihood of achieving results. In the view of Wallace et el, there is some evidence that the more clearly the components of an intervention programme are known and defined, the more readily the reform or change can be implemented successfully. This implies that the stakeholders in any curriculum reforms need to be adequately exposed to the new curriculum and its key features so they can effectively support its implementation.

On how to ensure FOI in programme implementation, Mihalic (2002) emphasised the work of Dane & Schneider (1998) who suggested four primary components to be examined when considering programme fidelity:

1. *Adherence* refers to whether the programme service or intervention is being delivered as it wasdesigned or written, i.e., with all core components being delivered to the appropriate population;staff trained appropriately; using the right protocols, techniques, and materials; and in thelocations or contexts prescribed;
2. *Exposure* may include any of the following: the number of sessions implemented, length ofeach session, or the frequency with which programme techniques were implemented;
3. *Quality of Programme Delivery* is the manner in which a teacher, volunteer, or staff memberdelivers a programme (e.g., skill in using the

techniques or methods prescribed by the programme,enthusiasm, preparedness, attitude); and

4. *Participant Responsiveness* is the extent to which participants are engaged by and involved inthe activities and content of the programme.

Similar to the suggestion of Mihalic as indicated in the above, Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) emphasise that the work of Berman and McLaughlin (1976) must be carefully considered when developing a FOI plan. Berman and McLaughlin (1976), as well as other scholars, have opined that the three primary aspects related to three primary agents that must be considered for in a FOI evaluation to be effective are as shown in the Table 1.

Table 1: Aspect and Agent Relationship in FOI Evaluation

Aspect	Agent
Programme design	Curriculum developers
Programme adherence	School leadership
Programme exposure and dosage	Teachers

Source: Berman and McLaughlin (1976); Century et al. (2008); Dusenbury et al. (2003);Kurki, Boyle, and Aladjem (2006); Wayne and Youngs (2003); Rivkin et al. (2005).

This study to a very large extent examined the third aspect: programme exposure and dosage. Exposure and dosage refers to the teacher's responsibility to deliver the curriculum to the students in the right amount, the right way, and to standard. In other words, the instruction given the students must align to the curricular programme's standard. Because research has demonstrated that instruction has a great impact upon students, it is only proper to further study its role in FOI evaluations (Stein & Kaufman, 2010;

Remillard& Bryans, 2004). Most FOI studies across the literature depend on extensive direct observation, interviews, and artifact examination (Fletcher et al., 2010). For this reason, it is beneficial to build upon existing research and constructs in order to explore more efficient and cost effective ways of determining teacher FOI, thereby adding to this field of study on curriculum implementation.

McDonough (2014) has observed that identifying curriculum components that must be implemented to standard is also an important area of FOI assessments. Thus, the identification of such components allows both programme designers and programme implementers to better understand where modifications in a programme can be made without risking programme failure (Darrow, 2009). Further, by understanding the critical components of a programme, researchers may be able to better predict the feasibility of programme success based upon contextual variations between the testing environment and the implementation environment (Mowbray et al., 2003; O'Donnell, 2008).

Case for Fidelity of Implementation

In most literature, there is research that supports the need to implement curriculum consistent with the programme's standards. In examining the effects that FOI has on students, Stein and Kaufman (2010) found that a teacher's fidelity to curricular standards has a positive measureable impact on student learning. Other scholars and researchers have similarly argued that a teacher's fidelity to curricular standards impacts student achievement more than a teacher's education, experience, or mastery of pedagogical techniques (Stein & Kaufman, 2010; Remillard&Bryans, 2004). Considering all of these,

it is obvious that researchers study and examine how FOI assessments can help teachers and educational leaders implement curricular programme standards more efficiently and effectively.

There are many variables that determine whether or not a curricular programme is implemented successfully.This, in and of itself, presents a clear case for the need to evaluate the FOI of curricularprogrammes. Specifically, because some variables fall outside a school's sphere ofinfluence, it is all the more important for a school to examine the variables it can controlto ensure that an acceptable FOI level is being attained. It is important to note thateducational contexts differ greatly, and that these same differences affect teachers andstudents. Moreover, educational programmes are ideally designed to accept a certain degree of variation(Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, & Hansen, 2003; Ruiz-Primo, 2005). Even so, there is apoint of failure inherent in all programmes, educational or otherwise, where, when achieved, the integrity of the programme becomes irreconcilably compromised. FOI assessments therefore havethe ability to measure exactly what the point of failure for a given programme is, as well asexactly how much variance from the programme's original construct is acceptable(Dusenbury et al., 2003).

Several scholars argue that since curricula are often packaged as a programme or intervention, it is reasonable to assume that the same efficacy, effectiveness, and point of failure criterion that affect programmes in other disciplines apply to curricula as well (Remillard& Bryans, 2004; Usiskin&Dossey, 2004). This being the case, and in order to avoid curriculum failure, there is the need for educational leaders to ensure that programmes are being properly implemented by both administrators and teachers.

In relation to the relevance in the assessment of the fidelity of implementation and why it is so critical to curriculum, In 1976, Berman and McLaughlin described implementation as a "bridge between a promising idea and its impact on students" (p. 349); in other words the bridge between the standards and the students is instruction. From this point of view; instruction is one of the most critical factors in a curricular programme because it directly influences student outcomes. Further, Dusenbury et al. (2003) asserted that while the field of education is thick with curricular innovations, instruction used to implement these curricular innovations is often not implemented to standard, thereby actually increasing the risk of negative student outcomes. Simply put, instruction is critical to ensuring students receive the curriculum as intended, and thus the FOI of a curricular programme must be carefully monitored to ensure that instruction is aligned to the curricular programme's standards.

Conditions for Implementing the Fidelity Model

In order that the fidelity approach could be successfully used in implementing a curriculum, there are certain conditions which must be satisfied. Among the conditions include: clearly defining the innovation needs, developing implementation scale or checklist and redefining the role of the teacher (Snyder et al., 1992). In the first place, before any programme could be declared as being a failure because the desired outcomes were not achieved, it is necessary that one should first determine whether the programme was really implemented. In the second place, an implementation scale or checklist should be developed to match desired practices, such as use of materials and activities, new roles/behaviour, new understandings and attitudes (Fullan,

2001b). Hence, defining the actual innovation is often the first step in developing a scale or checklist which is faithful to the intentions of the developers or a panel of experts who are asked to judge the validity of the instrument being used to make sure that it matches the intentions of those who developed the curriculum innovation. Once the scale or checklist is developed and validated, it is used to assess the degree of implementation of a particular innovation of these methods.

Redefining the role of the teacher is the third and final condition to allow for the use of the fidelity approach. Gross, Giacquinta and Bernstein (1971) were asked to do a study in the late 1960s' following reports of failed programmes designed to provide equal educational opportunities for disadvantaged students. Gross et al. (1971) felt that the actual implementation of compensatory programmes had been inadequately measured and so it was pointed out that social scientists had been wrongly focusing on introduction of an innovation (adoption) as the fundamental problem of change. Later, Gross et al. (1971) assessed the degrees of implementation, which was labelled "Catalytic role model". This involved a change from teacher-directed to traditional instruction to child-centred instruction aimed at creating independent, responsible, thinking students. The role of the teacher is to assist children to learn according to their interests. The teacher is also expected to emphasise the process, not the content of learning and to allow pupils maximum freedom in choosing their own activities.

Gross et al. (1971) were interested in determining the extent to which organisational members had changed their behaviour so that it was congruent with the behaviour patterns required by the innovation. After analyzing

documents describing the new catalytic role model and consulting with the developers, they developed an observation instrument, which identifies teaching behaviours that should be present if teachers were fully implementing innovation. Based on the observation instrument, they encouraged teachers to make materials in their classrooms available to students, allow or encourage students to interact with each other, allow students to move freely about the classroom, encourage students to choose their own activities and to allow them decide to work individually, in pairs, or in groups (Gross et al., 1971).

Teachers are also encouraged to have their classrooms arranged according to work areas; to utilise rooms according to work areas; to try to work with as many individual students or groups as possible, to try to act as guides, catalysts, or resource persons between students and materials. The fidelity does focus on individual teacher's perceptions about change, whether the innovation was actually being used in the classroom, and what the innovation looks like when integrated in the classroom. In the nutshell, implementation calls for putting into place certain favourable conditions to ensure the success of a particular programme. The absence of these conditions will render the programme ineffective because implementation cannot yield better results without them.

Mutual Adaptation Model

The second approach to implementation of research, which grew out of the fidelity perspective, is mutual adaptation (McLaughim, 1976). The mutual adaptation approach is a "process whereby adjustments in a curriculum are made by curriculum developers and those who use it in the school" (Snyder et al., 1992, p.410). Researchers with this ambition are interested in studying

how the innovation is adapted during the implementation process rather than in measuring the degree to which the innovation is implemented as planned. Models with a mutual adaptation perspective are characterized by an externally imposed middle-up dynamic (Cho, 1998). This perspective requires that the external authorities allow modifications to the innovation that has been designed by external experts for the classroom and also requires more complex decision-making by teachers as they reshape or adapt the innovation for their respective classrooms (Pinar, 2000). This perspective recognized the complexity of the classroom settings for which the curriculum was intended.

This involves conversations between teachers and external developers to adapt curriculum for local needs. This approach does not suggest curriculum knowledge different from the fidelity approach, since experts still define it, but curriculum change has become more flexible through mutual adaptations. The teacher's role has also become more active through formulating teachers' curriculum adjustments. Shawer (2003) argues that though the adaptation and curriculum-development approaches involve adaptations into the official curriculum, the development approach does not involve communications between external developers and teachers regarding teachers' adaptations. Through curriculum adjustments, teachers become curriculum-developers who use various sources in addition to curriculum materials. They adapt existing materials and topics, add new topics, leave out irrelevant elements, use flexible lesson plans, respond to student differences and use various teaching techniques. The development approach reflects Cohen and Ball's (1999) notion of instructional capacity that results from the interactions among teachers and students around curriculum materials, where

teachers'knowledge, experience, and skills affect the interactions of students and materials in ways that neither students nor materials can. This way, Cohen and Ball echoed Doyle (1992) indicate that through this interaction, teachers can turn curriculum from the institutional into the pedagogical level (experienced/ enacted curriculum).

According to this approach, the implemented curriculum results from mutual adaptations emerging from the users, given their interests, needs and competences, and also emerging from the central agencies. Thus, the adjustments that occur in the curriculum are made not only by central agencies, but also by the schools and in the context of the classroom, and thus imply a certain amount of negotiation and flexibility on the part of both designers and practitioners (Snyder et al., 1992). Consistent with the notion of the adaptive perspective is the sensitivity of post positivism that emphasizes the complexity of the context in which a change takes place. In curriculum implementation, this is widely referred to as "mutual adaptation," a term coined by McLaughlin (1976). Accordingly, most educational concerns are to fit a proposed innovation to the institutional setting that encourages reducing the gap between an ideal implementation goal and given local contexts.

In short, the success of a new curriculum results from the consequence of trade-offs within a local context in which multiple values are embedded. Yet, the authority of written programmes selected is still, to a large extent, respected by change facilitators and implementers (Hall &Hord, 1987; Leithwood& Montgomery, 1982; Lewis, 1988). This approach focuses only on studying how an innovation is adapted during the implementation process

without measuring the degree to which the innovation is implemented as planned.

Enactment Model

The third implementation approach is the enactment model. This perspective is driven by an internally imposed, bottom-up dynamic (Cho, 1998). In this approach, the emphasis shifts from studying the implementation and adaptation of proposed curriculum to studying curriculum enactment. Researchers within this orientation are interested in studying how curriculumis shaped through the evolving constructs of teachers and learners. Snyder and Umwalt (1992) offered the enactment approach to help teachers and students make meaning in the classroom. According to this approach, the curriculum is understood as the educational experiences jointly created by students and teachers (Snyder &Umwalt., 1992). Thus, the teacher has the role of the curriculum maker who, together with his or her students, is increasingly responsible for developing educational experiences. This is where teachers and students create meaning in the classroom so that curriculum knowledge is no longer a product as in the fidelity and adaptation approaches, but ongoing constructions out of the enacted experiences that students and teachers create.

External knowledge is viewed as a resource for teachers who create curriculum as they engage in the ongoing process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Moreover, it is teachers and their students who create the enacted curriculum. In addition, curriculum change is neither about implementing nor even adapting curriculum, but "a process of growth for teachers and students, a change in thinking and practice" (Snyder, et al., p. 429). The teacher's role ranges from using, adapting and supplementing

external curriculum to curriculum-making (Clandinin& Connelly, 1988; Clandinin& Connelly, 1992; Craig, 2006). The teachers have become curriculum-makers who assess students' needs to derive curriculum themes, use strategies of curriculum-planning, curriculum-design, material-writing and curriculum-free topics. In addition, they improvise and develop and use their pedagogic techniques. The curriculum-making approach (enactment) also represents another form of classroom-level curriculum development (Shawer, 2003).

Teacher decision-making is regarded as being complex, focused on what will or will not be implemented, and how innovation will be implemented in their classrooms. In the enactment perspective, implementation of innovations in most subject areas and grade levels became more complex. Unlike many models which focused on school systems or schools, models in the enactment perspective focuses on involving teachers in implementing innovations in their classrooms (Pinar, 2000). Argued by Snyder et al. (1992), the enactment perspective refers to intra-contextuality in creating meaningful educational experiences "shaped by the evolving constructs of teachers and students"(p. 404). What makes this an alternative perspective, compared to the previous two perspectives, is the way it defines the concept of curriculum.

In this perspective, different priorities for "successful" implementation can be made while the teacher and students enact the curriculum. The text describes three paradigms--positivism, post-positivism, and constructivism--in order to compare and contrast the basic assumptions of each perspective. Since researchers within this orientation are interested in studying how curriculum is

shaped through the evolving constructs of teachers and learners, this approach will also be a means to provide the needed motivation for other stakeholders (such as head teachers and parents) to work much more harder to contribute their quota to ensure successful curriculum implementation.

Conceptual Review

Meaning of Curriculum

Several definitions of Curriculum abound in literature. However, the core meaning of curriculum is embodied in its Latin derivation- a "course" or "track to be followed". Marsh and Stafford (1982:2) therefore confirm that "the word curriculum comes from the Latin root meaning, "racecourse" and, for many, the school curriculum is just like — a race to be run, a series of obstacles or hurdles (subjects) to be passed". According to Offorma (2005), curriculum is a programme which is made up of three components: programme of studies, programme of activities and programme of guidance. This definition corroborates Tyler's (1957) view that the curriculum is the learning experiences which is planned and directed by the school to attain its educational goal. A curriculum therefore guides the direction of classroom instruction as well as provide a set of objectives to achieve them. Thus, to Rao (2010), the curriculum collectively describes the teaching, learning and assessment materials available for a given course of study. He elaborates further by indicating that a broad school curriculum should achieve two broad aims:

(i) to promote pupils' all rounded personal development, intellectually, morally, socially, culturally and physically and to build pupils' capacity of continued learning throughout life.

(ii) to contribute to sustainable societal development through preparations of all pupils for learning/education at higher level, for the world of work and for responsible citizenship, in successfully adapting individually and collaboratively to economic, social, and cultural challenges at local, national and global levels.

The implications of the above is that since education influences and reflects the values of society, and the kind of society its citizens want to be, it is significant to recognise a broad set of common values that underpin the school curriculum. McGuire and Alismail (2015) consequently point out that in the 21st Century, curriculum developers must integrate over 75% of future skills. Therefore, in order to achieve authentic learning that is demanded in the 21st century, they suggested that students should be engaged in the learning environment effectively and develop 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. Similarly, Herrington and Kervin (2007) advocated for a "Thinking Curriculum" in the 21st Century. To them, a "thinking curriculum is the one that provides a deep understanding of the subject and the ability to apply that understanding to the complex, real world problems that the student will face as an adult"(p.64).

Ghana's Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education curriculum invariably captures this view by Herrington and Kervin in the curriculum's philosophy by emphasising the need for learners to be nurtured into honest, creative and responsible citizens through a learner-centred and activity-oriented curriculum delivery modes (NaCCA/MOE,2019). Thus, the curriculum encourages teachers to make the classroom more interesting by increasing learners' participation in class activities, so as to enable learners to

work together to represent real life situations and in multiple ways (i.e oral, text, pictures, diagrams, videos, role play, etc.). The approach suggested by the RME curriculum therefore corroborate the definition of curriculum by Brown, Ryan and Creswell (2007) as they maintain that a curriculum includes students' school experiences related to their skills and strategies which is essential to improve critical thinking and creativity, problem solving skill, collaborative work, communication, effective writing, reading and conducting research.

This definition thus links the meaning of curriculum to include learners' experiences which essentially leads to the acquisition of essential skills relevant for survival in the 21st century. For the Ghanaian RME teacher the Standard-based RME curriculum is directed towards the acquisition of six core competencies and thus the RME teacher needs to create and implement activities that would lead to the development of these six core competencies in the Ghanaian child. These competencies are Critical thinking and Problem solving (CP), Creativity and Innovation (CI), Communication and Collaboration (CC), Cultural Identity and Global Citizenship (CG), Personal Development and Leadership (PL) and Digital literacy (DL).

Marzano (2003) has emphasised three types of curriculum:

1. the intended curriculum – content specified by the state/province, districtor school, which must be addressed in a particular course or at a particular grade level.
2. the implemented curriculum – content actually delivered by the teacher.
3. the attained curriculum – content actually learned by students.

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He emphasisedfurther that the discrepancy between the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum make the opportunity to learn a significant factor in student achievement. The concept of opportunity to learn emphasises the necessity for guaranteed curriculum to provide guidance regarding content for specific courses and at specific class levels.

Another noteworthy observation about curriculum is that it can be identified in six (6)representations (Goodlad, 1979; van den Akker, 2003):

1. Visionary: the ideas, ideals and intentions (in case of 'national' curriculum renewal in particular of policy makers and curriculum developers; but the initial intentions can also come from school practice itself), giving directions to or underpinning choices in the curriculum.
2. Written: how the intentions are elaborated and specified in a written format.
3. Perceived: how the intended curriculum is interpreted, in particular by teachers.
4. Operational: how the curriculum is enacted in classroom practice.
5. Experiential: how the curriculum is experienced, in particular by students.
6. Attained: what are the learner outcomes of the enacted curriculum?

Squires (2005), on the basis of the above, therefore maintains that the elements of a curriculum needs to be sequential, clear, effective and achievable for both students and teachers.

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Concept of Curriculum Implementation

The term implementation may have two meanings according to policy perspectives (Lane, 1997). One shows policy intentions and the other implies policy results. For instance, this study covers both - what policy requires and how teachers' understand policy intentions and have applied them. Thus, implementation concerns initial experiences of attempting to translate policy intentions into practice (Stoller, 2009). Similarly, Afangideh (2009), describes the concept of curriculum implementation as the actual engagement of learners with planned learning opportunities. Curriculum implementation may therefore be seen as a process that is based on the fundamental assumption of student growth and improvement of learning. The process involves aligning instructional planning with learning outcomes which are specified in the curriculum framework. Resources are thus selected based on usefulness in meeting learner outcomes. Curriculum implementation therefore implies the interactive stage of the curriculum process which takes place in the classroom through the effort of the teachers, learners, school administrators and parents.It also integrates the application of physical facilities and the adoption of appropriate pedagogical strategies and methods.

Implementation, no doubt, plays a key role in determining whether an intended curriculum achieves its desired outcomes (McLaughlin, 1990). However, introducing a curriculum change at a school, district, or national level does not guarantee that those charged with implementation will implement the curriculum in ways that lead to deep changes to classroom practice. Educators may therefore implement a curriculum with fidelity by following the curriculum as prescribed, adapt the curriculum to the needs of

their local context while adhering to its core principles, comply with the curriculum by only implementing surface-level changes, adapt the curriculum to fit with existing practices, or not implement the curriculum at all (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976; Tichnor-Wagner et al., 2018). This, therefore suggests that when planning for and managing curriculum change, it is important to come up with a strategy for implementation support, since quality of curriculum implementation of any society is the bedrock of its political, economic, scientific and technological well-being.

Fullan (2007) is of the view that "implementation" is evident in the first three years of a curriculum innovation project. It is anticipated that during this period teachers will adapt and modify practices according to their interpretations of the new curriculum. This time frame view of Fullan (2007) was relevant to this study. This is because the initial classroom implementation of Ghana's standards-based curriculum was 2019 and this study followed in 2021, approximately a year and half after the official launch of Ghana's Standards-based curriculum for the primary schools. It is during this crucial phase that issues are likely to arise. Consequently, Stoller (2009) suggested that teachers and change managers should see problems occurring here as learning opportunities rather than as obstacles. Hence, implementation is similar to a teething process of growth whereby issues are inevitable, and potential recipients of change may either embrace or reject the innovation during the implementation phase of a curriculum reform.

However, Fullan and Pomfret (1977) have observed that in the curriculum reform processunless what was meant was actually implemented, the initiation of a curriculum change merely created the illusion that change

had occurred. There is therefore need for pragmatic measures to ensure that "intendedcurriculum" (the curriculum as designed on paper, which can include stated learning objectives, pedagogy for attaining learning objectives, scope and sequence, and prescribed lessons or units to teach), is rightly implemented (what students actually experience in classrooms, including the content that is actually taught and how that content is delivered).

Bennett (2007) has emphasised that Curriculum implementation is a process of innovation and change, and the overarching goal of any curriculum implementation is the improvement of student learning. According to the Curriculum Implementation Handbook (2005), curriculum thatis centered on student learning shares some of the following characteristics:

1. it is thoughtfully planned, involving a multi-stage process that recognizes differing contexts.
2. it is collaborative.
3. it is centered on overarching understandings in the written curriculum.
4. it is culturally responsive.
5. it promotes positive outcomes for all children. (p. 4)

Notwithstanding the above, The National Association for the Education of Young Children (2002) also outlined the following indicators of effective curriculum:

1. Children are active and engaged.
2. Goals are clear and shared by all.
3. Curriculum is evidence-based.
4. Valued content is learned through investigation and focused, intentionalteaching.

5. Curriculum builds on prior learning and experiences.
6. Curriculum is comprehensive.
7. Professional standards validate the curriculum's subject-matter content.
8. The curriculum is likely to benefit students.

Overview of Basic Education in Ghana

Basic education has been defined by a range of organisations, with each definition circling around core themes, each of the definitions of basic education shares common elements. These include the development of competencies, knowledge, attitudes and values as a basis for lifelong learning. Article 1.4 of the World Declaration of Education for All states that 'Basic education is more than an end in itself. It is the foundation for lifelong learning and human development on which countries may build, systematically, further levels and types of education and training.' (UNESCO, 1990). It is in this sense that Ghana as a nation periodically reviews its educational curriculum at the basic levels to equip its graduates with the relevant values and skills that aim at making them fit into the world of work or else to continue to higher levels of education (Tamakloe, 1992; Oduro, 2000). In September, 2019 the Ministry of Education of Ghana (MOE) through the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) began the implementation of a standards-based curriculum (SBC) for the country's primary schools. The new curriculum was a departure from the Objective-based curriculum. In the SBC, Basic Education has been redefined to include Senior High School. Thus Kindergarten, Primary, Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) are

described as basic schools. JHS 1, 2, 3, SHS 1 is now referred to as Basic 7,8,9&10 respectively. SHS 1 is therefore now to be called Basic Stage 10.

Fundamentally, the review of the curriculum is said to respond to a national goal of shifting the structure and content of the education system from merely passing examinations to building character, nurturing values, and raising literate, confident, and engaged citizens who can think critically. Thus, at the core of the current school curriculum is the belief in nurturing honest, creative and responsible citizens in the Ghanaian child (NaCCA, 2019). As such, every part of the curriculum, including the related pedagogy is consistent with the set of values of Respect, Diversity, Equity, Commitment to achieving excellence, Teamwork & Collaboration, Truth & Integrity (NaCCA, 2019).

In terms of pedagogy, the new standards-based curriculum advocates the use of learner-centred pedagogy, which incorporates inclusion, differentiation and scaffolding teaching strategies. Specifically, it recommends the creation of learner-centred classrooms through the use of drama, role play and other reinforcement activities to make the teaching of RME easier and interesting.

Concept of Religious Education (RE)

Religious Education as a subject has been part of many educational reforms the world over. It refers to the teaching of a particular religion and its varied components such as its beliefs, doctrines, rituals, customs and personal roles (Thomas, 1991). Similarly, 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. The term therefore refers to the kind of education that promotes an open-ended, critical, and pupil-centred approach to the teaching and learning of religion (Smart, 1998). Many religious education curricula are shaped by the vision of aiding and encouraging students to grow religiously and spiritually, being morally informed, caring and contributing members of society, who appreciate their own beliefs and values, and the beliefs and values of others. Thus, through their study, students are made to appreciate the intrinsic worth of each religion for its adherents. They are therefore expected to be guided and given the opportunity to examine a variety of issues from several religious perspectives.

Van Boven (2017) distinguishes between three models of religious education, namely: the mono-religious model, the multi-religious model and the inter-religious model. The *mono-religious model* is characterised by the dominance of a specific religious tradition, the pedagogical aim of internalisation of that tradition, and the claim of a particular religion to absolute truth as a normative basis (Sterkens, 2001, p. 49). The aim of mono-religious education is to construct a religious identity in line with one's own religious tradition and to increase pupils' interest and involvement in that particular religion. Other religions might be discussed, though from the perspective of one's own tradition and with the aim of affirming that tradition (Sterkens, 2001, pp. 50-54). While the mono-religious model can be viewed as a model for 'learning *in* religion', the multi-religious model focusses on 'learning *about* religion'. The aim of the *multi-religious model* is to compare different religious traditions in order to increase knowledge and tolerance of other religions and immanent world-views. The normative basis of this model

is religious relativism; thus all religions are considered equally valuable and evaluated according to 'objective' criteria (Sterkens, 2001, pp.55-59). It therefore focusses on the accumulation of information about beliefs, rituals and values of different religious traditions. The *inter-religious model* focusses on religious identity formation through the development of competence in dialogue. The normative basis for this model is 'pluralism'. Within this model, plurality is viewed as an opportunity for mutual enrichment. It aims at fostering respect for both other religious traditions as well as one's own religion by teaching effective communication between the adherents of different religions (Sterkens, 2001). Interreligious learning is ideally characterised by three main aspects, namely (1) the formation of identity, (2) openness to others, and (3) the willingness to learn with and from each other (Miedema, 2006, p. 170).

Ghana's approach to religious education seem hinged on the multi religious and inter-religious models. RME teachers are required to pay equal attention to the three major religions in Ghana. (i.e Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion). The idea is to maintain a balance approach to religious education and distinguish RE from programmes designed to instruct or to indoctrinate learners in a particular religion.

Religious Education provides challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be humans (Nukunya, 2003). It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of the major religions in Ghana and other traditions that offer answers to many questions in the world. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.

It enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expressions, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

Religious education therefore encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. Teachers are therefore encouraged to be inclusive of faiths, to help students appreciate the unique perspectives of religious beliefs, and to ensure that any information given about all faiths is accurate (Curriculum Guide, 2010). The basis for religious education in most educational institutions may therefore rightly be situated in the ideas of Rossiter (1981:14) who is of the view that the school:

1. may sponsor the study of religion, but should not sponsor the practice of religion;
2. may expose learners to all religious views, but may not impose any particular view;
3. is to educate about all religions, but not to convert learners to any religion;
4. should study what all people believe, but should not teach a learner what he should believe;
5. should strive for learner awareness of all religions, but should not press for learner acceptance of any one religion;
6. should seek to inform the learners about various beliefs, but should not seek to make them conform to any one belief;
7. can provide opportunity for discussion of religious questions, but should not impose religious answers.

The above ideas as emphasised by Rossiter (1981), no doubt places the teacher of religious education as a facilitator of knowledge acquisition of diverse religious beliefs and practices. Thus, while it is understood that each teacher brings his or her own belief to the classroom, it should also be understood that a teacher should not make any attempt to promote or denigrate any student's beliefs. He or she must not attempt to indoctrinate or proselytize. The Religious and Moral Education Curriculum for Ghana (NaCCA,2019) therefore suggests that teachers encourage learners to present their own ideas in ways that make sense to others and critique each other's reasoning. It thus encourages teaching to be "learner-centred rather than teacher-centred" (p.v)

Concept of Moral Education (ME)

Moral Education involves a study based on morality (Asare-Danso, 2018). 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". For Straughan (2000), Moral Education is the strategic teaching of basic values and principles such as fairness, honesty, and respect for others that would develop in learners a sense of social and personal responsibility. Thus, through moral education, children learn to appreciate common values such as honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and respect for others which are cherished by societies.

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. Maqsud (1994) thinks that moral education should be able to produce an individual who could manifest the following behavioral trait; (a) a positive

commitment towards the value of morality; (b) ability to communicate with others; and (c) the ability to understand feelings of others and those of his own. 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. Moral Education may be taught without necessarily using religion and thus the basis for its distinction from 'Religious Education' by some scholars.

Meaning and Nature of Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC)

Kaynat (2017) indicates that in education, the term "standards-based" refers to systems of instruction, assessment, grading and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating understanding or mastery of the knowledge or skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. Consequently, she asserts further that a standard-based curriculum is a body of knowledge and sets of competencies that form the basis of quality education. Thus, a standards-based curriculum defines what students should know, understand and be able to do with emphasis on accompanying teaching content. SBC thus emphasises what learners should know and be able to do. The key learning outcomes in SBC are therefore measured in terms of standards (skills and competencies) that learners are expected to achieve. Thus, according to Lund and Tannehil (2010) developing a standards-based curriculum begins by considering the standards, recognizing skills, knowledge and dispositions that students should demonstrate to meet these standards and

then appropriately selecting activities that will allow learners to reach the outcome stated in the standards.

In other words, SBC begins with the standards and when unpacked, the activities then follow. The Standards, which are mostly predetermined are therefore used as a reference point for planning, teaching and learning programmes, and for assessing student progress. SBC in practice therefore sets a body of knowledge and skills that are essential for all students to learn and expecting all students to learn it. The explicit intention of the standards-based reformers according to Boyle (2016) was therefore to set challenging standards for all students. Thus, common learning expectations are set for all students, regardless of background, or where they happen to attend school.

According to Lund and Tannehil (2010), the standards movement actually originated from the world of business as leaders began calling for educational reform. They intimated that business leaders wanted to ensure that their future workers were capable of performing the task necessary for success. Thus, employers who hired graduates wanted to make sure that those holding a high school diploma had mastered at least minimum sets of skills and acquired a basic level of knowledge. Educators were therefore called upon to identify what students know and do. These set of skills and knowledge according to Lund and Tannehil, is what was referred to as standards. A distinction is however, made between three types of standards: content standards, performance standards and proficiency standards. Content standards refer to the knowledge and skills that students should acquire in a particular subject area. In other words, they are statements about what learners should know and be able to do with contents. Performance standards are concrete

examples and explicit definitions of what students have "to know and be able to do" to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and knowledge outlined by the content standards (National Academy of Education, 2009).

Lund and Tannehil (2010) have further emphasised that in a standards-based curriculum once teachers have decided what learners should know and do, there is need for them to decide on the level of performance. This is because identifying performance levels for standards helps define the standards. The identification of the performance levels is largely based on the fact that in standards-based curriculum there is need for teachers to help each learner as well as focus on each students' progress- not just achievement (Schalock,Schalock& Ayres, 2006). Proficiency standards on the other hand tells how well learners should perform. Thus, it deals with learners achieving expected learning standards.

Clarke, Stow, Ruebling and Kayona (2006) present the following as framework in SBC:

1. A philosophy statement: a set of beliefs about a specific content area
2. Strands or definitions: major themes in the content area
3. Programme goals: statements for each strand that express the general intent for learning toward which students work
4. Scope and sequence grids: display the scope of the skills/concepts and the sequence that indicates who (the grade level/course) teaches what (skills/concepts) to what extent (introduce, expand, mastery, mastery expanded, and mastery maintained); as the skills/concepts are defined, subskills/subconcepts are identified

5. Unit plans: include (a) what will be learned? (learner outcomes or exit behaviors), (b) how will you know the students learned the skill/concept? (criterion- referenced assessment techniques both traditional and nontraditional), and (c) how will you teach the skills/concepts? (teacher/student activities along with instructional tools)

Nature and Scope of Ghana's Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum

Religious and Moral Education is an academic discipline that integrates religion, morality and education. It is a subject taught based on educational principles (Asare-Danso, 2018). The subject incorporates both Moral Education and Religious Education principles and approaches in the delivery of its content. It is an integrated subject made of Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional religion (Asare-Danso, 2018;NaCCA, 2019). Hence, Ghana's Standards-Based RME Curriculum has been designed to cover these three major religions in Ghana. It covers both religious and non-religious secular topics as well as aspects of moral and social life of the people. The religious aspects of the curriculum include major strands such as God, His Creation and Attributes, Religious Practices and their Moral implication, and Religious Leaders, all cutting across from basic one to basic six. The other strands covering the moral and social life of learners are captured as the Family and Commitment, then the Family, Authority and Obedience (NaCCA, 2019).

The Standards-Based RME curriculum no doubt describes Religious and Moral Education as a "vital and indispensable part of human growth and

development in the Ghanaian society" (NaCCA, 2019, p.v) and therefore suggests a conscious effort to nurture the Ghanaian child to be an honest, creative and responsible citizen through a learner-centred teaching philosophy. The curriculum proposes the conscious development of certain attitudes and values in the Ghanaian child through the learning and teaching of religious and moral education. Thus, attitudes such as curiosity, perseverance, flexibility in ideas, respect for ideas, respect for evidence and reflection have been incorporated into the curriculum for which teachers are expected to guide learners through inquiry - based activities to develop. In terms of Values acquisition, the curriculum further suggests that through related pedagogies teachers should guide learners to acquire values consistent with respect, diversity, commitment to achieving excellence, teamwork/collaboration, trust and integrity (NaCCA, 2019).

The RME curriculum emphasises development of core competencies, which describes a body of skills that teachers at all levels should seek to develop in their learners. These competencies are connected body of core skills that are acquired throughout the processes of teaching and learning. These competencies are Critical thinking and Problem solving (CP), Creativity and Innovation (CI), Communication and Collaboration (CC), Cultural Identity and Global Citizenship (CG), Personal Development and Leadership (PL) and Digital Literacy (DL). Core Competencies are sets of intellectual, personal, social and emotional proficiencies that all students need in order to engage in deep, lifelong learning. Students develop Core Competencies when they are engaged in the "doing" – the Curricular Competencies – within a learning area. As such, they are an integral part of the curriculum. While they

manifest themselves uniquely in each area of learning, the Core Competencies are often interconnected and are foundational to all learning. (https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies). The acquisition of these competencies therefore requires teachers to employ a variety of instructional strategies to help meet this specific requirement of the curriculum (i.e, development of core competencies). The competencies and their descriptions as explained in the RME curriculum are as follows:

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (CP)

This skill develops learners' cognitive and reasoning abilities to enable them analyse and solve problems. Critical thinking and problem solving skill enables learners to draw on their own experiences to analyse situations and choose the most appropriate, out of a number of possible solutions. It requires that learners embrace the problem at hand, persevere and take responsibility for their own learning.

Creativity and Innovation (CI)

Creativity and Innovation promotes entrepreneurial skills in learners through their ability to think of new ways of solving problems and developing technologies for addressing the problem at hand. It requires ingenuity of ideas, arts, technology and enterprise. Learners having this skill are also able to think independently and creatively.

Communication and Collaboration (CC)

This competence promotes in learners the skills to make use of languages, symbols and texts to exchange information about themselves and their life experiences. Learners actively participate in sharing their ideas. They

engage in dialogue with others by listening to and learning from them. They also respect and value the views of others.

Cultural Identity and Global Citizenship (CG)

This competence involves developing learners to put country and service foremost through an understanding of what it means to be active citizens. This is done by inculcating in learners a strong sense of social and economic awareness. Learners make use of the knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes acquired to contribute effectively towards the socioeconomic development of the country and on the global stage. Learners build skills to critically identify and analyse cultural and global trends that enable them to contribute to the global community.

Personal Development and Leadership (PL)

This competence involves improving self-awareness and building self-esteem. It also entails identifying and developing talents, fulfilling dreams and aspirations. Learners are able to learn from mistakes and failures of the past. They acquire skills to develop other people to meet their needs. It involves recognizing the importance of values such as honesty and empathy and seeking the well-being of others. Personal development and leadership enables learners to distinguish between right and wrong. The skill helps them to foster perseverance, resilience and self-confidence.PL helps them acquire the skill of leadership, self-regulation and responsibility necessary for lifelong learning.

Digital Literacy (DL)

Digital Literacy develops learners to discover, acquire, and communicate through ICT to support their learning. It also makes them use digital media responsibly.

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Table 2: Scope and Sequence of the Primary School RME Curriculum

STRANDS	SUB-STRANDS	Basic 1	Basic 2	Basic 3	Basic 4	Basic 5	Basic 6
God, His Creation and Attributes	God the Creator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The Environment		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Purpose of God's Creation		✓	✓			
Religious Practices and their Moral Implications	Religious Worship in the Three Major Religions in Ghana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Religious Festivals in the Three Major Religions in Ghana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Religious Leaders	Birth of the Leaders of the Three Major Religions in Ghana	✓					
	Early Life of the Leaders of the Three Major Religions		✓				
	The Youthful Lives of the Three Religious Leaders			✓			
	The Call of the Leaders of the Three Major Religions				✓		
	Ministry of the Leaders of the Three Major Religions in Ghana					✓	
	The Latter Lives of the Leaders of the Three Major Religions in Ghana						✓
The Family and the Community	Roles and Relationships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Personal Safety in the Community	✓	✓	✓			
The Family, Authority and Obedience	Authority and Obedience				✓	✓	✓
	Roles, Relationships in the Family and Character Formation				✓	✓	✓

(NaCCA, 2019)

In the above table 2 which represents the sequence and scope for Ghana's primary school standards-based RME curriculum, there are columns for strands and sub-strands. The strands represent the broad areas or sections of the RME content to be studied whiles the sub-strands refer to the topics within each strand under which the content is organized. A careful study of the table above indicates how the content is also organized within the various stages in the primary school. For instance, whiles some sub -strands cut across all the classes (i.e. Basic 1 to Basic 6), some are to be taught at certain stages only. For instance, the sub-strand, "God the creator" cuts across basic 1 to basic 6, whiles the sub-strand "Purpose of God's creation" appears only under basics 2 and 3.

The current RME curriculum also emphasises contemporary issues such as gender equality, equity and inclusive education. The curriculum acknowledges all learners' equal right to quality education and thus suggests a variety of approaches that addresses learners' diversity and their special needs in the learning process (NaCCA, 2019). The curriculum therefore encourages teachers to adopt strategies that promotes:

1. learning that is linked to the learner's background and to their prior experiences, interests, potential and capacities;
2. learning that is meaningful because it aligns with learners' ability (e.g. learning that is oriented towards developing general capabilities and solving the practical problems of everyday life); and
3. the active involvement of the learners in the selection and organisation of learning experiences, making them aware of their importance in the process and also enabling them to assess their own learning outcomes.

In terms of Pedagogy and Assessment, Ghana's SBC emphasises social constructivist approach to learning, Activity-based and learner-centred classrooms. The curriculum indicates that the learner should be at the centre of learning and thus advocates the creation of a learning-centred classroom where learners are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful "hands-on" activities which is reflective of their home experiences and other experiences outside the classroom. The aim is to create a learner autonomy so they can take control over their own learning as the teacher continuous to play a 'facilitator' role. The curriculum is therefore to be delivered through the use of creative pedagogies among which are "Differentiation" and "Scaffolding".

In Differentiation, differences between learners (i.e, learning styles, interests and readiness to learn) are accommodated so that all learners in a group have best possible chance of learning. This, the curriculum suggests can be achieved in the classroom through *task* (i.e, teachers setting different tasks for learners of different ability), *support* (i.e, teacher providing targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below expected standards, or at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcome), and by outcome (i.e., teachers allowing learners to respond at different levels, by ensuring that identified learners are allowed more time to complete a given task).

On the other hand, scaffolding require teachers to use variety of instructional techniques aimed at moving learners progressively towards stronger understanding and ultimately greater independence in the learning process. The RME curriculum suggests that teachers execute this task of scaffolding by:

1. giving learners a simplified version of a lesson, assignment, or reading, and then gradually increasing the complexity, difficulty, or sophistication over time.
2. describing or illustrating a concept, problem, or process in multiple ways to ensure understanding.
3. giving learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they will be asked to complete.
4. giving learners a vocabulary lesson before they read a difficult text.
5. clearly describing the purpose of a learning activity, the directions learners need to follow, and the learning goals they are expected to achieve.
6. explicitly describing how the new lesson builds on the knowledge and skills learners were taught in a previous lesson. (NaCCA, 2019, xiv).

In Ghana's SBC, Assessment is emphasised as a tool to promote learning by all. The curriculum therefore indicates the purpose of assessment as identifying the strengths and weaknesses of learners so as to enable teachers to adapt their teaching. The curriculum,therefore, emphasises three forms of assessment; Assessment as learning (AaL), Assessment for learning (AfL) and Assessment of learning (AoL). Assessment as Learning and Assessment for Learning is viewed in terms of formative assessment whiles Assessment of Learning is viewed in terms of summative assessment. Assessment as learning relates to engaging learners to reflect on the expectations of their learning. They are therefore assisted to know their roles and take responsibility for their own learning to improve. In AaL, Learners set their own goals and monitor their progress towards them. Assessment for Learning on the other

hand is an approach used to seek and interpret evidence, which serves as timely feedback for teachers to refine their teaching strategies in order to improve learners' performance. Learners therefore become actively involved in the learning process and gain confidence in what they are expected to learn. Assessment of learning as already indicated is summative and it describes the level learners have attained in the learning, what they know and can do over a period of time. The emphasis is therefore to evaluate the learner's cumulative progress and achievement (NaCCA, 2019).

Aims of Teaching Religious and Moral Education

Religion and Morality, no doubt have been a determining factor in history and many cultural heritage. While it is true that at times religions have been responsible for conflicts in the world, it is also true that they have served to bring about peace and social justice as well as better communal living. Hull (1984) emphasised that "religion is too important a part of history, culture, and current experience of [humankind] to be left to believers alone." (p.48). He therefore emphasised the role of the school in preparing pupils to take an informed and thoughtful part in the pluralistic society through the teaching of religion. To Hull, when the "society contains not one but several religions, the need for a thoughtful study of religion becomes greater, not less" (1984,p.48). It is in relation to this view of Hull and other factors that many nations make attempts to incorporate the study of religion and morality into its school curriculum. In Ghana, the Standards-Based RME curriculum contains six (6) specific aims for the subject in the primary school. Thus, the aims for teaching and learning Religious and Moral Education are to encourage and enable learners to:

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1. develop an awareness of their Creator and the purpose of their very existence.
2. develop an understanding and tolerance of other people's faiths and cultures.
3. draw the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours so that they can make the right decisions in any situation and thus become responsible citizens.
4. acquire the socio-cultural values inherent in the three major religions in Ghana (i.e. Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion) which will help them cope with the variety of moral choices they have to make in today's rapidly changing world.
5. develop the spirit of team work, collaboration and togetherness in nation-building.
6. increasingly develop the ability to respond to religious beliefs and practices in an informed, rational and responsible way.

The Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education curriculum outlines six main aims for the subject (NaCCA,2019). In the first place, the subject is designed to develop in learners an awareness of their creator and the purpose of their very existence. Throughout history, people have a quest for spiritual side of existence and the purpose of life. This quest has been described as lifelong and includes a search for answers relating to the profound questions about the purpose of life, where humans fit into the scheme of things, what is the ultimate mystery which embraces humans' entire existence, what makes humans different from other living things, what the source of suffering is, how happiness can be found, what happens after death,

and other fundamental questions (Curriculum Guide, 2010). This aim of the curriculum, therefore requires that learners are given structured and unstructured opportunities to search in their own religious heritage for the answers to these questions, and to compare these with the answers provided in other religious traditions. Grimmit (1978) has thus expressed that the aim of teaching Religion in the schools is not simply to present any sacred book as a record of historical events but to bring learners into an encounter with their creator. This is because from early humanity up to the present age the religious realm has continued to occupy peoples' thoughts and influence their behaviour to a very large extent.

The second specific aim is to encourage and enable learners to develop an understanding and tolerance of other peoples' faiths and cultures. This aim corroborates the philosophy of the RME curriculum which emphasizes that the teaching and learning of RME should reflect the belief that irrespective of the diverse needs of learners in Ghana's classrooms, each learner can be nurtured into honest, creative and responsible citizen (NaCCA/MOE,2019). This aim is an appreciation of the fact that each classroom embodies learners from diverse ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds, yet they need to learn to co-exist. In a multi-cultural and multi-faith world it is important that each person can value and celebrate his or her own faith. However, with accurate information about other religions, learners can recognize that others have religious beliefs that they value and celebrate as well. It is believed that religious and denominational intolerance will be eliminated only when people are more understanding on the intrinsic worth of religious views and traditions that are not their own. In a study on the need for religious tolerance,

Fleischacker (1999) concluded that the issue of sensitivity to other ethnicity, religious affiliation, age, sex, and deformities of people can be affected through study of appropriate religious and moral values. This aim of RME reflects the national goal of education which seeks to develop positive attitudes and values in learners and to promote harmonious relations among different ethnic groups and the international community (NaCCA/MOE, 2019). An effective religious education programme, no doubt should give accurate information and demonstrate respect for all world faiths (Curriculum Guide,2010), and this is exactly what Ghana's RME curriculum seeks to achieve through this aim of developing an understanding and tolerance of other peoples' faiths and cultures. This aim no doubt agrees with the provision in Article 26 (1) of Ghana's 1992 Constitution which recognizes people's right to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion. Teachers may therefore as a strategy need to model the use of inclusive language, attitudes, and actions supportive of all learners, their culture, beliefs and social backgrounds.

The third aim of teaching and learning of RME is to encourage and enable learners to draw the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours so that they can make the right decisions in any situation and thus become responsible citizens. Most of the values and morals upheld by any society have their origins in religious teaching and thus effective teaching and learning of RME brings about necessary behavioural changes in the lives of the learners (Curriculum guide, 2010). Through discussion and study of various issues confronting society, it is envisaged that learners would be in a

position to develop proper value systems and adopt moral standards that give them principles by which they live.

The acquisition of socio-cultural values inherent in the three major religions in Ghana (i.e. Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion) which will help learners cope with the variety of moral choices they have to make in today's rapidly changing world is the fourth aim of RME as indicated in the curriculum. This aim emphasises the important place that religion and morality education has on the attainment of societal and cultural values. Since most of the values of society are also echoed and emphasised by various religions, it is envisaged that teachers would guide learners to make appropriate linkages between the socio-cultural values in the Ghanaian societies as well as the beliefs and values of various religions taught in RME.

The fifth aim of RME in the curriculum is to encourage and develop the spirit of team work, collaboration and togetherness in nation-building among learners. Collaboration and team activities no doubt has great benefit for learners' inside and outside of the classroom. Smith (2010) has emphasised that team work and collaboration teaches essential communication and social skills such as active listening and effective speaking. Thus, teamwork teaches learners how to respectfully and confidently express their ideas effectively in a group setting. He further stated that teamwork and collaboration among other things improve the self-confidence of learners, knowing that their voices are valued and respected. Moreover, the ultimate relevance for the cultivation and encouragement of learners to work in teams and collaborate is that it translates into success outside the classroom, since there are very few career paths that operate in isolation. Therefore, introducing students to collaborative

environments early in their school experiences presents opportunities for them to be more productive and joyful as they work in a team-based environment in future.

The sixth and final aim of RME as indicated in the curriculum is to encourage and enable learners to increasingly develop the ability to respond to religious beliefs and practices in an informed, rational and responsible way. This aim makes the learner an active recipient of knowledge who is not only provided information but should rightly be guided to ask questions, find answers for themselves and develop their own religious identity (Pohl-Patalong,2011). The RME curriculum therefore places emphasis and corroborates this view of Pohl-Patalong when it indicates that "It is more productive for learners to find answers to their own questions rather than for teachers to provide the answers and their opinions in a learning-centred classroom." (NaCCA/MOE, p.xiii). Learners are therefore to be guided to explore and reflect on their own worldview.

The above discussion on the aims of Ghana's standards-based RME curriculum gives several indications and implications for the learning and teaching of Religious and Moral Education. In the first place, it demonstrates and supports the notion that young people have a spiritual dimension of life and further emphasises the fact that inter-faith dialogue is the awareness that human beings share essential truths and experiences that are much more important than those which divide them. Moreover, the aims further indicate the complementary and supplementary role of partnership that the school can play in the spiritual, moral, and faith development of young people. The curriculum, through these aims therefore require teachers to create a learner-

centred environment where sensitivity and respect is shown for all religious traditions.

Teacher and Pedagogical Approaches in Standards-Based Curriculum implementation

Teachers are considered the most important elements of the education system because they share in the overall task of general curriculum planning, design and implementation (Cochran- Smith &Zeichner, 2005). Any curriculum which has been constructed is essentially a set of proposals of intended learning, and it is the teacher who in the final analyses determines which of the proposed experiences learners must acquire. Thus, teachers play a key role in educational change as their goal is to enhance student learning. Fullan (2001) pointed out that educational change is a learning experience for the adults who are involved, and that teachers are the agents of educational change. Quinn (1996) makes a distinction between "deep" and "incremental change" in curriculum reforms.

Quinn (1996) thus stated: "Deep change differs from incremental change in that it requires new ways of thinking and behaving. It is change that is major in scope, discontinuous with the past, and generally irreversible" (p. 3). Deep change therefore demands the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for teachers, and transformative learning that affects their beliefs about teaching and learning. There is no doubt that a shift from an objective-based curriculum to a standards-based curriculum represents a "deep change" as indicated by Quinn and therefore confirms the view by Doolittle (2003) that "standards-based curriculum represents a huge paradigm shift for many teachers currently in the field" (in Lund & Tannehill,2010: 7). One area

which is therefore worth mentioning in curriculum change and implementation has to do with the kind of pedagogies to be adopted for the implementation of all curriculum including standards-based curriculum, since implementation of new curriculum requires changes in teaching practices and methodology (Bennet, 2007).

An inclusive educational system, where each student's skills and potentials are respected and realised, is supported by standards-based curricula, independent of ability, race, religion, gender, or region. They are meant to provide universal learning standards for all students, independent of their backgrounds or the particular school they are attending. Accordingly, the focus on all students is a clear departure from prior practice (United States of America Research Council, 1999), and as a result, teachers must develop the kind of pedagogies that outlines a body of knowledge and skills that are essential for all students to learn and expects all students to learn (National Research Council [NRC], 1999). The NRC further reiterates that Standards-based system is aimed not at comparing the performance of poor children with that of other poor children, but setting a target for all children-poor as well as affluent- and determining whether they are on the way toward reaching it.

These certainly require a mastery and adoption of approaches, methods and strategies for ensuring that every learner benefits from relevant teaching and learning episodes which are timely assessed and feedback provided to the learner and other stakeholders (Nacka,2019). Recent research from a variety of disciplines, however, indicates that some approaches to teaching yield better outcomes and that the role of pedagogy is critically important to achieving educational goals (Jensen, 2000; Tharp et al 2000 ; Levine 2002). In other

words, the ways in which a teacher interacts with students and organizes instruction are critically important aspects of helping each child learn, most especially in standards-based classrooms where greater emphasis is placed on setting challenging standards for all students.

It is obvious that most of the Standards-based reforms around the world have been anchored in nationwide acceptability and adaptation of the theoretical framework "Social Constructivism" pedagogy by Lev SemyonovichVygotsky as an effective teaching and learning pedagogy for educating students to possess the competencies of the 21st century world (Yalley, 2020). Vygotsky saw learning as an unavoidable social and cultural activity, and he saw language as the crucial medium through which ideas were expressed and shaped during any learning experiences. One of Vygotsky's best known and most influential ideas is that, if one considers children's learning potential when learning without support, and contrast that with children's potential when supported by someone more expert in that area of learning, the second potential would be considerably greater than the first. He called the gap between these two potentials the "ZPD", generally translated as the "Zone of Proximal Development". Some writers however suggest that the "Zone of Potential Development" is a better translation (Smith, 2010).

By implication, Vygotsky reiterates the fact that the job of every teacher is to help children to reach their greater potential through learning in a social context. Based on the views of Vygotsky, educators and researchers at the Centre for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) took up the challenge of identifying pedagogical practices that would result in all students reaching their educational potential. They conducted extensive and

careful research into the process of teaching, particularly with children at greatest risk for educational failure. Their examination revealed a variety of solid teaching principles that, when implemented systematically in the classroom, resulted in improved educational outcomes regardless of the challenges that students faced (Tharp et al. 2000). They proposed what came to be known as the "*Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy"* (Dalton, 1998).All the standards suggested emphasized the role of the teacher not as a provider of information to learners but a facilitator and guide to knowledge and skills acquisition.

1. Joint Productive Activity: Teachers and students working together
2. Develop language and literacy skills across the curriculum
3. Contextualization/making meaning: Connecting lessons to students' lives
4. Cognitive challenge: Engaging students with challenging lessons
5. Instructional Conversations: Teaching through dialogue

Joint Productive Activity: Teachers and students working together: This is based on the premise that young children have a lot to learn, but the most effective way for this learning to take place has been for more experienced individuals to work with novices to produce a common goal. This principle, it is believed formed the basis for the apprentice system. Thus the more skilled person serves as the expert, providing needed assistance so that the less experienced individual does not have to struggle alone. The key is for the teacher to work alongside of students to solve real problems. Therefore when students work in small groups, it allow the teacher to observe and listen carefully to individuals in the group, watch reactions and note responses that

are indicative of either clarity or confusion and to chart progress appropriately. These joint productive activities invariably create opportunities for teachers to have short but frequent and intense interpersonal contact with individual children. Teachers can facilitate these important opportunities to work together by designing challenging activities with targeted outcomes that require student-teacher collaboration to produce a common end product. Ability levels, temperaments and learning styles, interests, language skills and even friendships are some of the factors that teachers need to consider when organizing these small group activities. Throughout the activity, the teacher is encouraged to monitor the participation of the members of the group, know their interest and attention levels, encourage their collaboration and organize the conclusion of the activity so that each member of the group feels a sense of accomplishment and has contributed to the project, including the clean-up. Moreover, the value of cooperative learning is further maximized through the application of this standard pedagogy.

Develop language and literacy skills across the curriculum: The acquisition of language is so vital to social interaction and to thinking that it deserves a special place in any educational programme. CREDE (2006) emphasised that all forms of language were essential for school success, including social language, subject matter vocabulary and specialized formal academic language.Therefore, teachers are encouraged to make a conscious effort to have students understand and use content vocabulary to express their ideas and to connect oral and written language whenever possible. Teachers are therefore required to model, elicit, restate, probe, clarify, question, encourage, and reinforce vocabulary so as to improve learners' communication.

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Contextualization/Making Meaning: Connecting Lessons to Students' Lives: The basic assumption is that Children, come to school with life experiences that form the basis of their skills and knowledge. Thus, the focus of this CREDE standard is on the importance of helping children relate the new information they are exposed to in formal educational settings to the conceptual frameworks that they have already constructed at home and in other environments apart from the school. By relating novel ideas to the familiar, teachers are able to help students expand their understanding to include new information. This standard pedagogy therefore encourages the teacher to introduce instruction by referencing what the children already know from home, community, or previous school experiences. Teachers are required to design instructional activities that are meaningful in terms of community norms, knowledge and practices. The idea is for teachers to take opportunities to capitalize on the children's families and the community as resources and by finding ways to apply new learning to the home and in the community. By so doing learning will be exciting, relevant and meaningful (Rao,2010), since learning will be accepted as an ongoing process both at home and at school.

Cognitive Challenge: Engaging Students with Challenging Lessons: Content standards identify what a teacher needs to cover and what skills students should master. It is often the case that when not much is expected, not much is produced or achieved. At-risk students, who frequently suffer from the prejudice of low expectations, benefit greatly from working with a teacher who expects them to learn and who positions tasks within their individual zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978; Tharp, et al. 2000; Berk and Winsler, 1995). Teachers therefore must design activities that

advance children's understanding and challenge them to engage in more complex thinking. The teacher begins the process of engaging students in cognitively challenging tasks by making a concerted effort to understand students' prior knowledge and then by constructing activities based on that knowledge base. Through carefully designed activities, questions and modeling, the teacher helps students learn to analyze, synthesize, apply and evaluate what they are doing. The teacher needs to show children how to see the relationships between the whole and its parts. She/he then gives clear directions and provides direct feedback about student performances.

Instructional Conversation: Teaching Through Dialogue:CREDE (2006) has emphasized that that the most effective way to facilitate language development, help children engage in more complex thinking and achieve the other desired outcomes is through dialogue, questioning and sharing ideas. It is believed that during these *instructional conversations,* the teacher focuses her attention on what children are saying, makes guesses about their intended meanings and supports children's efforts at conversation. She/he adjusts her responses to assist her students' efforts to communicate. The teacher then takes every opportunity to help children to see relationships and draw upon their store of knowledge to relate school activities to community events or their family life. The teacher facilitates individual and small group dialogues by utilizing verbal and nonverbal cues, questioning, restating, encouraging and reinforcing efforts to communicate. Through intense teacher-student interactions and conversations, the teacher guides student participation through questioning and exchanging ideas, utilizing both speech and writing

(Entz,2007). These activities therefore help build and develop competencies such as collaboration and communication in children.

In relation to pedagogy and assessment, Ghana's standards-based RME curriculum emphasises the following strategies to ensuring that individual learners achieve the maximum learning outcomes by bringing subject matter to life and taught in a way that brings its relevance to the learner.

1. Creation of learning-centred classrooms through the use of creative approaches to teaching and learning as strategies to ensuring learner empowerment and independent learning.
2. Positioning of inclusion and equity at the centre of quality teaching and learning.
3. Use of differentiation and scaffolding as teaching and learning strategies for ensuring that no learner is left behind.
4. Use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) as a pedagogical tool.
5. Identification of subject-specific instructional expectations needed for making learning in the subject relevant to learners.
6. Integration of assessment for learning and of learning into the teaching and learning process and as an accountability strategy.
7. Use of questioning techniques that promote deepen learning (NaCCA/MOE, 2019).

The use of Creative Approaches in teaching; Creativity involves expressing ideas and feelings and using a range of ways to do so, for example through the expressive arts. Creativity is fundamental to human nature, and is evidenced in many learning activities. To Beetlestone (1998), "creativity involves the

elements of symbolism, role play, acting, drawing, graphics, illustration, painting, producing a likeness, tracing, printing, engraving, sculpture, art, fine art, photography, map making, imitation and description" (P.2). Creative approaches may therefore be described as approaches to teaching which encourages problem solving and investigation, drawing upon children's natural curiosity and desire to learn. Thus, creative approaches may present itself in the teaching and learning situation through games, storytelling, songs, role-play, modelling, play and the use of poems as well as rhymes (Transforming Teacher Education and Learning, [T-Tel], 2015). These strategies no doubt are powerful teaching and learning tools that help learners to make sense of their lives, build confidence in social situations, actively engages students in learning, develop social skills and team work and eventually contribute to the acquisition of critical thinking, listening, speaking and collaboration skills.

Promoting Inclusion and Equity in Teaching and Learning; Inclusion and equity issues require teachers to create an environment that is responsive to learner diversity and to ensure that all learners have the best possible opportunities to learn (MOE/T-Tel, 2016). Thus, an inclusive classroom values the social and ethno-cultural backgrounds of all students as well as require teachers to recognize students' diverse learning styles, attend to multiple intelligence, provide varied avenues and entry points to learning, utilize multiple resources (print, non-print, visual auditory, digital, virtual etc.) and promote varied and flexible assessment (simulation, drama, fine arts,etc). (Curriculum Guide, 2010). The principle of equity and inclusion in teaching further require teachers to acknowledge and take into consideration the special

education needs of learners by using resources that are relevant to the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of their learners. The Standards-based RME curriculum of Ghana emphasizes that inclusion entails access and learning for all learners especially those disadvantaged and therefore require that the daily learning activities to which learners are exposed should ensure that learners' right to equal access to quality education is being met. The curriculum further acknowledges that learners have individual needs and different learning styles, learning experiences and different levels of motivation for learning and therefore recommends to teachers the kind of :

1. learning that is linked to the learner's background and to their prior experiences, interests, potential and capacities;
2. learning that is meaningful because it aligns with learners' ability (e.g. learning that is oriented towards developing general capabilities and solving the practical problems of everyday life); and
3. learning that deals with active involvement of the learners in the selection and organisation of learning experiences, making them aware of their importance in the process and also enabling them to assess their own learning outcomes. (NaCCA/Ministry of Education, 2019*)*

Differentiation and Scaffolding; Differentiation and Scaffolding are two important strategies proposed for use in various classrooms.Differentiationis a process by which differences between learners, (learning styles, interest and readiness to learn etc.) are accommodated so that all students in a group have best possible chance of learning (NaCCA/MOE,2019). Differentiation, therefore refers to the idea of meeting individual needs of students. According to Nelson-Danley (2020), differentiation occurs in many ways, often in small-

group or peer-to-peer arrangements. He indicates further that students receiving differentiation get instruction and learning opportunities such as extra practice, increased time with materials, less difficult work, or enhanced work.

To Nelson-Danley(2020), teachers can differentiate in four ways: by content, process, environment, and product. When differentiating in the area of content, Nelson-Danley asserted that teachers can use pre-assessments to design instruction, help students to develop individual goals, and integrate choice and interests into lessons. In the area of process, it refers to how teachers deliver instruction. Thus, when teachers differentiate by process, Nelson-Danley indicated that they can offer multiple points of access to curriculum such as digital texts or programmes, PowerPoints, songs, individual work, or collaborative work. In terms of environment, he referred to how learning is structured in the classroom. Thus, when differentiating by environment, teachers may utilise flexible seating, play music, or establish different behaviour expectations in different settings or parts of the classroom. Products, according to Nelson-Danley, is how students show what they have learned. Therefore when teachers are differentiating according to product, they may have to offer students options to demonstrate mastery and use rubrics to grade various display of mastery.

Similarly, according to the Standards-based RME curriculum of Ghana, differentiation as a way of ensuring each learner benefits adequately from delivery of the curriculum can be achieved in the classroom through task, One-on-one support and Outcome.

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Another key strategy that teachers can use to help children learn is to scaffold their learning(Smith, 2010). Smith explains further that just as scaffolding on a building supports constructional work for as long as that support is needed, so as the sort of scaffolding in teaching and learning supports children as they learn. Scaffolding is therefore the use of variety of instructional techniques aimed at moving learners progressively towards stronger understanding and ultimately greater independence in the learning process. Smith has however cautioned that scaffolding should be seen as a transitional strategy, and that if educators want children to be confident, independent and self- reliant, then they must be careful not to create a culture of dependency in the classrooms by providing more scaffolding than is needed. Thus to him, just as a building will not have scaffolding attached to it permanently, the scaffolding of children's learning should be available for as long as it is required but gently removed thereafter.

Use of Information and Communication Technology; under standards-based curriculum implementationit is imperative for facilitators to integrate ICT as a teaching and learning pedagogy. By this the facilitator should be knowledgeable and should possess the competencies for integrating the content of the subject, the pedagogy and the technology into a powerful learning missal(Yalley, 2020). The use of ICT as a learning tool no doubt will provide learners an access to large quantities of information on-line as well as help them to organize, edit and present information in many different ways. ICT must therefore support four key components oflearning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts (Harkverdi, Gucum, &Korkmaz, 2007). Rao

(2010) asserts that today's children spend much more time with television and other electronic media than with their parents and thus for him, "today's brain needs a Television-like environment, where both sound and animations are most relevant" (p.134). The Association for Educational Communication and Technology (2004) made a major contribution in tracking the various stages of technology integration by identifying five stages teachers pass through in their attempt to integrate ICT in lessons:

1. Entry - where teacher uses technology to deliver curriculum content to students;
2. Adoption - where teacher directs students in the conventional use of tool-based software;
3. Adaptation - where teacher encourages students to select a tool and modify its use to accomplish the task at hand;
4. Infusion - where teacher consistently provides for the infusion of technology tools with understanding, applying, analyzing, and evaluating learning tasks; and
5. Transformation – where teacher blends technology tools with student-initiated investigations, discussions, compositions, or projects across any content area.

It is believed that the exposure that learners are given at the basic level to use ICT in exploring learning will build their confidence as well as increase their level of motivation to apply ICT use in later years, both within and outside of education.

Following discussions on the teacher and pedagogies in the implementation of standards-based curriculum, one can conclude that the

approaches are anchored in the Social Constructivist theory of Lev Vygotsky who believed that knowledge is first constructed in a social context and collaborated with other individuals or groups. Therefore a More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) (anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process or concept) is supposed to guide and assist the learner in realizing his/her potential. The MKO is normally thought of as being a teacher, coach or older adult but the MKO could also be peers, a young person or even a computer (Yalley,2020). Thus, the teacher's role in standards-based curriculum implementation is not a provider of information but facilitator of knowledge, who is expected to adopt diverse strategies to guide learners to be good problem solvers, think creatively as well as develop the competence and confidence to participate fully in any society (NaCCA, 2019).

The teacher and his/her pedagogies under standards-based instruction may be summarized in the work of Yalley (2020) as follows:

1. Teachers and students collaborate in learning and practicing four key skills: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting. The teacher's role in the process is reduced to a facilitator or a guide to the learners as learner move higher the learning paddle over time.
2. The appropriate teaching and learning approach is the learner-centred approach.
3. Teaching and learning instruction should be from known to the unknown or from concrete to abstract or from simple to complex. This enables learners to learn using the experiential approach.
4. The facilitator must have adequate knowledge about his/her learners

5. Teaching and learning should lay emphases on discovery learning thus learning that helps in solving societal problems.
6. Learners must construct/develop their knowledge through active participation in their learning based on their previous experience.
7. Teachers should build student background knowledge through various learning experiences (e.g., field trips, multimedia presentations, historical fiction, technology, community resource people).
8. Learning should be focused on building concepts, skills and competencies that can set the learners on a life-long learning mood.
9. Facilitator links concepts and key ideas to learners' prior experiences and understandings, uses multiple representations, examples and explanations.
10. Teacher incorporates student experiences, interests and real-life situations in instruction. The teacher:
    i. implements lessons that include students and teachers local and personal histories.
    ii. stimulates students to investigate and respond to human condition in the contemporary world.
    iii. encourages students to consider multiple perspectives and share their point of view, values and beliefs.
11. Teacher makes lesson connections to community, society, and current events. The teacher therefore:
    i. encourages students to be involved in service-learning projects.
    ii. utilizes the experience and expertise of a variety of community resource people.

iii. connects learning to community, society, current events, multiple points of view and global perspectives.

iv. encourages students to develop a commitment to social responsibility, justice, action, citizenship, civic values and reflective concern for the common good.

12. Teacher accesses a rich repertoire of instructional practices, strategies, resources and applies them appropriately.
13. Facilitator designs learning opportunities that allow learners to participate in empowering activities in which learners understand that learning is a process and mistakes are naturally part of the learning.
14. . In the application of the social constructivist theory, assessment of learners learning progression is key. This assessment will take form of diagnostic and formative assessment. For the formative assessment, assessment for learning (centred on the facilitator) and assessment as learning (centred on the learner).
15. Facilitators are expected to administer and employ different assessment techniques in assessing their learners. This assessment becomes comprehensive in nature which covers all aspect of the learners learning. These assessments should be done at intervals as the learning unfolds.
16. The assessment must be systematic in nature in the sense that it requires an operational plan, namely the measurement to be made, at what period, taking and filling of records of the progress of the learner.
17. Teacher selects and utilizes a variety of technology that support student learning.

18. In the course of scaffolding learners, it is imperative for facilitators to integrate ICT as a teaching and learning pedagogy. By this the facilitator should be knowledgeable and should possess the competencies for integrating the content of the subject, the pedagogy and the technology into a powerful learning missal.
19. By the integration of ICT into the teaching and learning process, the facilitator meets the learning needs and the divergent medium of learning of learners that is the auditory learners, the visual learners and auditory-visual learners.
20. Teacher must participate and contribute to professional learning communities (PLC) (a method to foster collaborative learning among colleagues within a particular work environment or field, e.g., workshops, seminars and symposia).

Teacher Preparation for Standards-Based Curriculum Implementation

Standards-Based Curriculum reforms come with greater teacher responsibility and task, since it means providing all learners with rich and engaging instructional activities. Capacity building and Continuous teacher professional development are therefore seen as key ingredients in support of any standards-based reforms (McLaughlin & Shepherd, 1995). In the United States of America, the introduction and implementation of the NCLB and its attendant challenges established the relevance of having quality teachers in every classroom (Rice, 2003). Thus, every curriculum implementation effort needs to focus on improving teacher quality through training, since teacher quality is vital to the realization of improved student achievement. When teachers are poorly informed about an intended innovation, it is certain that its

application may remain limited and its impact on student learning is likely to be unclear. Leonard-Barton and Kraus(1985) affirm the relevance of teacher preparation prior to curriculum implementation when they assert that "many implementation efforts fail because someone underestimated the scope or importance of preparation" (p.105). Fullan (1982, 2016), has therefore pointed out that educational change is not a single event, but a multidimensional process that includes 3 dimensions and that should form the basis and justification for training before any curriculum implementation;

1. the possible use of new or revised materials (instructional resources such as curriculum materials, standards or technologies);
2. the possible use of new teaching approaches (i.e., new pedagogies, especiallylearning partnerships with students);
3. the possible alteration of beliefs (e.g., pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programmes).

The above three dimensions as presented by Fullan no doubt makes it imperative for teacher preparation through training before any curriculum innovation since in the first place, new or revised materials need to be understood by teachers so they can effectively translate it to learners. Secondly, the introduction of new pedagogies require the understanding and demonstrations for better and effective use in real classroom situation and finally, the need for teachers who are key to curriculum implementation to understand the philosophies and theories that underpin a new curriculum.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] (2019) corroborated the need for training as part of preparation prior to curriculum implementation when they suggested that Government and non-

governmental organisations can utilise policy instruments such as capacity building (e.g., professional development) and inducements (e.g., monetary grants) that support higher levels of curriculum implementation (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). These include offering professional development directly aligned to the curriculum reform (Chan, 2010; Cheung & Wong, 2012; Cohen & Hill, 2000; Desimone, 2002; Taylor et al., 2016), providing schools external experts from universities, government offices, or curriculum design teams (Chan, 2010; Datnow et al., 2000), and creating documents that directly address specifics of how to implement the curriculum in the classroom (Desimone, 2002; Germenton, 2011; Kennedy, Chan, & Kwan, 2011; Smith & Their, 2017).

These tools for teacher professional development are no doubt necessary because the introduction of Standards-based curriculum require fundamental changes in instructional practices, and capacity building and teacher professional development have been seen as key ingredients in support of such reforms. For instance in the United States of America, the National Academy of Education (2009) confirm that as part of efforts to implement the NCLB strategies, very few states invested in training to help teachers teach rigorous subject matter in engaging ways. They further observed that even for the states that invested in teacher professional development, training was limited. Consequently, these affected implementation efforts as "teachers lacked the training to interprete data about their students and often did not know how to adapt instruction for struggling students" (P.6). They intimated further that teachers did not themselves know enough about the discipline they are teaching and about methods for teaching in that discipline (especially in

the case of mathematics and science) to be able to teach in ways that are both engaging and conceptually deep.

Since society gives teachers the task of mediating the curriculum for each child, it is relevant that teachers are readily prepared and equipped to implement curriculum reforms. This is because professional development through training for curriculum implementation has a positive development on teacher efficacy and student teaching (Bennett, 2007). Reeves (2004) concurred that the most important variable affecting student achievement is the quality of teaching. He stated that the quality of the teacher is almost twice as important as every other variable. Similarly,Darling-Hammond (2000) contended that measures of teacher quality in the context of teacher preparation and certification are more strongly related to student achievement than other kinds of investments such as reduced class size, overall spending on education, and teacher salaries. These assertions and many others based on empirical study makes teacher preparation an indispensable element in the implementation of any curriculum.

However, OECD (2019) have intimated that the trainings that schools provide should be sustained over time rather than "one and done" workshops. They indicated further that effective professional learning that leads to changes to teacher practice and improved student outcomes are job-embedded, collaborative and hands-on, and scaffolds teacher learning. This therefore makes continuous professional development equally important, even after the initial teacher training for the implementation of a new curriculum has taken place. Gunn (n.d.) therefore suggests that a school's preparation for and work

with a new programme or instructional approach should include the following key components:

1. Learning the programme- both curriculum content and approaches for instructional delivery, including ways to provide explicit instruction, demonstrate skills and strategies, guide student practice, and provide corrective feedback;
2. Staff observation of the practice in operation-either by visiting other schools or classrooms, or by allowing teachers time to practice and observe one another during initial implementation;
3. Teaching time during which teachers develop comfort and fluency and assess how the approach works with their students;
4. Observation by other staff members who have been trained in what they should be observing, with feedback provided as a way to increase FOI, not an evaluation of teaching quality in general;
5. Refinement through teacher use of observation feedback, grade-level or team meetings to discuss the practice and its implementation, and development of some "calibration checks" for teachers to use to monitor their own implementation.

Professional development therefore plays a key role in providing teachers with knowledge and skills to refine their teaching practices, to rejuvenate them, and to improve student learning. It also assists teachers in successfully implementing new curricula. Bennett (2007) thus asserted that as teachers become aware of the need to change teaching practices in order to improve teacher efficacy, professional development provides opportunities to gain confidence and heighten their sense of personal efficacy, especially in the

context of implementing a new and challenging curriculum such as a standards-based curriculum.

Challenges hindering the Effective Implementation of Standards-based Curriculum

Developing a Standards-based curriculum is seen as a vehicle for educational renewal in most countries that adopted it. However, SBC has been described as complex and requires a great deal of thought to develop and implement (Lund &Tannehill, 2010). In view of its complexity, its implementation is bedeviled with a lot of challenges. Malone and Nelson (2006) affirm this when they indicated that critics of SBC see a variety of problems related to teaching to the standards: too many students, teachers have too many demands on their time, and not enough hours to focus on world-class standards. Some challenges or hindrances to be considered are teacher misunderstanding of curriculum content and pedagogy,lack of school leadership support,lack of adequate training for teachers and school leaders, teacher-workload, large class size, inadequate resources and teachers' poor knowledge in ICT tools and their application in classroom situations.

Teacher misunderstanding of curriculum content and pedagogy

The challenge of teacher misunderstanding of curriculum content and pedagogy persist especially due to the complexity and nature of standards-based curriculum. Misunderstanding of the curriculum may occur for multiple reasons. First, in low implementation contexts, teachers acknowledged a lack of awareness, familiarity, or training about what the new curriculum entailed regarding actual teaching practices in the classroom (Bantwani, 2010). Second, in some cases, teachers made sense of new practices through the lens

of old practices (Spillane et al., 2002), leading to superficial changes to practice or "cooptation" of new curriculum under the umbrella of old practices (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976). Jones (2000) concurred when he asserted that many educators find themselves unable to interprete the standards, thus, potentially leading to misinterpretation. Therefore, the more clearly the core components of an intervention programme are known and defined, the more readily the innovation can be implemented successfully (Wallace et al, 2008). This, invariably calls for a proper training and orientation of teachers on the "essential and indispensable" elements of a curriculum reform (those that are critical to the likelihood of achieving positive results).

Lack of school leadership support

The absence of school leadership in promoting and scaffolding new curriculum for teachers has been a notable feature in schools with low levels of curriculum implementation, according to OECD (2019). Leadership and support are among the major determining factors in the success of curriculum implementation. Ruebling et al (2004) in a study noted that school leaders maintain a "hands-off" approach with respect to curriculum development activities, thus relying entirely on teachers and not personally supervising implementation of curriculum. Datnow, Borman and Stringfield (2000) in a mixed methods examination of the implementation of a Core Knowledge curriculum across four case study schools found three of the four schools to be high implementers. They observed that instructional leadership was a key differentiating factor between these schools; unlike the high implementer schools, the principal at the low implementing school, they indicated, did not have knowledge of the curriculum, accommodate teachers' needs, nor

participate in Core Knowledge networks to improve their own understanding and ability to support teachers.

Lack of adequate training for teachers and school leaders

A lack of collaborative professional learning opportunities can hinder implementation. This is true not only for teachers but for school leaders as well (OECD, 2019). Germenton (2011) found that in Norway, principals did not receive much training on the new curriculum, even though they were to introduce the reforms to their staff. Likewise, multiple qualitative studies also revealed that school leadership did not understand the intention or pedagogy behind curriculum reforms, which can result in passing those misconceptions on to teachers (Coburn, 2006; Hamilton, 2013; Spillane & Callahan, 2000). It is most likely that school leaders who are well trained about a curriculum reform will help achieve greater implementation success by clearly communicating what was expected of teachers, give teachers ownership over the reform model, successfully allocate resources and arrange schedules to support the new curriculum, support teachers' professional development, as well as talk with teachers about changes to their instructional practices (Desimone, 2002). Moreover, professional development is designed to help teachers move students toward achievement or mastery of the standards. Thus when teachers are ill-prepared for the implementation of a standards-based curriculum, the achievement of the standards are seriously affected, since pedagogy and assessment under standards-based curriculum may be seriously compromised.

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Teacher workload

Teachers across multiple studies have pointed to stressful workloads as an obstacle to implementation of standards-based curriculum. Proponents of Standards-based reforms acknowledge the fact that proper implementation of standards-based reforms, though leads to rise in students' achievement, it correspondingly require some rigorousness in teacher practice (Pak, Polikoff, Desimone& Garcia, 2020). This is because implementation require a lot of adjustments in terms of the content teachers teach and the rigour by which they teach it (Supvitz, 2015). OECD(2019) for instance has indicated that, a survey of around 10,000 key stakeholders including principals, curriculum leaders, teachers, and students across 150 primary and 120 secondary schools in Hong Kong, China, found that teacher workload was a top hindering factor listed by teachers, curriculum leaders, and administrators towards implementing the national curriculum reforms (Cheung & Wong, 2012). This view was corroborated by Apau (2021) when some sampled teachers in a study appreciated the relevance of Ghana's standards-based curriculum but emphasised the enormous demands put on the teacher in the classroom due to its demand of a shift in pedagogical practices of teachers from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness, as well as new assessment approaches. Since SBC require a lot of such adjustments and shift from old practices, the teachers implementing its features require a great deal of time, commitment and efforts at ensuring a successful implementation.

Head teacher support in Standards-Based Curriculum Implementation

Reeves (2004) stated that leaders are the architects of organisational and individual improvements. Thus, in well-organised schools, leadership

qualities contribute in many ways to student achievement when school authorities demonstrate a clear vision and motivate teachers toward that vision (Rogers, 1995). Hall and Hord (2006) found administrative leadership as one of the major principles of change and successful curriculum implementation. Their cumulative findings posit that given the presence of skilled leadership, teachers will move through a predictable set of stages of change towards effective curriculum implementation. They intimated further that successful changes involve team of leaders who are there to support implementation efforts and without them important initiatives may die out. Thus, school heads have a greater degree of influence over the activities of their teachers in the schools.

Effective implementation is influenced by individual competences, interests, skills, and dispositions of school heads. In his seminal work, Fullan (2001a) outlines a framework for educational leadership designed to establish a system of shared values, beliefs, and norms aimed at influencing implementation stating that "leadership style affects climate and, in turn, performance" (p. 35). Fullan reiterates that leadership commitment must involve personal energy, enthusiasm, and hopefulness by incorporating the components of (1) moral purpose; (2) understanding the implementation process; (relationships); (3) knowledge creation and sharing; and (4) coherence making. Each of these components aims to stimulate and sustain a conducive and systematic curriculum implementation and a school environment of professional learning and quality leadership.

Etsey, Amedahe and Edjah (2004) in a study of 60 private and public schools from peri-urban (29 schools) and rural (31 schools) areas in Ghana

found that academic performance improved in the private schools because of more effective supervision of work. Oduro (2000) investigated the implementation of the Basic education in Ghana in the post-reform period and found out that additional financial resources are but one of the many needs of the basic education sector in Ghana. The study also cited a review of the content of the curriculum and teaching methods as well as teacher supervision and provision of incentives for teachers as vital for successful implementation. However, he intimated that the lack of a positive link between school authorities and classroom teaching negatively affected implementation. His findings revealed that pumping resources into the teaching-learning process was not sufficient enough to solve the problems the teachers were facing. What was critical was how the resources were to be managed, monitored and utilized. These statements are similar to those made by Chubb and Moe (1990) who identified shared norms of improvement; a strong committed staff; flexible, distributed school leadership; and elements of instructional support as those that contribute to student achievement.

OECD (2019) asserted that School leaders, including principals, headmasters, and department heads, promote curriculum implementation in numerous ways. They emphasised that school leaders allocated time into the teaching, planning, and professional development schedule to support curriculum reform (Chapman et al., 2018; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Stringfield et al., 1998), created a congruent message into the vision and culture of the school that supports curriculum change (Coburn, 2006; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Datnow, 2005; Hamilton, 2013; Priestly et al., 2014), and selected instructional materials that aligned with curriculum goals (Cohen & Hill,

2001). Similarly, Clarke, Stow, Reubling and Kayona (2006) have indicated that instructional leaders must be able to articulate to their staff a clear rationale for the curricula and the requirement of aligning the written, taught, and tested curricula. Clarke et al therefore present four (4) important leadership tasks regarding curricula, within the role of being an instructional leader, that focus on the academic success for all students.

1. Active involvement in development of the curriculum. According to Marzano, one of the critical roles of leadership is to provide teachers and students with a "guaranteed and viable curriculum" (2003:173). Instructional leaders must therefore understand and be involved in the curriculum development process. When instructional leaders are involved in the curriculum development process it certainly provides for him or her the avenue to effectively help teachers to interprete the provisions of the new curriculum, thus making implementation of the curriculum a high priority.
2. Development of strong teaching teams to implement the newly developed standards-based curriculum. Instructional leaders according to Clarke et al (2006) need to place emphasis on team building. Lambert (2003) therefore asserted that leaders need to provide opportunities for teams and emphasised further that effective teams must have shared goals, shared accountability for student learning as measured by assessments and have diverse teaching and problem-solving skills. Thus, instructional leaders are encouraged to provide time for teachers to be engaged in coaching episodes, collegial conversations, and shared decision making groups as well as

departmental meetings. Leaders are therefore advised to monitor these meetings to enable them evaluate meetings for effectiveness and results orientation" (Schmoker,2001:42) to determine if they are on target.

3. Support of the comprehensive assessment programme: the leaders must support the comprehensive driven assessment program under standards-based curriculum. Since data from the assessment program drives improvement, teams of teachers need to review student achievement data, study the results, identify areas of strength and areas for growth, and develop plans to improve the teaching and learning process. Instructional leaders must therefore ensure that teachers use the data to plan an effective and improved instructional programme.
4. Management of learning through monitoring the implementation of curriculum.

Monitoring the implementation of the newly developed curriculum is a must. Clarke et al (2006) therefore intimated that the instructional leader must monitor lesson plans and have regular conversations with both individual teachers and teams of teachers about teaching and the progress of students. More specifically, they suggested that instructional leaders need to discuss with teachers and teams how they plan instruction, select activities and materials, and prepare assessments that are aligned with the curricula. Leaders therefore need to observe teachers as they are teaching and provide feedback about what is recorded during the observation of the teaching and learning processes. When leaders know grade level and course content as defined in the curriculum documents, they can quickly assess if the teacher is focusing on the

essential learning requirements. The data from these processes maythereforeprovide implications for changes and reinforcements in the teaching during the next review cycle (Clarke et al, 2006).

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Conceptual Framework

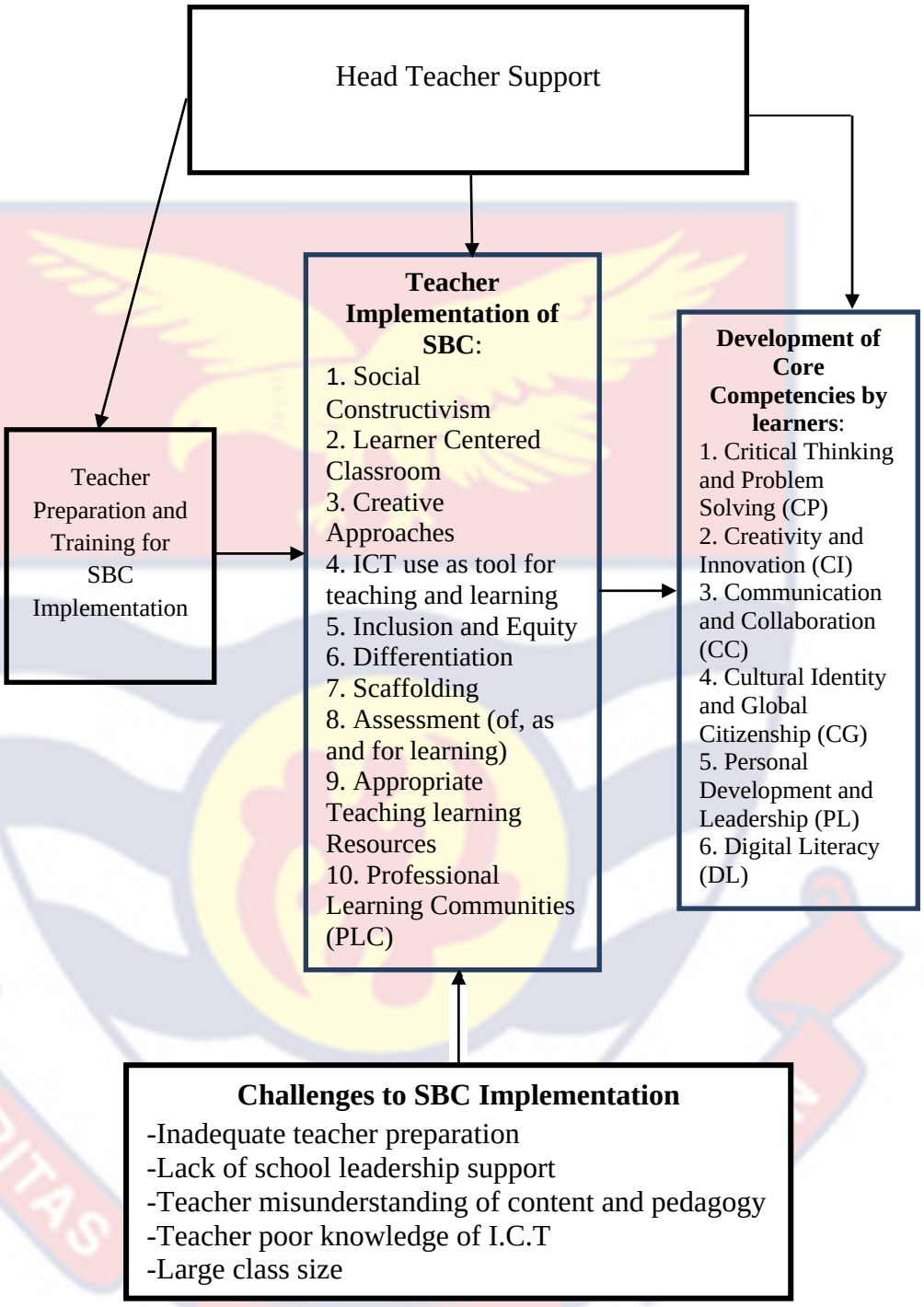

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for teacher factor in Standards-Based RME curriculum implementation. (Adapted from Bay-Williams, Reys&Reys,2003 in "The Top 10 Elements That Must Be in Place to Implement Standards-Based Mathematics Curricula"/The National Pre-tertiary Education Curriculum: contextual framework)

In the above Conceptual construct (figure 1), the study suggests that effective implementation of a standards-based curriculum consists of inter-related sets of elements. Thus the teacher, being an indispensable factor in every curriculum implementation effort needs to look first at the 'key competencies' or standards required by Ghana's SBC before identifying activities that will help students attain those standards/key competencies (Tannehil& Lund, 2010). However, his/her ability to help learners master these competencies is highly dependent on effective pre-curriculum implementation training and the support provided by the school leadership, since the quality of local and school level leadership has been identified to be a major predictor of successful implementation of policy (Coburn,2006; Hala`sz & Michel, 2011). The interaction of these (the teacher, training and school leadership support) invariably leadsto the adoption of appropriate pedagogical tools relevant for the achievement or attainment of the competencies and attainment of learning outcomes as stipulated in the standards based RME curriculum (MOE/NaCCA, 2019).

Empirical Review

Empirical review is devoted to reviewing empirically the works done by others which are related to or have bearing on the study. It helped to determine the nature, extent and quality of the RME curriculum implementation process in basic schools.

Annobil (2017) investigated the factors influencing the implementation of basic school Religious and Moral Education curriculum. It was an exploratory survey study that adopted the sequential explanatory mixed method as a model. The population consisted of 515 people (446 teachers and

61 head teachers) with a sample size of 288. Data were gathered from questionnaire, interviews and observations. Both the descriptive and multiple regression results showed that teachers, pupils, head teachers, parents as well as school and community-based instructional resources contribute directly or indirectly towards the RME curriculum implementation process at the basic school level. It was however revealed in the study that lack of in-service training courses, the absence and/or inadequacy of requisite instructional resources, and failure of parents in supervising their wards' learning negatively affected the successful teaching and learning of RME. In a related study, Nevenglosky (2018) in the study of "Barriers to effective curriculum implementation", using the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) as a conceptual framework identified concerns and barriers teachers report when implementing a new curriculum. The results indicated that teachers required additional information before expected implementation occur, as well as an understanding of demands on their personal time, especially in SBC implementation. Thus, in her study common themes showed teachers' desire for professional development (PD), peer collaboration and access to curriculum resources.

Bennett (2007) did a study on "teacher efficacy in the implementation of new curriculum supported by professional development". It was a qualitative study that employed phenomenological tradition in describing the "lived experiences" of participants involved in the implementation of a new curriculum. 14 teachers and 7 heads of institutions were sampled for this study. Major findings from the study concluded that teacher participants recognise professional development as a common thread that motivates,

improves their sense of efficacy, assist them in successful curriculum implementation, heightens their awareness of the need to improve teaching practices as well as the need to become student-centred and improve student learning. Head of school participants concurred with teacher participants, and also recognized the role leaders play in motivating teachers to become actively involved in planning activities.

In a research on "Teacher perception of the new educational curriculum in Ghana" conducted by Aboagye and Yawson (2020), they concluded that teachers perceived that the new curriculum is important, as it will encourage group work, assist students to get lifelong skills, prepare students for the job market, promote inclusive education, promote gender equality as well as considers Ghanaian students' culture and society. Teachers were however of the view that in planning the curriculum, policy makers should actively involve them, get books and materials ready, train teachers in advance and pilot a new curriculum before implementation. They posited further that large class size posed a potential challenge to the implementation of the new curriculum considering the fact that most schools in Ghana have large class size, ultimately affecting the learner-centred pedagogy advocated by the new curriculum (Amofa, 2019).

Chapter Summary

This chapter covered the theoretical review, conceptual framework and empirical review of the implementation of Standards-based curriculum. The theoretical review focused on the Fidelity of Implementation of curriculum, emphasising the explanation of Fullan and Pamfret (1977) as well as Synder, Bolin and Zumwalt (1992), who all to a large extent described FOI as the

degree to which teachers or stakeholders abide by curriculum's original design when implementing it. This section of the review also focused on the case for FOI as well as an emphasis on Breman and McLaughlin's (1976) three primary agent that should be considered in FOI evaluation (i.e., curriculum developers, school leadership and teachers.

The conceptual review focused on very relevant concepts such as curriculum, curriculum implementation, standards-based curriculum and related features and some general concepts regarding meaning and scope of RME. As part of the conceptual review aspects such as teacher preparation for curriculum implementation (McLaughlin &Shepherd, 1995; Rice,2003; Fullan, 2016; OECD, 2019), head teacher role in SBC implementation (Hall and Hord, 2001; Clarke et al, 2006; Hamilton, 2013) and challenges to SBC implementation were all discussed.

The empirical review examined some studies done by Annobil (2017), Nevenglosky (2018), Bennet (2007) and Aboagyeand Yawson (2020). Under each of the study the review cited the methodology adopted and key findings relevant to this study. The next chapter is the methodology which indicates the design and instruments used as well as how data was collected and analysed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. The chapter therefore describes how data was collected and discusses the procedures as well as techniques which was followed to conduct the study. Thus, it includes research design, the target population, sample size and sampling technique, the research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis. This chapter also discusses ethical issues considered as well as the chapter summary.

Research Paradigm

This study represents the pragmatic worldview in that it uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data (i.e. Questionnaires, interviews and observation). It thus embraces the idea of multiple realities (ontology) by reporting different perspectives of the study participants (Johnson &Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Secondly, knowledge is based on subjective views of the participants as depicted in interview results (epistemology) (Bessey, 1999; Esterberg, 2002). Thirdly, by acknowledging the researcher's interpretation in consonance with that of the participants, as well as biases present in the study, the value nature of the research (axiology) is revealed (Corbetta, 2003). Fourthly, the research process used was characterized by a combination of both inductive and deductive methods of data collection and analysis that give more strength than either of two alone (methodological). Lastly, the study is inherent to the pragmatic worldview as it is designed around research questions with the intent of addressing them in the different

ways that were deem appropriate and utilising the results in ways that can bring about positive consequences to those who will benefit from this research (Teddie&Tashakkori, 2009).

Research Design

The Convergent parallel design under mixed method research was employed for the study. This approach involves the collection of different but complementary data on the same phenomena. In convergent parallel design, the results or data are merged by comparing, interpreting and discussing them by stating the degree to which they converge, diverge or related (Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2011). Several good reasons are advanced for the adoption of the MMR design. The first reason is for Completeness, since a researcher can fully address a research problem and its sub problems only by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data. Another good reason is for Complementarity**.** This is because quantitative aspects of the study can compensate for weaknesses in qualitative research, and vice versa. For example, the results of unstructured interview with only a small number of individuals (which might raise concerns about generalizability) can be replicated by administering a questionnaire to a larger, more representative sample.

Moreover in a quantitative study, various results can sometimes seem inconsistent or contradictory; qualitative data may reveal underlying nuances and meanings that can help the researcher make sense of the numbers. Thus, the adoption of MMR designs helps in the resolution of puzzling findings. Finally, for the purposes of Triangulation, MMR designs are advocated for use, since a researcher can make a more convincing case for particular

conclusions if both quantitative and qualitative data lead to those conclusions (Bryman, 2006; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989 in Leedy&Ormrod, 2015). According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), mixed method is more expensive, time consuming and can be difficult for a single researcher to carry out both qualitative and quantitative research, especially if two or more approaches are expected to be used concurrently. In spite of the challenges, this study employed this design in order to merge both quantitative and qualitative data for discussion and interpretation to get an in-depth information about the topic under study.

Population

The population for this study consisted of all public primary school RME teachers and head teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana with an estimated total population of 312 teachers and 78 head teachers from 78 public primary schools in the municipality (Kwahu West Municipal Directorate of Education, [KWMDE], 2022).

Sample and Sampling Procedures

175 RME teachers and 6 head teachers formed the sample size for the study. Out of the 312 RME teachers in public primary schools, 175 of them were sampled based on census method, from 40 schools across all the eight (8) circuits to form the sample size for the teachers(Krejcie& Morgan, 2006). The Circuits used were Nkawkaw 'A', Nkawkaw 'B', Nkawkaw 'C', KwahuNsabah, Aweregya, Awenade, Fodoa and Asuboni Rails Circuits. The 40 schools were selected from the public primary schools in the various circuits using the simple random sampling technique, where names of all the schools had been written on pieces of papers so that each school had the

chance of being selected. The schools were selected at random from the list of the schools until the required numbers were arrived at. Census sampling was used to include all the RME teachers from the 40 schools for the study.

Out of the 175 RME teacher respondents, 12 of them were selected from6 schools for the qualitative component of the study. 2 teachers were each selected from the 6 schools and were interviewed on the variables of the study. Again, out of the 12 teachers, 6 were selected for classroom observation. The selection focused on teachers at the primary school who had been in service for three years or more. Since the research focused on teacher experience with curriculum implementation due to change, it was more expedient to deal with teachers who had experience with the previous curriculum and the new one. Although this study did not intend to compare the two curricula, in the researcher's view an encounter with teachers who had encountered the previous and current curricula would enhance data gathered than newly trained or recruited teachers. 6 head teachers from the 6 selected schools were also purposively selected for the qualitative study. Thus in all, 18 respondents, comprising 12 teachers and 6 head teachers were used for the qualitative component of the study.

Kusi (2012) reiterates that "one of the factors that influence the selection of a reasonable sample size for studies located within the interpretive-qualitative framework is manageability" (p.80). Since qualitative study aims at exploring a phenomenon for a better understanding, it is therefore necessary to select a sample size that is not too large.Creswell (2005), therefore argues that selecting a large number of interviewees for a qualitative research, in particular, will "result in superficial perspectives… the

overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual or site" (p.207).

In this study, only teachers and head teachers were selected because they were more suitable for the purpose and objectives of the study. Again, the teachers formed a majority of the sample size because they were the most focal point so far as the implementation of the standards-based RME curriculum is concerned.

Data Collection Instruments

Three different instruments that involve quantitative and qualitative data collection were used to obtain the necessary data and to address the research questions. The research instruments that were employed in the study were questionnaire, interview guide and observation guide. A major reason for the use of these instruments were to overcome the limitations associated with the use of single data collection instrument. Thus, it enabled the investigator to triangulate data to test the consistency of the findings obtained from each instrument used. Bekoe (2006) opined that triangulation in research is to test for consistency of findings obtained through different instruments.

Questionnaire

A 63-item questionnaire was designed to enable the researcher obtain the necessary information from the teachers who were sampled for the study. The questionnaires consisted of sixty-two (62) closed ended questions (Nachmias&Nachmias, 1981;Combes, 2001) and the items were written to cover all the variables of the study. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), close-ended questions are quick to compile and straight forward to code, and do not discriminate unduly on the basis of how articulate

the respondents are. Moreover, Borg, Gall and Gall (2007) found it to be popular, easy to construct and to administer and score. The 63rd question which was the last question was open ended.

The questionnaire items were grouped into five sections. The Section 'A'(items 1-5) dealt with the demographic data of the respondents while Section 'B' (items 6-22) focused on the first research question which was on how RME teachers were prepared and trained for the implementation of the standards-based RME Curriculum. Section 'C'(items 23-40) comprised questions on the actual implementation of the standards-based RME curriculum by teachers through teaching and learning. The questions in this category were tailored to answer research question 2. Section 'D' (items 41-49) focused on research question 3 which dealt with the support head teachers provided teachers to aid effective implementation of the curriculum. The final section, which was section 'E' (items 50-63) were to answer research questions 4, which bordered on the challenges RME teachers faced in their implementation of the RME curriculum.

Semi - structured interview guide

Semi-structured interview Guide was used to collect data from selected RME teachers and head teachers. Semi-structured interviews was adopted because they offer a versatile way of collecting data and can be used with all ages. Moreover, it allows the interviewer to use probes with a view to clearing up vague responses, or asking for elaboration in case of incomplete responses (Welmann&Krugar, 2001). The interview Guides for both selected teachers and head teachers had 2 sections i.e. A and B.With reference to the interview guide for teachers, Section A (items 1-7) comprised demographic data, whiles

section 'B'(items 8-17) comprised various questions carved to answer the various research questions. Similarly, the interview guide for the head teachers had section 'A' (items 1-5) focused on demographic data, as section 'B'(items 6-13) comprised questions relating to head teacher support to teacher and challenges faced in implementation of the RME curriculum.

Observation guide

In this study non-participant observation was used.Thus, the researcher observed the teachers and learners, but did not participate in class activities. A 41-item observation guide (refer to Appendix D) developed by the researcher was used in observing extent to which the Standards-based Religious and Moral Education curriculum was being implemented at the classroom level. The observation guide had 4 sections. Section 'A' sought information on particulars of the schools and personal data of the teachers.Section 'B' was titled 'lesson outline' with features such as strands, sub-strand, performance indicators, competencies to be achieved and learner teacher resources (LTRs) as observed in the teachers' lesson note book. Section 'C' dealt with the nature of the physical environment(Classroom resources, classroom arrangement,classroom space, major ways in which pupils activities were structured, major ways in which pupils engaged in class activities). Section 'D' collected information on key standards-based RME implementation indicators.These observations were done during the structured RME classroom lessons. For each teacher, one observationwasdone during RME lesson delivery. In addition to the observation guide, field notes were taken and later developed into comprehensive field models after which I later relied on to cross-check the information obtained from the interview conducted.

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Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

It is of great importance that the researcher has to be aware of validity threats from the design stage to the data gathering, data analysis and data reporting stages. Cohen et. al.(2002:129) wrote that, "One central issue in considering the reliability and validity of an instrument is that of sampling." Morrison (as cited in Cohen et al., 2002:129) adds that an unrepresentative, skewed sample, either too big or too small, can easily distort the data. Therefore, a good researcher enhances the validity of the research by choosing the right sample for the research. The size of the sample for the interview in this study is small, as the purpose is not to generalise from the findings but rather to understand the perceptions of the participants in order to answer the research questions. The validity of the instruments was tested by face and content validation procedure by submitting them to the supervisor of the research work for perusal and comments.

A pilot study was conducted in five (5) of the primary schools in the Kwahu-South Municipality. The aim was to identify any ambiguities in questions and to find out if the questions are not too difficult for the respondents. It was also to find out the extent to which teachers would be comfortable in answering some of the questions. 25RME teachers and 2 head teachers, were involved in the pilot study. Observations were done in the classrooms of two teachers. Ambiguities in questions were cleared and difficult questions rephrased.

After the data of the pilot testing was collected, it was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS] (version 21) to check for the reliability co-efficient using Cronbach alpha level which yielded the value of

0.72. This suggests that the questionnaire was reliable. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) posit that, for research purposes a useful rule of thumb is that reliability should be at .70 and preferably higher.

Data Collection Procedures

A letter of introduction was collected from the Department of Arts Education in the University of Cape Coast, to seek permission from the head teachers and RME teachers in the public basic schools in the study area. The researcher also established the necessary contacts with the head teachers of the schools to seek permission to administer the questionnaire. A discussion was held with RME teachers and head teachers of the various public basic schools selected for the study to agree on a convenient time to administer the instrument. A brief self-introduction was made by the researcher to explain the purpose of the study to the respondents before the questionnaires were distributed to them. The RME teachers were supervised by the researcher to complete the questionnaire. To ensure high response rate, the questionnaire was self-administered and retrieved on the same day. The respondents were given enough time to complete the questionnaire. The data collection exercise took six (6) weeks to complete due to the tight schedules of the respondents.

Interview sessions were held with six (6) head teachers and 12 RME teachers in the study area. The semi-structured interview guide was adopted in collecting this data for the study. This was done in order to provide detailed information and to ascertain the data collected with the use of the questionnaire. Again, observation sessions were held with the six (6) RME teachers during the RME lessons so that the researcher could have firsthand information as to how the RME teachers were implementing the key features

of the SBC RME curriculum. These key features comprised learner-centred pedagogy, inclusion and equity, differentiation and scaffolding, integration of I.C.T and development of core competencies. Each observation session lasted for 30 minutes and the researcher adopted the non-participant observation technique in collecting this data.

Data Processing and Analysis

This study sought to explore the extent to which Religious and Moral Education teachers are "faithfully" implementing the Standards-Based RME Curriculum as well as assess the challenges hindering the effective implementation of the standards-based curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region of Ghana. To answer the research questions formulated to guide the study, the type of statistics that was employed in the analysis of the data was descriptive statistics. Specifically, the data from the questionnaire was used to answer research questions 1-4 through the computation of frequencies, percentages and means and standard deviation. This was done with the use of computer software called Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21. Data gathered with the use of the interview guides (from head teachers and RME teachers) and the observation guide were analysed using the thematic approach, which involves systematically organizing and interpreting open-ended feedback to uncover meaningful insights and identify underlying patterns within the data.

Ethical Considerations

Cohen, Manion and Morison (2007) assert that if researchers intend to probe into the private aspects of individual lives, their intentions should be made clear and consent should be sought from those who are involved. For

this study, official introductory letter was obtained in writing from the Department of Arts Education of the University to do the study in the Municipality. The letter from the department was forwarded to the Municipal Directorate of Education who also introduced me to the schools concerned, explaining the purpose of the research to the schools.

Sample of the proposal and data collection instruments were submitted to the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board for perusal, advice and approval before it was used on the field for data collection.

Consent was sought from participants in this study. The purpose of the study was explained to participants before the interview and questionnaires were administered. Both teachers and head teachers were assured their anonymity and privacy. In the case of interviews, anonymity could not be expected if someone agrees to do a face-to-face interview (Cohen et al., 2000:61).However, the interviewer promised confidentiality. This means that although the researcher knew who provided the information, he would not make the connection known publicly. Moreover, the actual names of the schools were not used in the discussion of the results. Names of both teachers and head teachers involved in the study were notused. In case of teachers, where direct quotes were made only the sex, class and number of years of teaching experience were referred to.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the general research design for the study and the methods used to collect the data. The descriptive convergent mixed method research design was adopted for the study. The data was gathered from all RME teachers and head teachers in the public basic schools in the Kwahu

West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The census and purposive sampling procedure were used to involve 175 RME teachers and six (6) head teachers in the study. Again, the study made use of questionnaire, interview guide, and observation guide to collect data regarding the extent to which Religious and Moral Education teachers are "faithfully" implementing the Standards-Based RME Curriculum as well as assess the challenges hindering the effective implementation of the standards-based curriculum. The chapter dealt with other areas such as validity and reliability of instrument, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, data processing and analysis, as well as ethical considerations.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the extent to which Religious and Moral Education teachers are "faithfully" implementing the Standards-Based RME Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region of Ghana. Questionnaires (for teachers), interview guides (for head teachers and teachers), and observation guidewere employed to gather the requisite data for the study. The data from the RME teachers were analyzed through the computation of frequencies, percentages,and mean of means distributions. Descriptive statistics was employed in the analysis of quantitative data. The thematic analysis was used in analyzing the data from the interview guide as well as the observation guide. This chapter presents the interpretations, discussions and inferences that were made from the output.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 3 shows the characteristics of RME teachersfrom the public primary schools in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana, who served as respondents for the study.

Table 3: Characteristics of Teachers

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	60	34.3
	Female	115	65.7
Age	Below 20 years	1	0.6
	21-30 years	14	8.0
	31-40 years	129	73.7
	41-50 years	22	12.6
	51-60 years	9	5.1

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Religious Affiliation	Christianity	146	83.4
	Islam	19	10.9
	African Traditional Religion	10	5.7
Highest Academic/	Diploma	28	16.0
Professional Qualification	First Degree	141	80.6
	Master's Degree	6	3.4
Years of Teaching	Less than a year	2	1.1
Experience	1-5 years	36	20.6
	6-10 years	99	56.6
	11-15 years	12	6.9
	Above 15 years	26	14.9

Source: Field Data, 2022

From Table 3, all the 175RME teachers were involved in the study. This represents a return rate of 100.0%. Concerning the gender of the teachers involved in the study, 34% were males, whiles 66% were females. So a greater number of respondents in the study area were females. Also, the majority of the respondents were between 31-40 years. This is because, 1% were below 20 years, 8.0% were between 21-30 years, 74% were between 31-40 years, 13% were between 41-50 years, and 5% were between 51-60 years. In line with religious affiliation, 83% were Christians, 11% were Muslims, and 6% were African Traditionalists. Therefore, the majority of the RME teacherswere Christians. Regarding highest academic/professional qualification, 16.0% had Diploma, 80.6% had First Degree, and 3.4% had Master's Degree. Thus, the majority of the respondents had First Degrees as their highest academic/professional qualification. In terms of years of teaching experience, 1 % had taught for less than a year, 21% had taught between 1-5 years, 57% had taught between 6-10 years, 7% had taught between 11-15 years, and 15% had taught for more than 15 years. This means that the majority of the RME

teachers had taught RME for quite a good number of years and may have a great deal of experience when it comes to the implementation of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum.

Table 4: Characteristics of Head Teachers

Variable	Subscale	No.	%
Gender	Male	3	50
	Female	3	50
Age			
	20-30 years	0	0
	31-40 years	1	17
	41-50 years	3	50
	51 – 60 years	2	33
Religious Affiliation	Christianity	5	83
	Islam	1	17
	African Traditional Religion	0	0
Highest Academic/	Diploma	0	0
Professional Qualification	First Degree	4	67
	Master's Degree	2	33
Years of Teaching			
Experience	1-5 years	0	0
	6-10 years	2	33
	11-15 years	1	17
	Above 15 years	3	50

Source: Field Data, 2022

From Table 4, 6 head teachers were involved in the study. With respect to their gender, 3 head teachers, representing 50% were males, with the other 3(50%) also being females. In relation to the age of head teacher respondents, 1(17%) was between 31-40 years. 3(50%) of the respondents were between 41-50 years while 2(33%) were between 51-60years. With regards to head teacher respondents' religious affiliation, 5(83%) were Christians, with 1

(17%) being Muslim. This means that majority of head teacher respondents were Christians.Regarding the level of education of head teacher respondents, 4(67%) had first degrees with the remaining 2 (33%) having master's degree as their highest academic qualification. As to respondents' years of teaching and being heads, 2 (33%) had been in the profession for between 6-10 years. 1(17%) had also been teaching for between 1-15 years, whiles 3(50%) also indicated their years of teaching as being 15years and above.

Discussion of Main Results

This part of the study covers the main findings that emerged from the study. The results are organized and discussed in accordance with the research questions guiding the study. This was done to ensure achievement of the various research questions set at the beginning of the study and to provide well organised discussions to enhance easy understanding of the findings of the study. It comprised data from the questionnaire, interview guide and observation guide.

Preparedness of RME Teachers for the Implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum

Research Question 1: Howare RME teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum?

The aim of this research objective was to find out the preparedness of RME teachers in the public primary schools for the implementation of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality. Items 6-22 under section B of questionnaire for teachers as well as questions 8-11 of teachers' interview guide were used to answer this research question. Question 6 of the interview guide for head teachers also attempted to solicit response to

this research question. The responses given by the RME teachers are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Preparedness of RME Teachers for the Implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum

Statements:	M	SD
I had training on the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC) in my municipality.	3.09	.62
The training I had was adequate for proper implementation of the SBC.	2.75	.81
The training I had adequately exposed me to the features of the SBC.	2.89	.95
RME was featured in the training programme prior to implementation of SBC	2.75	.98
I understood the teaching and learning philosophy of RME.	2.63	.80
I was clear with the general and specific aims of RME during the training.	2.30	.89
I was adequately taken through the instructional expectations of RME.	2.15	.90
I was introduced to the core competencies during the training. .	2.39	.90
I understood all the core competencies for effective SBC implementation.	2.51	.99
From the training, I know the pedagogical approaches to use in teaching RME.	2.59	1.03
The training exposed me to the principles of inclusion and equity in teaching.	2.53	.82
The training effectively exposed me to assessment procedures in the SBC.	2.91	.66
I had enough training on the use of learner-centredpedagogies .	2.62	.86
I had understanding on the use and application of differentiation and scaffolding in teaching and learning.	2.49	.77
I had enough training on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning.	2.25	.71
Since inception of the SBC I have attended in-service training programmes on the SBC implementation.	2.18	.98
Professional learning communities provide me adequate support for teaching and learning of RME.	1.66	.86

Source: Field data (2022)
Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree,
3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree
Mean of means = 2.51
Mean of Standard Deviation = 0.85

Table 5 sought to find out the preparedness of RME teachers for the implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality. The means and standard deviation were obtained based on the responses recorded for each of the items on the questionnaire that were given to the respondents. The computation was done with the use of the Statistical Package for Service Solutions version 21. The coding of the items was done in line with the scale provided under Table 5 (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Agree; and 4= Strongly Agree). A mean of means of 2.51 and a mean of standard deviation of .85 were realized. Further discussions of individual items are presented in the paragraphs below.

From Table 5, a mean of 3.09 and a standard deviation of .62 were achieved for the statement: "I had training on the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC) in my municipality". This means that, the respondents agreed that they had training on the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC) in their municipality. This results is in agreement with McLaughlin and Shepherd (1995) who explain that, capacity building and continuous teacher professional development are seen as key ingredients in support of any standards-based reforms. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether the training they had was adequate for proper implementation of the SBC, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 2.75 and a standard deviation of .81 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement. This confirms the views of Leonard-Barton and Kraus(1985) who affirm the relevance of teacher preparation prior to curriculum implementation when they assert that "many implementation efforts fail because someone underestimated the scope or importance of preparation" (p.105). Also, from Table 5, the teachers agreed

that the training they had adequately exposed them to the features of the SBC. This is evidenced by the mean score of 2.89 and a standard deviation of .95 for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed to the statement. Regarding the statement; "RME was featured in the training programme prior to implementation of SBC", the majority of the teachers agreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 2.75 and a standard deviation of .98 that were realized. Also, a mean of 2.63 and a standard deviation .80 were recorded for the item "I understood the teaching and learning philosophy of RME". This means that, the majority of the teachers agreed to this statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) looking at the scale under Table 4.

The results show that the majority of RME teachers disagreed that they were clear with the general and specific aims of RME during the training. With a mean of 2.30 and a standard deviation of .89, it can be concluded thatthe mean falls into the scale 2 (agree). From Table 5, a mean of 2.15 and a standard deviation of .90 were achieved for the statement: "I was adequately taken through the instructional expectations of RME". This means that, the teachers disagreed to the statement. The high standard deviation obtained indicates that there were variations in the responses recorded for the item. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether they were introduced to the core competencies during the training, a mean of 2.39 and a standard deviation of .90 were obtained for this item showing the respondents disagreed to the statement. This contradicts the view of NaCCA (2019) who explain that, the RME curriculum emphasises development of core competencies, which describes a body of skills that teachers at all levels should seek to develop in

their learners. Also, from Table 5, the RME teachers indicated that they understood all the core competencies for effective SBC implementation. This is evidenced by the mean score of 2.51 and a standard deviation of .99 for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed to the statement. The high standard deviation obtained which was higher than the mean of standard deviation of .85 indicates that there were variation in the responses recorded for this item. Yet, it still remains that the majority of the respondents agreed to the statement. Regarding the statement, "From the training, I know the pedagogical approaches to use in teaching RME", the majority of the respondents agreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 2.59 and a standard deviation of 1.03 that were realized. This confirms the view of Bennett (2007) who asserted that as teachers become aware of the need to change teaching practices in order to improve teacher efficacy, professional development provides opportunities to gain confidence and heighten their sense of personal efficacy, especially in the context of implementing a new and challenging curriculum such as a standards-based curriculum. Also, a mean of 2.53 and a standard deviation .82 were recorded for the statement "The training exposed me to the principles of inclusion and equity in teaching". This means that, the majority of the teachers agreed that, the training exposed them to the principles of inclusion and equity in teaching. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) looking at the scale under Table 5.

The result depicts that, the training effectively exposed the RME teachers to assessment procedures in the SBC. With a mean of 2.91 and a standard deviation of .66 it could be concluded that the mean falls into the

scale of 3 (agree). Thus, the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. Again, when the respondents were asked whether they had enough training on the use of learner-centred pedagogies, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 2.62 and a standard deviation of .86 were obtained for this item showing the respondents had enough training on the use of learner-centred pedagogies. Also, from Table 5, the RME teachers had understanding on the use and application of differentiation and scaffolding in teaching and learning. This is evidenced by the mean score of 2.49 and a standard deviation of .77 for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed to the statement. Regarding the statement "I had enough training on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning", the majority of the RME teachers disagreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 2.25 and a standard deviation of .71 that were realized. Again, when the teachers were asked whether they have attended in-service training programmes on the SBC implementation since inception of the SBC, they disagreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 2.18 and a standard deviation of .98 were obtained for this statement. This contradicts the views expressed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] (2019) who intimated that the trainings that schools provide should be sustained over time rather than "one and done" workshops. They indicated further that effective professional learning that leads to changes to teacher practice and improved student outcomes are job-embedded, collaborative and hands-on, and scaffolds teacher learning. This therefore makes continuous professional development equally important, even after the initial teacher training for the implementation of a new curriculum has taken place.Also, from Table 4, the

RME teachers indicated that professional learning communities did not provide them adequate support for teaching and learning of RME. This is evidenced by the mean score of 1.66 and a standard deviation of .86 for this item. The mean is approximately 2, showing that the respondents disagreed to the statement.

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Teachers in the Selected Schools

The interview was used to collect qualitative data to complement quantitative data to ascertain the authenticity of responses. In doing this, interview sessions were conducted with 12 RME teachers. The results of the interviews are in themes. The discussions from the responses gathered from the teachers on the implementation of the RME standards-based curriculum are presented in the subsequent paragraphs.

The general impression created in their various responses indicated that indeed there were some training organized for all teachers within the municipality for the purposes of equipping teachers to implement the new curriculum. Thus a primary 1 teacher of 1-5 years teaching experience and 3-years' experience of teaching RME in her school expressed the kind of training given teachers in the following:

"A general orientation was given to us, with emphasis on English, Maths and Science (Respondent 1).

Another male teacher of 4 years teaching experience responded as follows:

"I attended a 5- day's workshop organized by NaCCA\GES at St Cecilia Basic School" (Respondent 2).

All other responses by the teachers interviewed were similar to the views above.

The responses for the interviews with teachers on initial teacher preparation prior to implementation of the SBC corroborates similar outcome in the questionnaires administered to them, thus agreeing with McLaughlin and Shepherd (1995) who cited Capacity building and Continuous teacher professional development as key ingredients in support of any standards-based reforms . Moreover, Leonard-Barton and Kraus(1985) affirm the relevance of teacher preparation prior to curriculum implementation when they assert that "many implementation efforts fail because someone underestimated the scope or importance of preparation" (p.105). The organisation of these workshops prior to implementation of the SBC was therefore appropriate since teachers needed to know the features of the SBC for RME as well as the pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying the SBC implementation (Fullan,2016).

Another question that was related to the adequacy of the training provided teachers for the implementation of the Standards-based RME curriculum was also asked. On the perceptions of teachers as to whether they were adequately trained for the implementation of the RME curriculum, varied but similar responses were provided by respondents. Thus, all the 12 respondents responded "No!" and cited reasons to buttress their responses:

"*No, because I did not get adequate information on the methods to be adopted in teaching" (Respondent 4).*

Another teacher also said that:

"No, because not much emphasis was placed on the teaching of RME"(Respondent 5)

Also, one of the teachers indicated that:

"No, it was woefully inadequate considering the fact that the numbers were so large and thus limited the kind of interaction needed for better understanding of the concepts and issues in the new curriculum". (Respondent 6).

"No, because I am now getting acquainted to the curriculum and its features after two years of its introduction" (Respondent 7).

"No, because the facilitator emphasized most on English, Maths and Science doing away with RME" (Respondent 8)

"No, the facilitators did not really touch on RME but based much emphasis on other subjects like Maths, Science….. and also linked OWOP to RME" (Respondent 9).

In relation to the kind of training RME teachers were taken through and how it is impacting their lessons, teacher respondents expressed their views as follows;

"Since the training was done in a rush I must say I did not get the best and therefore I just pick the curriculum, choose my topic and try my best(Respondent 1).

Another teacher also said that:

"It didn't really have impact in my teaching of the subject since much emphasise was placed on English, Maths and Science" (Respondent 2).

When asked whether in their view they were adequately introduced to the features of the RME curriculum during the training, all RME teacher respondents expressed views leading to the conclusion that they were not adequately exposed to the features of the RME curriculum. Thus, in the words

of a basic five (5) female teacher of 5 years teaching experience in RME she said, she is now getting acquainted with the curriculum.

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Head Teachers in the Selected Schools

The interview was used to collect qualitative data complement quantitative data in order to ascertain the authenticity of teacher responses. In doing this, interview sessions were conducted with 6 head teachers. Most of the questions bordered on their views on the implementation of the RME standards-based curriculum by their respective RME teachers and the kind of support they provided to aid the implementation process. However, in relation to research question 1, question 6 of the interview guide for head teachers specifically sought their views on the adequacy or otherwise of teacher preparation prior to the standards-based curriculum implementation.

Responses provided by all six heads from the six different circuits selected from the municipality were indicative of some kind of preparation in the form of a general workshop organized for all teachers in the municipality prior to the commencement of the 2019/20 academic year. However, they were all quick to add a level of inadequacy in preparation of teachers for the implementation of the RME curriculum. For instance on the question of whether in their view their teachers were well trained for the implementation of the curriculum, a male head teacher of eight years (8) experience as head teacher in one of the selected schools responded as follows:

"The whole programme was hastily rushed down (Respondent, 1)

Similarly a female head teacher with six (6) years' experience as head teacher of her school responded that :

"Even though the training was done for the various teachers, it was not accompanied by curriculum materials" (Respondent 2)

As a follow-up question to ascertain how often they as head teachers had organized in-service training for their RME teachers on the implementation of the curriculum, all six head teachers said they had never organized any in-service training on the Standards-based curriculum for their RME teachers. In answering this question a male head teacher responded as follows:

"*Not at all*" (Respondent 3)

Another male head teacher of five years' experience as head of his school said that he had only relied on the weekly Professional Learning Community sessions planned as part of the curriculum, but had not organized any specialized training on RME and the SBC implementation for his teachers since the general training offered for all teachers by the municipal directorate prior to the introduction of the SBC in basic schools.

From the above discussions, it can be concluded that, the RME teachers were somewhat prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This was because, the RME teachers agreed that, they had training on the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC); the training they had was adequate for proper implementation of the SBC; the training they had adequately exposed them to the features of the SBC;RME was featured in the training programme prior to implementation of SBC; and they understood the teaching and learning philosophy of RME. They also indicated that: they understood all the core competencies for effective

SBC implementation; they got to know the pedagogical approaches to use in teaching RME from the training; the training exposed them to the principles of inclusion and equity in teaching; the training effectively exposed them to assessment procedures in the SBC and they had enough training on the use of learner-centred pedagogies. However, the RME teachers were: not clear with the general and specific aims of RME during the training; not adequately taken through the instructional expectations of RME; and were not introduced to the core competencies during the training. Again, the RME teachers did not have enough training on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning; had not attended in-service training programmes on the SBC implementation since inception of the SBC; and that, professional learning communities did not provide them adequate support for teaching and learning of RME.

How RME Teachers are implementing the Key Features of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum

Research Question 2: How are teachers implementing the key features of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum?

The research question sought to ascertain how RME teachers are implementing the key features of the standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in the Kwahu West District of the Eastern Region of Ghana. Items 23-40 under section C of questionnaire for teachers (AppendixA) as well as questions 12 and 15 of teachers' interview guide (Appendix B) were used to answer this research question. Sections C (items7-11) and D (items 12-41) of the observation guide (Appendix D) were used to corroborate the teacher responses in the questionnaires and interviews.The observation sessions took place in selected classrooms where RME teachers

taught various lessons and were observed by the researcher. The responses given by the RME teachers in the questionnaires are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: How RME Teachers are Implementing the Key Features of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum

Statements:	M	SD
I prepare lesson notes using the scope and sequence in the RME curriculum.	3.03	.57
I integrate ICT in my lesson.	2.83	.99
I indicate required core competencies in my lesson plans.	3.36	.63
My chosen core competencies are always linked to my performance indicators.	3.12	.53
My RME lessons are more learner-centred than teacher-centred.	3.54	.57
I provide learners opportunity to interact with varied sources of information, teaching and learning materials and ideas in various ways.	3.47	.64
I assume the position of a facilitator or coach who helps learners in their learning.	3.27	.49
I make learners collaborate whilst learning.	3.18	.39
I make learners demonstrate the result of their learning through a product of performance.	3.06	.48
I guide learners to find answers to their own questions rather than readily provide answers to their questions.	3.25	.43
I set different tasks for learners of different abilities.	3.01	.20
I provide targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below standards or at risk not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes.	2.91	.70
Identified low achievers are allowed more time to complete given task.	3.25	.57
I provide learners who are at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes, simplified version of a lesson, assignment or reading and gradually increase the complexity or sophistication over time.	3.10	.54
I describe or illustrate concepts or process in multiple ways to ensure understanding.	3.28	.49
I give learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they are asked to complete.	3.18	.58
I clearly describe the purpose of a learning activity, the directions learners need to follow, and the learning goals they are expected to achieve.	3.26	.49
I expose learners to the use of ICT tools.	2.54	.89

Source: Field data (2022)
Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree,
3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree
Mean of means = 3.15
Mean of Standard Deviation = 0.57

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From Table 6, a mean of means of 3.15 and a mean of standard deviation of 0.57 were obtained indicating that the respondents agreed to most of the statements that were posed to them to find out how RME teachers were implementing the key features of the Standard-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality. The means and standard deviation were obtained based on the responses recorded for each of the items on the questionnaire that were given to the respondents. The computation was done with the use of the Statistical Package for Service Solutions version 21. The coding of the items was done in line with the scale provided under Table 6 (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Agree; and 4= Strongly Agree). Details of the individual items are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Regarding the statement: "I prepare lesson notes using the scope and sequence in the RME curriculum", the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 3.03 and a standard deviation of .57 that were realized. Also, a mean of 2.83 and a standard deviation .99 were recorded for the item "I integrate ICT in my lesson". This means that, the majority of the RME teachers agreed to this statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) when approximated to the nearest whole number. From Table 6, a mean of 3.36 and a standard deviation of .63 were achieved for the statement: "I indicate required core competencies in my lesson plans". This means that, the respondents agreed to the statement. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether their chosen core competencies are always linked to their performance indicators, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 3.12 and a standard deviation of .53 were obtained for this item

showing the respondents agreed to the statement. Also, from Table 6, the respondents strongly agreed that their RME lessons are more learner-centredthan teacher-centred. This is evidenced by the mean score of 3.54 and a standard deviation of .57 for this item. The mean is approximately 4, showing that the respondents strongly agreed to the statement. This finding is in agreement with NaCCA (2019) that, the SBC curriculum encourages teachers to adopt strategies that promote active involvement of the learners in the selection and organisation of learning experiences, making them aware of their importance in the process and also enabling them to assess their own learning outcomes. The result depicts that, most of the RME teachers agreed to the statement: "I provide learners opportunity to interact with varied sources of information, teaching and learning materials and ideas in various ways". With a mean of 3.47 and a standard deviation of .64 it could be concluded that the mean falls into the scale of 4 (strongly agree).

Again, when the respondents were asked whether they assume the position of a facilitator or coach who helps learners in their learning, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 3.27 and a standard deviation of .49 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement. Also, from Table 6, the RME teachers agreed that they make learners collaborate whilst learning. This is evidenced by the mean score of 3.18 and a standard deviation of .39 for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed. Regarding the statement: "I make learners demonstrate the result of their learning through a product of performance", the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 3.06 and a standard deviation of .48 that were realized. Also, a

mean of 3.25 and a standard deviation .43 were recorded for the item "I guide learners to find answers to their own questions rather than readily provide answers to their questions" This means that, the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) when approximated to the nearest whole number looking at the scale under Table 6. Again, the majority of the respondents agreed that they set different tasks for learners of different abilities. With this, a mean of 3.01 and a standard deviation of .20 were achieved. From Table 6, a mean of 2.91 and a standard deviation of .70 were achieved for the statement: "I provide targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below standards or at risk not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes". This means that, the respondents agreed that they provide targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below standards or at risk not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes.

Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether identified low achievers are allowed more time to complete given task, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 3.25 and a standard deviation of .57 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement. Also, from Table 5, the teachers agreed that they provide learners who are at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes, simplified version of a lesson, assignment or reading and gradually increase the complexity or sophistication over time. This is evidenced by the mean score of 3.10 and a standard deviation of .54 for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed to the statement. Also, a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation .49 were recorded for the item "I describe or illustrate

concepts or process in multiple ways to ensure understanding". This means that, the majority of the teachers agreed to this statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) looking at the scale under Table 5. This finding resonates with NaCCA (2019) that, the SBC curriculum encourages teachers to illustrate a concept, problem, or process in multiple ways to ensure understanding.The findings show that the majority of RME teachers agreed that they give learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they are asked to complete. With a mean of 3.18 and a standard deviation of .58, it can be concluded that the mean falls into the scale 3 (agree). This result is in agreement with NaCCA (2019), that, the SBC curriculum encourages teachers give learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they will be asked to complete.From Table 6, a mean of 3.26 and a standard deviation of .49 were achieved for the statement: "I clearly describe the purpose of a learning activity, the directions learners need to follow, and the learning goals they are expected to achieve". This means that, the teachers agreed to the statement. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether they expose learners to the use of ICT tools, a mean of 2.54 and a standard deviation of .89 were obtained for this item showing the respondents *agreed* to the statement.

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Teachers in the Selected Schools

The interview was used to collect qualitative data to complement quantitative data in order to ascertain the authenticity of the responses by teachers. In doing this, interview sessions were conducted with 12 RME teachers. The results of the interviews are in themes. Some questions in the interview guide solicited RME teachers' view with respect to how they were

implementing the features of the curriculum such as to lead to the achievement of the six (6) competencies (i.e. Critical thinking and Problem Solving (CP), Creativity and Innovation (CI), Communication and Collaboration (CC), Cultural Identity and Global Citizenship (CG), Personal Development and Leadership (PL) and Digital Literacy (DL) .Various responses were provided by the respondents.

"I refer to the curriculum document for my topics for each lesson" (Respondent 1).

Also, one of the teacher respondents said that:

"My Strands and sub-strands as well as terminal performance indicators are all taken from the curriculum" (Respondent 2).

Another teacher explained that:

"Since in each lesson core competencies are required I try to create activities that may lead to the attainment of the stated competencies" (Respondent 3).

Similarly, one of the teachers indicated that:

"After teaching the concept 'family', students were able to role play or demonstrate the responsibility of members in the family such as father, mother and children. This helped in the achievement of Creativity and Critical Thinking" (Respondent 4).

"In a lesson like God, His Creation and Attributes learners are able to identify and role play the attributes of God in groups, for example, Love, patience and merciful, achieving CC, PL and CI" (Respondent 5)

"By setting and communicating learning goals or targets that learners can understand and articulate for each lesson" (Respondent 6).

"Ensuring assessment and feedback are provided in a timely manner with options to demonstrate their learning" (Respondent 7).

"I use group work and improvise TLMs in most of my lessons" (Respondent 8).

The responses of teachers during the interview session to a very great extent corroborates their responses in the questionnaire on how they were implementing the key features of the SBC. The responses resonates with the view of McDonough (2014), who observed that identifying curriculum components that must be implemented to standard is also an important area of FOI assessments. This is because identification of such components according to Darrow (2009), allows both programme designers and programme implementers to better understand where modifications in a programme can be made without risking programme failure. From the responses, there were indications of some of the use and application of the standards for effective pedagogy such as teachers and students working together, connection of lessons to students' lives and teaching through dialogue (Dalton, 1998).

Results from Observation Sessions Conducted in the Selected Schools

A total of 6 RME teachers were selected for the lesson observation. 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. 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). In order to maintain confidentiality in this study, the researcher used a pseudonym for each of the teachers. 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. Each teacher was observed once and they were allowed to select and design their own lessons. Each observed lesson lasted for about 30 minutes.

A brief description of all the teachers and their classroom coupled with a general description of the lessons observed was presented first. This was followed by a matrix of curriculum implementation practices adopted by the RME teachers in the classroom. The observations made are presented as follows:

Primary Teacher 1 (PT1): This was a female teacher with her first degree in Catering and had been teaching Religious and Moral Education in her current school for the past five (5) years. She was between 31-40 years. She taught her regular class 5 pupils. She taught the Strand: Religious Practices and their Moral Implications with the Sub-strand: Religious Worship in the three major religions. (As found in page 39 of the RME curriculum). She indicated her performance indicators on the board. The classroom had adequate space with a total class enrollment of 16 pupils (7 males and 9 females). The lesson was interactive with relevant examples used to explain major ideas.The question and answer approach was mainly used. Thus she illustrated concepts in multiple ways to ensure understanding. She exhibited high command of the subject matter and guided learners to find answers to their own questions rather than readily providing answers for them. The time allocation of 30

minutes was judiciously managed. It was observed that the entire class was engaged in the same activities at the same time. The use of creative approaches such as role play, sketches, oral presentations, songs and storytelling were however lacking in the lesson delivery. Moreover, the integration of ICT was absent in lesson delivery. There were no observed specific activities that paid special attention to low achievers neither were different tasks set for learners of different abilities. In terms of assessment, researcher observed that her assessment of learners understanding was only at the end of the lesson and not throughout the learning process. Another major observation made was the fact that she took all activities from a textbook she had in hand without a written lesson plan. Thus the competencies to be achieved were not clearly seen neither were they observed in her lesson delivery. At a post-observation interaction she indicated that she could not print the lesson on-line as had been the practice.

Primary Teacher 2 (PT2): PT2 was a Professional teacher and a Diploma holder of three years teaching experience. She was between 31-40 years and did a general programme including RME in her diploma education from one of Ghana's Colleges of Education. She taught a P1 Class, with total enrollment of 24 (10 males and 14 females). The Strand was 'The Family and the Community' and Sub-strand was 'Roles and Relationships' with emphasis on the 'Nuclear Family'.(Found on page 5 of the RME curriculum for primary schools). The size of the class was large enough and very spacious for interaction among pupils. The arrangement of tables strongly facilitated interaction. The entire class was engaged in the same activities at the same time. PT2 communicated the performance indicators at the start of lesson. She

related pupils' relevant previous knowledge to the current sub-strand. She exhibited high command of subject matter by giving precise information, and displayed confidence as well as related the content to learners' experiences. She encouraged learners to ask questions. She illustrated concepts in multiple ways to ensure understanding. She integrated ICT in her lesson as she used her mobile phone and connected it to Bluetooth equipment and displayed some family interactive activities for class discussion, thus overcoming the challenge of the unavailability of electricity in the classroom. PT2 assessed learners and her assessment of learners' understanding occurred throughout the learning process and not only at the end. She drew learners' attention to end of lesson, used questions and answers as well as clarified main points to class. The adoption of various creative pedagogies such as role play, songs, sketches, oral presentations, drawings, storytelling and games was however minimal. The provision of targeted support to low achievers or learners who were at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes was not observed in teacher interaction with learners. Moreover, there were no specific reference to the core competencies, neither were there observed attempt(s) to meet requirement of any such competencies. She picked her content directly from a textbook she had in hand without reference to a lesson plan.

Primary Teacher 3 (PT3): PT3 was a female teacher of over 15 years teaching experience and an only teacher of RME for the school. Thus she handled only RME from basic one (1) to six (6). She had a Diploma in Basic Education Certificate. She taught a basic 4 class for the observation session. The strand was "Religious practices and their moral implications" and the sub-strand focused on "Festivals in the three major religions". She had lesson

notes prepared, strand and sub-strand accordingly indicated while performance indicators and competencies were all incorporated in the plan. There was a pupil population of 43, with the break down as 27 males, 16 females. In relation to the classroom space, it was observed to be very spacious, with furniture arrangement done to facilitate interaction. Learners' activities were structured as whole group, with entire class engaged in same activities at the same time. In terms of the observed key standards-based RME curriculum implementation indicators, varied observations were made by the researcher. It was observed at the start of lesson that the teacher communicated performance indicators to learners. She related pupils' relevant previous knowledge to current strand and sub-strand. She also exhibited high command of the subject matter, by providing precise information and relating content to learners' experiences. The lesson was interactive as teacher encouraged learners to ask questions. Moreover, she guided learners to find answers to their own questions rather than readily providing answers for them. The integration of ICT in lesson was however absent, neither were learners exposed to the use of ICT tools in the observed lesson. Apart from the textbook she had in hand there were no other Teacher learner Resources observed to have been used to illustrate or demonstrate concepts. Same tasks were observed to have been set for all learners. Thus the indicator of teacher setting different tasks for learners of different abilities was absent in the class. There were also no observed targeted supported to learners who were seen as performing below standards. The use of appropriate creative approaches to enhance pupils understanding in the lesson was quite minimal. Thus role plays, sketches, drawings, songs, storytelling and some other relevant approaches were not conspicuous in the

lesson delivered. In terms of assessment the researcher observed that the teachers' assessment occurred only at the end of the lesson. Moreover, there was no observed linkage of the summary of the lesson and closure to the stated performance indicators as well as competencies stated in teachers' lesson plan.

Primary Teacher 4 (PT4): PT4 was a female teacher of between 51-50 years and had 12 years teaching experience, with a first degree in Basic Education. She served as a class teacher and assistant headmistress of her school. She taught a Basic 2 class thestrand: God, His Creation and Attributes and sub-strand: The Environment. PT4 stated her performance indicators as well as competencies to be achieved. There was the use of a manila card that depicted the importance of the environment (i.e, Air, Food, Water and Shelter). In terms of class space, the class was crowded such as to hinder effective movement of learners. The class had a population of 56pupils and were under a temporary wooden structure. The lesson was held for the class as a whole group, with the entire class engaged in same activities at the same time. PT4 communicated the performance indicators to learners at the start of the lesson as well as linked the current lesson to a relevant knowledge. She exhibited her command of subject matter by providing precise information and displayed confidence as well as related the lesson to learners' experiences. PT4 used the questions and answer techniques by asking well- balanced mixture of factual probing questions as well as distributed the questions fairly. She further integrated instruction with real-world or life skills. The Teaching Learning Resource adopted was quite appropriate and had the potential of helping to achieve some of the core competencies stated by the teacher. There was however, no observed integration of ICT during the lesson delivery. Neither

were learners introduced to the use ICT tools during the lesson. The assessment procedure adopted was mainly seen at the end of the lesson where she made learners demonstrate their learning by drawing activities that destroyed the environment. Learners however, could not produce the final work before closure of lesson.

Primary Teacher 5 (PT5): PT5 was a male teacher of between 20-30 years with qualification in Diploma in Basic Education. His area of specialization during his teacher training was Agricultural Science. He had 4 years' experience in teaching Religious and Moral Education. He taught in Primary Six (6). He taught a lesson on the Strand: God, His Creation and Attributes, with the sub-strand: The Environment. Competencies to be achieved were also rightly indicated. He had his lesson notes with performance indicators appropriately indicated. He used questions and answers as well as group presentations in delivery of his lesson. The classroom had adequate space with furniture arrangement that facilitated interaction. Activities were performed in small groups, with groups of pupils engaged in different activities at the same time. In terms of ratings of key standards-based RME curriculum indicators, various observations were made. PT5 communicated the performance indicators to his class and related pupils relevant previous knowledge to current sub-strand. He exhibited high command of subject matter by giving precise information, displaying confidence and related content of lesson to learners' experiences. He made learners to collaborate whiles learning by putting them into groups to work and do a presentation. PT5 encouraged pupils to ask questions and provided information using peers. He demonstrated the use of some creative approaches such as oral presentations,

role plays and drawings. Some of these approaches had the potential of helping achieve some of the core competencies he stated in his lesson plan. The integration of ICT in lesson was however absent neither learners were exposed to the use of ICT tools during lesson delivery. Tasks were not specifically set for learners of different abilities. Moreover there were no targeted support to learners who were performing below standards. His assessment of learners' understanding occurred at the end of the lesson and not throughout the lesson. There were evidence of a linkage of evaluation activities with competencies stated.

Primary Teacher 6 (PT6): Primary Teacher 6 (PT6) was a male graduate and a professional teacher. He was holding a Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) degree in Basic Education. He had been teaching for 10 years and he was between 40 – 45 years of age. The teacher had been teaching RME in class four (4) for the past six years of his 12 years teaching career. There was a class population of 48 learners comprising 29 males and 19 females. On the day of observation he taught the strand: The Family, Authority and Obedience, with sub-strand: Roles, Relationships in the family and Character formation. Lesson plan was used with performance indicators appropriately indicated. The lesson was taught through the whole class engagement in which the entire class was engaged in the same activity at the same time.In terms of class space, the class was crowded such as to hinder effective movement of learners. PT6 communicated the performance indicators to learners at the start of lesson and related learners' previous knowledge to current sub strand taught. He exhibited high command of the subject matter through a display of confidence and provision of precise information on the selected sub-strand. He distributed

his questions fairly and encouraged learners to ask questions. The use of creative approaches such as role plays, sketches, oral presentations, drawings, etc. were however absent during lesson delivery. The lesson was more teacher-centred interspersed with occasional questions thrown to whole class. No opportunity was provided for learners to interact with varied sources of information as well as Learning and teaching resources. ICT integration was lacking in lesson delivery. No different task was set for learners of different abilities neither did teacher provide any targeted support to learners who were at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes. PT6 assessed lesson at the end by drawing attention to the end of the lesson using questions and answers.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that, the RME teachers were implementing the key features of the Standard-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This hinges on the findings that, the RME teachers agreed that: they prepare lesson notes using the scope and sequence in the RME curriculum; integrate ICT in their lesson; indicate required core competencies in their lesson plans; ensured that their chosen core competencies are always linked to their performance indicators; RME lessons are more learner-centred than teacher-centredand they provide learners opportunity to interact with varied sources of information, teaching and learning materials and ideas in various ways. They also indicated that: they assume the position of a facilitator or coach who help learners in their learning; make learners collaborate whilst learning; they make learners demonstrate the result of their learning through a product of performance; guide learners to find answers to their own questions

rather than readily provide answers to their questions; set different tasks for learners of different abilities and they provide targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below standards or at risk not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes.Again, the RME teachers:identified low achievers and are allowed more time to complete given task; provided learners who are at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes, simplified version of a lesson, assignment or reading and gradually increase the complexity or sophistication over time: describe or illustrate concepts or process in multiple ways to ensure understanding; give learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they are asked to complete; clearly describe the purpose of a learning activity, the directions learners need to follow, and the learning goals they are expected to achieve. However, from the observation sessions, it was realised that the integration and exposure of learners to ICT was very minimal. For instance of the six lessons observed, it was only in one lesson that the use of ICT was clearly seen. This trend has the potential of depriving learners of the benefits of ICT as opined by Harkverdi, et al (2007) who cited that the use of ICT provide learners an access to large quantities of information on-line as well as help them to organize, edit and present information in many different ways and therefore proposed that ICT must be used to support four key components of learning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts.

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Support Systems Head Teachers provide to assist Teachers in the Implementation of the RME Curriculum in Basic Schools

Research Question 3: What support systems do head teachers provide to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools in the Kwahu West Municipality?

The aim of this research question was to find out the support systems head teachers provide to assist teachers in the implementation of the Standards-based RME Curriculum in basic schools in the Kwahu West Municipality. Questionnaires and interview guides administered to teachers were used to answer this research question. Thus, section D of the questionnaire (items 41-49) were all related to this research question. The interview guide for head teachers (Appendix C) also had questions posed to the head teachers in relation to the support systems they provided RME teachers.

The responses from the questionnaires given by the RME teachers are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Support Systems Head Teachers provide to assist Teachers in the Implementation of the RME Curriculum in Basic Schools

Statements:	M	SD
Head teachers have knowledge on the features of the standards-based RME curriculum.	2.84	.82
Head teachers have positive attitudes towards the teaching and learning of RME.	2.99	.89
Head teachers encourage RME teachers to prepare adequately before going to teach.	3.33	.48
Head teachers supervise the teaching and learning of RME.	2.75	.60
Head teachers make available teaching and learning	2.30	.89

resources needed for RME lessons.		
Head teachers ensure that periods allocated for RME are used judiciously.	3.11	.59
Head teachers organize in-service training programmes for RME teachers.	2.02	.99
Head teachers discuss challenges to effective teaching of RME with teachers.	2.49	.85
Head teachers make effortsto get feedback from the teaching and learning of RME.	2.49	.73

Source: Field data (2022)
Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree,
3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree
Mean of means = 2.70
Mean of Standard Deviation = 0.76

Table 7 presents results on the support systems head teachers provide to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools in the Kwahu West Municipality. The means and standard deviation were obtained based on the responses recorded for each of the items on the questionnaire that were given to the respondents. The computation was done with the use of the Statistical Package for Service Solutions version 21. The coding of the items was done in line with the scale provided under Table 7 (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Agree; and 4= Strongly Agree). A mean of means of 2.70 and a mean of standard deviation of .76 were realized. Further discussions of individual items are presented in the paragraphs below.

From Table 7, a mean of 2.84 and a standard deviation of .82 were achieved for the statement: “Head teachers have knowledge on the features of the standards-based RME curriculum”. This means that, the respondents agreed to the statement thattheir head teachers have knowledge on the features of the standards-based RME curriculum. This finding confirms the view of

Hall and Hord (2001) who found administrative leadership as one of the major principles of change and successful curriculum implementation. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether their head teachers have positive attitudes towards the teaching and learning of RME, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 2.99 and a standard deviation of .89 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement. Also, from Table 7, the respondents agreed that their head teachers encourage RME teachers to prepare adequately before going to teach. This is evidenced by the mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of .48 for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed to the statement. This finding is in agreement with that of Rogers (1995) who explain that, in well-organised schools, leadership qualities contribute in many ways to student achievement when school authorities demonstrate a clear vision and motivate teachers toward that vision). The result depicts that, most of the RME teachers agreed to the statement: "Head teachers supervise the teaching and learning of RME". With a mean of 2.75 and a standard deviation of .60 it could be concluded that the mean falls into the scale of 3 (agree). This finding resonates with that of Etsey, Amedahe and Edjah (2004) who found that academic performance improved in the private schools because of more effective supervision of work. Again, when the respondents were asked whether their head teachers make available teaching and learning resources needed for RME lessons, they disagreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 2.30 and a standard deviation of .89 were obtained for this item showing the respondents disagreed to the statement.

Also, from Table 7, the RME teachers agreed that their head teachers ensure that periods allocated for RME are used judiciously. This is evidenced by the mean score of 3.11 and a standard deviation of .59 obtained for this item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed. This finding is in agreement with Chapman et al. (2018), Coburn and Russell (2008), Stringfield et al. (1998) who emphasised that school leaders allocated time into the teaching, planning, and professional development schedule to support curriculum reform. Regarding the statement: "Head teachers organize in-service training programmes for RME teachers", the majority of the RME teachers disagreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 2.02 and a standard deviation of .99 that were realized. Also, a mean of 2.49 and a standard deviation .85 were recorded for the item "Head teachers discuss challenges to effective teaching of RME with teachers" This means that, the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) when approximated to the nearest wholenumber looking at the scale under Table 6. This finding is in agreement with OECD (2019) who asserted that, school leaders, including principals, headmasters, and department heads, promote curriculum implementation in numerous ways. Again, the majority of the respondents agreed that their head teachers make efforts to get feedback from the teaching and learning of RME. With this, a mean of 2.49 and a standard deviation of .73 were achieved.

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Teachers in the Selected Schools

The interview was used to collect qualitative data to complement quantitative data in order to ascertain the authenticity of the responses by

teachers. In doing this, interview sessions were conducted with 12 RME teachers. The results of the interviews are in themes.

In relation to the kind of support provided teachers by their head teachers, respondents gave varied information indicative of various support and accordance to what in their view the head teachers could do in spite of the challenges they themselves faced as heads. The following responses therefore depict the kind and nature of support respondents cited as getting from their heads.

A female teacher of 5 years teaching experience in RME thus states:

"The head teacher checks on us and provides the resources needed if only it is there" (Respondent 1).

Another teacher recounted:

"Once in her capacity, she helps" (Respondent 2)

Another female teacher of between 16-20 years teaching experience and the only RME teacher in her school described the head teacher as "Very, Very Supportive".

In another response, a male teacher of 4 years teaching experience responded as;

"My head teacher has been supportive by organizing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) every Wednesday for teachers on Standards-based RME Curriculum" (Respondent 3).

In a related question which sought to inquire the kind of support teachers needed but were unavailable to them. RME teacher respondents' responses to this question depicted a high level of unanimity as most of them

itemized the support needed but unavailable as: unavailability of textbooks; in-service workshops; and teaching Learning Resources (TLRs).

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Head Teachers in the Selected Schools

Head teachers from 6 primary schools selected within the municipality were interviewed. Most of the questions bordered on the kind of support they provided to aid the implementation process. This question was to ascertain the kind and levels of support head teachers provided their RME teachers to enable them effectively deliver their mandate as curriculum implementers. There were three specific questions relating to this major question. The first of this sub-questions was whether as head teachers they interacted regularly with their RME teachers on to how best to implement the RME curriculum. Head teacher respondents provided varied responses to this question. For instance in response to this question, a male head teacher of 13 years teaching experience and 8 years' experience as head teacher of his school answered "NO!" to the question of whether he interacted regularly with his RME teachers. Explaining further the reason for his No! response he said :

"No, *because I believe the focus in primary school should have been based on reading, writing, comprehension, arithmetic's and basic science" (Respondent 1)*

Another head teacher in her response to how regularly she interacted with her RME teachers on implementation of the RME curriculum indicated that, she did interact with them, but through occasional classroom observations.

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There was another question on what specific support (s) they provided their RME teachers in the implementation of SBC. Respondents had varied responses, though they all focused on the acquisition of materials and some resources to the teachers. Thus one head teacher said:

"I got them all curriculum materials when it was not even provided by the directorate and also supported them in getting relevant source books" (Respondents 2).

Another head teacher indicated that:

"Since teachers complain a lot about the unavailability of major curriculum materials, I encourage them to use the limited resources available until the government provides" (Respondent 3)

In a response to the same question of head teacher support, a female head teacher of over twenty (20) years teaching experience and six (6) years headship of her school indicated that she could not mention any specific support to only RME teachers but however said that she provided general support to all teachers, especially during the Professional Learning Communities' meeting.

It can be concluded that, head teachers provided support systems to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This is because, head teachers had knowledge on the features of the standards-based RME curriculum; had positive attitudes towards the teaching and learning of RME; encouraged RME teachers to prepare adequately before going to teach; supervised the teaching and learning of RME; ensured that periods allocated for RME are used judiciously; discussed challenges to effective teaching of

RME with teachers; and made efforts to get feedback from the teaching and learning of RME. However, the head teachers do not make available teaching and learning resources needed for RME lessons; andtheydid not organise in-service training programmes for RME teachers.

Challenges hindering the Effective Implementation of Standard-Based RME Curriculum

Research Question 4: What are the challenges hindering the effective implementation of the Standards-Based RME curriculum from the perspectives of teachers and head teachers?

The research question sought to ascertain the challenges hindering the effective implementation of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum in the Kwahu West District of the Eastern Region of Ghana. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to answer this research question. Section E of the questionnaires for teachers (items 50-63) contains questions that were responded to by selected RME teachers. Both teachers and head teachers also responded to questions relating to the challenges in the SBC implementation.

The responses given by the RME teachers in the questionnaires are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Challenges hindering the Effective Implementation of Standard-Based RME Curriculum

Statements:	M	SD
Inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation.	3.02	.96
Lack of in-service training.	3.24	.89
Inadequate head teacher support.	2.98	.86
Unavailability of ICT tools.	3.23	.87
Poor teacher knowledge and application of ICT tools.	2.92	1.00

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Unavailability of visual resources such as charts, pictures and photographs.	3.22	.67
Unavailability of curriculum materials such as teachers manual, resource packs, textbooks, etc.	3.19	.85
Too much work load with new curriculum.	2.87	.79
The SBC is too complex.	2.98	.74
Unavailability of audio resources such as radio, cassette player etc.	3.23	.71
Unavailability of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc.	3.38	.58
Inadequate time allocation for RME lesson on the time table.	2.95	.97
Large class size.	2.18	1.02

Source: Field data (2022)
Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree,
3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree
Mean of means = 3.03
Mean of Standard Deviation = 0.84

From Table 8, a mean of means of 3.03 and a mean of standard deviation of 0.84 were obtained indicating that the respondents agreed to most of the statements that were posed to them to find out the challenges hindering the effective implementation of standards-based RME curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality. The means and standard deviation were obtained based on the responses recorded for each of the items on the questionnaire that were given to the respondents. The computation was done with the use of the Statistical Package for Service Solutions version 21. The coding of the items was done in line with the scale provided under Table 8 (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Agree; and 4= Strongly Agree). Details of the individual items are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Regarding the statement; "Inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation", the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 3.02 and a standard deviation of .96 that were realized. This finding corroborates that of OECD (2019) that, lack of collaborative professional learning opportunities can hinder implementation. This is true not only for teachers but for school leaders as well. Also, a mean of 3.24 and a standard deviation .89 were recorded for the item "Lack of in-service training". This means that, the majority of the RME teachers agreed to this statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) when approximated to the nearest whole number. From Table 8, a mean of 2.98 and a standard deviation of .86 were achieved for the statement: "Inadequate head teacher support". This means that, the respondents agreed to the statement. This finding is in agreement with the views of Ruebling et al (2004) who explain that, leadership and support are among the major determining factors in the success of curriculum implementation. They emphasize that school leaders maintain a "hands-off" approach with respect to curriculum development activities, thus relying entirely on teachers and not personally supervising implementation of curriculum. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether unavailability of ICT tools was a challenge to them, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 3.23 and a standard deviation of .87 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement. Also, from Table 5, the respondents agreed that poor teacher knowledge and application of ICT tools was a challenge hindering the effective implementation of standards-based RME curriculum. This is evidenced by the mean score of 2.92 and a standard deviation of 1.00 for this

item. The mean is approximately 3, showing that the respondents agreed to the statement. The result depicts that, most of the RME teachers agreed to the statement: "Unavailability of visual resources such as charts, pictures and photographs". With a mean of 3.22 and a standard deviation of .67 it could be concluded that the mean falls into the scale of 3 (agree). Again, when the respondents were asked whether theunavailability of curriculum materials such as teachers' manual, resource packs, textbooks, etc.was a challenge to them, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of .85 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement.

Regarding the statement; "Too much work load with new curriculum." The majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This can be seen from the mean of 2.87 and a standard deviation of .79 that were realised. This finding is in agreement with Pak, Polikoff, Desimone and Garcia (2020) who opined that proponents of Standards-based reforms acknowledge the fact that proper implementation of standards-based reforms, though leads to rise in students' achievement, it correspondingly require some rigorousness in teacher practice. This is because implementation require a lot of adjustments in terms of the content teachers teach and the rigour by which they teach it (Supvitz, 2015). This is true not only for teachers but for school leaders as well. Also, a mean of 2.98 and a standard deviation .74 were recorded for the item "The SBC is too complex" This means that, the majority of the RME teachers agreed to the statement. This is because the mean falls on scale 3 (agree) when approximated to the nearest whole number looking at the scale under Table 8. This finding resonates with the views of Johnson, Mellard,

Fuchs and McKnight (2006) who identified complexity (the more complex the intervention, the lower the fidelity because of the level of difficulty) as one of the factors that influence fidelity of Implementation. Again, the majority of the respondents agreed that unavailability of audio resources such as radio, cassette player etc.was a challenge to them. With this, a mean of 3.23 and a standard deviation of .71 were achieved. From Table 8, a mean of 3.38 and a standard deviation of .58 were achieved for the statement: "Unavailability of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc". This means that, the respondents agreed that unavailability of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc was a challenge to them. Again, when the RME teachers were asked whether inadequate time allocation for RME lesson on the time table was a challenge to them, they agreed to the statement. Here, a mean of 2.95 and a standard deviation of .97 were obtained for this item showing the respondents agreed to the statement. This finding is in agreement with Malone and Nelson (2006) who affirm that critics of SBC see a variety of problems related to teaching to the standards: too many students, teachers have too many demands on their time, and not enough hours to focus on world-class standards. The findings show that the majority of RME teachers disagreed that large class size was a challenge to them. With a mean of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 1.02, it can be concluded that the mean falls into the scale 2 (disagree).

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Teachers in the Selected Schools

Teacher respondents readily provided some challenges they felt hindered the effective implementation of the curriculum. Some responses they

provided included: lack of textbooks for the teaching of RME; lack of teaching learning resources for teaching the subject; unavailability of ICT tools such as lap tops and projectors; bad attitude of pupils to teaching contents outside their religions; and very limited time for RME lessons.

In connection with the challenges, a Basic Stage 4 teacher of 5 years teaching experience recounted as follows:

"Some topics require a resource person to demonstrate for pupils to get requisite skills but those people are not readily available. Example include performing ablution, pouring of libation and others" (Respondent 1).

Yet another teacher provided the following responses:

"Management gives priority of teaching English, Mathematics and Science than the teaching of RME in the lower primary" (Respondent 2).

A male teacher of over 10 years experience of teaching RME in one of the circuits responded in the following words:

"The Government needs to provide teachers with textbooks. Using the internet for information is not easy for most teachers" (Respondent 3).

In a similar tone as the one earlier provided, another male teacher of over 15 years' experience of teaching RME expressed his frustration in the following:

"It is necessary if the government or Ministry will provide us with textbooks of various subjects. Going to the net for topics is very tedious. From time immemorial we have been using textbooks which makes the work easier. Kindly contact the necessary sector responsible for the provision of textbooks to do so. Teachers in the classroom are suffering but we cannot voice it (Respondent 4).

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The non-existence of RME specific in-service training was also recounted as one of the challenges teachers faced with the implementation of the curriculum. Thus in the words of a basic 1 female teacher of 4 years' experience of teaching RME she said:

"I have not attended any other workshop since the inception of the curriculum. Most workshops are on English and Mathematics" (Respondent 5).

She further presented a more community specific challenge which in the view of the researcher is more attitudinal than educational. She recounted that due to the fact that most of the learners live within the community in which the school is cited, sometimes when they go out for break to eat at home, they do not come back.

Results from Interview Sessions Held with Head Teachers in the Selected Schools

Head teachers from 6 primary schools within the municipality were interviewed. This interview was to ascertain the challenges hindering the effective implementation of the Standards-Based RME curriculum from the perspectives of head teachers. On the question of the kind of challenges in the opinion of the heads interviewed, their teachers faced in their role as implementers of the standards-based curriculum, head teacher respondents provided some responses as follows:

"There are no books from the government, so teachers have to rely on some old books used during the old curriculum" (Respondent 1)

Another head teacher also explained that:

"The curriculum manual is only one, so teachers from basic 1-6 all have to come for it to use in turns".(Respondent 2)

In another interview, a male head teacher indicated that:

"*Even though some teachers downloaded some available curriculum materials on-line, some have challenges because they have no Android phones to enable them go on-line"(Respondent 3)*

One of the head teachers of one of the most pupil-populated schools in the municipality cited the challenge of large class size as a major hurdle for her teachers.She indicated further in the following response

"The unavailability of Audio and Audio-visual materials complicate matters as they make lesson delivery difficult coupled with the large class size. Teachers are not able to engage learners in more group work and other learner-centred activities which are requirement of the new curriculum" (Respondent 4)

In responding to the questions of challenges faced by their teachers, another headteacher responded as follows:

"Lack of relevant TLMs especially the source books. Teachers not understanding some components of the SBC and how to go about it." (Respondent 5).

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that, teachers were confronted with a number of challenges in the implementation of standards-based RME curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Some of the challenges included: inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation; lack of in-service training; inadequate head teacher support; unavailability of ICT tools; poor teacher knowledge and

application of ICT tools; unavailability of visual resources such as charts, pictures and photographs; and unavailability of curriculum materials such as teachers manual, resource packs, textbooks, etc. Again, other challenges included: too much work load with new curriculum; the SBC is too complex; unavailability of audio resources such as radio, cassette player etc.; unavailability of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc.; inadequate time allocation for RME lesson on the time table; as well as large class size.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter marks the concluding part of the study. It aims at highlighting the main findings. It also presents a summary of the research process, conclusions and offers some general recommendations as well as some specific recommendationson areas for future research.

Summary of the Study

The study focused on investigating the fidelity of implementation of Ghana's standards-based curriculum by Religious and Moral Education teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to provide answers to four (4) research questions, which were:

1. How were RME teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum?
2. How are teachers implementing the key features of the Standards-Based RME Curriculum ?
3. What support systems do head teachers provide to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools in the Kwahu West Municipality?
4. What are the challenges hindering the effecting implementation of the Standards-Based RME curriculum from the perspectives of teachers and head teachers?

In order to find answers to the research questions that were formulated to guide the study, the convergent parallel design under mixed method research was employed for the study. The study covered all the public primary school RME teachers and head teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. In all, 175 RME teachers and 6 head teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana were involved in the study. The census and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the RME teachers and head teachers from the public primary schools for the study.Questionnaire, interview guide and observation guidewere the instruments used in collecting data to address the research questions. The questionnaire was the four-point Likertscale type to ensure quick and easy response to the items. It is worthy to note that, the instruments was subjected to reliability and validity test. The data gathered was analysed using the computation of frequencies, percentages, means,standard deviations and the thematic approach.

Key Findings

Based on the analysed data and results, the following key findings were made.

1. It was realised that,the RME teachers were somewhat prepared for the implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This is because, although the RME teachers agreed that: they had training on the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC); the training they had was adequate for proper implementation of the SBC; and that the training they had adequately exposed them to the features of the SBC; yet, the RME teachers were: not clear with the general and

specific aims of RME during the training; not adequately taken through the instructional expectations of RME; and were not introduced to the core competencies during the training. Again, the RME teachers did not have enough training on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning; and the professional learning communities did not provide them adequate support for teaching and learning of RME.

2. The findings of the study revealed thatthe RME teachers were to a very large extent implementing the key features of the Standard-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum. This was based on the findings that, the RME teachers agreed that: they prepared lesson notes using the scope and sequence in the RME curriculum; integrated ICT in their lesson; indicated required core competencies in their lesson plans; ensured that their chosen core competencies were always linked to their performance indicators; ensured that RME lessons were more learner-centred than teacher-centred; and provided learners opportunity to interact with varied sources of information, teaching and learning materials and ideas in various ways.
3. The findings revealedthat, head teachers provided support systems to assist teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools. This is because, head teachers: had knowledge on the features of the standards-based RME curriculum; had positive attitudes towards the teaching and learning of RME; encouraged RME teachers to prepare adequately before going to teach; supervised the teaching and learning of RME; ensured that periods allocated for RME were used judiciously; discussed challenges to effective teaching of RME with

teachers; and made efforts to get feedback from the teaching and learning of RME. However, the head teachers did not make available teaching and learning resources needed for RME lessons; andthey do not organize in-service training programmes for RME teachers.

4. It was realized that, teachers were confronted with a number of challenges during the implementation of standards-based RME curriculum. Some of the challenges included: inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation; lack of in-service training; inadequate head teacher support; unavailability of ICT tools; poor teacher knowledge and application of ICT tools; unavailability of visual resources such as charts, pictures and photographs; and unavailability of curriculum materials such as teachers' manual, resource packs, textbooks, etc. Again, other challenges included: too much work load associated with the implementation of the new curriculum; the SBC being too complex; unavailability of audio resources such as radio, cassette player etc.; unavailability of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc.; inadequate time allocation for RME lessons on the time table; as well as large class sizes.

Conclusions

The following conclusions could be drawn from the findings of the study.

In the first place, based on the key findings of the research question one, it can be concluded that, the RME teachers in the Kwahu West Municipality in the Eastern Region although were prepared for the

implementation of the SBC through the initial training given to all teachers in the municipality, the preparation was inadequate. This was because the teachers were not effectively introduced to the core competencies to be developed in learners as well as the instructional expectations for RME as a subject. Moreover, in-service training on the Religious and Moral Education SBC which was needed to complement and reinforce the initial workshops organised prior to the implementation of the SBC was virtually absent in the municipality.

With regards to the key findings for research question two, it can be concluded that RME teachers are to a very large extent implementing the key features of the curriculum through their consistent reference to scope and sequence for their lesson preparation, indication and linkage of core competencies to performance indicators as well as the creation of learner-centred classrooms which has the potential of assisting learners to develop expected competencies stipulated in the Standards-Based Curriculum. The integration of ICT in lesson delivery and the conscious application of the principle of differentiation and scaffolding during teaching and learning were however not clearly present in classroom practices of teachers.

Based on the key findings for research question three, the investigator can conclude that head teachers provided some support systems such as encouraging RME teachers to prepare adequately before teaching, positive attitudes towards RME as a subject and ensuring that RME periods allocated were used judiciously, they nevertheless could not make available relevant teaching and learning materials as well as organise in-service training for theRME teachers in their respective schools.

In view of the key findings for research question four, it can be concluded that inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation; lack of in-service training; inadequate head teacher support; unavailability of ICT tools; poor teacher knowledge and application of ICT tools; unavailability of visual resources such as charts, pictures and photographs;unavailability of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, among others are some of the challenges hindering effective implementation of the SBC by RME teachers. Thus, the rationale for introduction of the SBC may not be achieved if these limiting factors are not critically looked at.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations have been made.

1. It is recommended that, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) organise detailed and frequent in-service trainingprogrammesfor the RME teachers, in order to better equip them on the implementation of the Standards-Based Religious and Moral Education Curriculum. The in-service training programme should ensure that, the RME teachers are: clear with the general and specific aims of RME during the training; are adequately taken through the instructional expectations of RME; and should introduceRME teachers to the core competencies during the training. Again, the RME teachers should be given enough training on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning.
2. Again, it is commendable that the RME teachers were implementing the key features of the SBC RME curriculum. Yet, it is recommended that, the head teachers of the various basic schools assist RME teachers to

implement the basic features of the SBC RME curriculum in terms of ensuring that: they prepare lesson notes using the scope and sequence in the RME curriculum; integrate ICT in their lesson; indicate required core competencies in theirlesson plans; ensure that their chosen core competencies are always linked to their performance indicators; and ensure that RME lessons are more learner-centred than teacher-centred.

3. It is suggested that the head teachers provide assistance to the RME teachers in the implementation of the RME curriculum in basic schools. In doing this, head teachers should continually demonstrate positive attitudes towards the teaching and learning of RME; and should make available teaching and learning resources needed for RME lessons. Again, the head teachers should organize in-service training programmes for RME teachers.
4. It is recommended that, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) should make available ICT tools and ensure that teachers have adequate knowledge in the application of ICT tools. They should also make available visual resources such as charts, pictures and photographs; and curriculum materials such as teachers' manual, resource packs, textbooks, etc. Again, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) should make available audio resources such as radio, cassette player etc.; audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc.; provide adequate time allocation for RME lesson on the time table; and ensure that class sizes are reasonable enough to ensure effective teaching and learning.

5. It is further recommended that head teachers and teachers take keen interest in the weekly Professional Learning Community sessions and package each session well so that teachers may leverage on the relevance and numerous advantages associated with PLC.
6. It is recommended to teachers to provide targeted support to learners who are at risk of not reaching expected level of learning outcomes by providing them simplified versions of lesson, assignment, reading and gradually increase the complexity with time.

Areas for Further Research

This study examined the extent to which Religious and Moral Education teachers are "faithfully" implementing the Standards-Based RME Curriculum in the Kwahu West Municipality of the Eastern region of Ghana in the midst of challenges. The study could be replicated in primary schools in other regions in the country to find out what persists there. Future studies may consider investigating the perceptions of teacherson the implementation of the SBC RME curriculum.

Since Professional Learning Communities (PLC) have become a permanent feature of the implementation of the SBC in Ghana, studies on how PLC meetings are organised and its impact on the implementation of the standards-based RME curriculum may be considered by future researchers in the area.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS EDUCATION

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. This questionnaire is designed to elicit information from Religious and Moral Education teachers on how they are implementing the Standards- based RME Curriculum in the municipality.

You will be contributing immensely towards the successful teaching and learning of Ghana's standards-based RME curriculum in the primary schools if you answer the following questions as frankly and truly as possible.

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to participate, yourpersonal information will remain strictly confidential. Information that could be used to identify you or connect you to individual results will not beshared with staff in your school, district ormunicipality. Any information given will be treated as confidential.Your name is not required.

Thank you for your co-operation.

.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Please tick [√] the appropriate box or column or write in the blank spaces where necessary

1. Sex: Male [ ] Female[ ]
2. Age :

   below 20 years [ ]

   21-30 years[ ]

   31 – 40 years[ ]

   41-50 years [ ]

   51- 60 years [ ]
3. Religions Affiliation;……

   [ ] Christianity

   [ ] Islam

   [ ] African Traditional Religion

   Others (state)……
4. Your highest academic or professional qualification :

   Cert A 3 year[ ]

   Diploma[ ]

   First Degree[ ]

   MastersDegree[ ]

   Others (Specify) …….
5. How long have you been teaching RME?

   less than a year[ ]

   1-5 years[ ]

   6-10 years[ ]

.

11-15 years[ ]

above 15 years[ ]

SECTION B: TEACHER PREPARATION AND TRAINING FOR SBC IMPLEMENTATION

Please respond to all items given below by putting a tick [√] in the appropriate space using the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

2 = Disagree (D)

3 = Agree (A)

4 = strongly agree (SA)

How will you rate your preparation or training as an RME teacher in respect to the implementation of the SBC?

No.	Item	SD	D	A	SA
6	I had training on the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC) in your municipality?				
7	The training I had was adequate for proper implementation of the SBC				
8	The training I had adequately exposed you to the features of the SBC				
9	RME was featured in the training programme prior to implementation of SBC				
10	I understood the teaching and learning Philosophy of RME				
11	I was clear with the General and specific aims				

	of RME during the training				
12	I was adequately taken through the instructional expectations of RME				
13	I was introduced to the core competencies in the training				
14	I understood all the core competencies for effective SBC implementation				
15	From the training, I know the pedagogical approaches to use in teaching RME				
16	The training exposed me to the principles of inclusion and equity in teaching				
17	The training effectively exposed me to assessment procedures in the SBC				
18	I had enough training on the use of learner-centredpedagogies				
19	I had understanding on the use and application of differentiation and scaffolding in teaching and learning				
20	I had enough training on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning				
21.	Since inception of the SBC I have attended in- service training programmes on the SBC implementation				
22.	Professional learning communities provide me adequate support for teaching and learning of RME				

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SECTION C: ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF SBC THROUGH TEACHING AND LEARNING

Rate your current teaching and learning pedagogies in relation to the implementation of the RME standards based curriculum in your classroom.

Tick [√] 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Agree (A), 4 = strongly agree (SA)

No.	Item	SD	D	A	SA
23	I prepare lesson notes using the scope and sequence in the RME curriculum				
24	I integrate ICT in my lesson				
25	I indicate required core competencies in my lesson plans				
26	My chosen core competencies are always linked to my performance indicators				
27	My RME lessons are more learner- centered than teacher-centered				
28	I provide learners opportunity to interact with varied sources of information, teaching and learning materials and ideas in various ways.				
29	I assume the position of a facilitator or coach who help learners in their learning				
30	I make learners collaborate whilst learning				
31	I make learners demonstrate the result of their learning through a product or performance				
32.	I guide learners to find answers to their own				

	questions rather than readily provide answers to their questions				
33.	I set different tasks for learners of different abilities				
34	I provide targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below standards or at risk not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes				
35	Identified low achievers are allowed more time to complete given task				
36	I provide learners who are at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes, simplified version of a lesson, assignment or reading and gradually increase the complexity or sophistication over time				
37	I describe or illustrate concepts or process in multiple ways to ensure understanding				
38.	I give learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they are asked to complete				
39.	I clearly describe the purpose of a learning activity, the directions learners need to follow, and the learning goals they are expected to achieve.				
40.	I expose learners to the use of ICT tools				

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SECTION D: HEADTEACHER SUPPORT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF RME

How would you rate the support given by the head teacher to your implementation of the Standards-based RME curriculum?

Tick [√] 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Agree (A), 4 = strongly agree (SA)

No	Item	SD	D	A	SA
41.	Head teachers have knowledge on the features of the standards based RME curriculum				
42.	Head teachers have positive attitudes toward the teaching and learning of RME				
43.	Head teachers encourage RME teachers to prepare adequately before going to teach				
44.	Head teachers supervise the teaching and learning of RME				
45.	Head teachers make available Teaching and Learning resources needed for RME lessons				
46.	Head teachers ensure that periods allocated for RME are used judiciously				
47.	Head teachers organize in -service training programmes for RME teachers				
48.	Head teachers discuss challenges to effective teaching of RME with teachers				
49.	Head teachers make efforts to get feedback from the teaching and learning of RME				

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SECTION E: CHALLENGES HINDERING THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARDS-BASED RME CURRICULUM

How would you rate the extent to which the following issues hinder effective teaching and learning/implementationof the RME curriculum?

Tick [√] 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Agree (A), 4 = Strongly agree (SA)

No.	I face the challenge of ……..	SD	D	A	SA
50.	inadequate teacher training prior to curriculum implementation				
51.	lack of in - service training				
52.	inadequate head teacher support				
53	unavailability of ICT tools				
54.	poor teacher knowledge and application of ICT tools				
55.	unavailability of visual resources such as charts, pictures and photograghs				
56.	unavailability of curriculum materials such as teachers manual, resource packs, textbooks,etc.				
57.	too much work load with new curriculum				
58.	The SBC being too complex				
59.	Unavailiabity of audio resources such as radio, cassette player etc.				
60.	Unavailiabity of audio-visual material such as television, projectors, etc.				
61.	Inadequate time allocation for RME lesson on the time table				
62.	Large class size				

63. Please provide any other challenge(s) not indicated above;

……

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RME TEACHERS

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender :Male[ ] Female[ ]
2. Age:
   a. 20 – 30[ ]
   b. 31 – 40[ ]
   c. 41 – 50[ ]
   d. 51 and above[ ]

3. Academic Qualification:

   Cert A' 3 year[ ]

   Diploma[ ]

   First Degree[ ]

   Master's Degree[ ]

   Others (Specify)……

4. How long have you been teaching ?

   less than a year[ ]

   1-5 years[ ]

   6-10 years[ ]

   11-15 years[ ]

   above 15 years[ ]

.

5. Class of teacher

Basic 1[ ] Basic 2[ ] Basic 3[ ]

Basic 4[ ] Basic 5[ ] Basic 6[ ]

6. Number of years of teaching RME

1 – 5 years[ ]

6 – 10 years[ ]

11 – 15 years [ ]

16 – 20 years[ ]

7. Major subject area of teacher training; ……

SECTION B

8. How were you trained for the implementation of the current standards based RME curriculum?

9. Do you think you were adequately trained for the implementation of the RME curriculum?

Yes, if yes how? ……

No, if no why? ……..

10. To what extent does the training you went through impact on your teaching of the subject? ……

11. In your training, do you think you were adequately introduced to the features of theSBC, such as to ensure effectively implementation? Explain

12. How do your lessons (Pedagogies) support the achievement of the core competencies? Provide examples for each (i.e, CP,CI,CC,CG,PL,DL)

13. How supportive are your school authorities (especially head teacher) towards the implementation of the standard -based RME curriculum? Please explain

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14. Which kinds of support do you need from school authorities but are not available to you?

15. How do you plan your lesson such that they help to achieve the core competencies in the curriculum?

16. What challenges do you face in your role as the implementer of the RME standard -based curriculum?

17. What suggestions would you give to improve your role and ensure effective implementation of the Standards-based RME curriculum?

.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

1. Gender

   Male [ ]

   Female [ ]

2. Age:

   20 – 30 [ ]

   41 – 40 [ ]

   41 – 50 [ ]

   51 and above [ ]

3. Academic Qualification

   Cert A' 3 year [ ] Diploma[ ] First Degree[ ] Master's Degree[ ]

4. How long have you been teaching?

   1 – 5 years[ ]

   6- 10 years[ ]

   11 – 15 years [ ]

   16 – 20 years[ ]

   21 and above[ ]

5. How long have you been a head of the school?.....

SECTION B

6. Do you think your teachers were well trained for the implementation of the Standards based RME curriculum?

If yes, how?.....

If no, why?.....

7. How often have you arranged in-service training for teachers on the implementation of the RME curriculum?

8. Do you interact regularly with your RME teachers on how best to implement the RME curriculum?

Yes, If Yes, how? …….

No, If No, why? …….

9. What support do you provide RME teachers who are implementing the standards based RME curriculum? Please give examples

10. Have you had any specific training on the SBC and how to support teachers in the implementation?

11. What challenges do your teachers face in their role as implementers of the standards based RME curriculum?

12. What challenges do you face in your role as head in the implementation of RME curriculum?

13. To what extent do your RME teachers implement the features of the RME curriculum?

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APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION GUIDE

SECTION A- DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Date and Day ……..

2. Class…….

4. Number on Roll …… Boys…… Girls……..

5. Time of observation……Start……End……..

6. Teacher's Gender…… Male [ ] …… Female [ ]……

7. Highest academic/professional qualification:……

8. Number of years of teaching Religious and Moral Education……

SECTION B – LESSON OUTLINE

3. Strand……

4. Sub-strand: ……

5. Performance Indicator(s) ……

……

……

6. Competencies to be achieved: ……

……

……

……

7. LTRs ……

……

……

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SECTION C – NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT A.

Classroom Context: Rate the adequacy of the physical environment.

7. Classroom space:

Very Crowded Space=1, Crowded Space=2, Adequate=3, Very Adequate Space = 4

Comments…….....

.....……

……

8. **B. Classroom resources:**

Very sparsely equipped=1, sparsely equipped = 2, Rich in Resources = 3, Very Rich in resources = 4

Comments…….....……

……..……

……

9. **C. Room arrangement:**

Strongly Inhibited Interaction =1, Inhibited Interaction= 2, Facilitated Interaction = 3,Strongly facilitated interaction = 4

Comments…….....……

……..……

10.**D. Major way(s) in which pupils' activities were structured.**

As a whole group [ ] ,As small groups [ ], As pairs [ ], As individuals [ ]

Comments (*estimate time spent on each*)

…….....……

…….....……

……

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11. E**. Major way(s) in which pupils engaged in class activities.**

[ ] Entire class was engaged in the same activities at the same time

[ ] Groups of pupils were engaged in different activities at the same time.

[ ] Some individuals with special needs engaged in different activities

Comments…….....……

…….....……

……..

SECTION D: RATINGS OF KEY STANDARDS-BASED RME CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS

NO.	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4
12.	Teacher communicates the performance indicators to learners at the start of lesson				
13.	Teacher relates pupils' relevant previous knowledge to current sub strand being taught				
14.	Teacher exhibits high command of subject matter; gives precise information; displays confidence; relates content to learners experiences				
15.	Teacher integrates ICT in his/her lesson				
16.	Teacher makes learners to collaborate whilst learning				
17.	Teacher engages all learners in the lesson; facilitates problem solving among pupils and encourages cooperative peer- tutoring and reflective learning				

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18.	Teacher asks well-balanced mixture of factual, probing high order and divergent questions; distributes questions fairly				
19.	Teacher encourages Pupils to ask questions and provides responses using peers at times				
20.	Teacher guides learners to find answers to their own questions rather than readily providing answers for them				
21.	Teacher provides opportunity for learners to interact with varied sources of information,teaching and learning materials and ideas in various ways				
22.	Teacher uses appropriate creative approaches to enhance pupils' understanding (role plays, sketches, oral presentations, drawings, songs, storytelling, Games, etc.)				
23.	Teacher integrates instruction of RME with real-world or life skills.				
24.	Approaches and TLRs have the potential of helping to achieve core competencies stated				
25.	Teacher uses appropriate TLRs				
26.	Teacher sets different tasks for learners of different abilities				
27.	Teacher provides targeted support to learners who are seen as performing below standards				

	or at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes				
28.	Identified low achievers are allowed more time to complete a given task				
29.	Teacher provides Learners who are at risk of not reaching the expected level of learning outcomes, simplified version of lesson/assignment/reading and gradually increase the complexity with time				
30.	Teacher illustrates concepts/process in multiple ways to ensure understanding				
31.	Teacher gives learners an exemplar or model of an assignment, they are asked to complete				
32.	Teacher exposes learners to the use of ICT tools				
33.	Teacher's assessment of pupils' understanding occur throughout the learning process and not only at the end				
34.	Teacher makes learners to demonstrate the results of their learning through a product or performance				
35.	Teacher shows enthusiasm in teaching, sustains learners' attention and interest throughout lesson.				
36.	Teacher is able to identify pupils who have				

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	difficulty in understanding main ideas of the lesson				
37.	Teacher uses a variety of assessment techniques to determine understanding ;assessments are linked to performance indicators and stated competencies				
38.	Teacher encourages learners' self-assessment of learning and application of learning.				
39.	There is evidence of a linkage of evaluation/reflective activities with competencies stated in lesson				
40.	Teacher makes use of time allocation				
41.	Teacher draws attention to end of lesson; uses question and answers, summary, clarifies main points along content standards and performance indicators, gives and marks exercise				