

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

This chapter of the research report discusses and explains the background to the integrated curriculum approach, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives, research questions, and significance of the study. It also defines some key terms used in the study.

### **1.1 Background to the study**

Historically, the school curriculum in the English-speaking world was divided into separate subjects, well ordered in sequence and packaged for teaching to young people at various age levels. It was only towards the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that other patterns of organised curriculum were suggested. Curriculum integration was introduced to rival the fragmented traditional curriculum. Curriculum integration is the grouping together of subjects that are similar in content and the breaking down of subject barriers to form broad subject areas such as general science, social studies, etc (Bishop, 1985).

The development of Religious Education (RE) in Zambia has undergone three stages called ‘denominational’( from missionary settlement up to the sixties), ‘ecumenical’(in the seventies) and ‘educational’(from the eighties when new multi-faith syllabuses were introduced as part of wider Zambian educational reforms started in 1977) ( Henze,1994; Carmody, 2004). During these stages RE has been taught as a stand alone subject, although at some point the subject was a component of Social Studies (SS) and it had two multiple choice questions tested in the Social Studies Grade 7 Composite Examinations

(MacGivern, 2005). Like many other countries, Zambia did not remain behind in educational reforms. In 1996, Zambia began implementing the curriculum reforms recommended in the national education policy document, *Educating Our Future*.

The document proposes a new curriculum in which the subjects to be taught and learned in primary schools are to be integrated and reduced from eleven distinct subjects to five learning areas. It is in line with this reform that RE and SS were integrated into Social and Development Studies (SDS). According to the Ministry of Education (MOE) (1996: 32):

Although the curriculum must deal with wide areas of human experience, knowledge and abilities, it should not fragment at lower and middle basic levels into rigid subject defined compartments. The child at this stage has not acquired the analytical capability of separating the world of experience, which is unified and integrated into clearly defined categories. The curriculum therefore, should respond to the child's unified outlook on life by itself being unified and integrated.

In response to this recommendation, the Directorate of Curriculum and Standards through the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), embarked on the revision of Lower and Middle Basic School syllabuses. The revision involved the integration of eleven distinct subjects into five learning areas. Apart from Community Studies, the others are as follows: Languages and Literacy, Numeracy or Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social and Development Studies, and Creative and Technological Studies. As stated above, RE was merged with SS, which has some elements of Geography, History and Civics into a new learning area called SDS (Simuchimba, 2005: 25).

This study was undertaken because since the new integrated curriculum approach was introduced in the Zambian schools in 2004, it is not known whether or not the teaching of RE as part of SDS is effective. The study was conducted in Solwezi District at four

selected basic schools, and aimed at finding out how effective the teaching of RE as part of SDS (in the integrated middle basic school curriculum) was.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Since the beginning of formal education in Zambia, RE has been taught as a distinctive subject. Following the 2003-2004 primary school or middle basic education curriculum reforms, the subject is now being taught as part of SDS. MOE (1996) argues that children at this stage are likely to learn or acquire knowledge better through an integrated approach to education (including RE) than a fragmented one. However, it is not known whether or not the teaching of RE as part of SDS in Zambia basic schools is effective. This is what this study tries to establish.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to bring to light information on whether the teaching of the component of RE in SDS is effective or not, and to establish the attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS as well as their competence to handle an integrated curriculum.

### **1.4 Aim**

The study aimed at finding out the effectiveness of the teaching of RE part of SDS in the integrated primary school curriculum in Zambia.

## **1.5 Specific objectives**

The study had the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS.
2. To examine the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS.
3. To establish the competence of the teachers teaching RE/SDS in handling an integrated curriculum.

## **1.6 Research questions**

1. How effective is the teaching of RE as part of SDS?
2. What kind of attitudes do teachers have towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS?
3. How competent are the teachers teaching RE as part of SDS in handling an integrated curriculum?

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

The study is significant because it has tried to bring out information on the effectiveness of teaching and learning RE as part of SDS. It has also given suggestions on how the teaching of RE as part of SDS in the primary school curriculum might be improved. This information might contribute to the body of knowledge to be used by CDC, teacher educators, Education Standards Officers and teachers to enhance teaching and learning in this subject area in Zambia. It may enhance deeper insights and better understanding of the problems faced by teachers and pupils.

## **1.8 Limitation of the study**

The sample of teachers, administrators and pupils was restricted to selected basic schools in Solwezi District. The negative attitude among the teachers towards researchers made data collection difficult. Some teachers refused to be observed and interviewed by the researcher, even after permission was sought from the head teacher of the school. However, they were replaced by other teachers who were willing to be observed and interviewed. The head teachers too were not ready to be interviewed and they instead asked the senior teachers to stand in for them. Though the refusal of head teachers to be interviewed could have affected the validity of the study's findings, the senior teachers delegated with the responsibility to be interviewed had served for sometime and were around when the integrated curriculum approach was introduced. They were also aware of the success or failure of the integrated curriculum approach and therefore, they gave the necessary data needed for this research. In addition, data was also collected from the DRCC to cover the gaps of either the senior teachers or class teachers.

## **1.9 Definition of terms**

In this study, the terms will be defined first by giving the everyday (dictionary) meaning before giving what they mean in this study.

**Attitude:** feeling or opinion about something or someone, or a way of behaving that follows from this (Hornby, 2000). In this study, the word refers to the views and opinions of head teachers, teachers and pupils on the teaching and learning of RE as part of SDS.

**Competence:** the ability to do something to a level that is acceptable. In this study the term refers to the capability of teachers to teach RE as part of an integrated SDS syllabus.

**Effectiveness:** something is described as effective if it produces the results it was intended to. In this study effectiveness refers to the achievement of the intended goals of the integrated curriculum and value that the new integrated curriculum approach through SDS has brought to the teaching of RE in middle basic or primary schools.

**Integration:** ordinarily means to mix with and join society or a group of people, often changing to suit their way of life, habits and customs to be suitable for and combine with each other or with what already exists. With regard to the curriculum which we are concerned with here, the term refers to the teaching and learning whereby similar content, topics and themes from different subjects (RE and SS) are planned as one and taught together in one (SDS) syllabus.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of literature**

This chapter reviews existing and related literature on the integration of RE in Social and Development Studies. It discusses integration projects carried out in other countries as reported by different researchers and authors and then focuses on the Zambian situation. As a way of making the chapter clear, the literature will be categorised and discussed under the headings, theory and definition of curriculum integration, foreign studies, African studies, and Zambian studies.

#### **2.1 Theory and definition of curriculum integration**

Golby, Greenwald and West (1975) contend that integration is an ‘in’ word. There is talk of the ‘seamless cloak of knowledge’, the ‘unity of learning’, or ‘a single view of the world and of life’, all of which, so we are told, can be reflected adequately only in an integrated curriculum. Integration is also a ‘pro’-word. It is contrasted with the *fragmentation* of the curriculum which typifies the traditional school, with subject barriers, the compartmentalisation or pigeon-holing of knowledge, with specialisation and irrelevance to life as a whole. Rather, it is connected with the natural enquiry of children which does not respect subject divisions.

To be both an ‘in’ word and a ‘pro’ word has its dangers. Educational theory is predominant with such words: ‘growth’, ‘needs of the child’, ‘creativity’, and so on. They play a significant part in much educational argument, are often accepted uncritically, and have an emotive meaning that dares anyone to challenge the educational aims which they

embody. ‘Integration’ is quickly becoming such a word. Who would object to knowledge or personality or life being ‘integrated’? Unity, integration, wholeness seem to have a fascination and value of their own. ‘Integration’ as such is an empty word. There must be integration of something and one cannot really understand or appreciate what is meant by curriculum integration until one has clarified what it is that is being integrated.

Curriculum integration is frequently contrasted with the ‘compartmentalisation’ of knowledge, which is a characteristic of the ‘traditional’ syllabus. A subject-based curriculum is said to limit enquiry, set up barriers, and confine study to a limited range of information. Often these barriers are seen to be arbitrary or simply conventional, and the integration of subjects is seen as a necessary, if not ‘truer’ or more comprehensive, picture of reality. It is argued that the division of knowledge into distinct subject divisions is artificial and does not reflect correctly the essential unity of reality and of our ordinary way of understanding and judging; it is foreign to the natural and spontaneous method of enquiry.

Curriculum integration is a much more complex notion than is often realised, not only in its conception but also in its effect upon teaching roles, use of time, organisation of the school and the classroom, and so on.

Lake (1994) defines an integrated curriculum as education that is organised in such a way that it cuts across subject matter lines, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study. It views learning and teaching in a holistic way and reflects the real world, which is interactive.

Steinberg (1997) contends that the term ‘integrated curriculum’ has many different, sometimes conflicting meaning to different educators. In the context of the multiple pathways approach, we use integrated curriculum to refer to an instructional method and materials for multidisciplinary teams of teachers to organise their instruction so that students are encouraged to make meaningful connections across subject areas.

Pollard (2002) distinguishes between a ‘collection’ type of curriculum in which subject knowledge is distinct, and an ‘integrated’ type in which subjects may be merged. The integrated type is where the various contents stand in an open relation to each other. It has a reduced insulation between the content and is said to weaken the boundaries between the contents so that unlike in the collection type of curriculum, teaching and learning can be done across such boundaries.

## **2.2 History of the Integrated Curriculum**

Before I zero in on Zambia, I want to trace the theory behind and the history of integrated curricula.

The idea of an integrated curriculum which is being implemented in Zambia is not new. Vars (1991) traced the evolving concept of the core curriculum back to Herbert Spencer’s writings in the 1800s.

It is useful to know that an interdisciplinary curriculum is not just a fad. For more than a century, there have been a number of forays into the realm of integrated curricular. The following brief historical account is based on the work of Wraga (1996, 1997) found in

the *Annual Review of Research for School Leaders*. By the late 1800s, educators were wrestling with many of the same concerns we now face. Three pressing issues gave rise to discussions on the pros and cons of integrated curricular and instruction:

1. What should be taught, given the vast increase in available knowledge?
2. What should be taught, given the greater number of students who now need to be educated?
3. How can schools be responsible for developing moral character unless the curriculum is connected to real life?

These discussions were at the theory level. however, resistance to integrated approaches was attributed to similar reasons as are touted today. They included:

- Varying definitions for varying degrees of integration, ranging from simple connections between subjects to integrating students' experience with the larger world.
- The importance of making the school experience applicable to life.
- The domination of the disciplines as an obstacle to integration.

In 1900, Dewey (1900: 91) proposed, ‘Relate the school to life, and all studies are of necessity correlated.’ Dewey experimented with an experiential approach, proposing experiences of growth for students. He used problem solving through the scientific method as the core of his experiment. His philosophy has been largely associated with the progressive education movement, although he did not agree with all the movement’s tenets and argued for more rigours through the scientific method.

By the late 1930s and early 40s, the term 'core curriculum' had become part of the literature in various state and national curriculum reform efforts, most significantly the progressive education movement. By the 1930s, three progressive approaches emerged: the project method, the experience curriculum, and the activity movement. These approaches, however, tended to be extremely child-centered and emphasized activity for activity's sake. Curriculum organisations emerged to bring more rigours to progressive approaches. Statewide curriculum development projects were undertaken in Virginia, Arkansas, Kentucky, Texas, Georgia, and Tennessee. It was determined that 80 per cent of schools in the United States had some form of interdisciplinary curriculum (Wraga, 1996).

At the same time, general education advocates promoted "common learning." Such experiences included problem solving, critical thinking, and analytical research. "Core curriculum" emerged from general education. In 1942, the concept of 'core and integrated curriculum' was tested in the famous Eight-Year Study of the Progressive Education Association. By the late 1980s, more than 80 normative or comparative studies had been conducted on the effectiveness of integration (National Association for Core Curriculum, 1984). In core curriculum, learning activities and knowledge were organised around personal and social issues. It involved block timing and team teaching. Core curriculum remained popular during the 1940s and 50s. In 1955, the Association for Supervision Curriculum Development issued a report identifying the following competencies for a core teacher using an interdisciplinary approach: understanding the adolescent, democratic leadership skills, student counseling skills, and the ability to apply subject knowledge to exploring personal and social issues.

Integration of subjects has been a fact of educational life; more accurately it is an unavoidable feature of educators' work. Any intentional uniting or meshing of discrete elements or features of a subject constitutes some form of integration. The very act of learning typically involves integration; new beliefs are filtered through and connected to the individual's prior beliefs. Despite its ubiquity, educational debate about the effectiveness of subject integration is on going (Dressel, 1958).

Integrated curriculum approaches were largely forgotten during the late 1950s. At this time, the educational world was plunged into a rigid, discipline-based approach with a special emphasis on mathematics and sciences. Two innovations, however, left the door open for discussions on integrated approaches: team teaching and the emergence of middle schools.

By the late 1980s there were new calls for reform in papers such as *Caught in the Middle* (California State Department of Education, 1987) and *Turning Points* (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989). These papers focused on making school relevant for students, turning the attention again to the integrated curriculum.

The literature on the history of curriculum integration is very important to my study because it will enrich or shade more light on the research topic. The historical information provokes such questions as, why was the integrated approach forgotten at some point? Why did the educationalists revert to the integrated approach? These questions indicate that integration is not a straight forward issue and needs critical examination. In line with

this, the current research study will concentrate on the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, which is an integrated learning area in the primary school curriculum.

## **2. 3 Foreign related literature**

Thailand is one of the countries in the world that has embraced curriculum integration. Thailand provides six years of universal primary education for its children. But instead of this education consisting of a host of subjects, the new curriculum is divided into only four integrated subject areas: basic skills, life experience, work experience, and character education. Sri Lanka has also re-designed its primary school curriculum, integrating it into ten or eleven themes (Bishop, 1985). Unfortunately, the results of these reforms have not been given. However, it is clear from these examples that curriculum reforms are not only happening in Zambia but in other countries also. What is important is to find out if these curriculum reforms are viable, which is what this study does.

Integrated studies involve a change in the normal role of the teacher. In the Humanities Curriculum Project (U.K), the role of the teacher was radically transformed from that of information-giver to debate-leader. Integrated studies are generally a new experience for teachers in the UK. From being a specialist in his or her subject, the teacher now needs a deep knowledge of a range of subjects and of their significant concepts. But such teachers are in short supply. At Countesthorpe College in England, an interdisciplinary approach was used. However, very little integration took place between science and other subjects. Between the sciences themselves there were problems, with teachers not having enough knowledge in the other fields to integrate (Bishop, 1985). The report goes on to touch upon another factor which adds to the difficulty of integration, namely, subject specialists

who ‘view themselves and their disciplines and knowledge with the jealous eye of a ‘threatened priesthood’ and ‘defend the boundaries of their specialist subjects against the marauding peddlers of integration’. In Zambia subject specialisation does not exist at primary or middle basic education. Therefore, the issue of safeguarding subject disciplines and knowledge may not come up so prominently. However, resistance to integration may occur in cases where some teachers feel they can only handle SS or RE as single subjects. It is partly with this in mind that this study concentrates on the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS.

In addition, traditional loyalties die hard; it is subjects that tend to give teachers their professional identity. They see themselves as historians, geographers, linguists, mathematicians and scientists. An integrated curriculum takes away from them their specialist role (or so it appears to them) and so teachers may resent swapping a subject expertise for the right to participate in a generalised approach to human problems and issues (Bishop, 1985). For effective teaching and learning to take place there would be need for teachers to change their mind set to suit the new integrated approach to the curriculum. Since in Zambia primary school teachers are trained as generalists and not subject specialists, this study will find out if the problems alluded to by Bishop are applicable here as well.

While Bishop looked at the teachers’ resentment as a result of losing their subject expert status, Aschbacher (1991) compared the Humanitas Programme, an interdisciplinary thematic and team-based approach to high school humanities education in Los Angeles to 16 other schools which were more traditional in their approach. Performance-based

assessments; surveys of teachers, students, and administrators; classroom observations; teacher and student interviews; analysis of assignments and examinations; analysis of portfolios; records of student attendance; records of discipline incidents; and records of college-oriented behavior were all considered in this research, making it one of the most thorough explorations of curriculum integration. The findings showed that the Humanitas Programme had a statistically significant effect on writing and content knowledge, even after students had been enrolled for only one year. The largest gains were shown in conceptual understanding. The control groups of students made no gains in conceptual understanding during the same time frame. Aschbacher's findings (from the Humanitas Programme research) were in favour of an integrated curriculum. However, this research study on the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of an integrated SDS syllabus might not bring out similar results because the Humanitas study was conducted in high schools while this research will be conducted in primary schools.

For curriculum integration to be successful in schools, Jacobs (1991) developed a four-phase plan to be followed when planning. Phase I (six months to one year) is for research. Internal research is conducted to pilot the units of the study taught on a monthly basis, to find out when pupils are studying certain subject matter, to reduce repetition of material from year to year, and to identify units of study that lend themselves to an integration approach. Staff members conduct external research by attending conferences, making onsite visits, or arranging in-service activities. Phase II (two to four months) is development of a proposal. Potential areas for integrated units are assessed, and an existing unit of study is upgraded to include integration of various subjects. On completion of the proposal and its review at higher levels, classroom implementation of a

pilot programme may follow. Phase III (two to six weeks) is implementation of the pilot programme. This phase includes assessment by the teaching staff involved in the pilot. The programme is monitored and evaluated, and feedback is given. Phase IV (third year of plan) is adaptation of the programme based on the feedback and evaluation from the pilot phase.

Although my study did not follow Jacobs' four-phase planning, proper planning was necessary for the success of curriculum integration in Zambia.

Without over emphasising the importance of evaluation as stated by Jacob in one of the phases, Wicklein and Schell (1995) conducted case studies of multidisciplinary demonstration projects to evaluate them for effectiveness. Four high school demonstration sites were selected in four different states within the Middle Western section of the United States of America. These were: Missouri, Nebraska, Colorado and Oklahoma County School Districts. Each school established a multidisciplinary team comprising teachers from three respective academic disciplines: technology education, science, and mathematics as well as a school administrator and a school counsellor.

In addition to the high school multidisciplinary team, there was a resource team to help support the local school integration activities. The resource team comprised teacher educators from the three academic areas of technology education, science and mathematics along with the state supervisor for technology education. Each demonstration site team developed a multidisciplinary curriculum that integrated mathematics, science and technology education and was workable and effective within

their unique educational environment. Although a limited number of curriculum integrated criteria were encouraged (e.g. context based learning, learning transfer, working/learning teams, higher-order thinking skills), no effort was directed to specify curriculum models to be used. After a careful examination of each of the pilot demonstration schools, three primary factors were identified that significantly affected the success or failure of the multidisciplinary curriculum:

- Teachers and administrators commitment to the integration approach,
- Innovation and effort in curriculum re-design,
- Administrators and teachers coordination of integration plan.

Each of these factors was important in creating the type of integrated curriculum that would help students learn, apply, and transfer learning beyond the classroom environment.

The findings of Wichlein and Schell, especially on the three factors that can lead to success or failure of multidisciplinary curriculum implementation, are important. However, since the subjects involved were technology studies, science, and mathematics, the three factors may not apply in the same way to this research study which involves non-science and technology subjects, RE and SS. Also the demands of the high school curriculum may not be the same as those of a primary school curriculum.

In 1995-96 a team of researchers from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto conducted a study that examined the effects of curriculum integration on student learning. The study compared the Trenton Programme to a

programme in another secondary school (given the pseudonym Woodville) that taught the three subjects separately. The researchers observed students, administered a variety of surveys, and interviewed students about their work. The researchers also talked to teachers in the two schools about their curriculum. At the end of the research it was discovered that curriculum integration contributed to higher achievement. Trenton students produced better diagrams of what they planned to build than students at Woodville. Trenton students also had a better understanding of the concepts that were shared by the three disciplines (such as the Board's problem solving framework). In addition, Trenton students were more likely to apply concepts that were mainly taught in mathematics. Female students performed better on science concepts in Trenton than they did when each subject discipline was taught separately. In other words, the benefits of curriculum integration (better achievement of common outcomes) were realised at no visible cost (i.e. there was no loss of achievement in outcomes unique to each discipline and in some instances there were gains).

Despite the good results from the study on curriculum integration above, three things have to be done before assuming that your school will get the same results. First, the programme was developed over a four year period; teachers worked the lungs out by starting small. Second, the programme had strong support from administrators who made timetable adjustments to keep students and teachers together. Third, the programme was owned by the three departments, not a few individuals, with virtually all teachers playing a role at one time or another (Ross and Gray, 1996).

The University of Toronto research project is similar to what is being investigated in this research. However, the slight difference between the two research studies is that this study is looking at the effectiveness of teaching one subject, RE, as part of SDS in primary schools. Also the Toronto Project examined the effects of curriculum integration on student learning in secondary schools while this study will cover primary schools in Solwezi Urban area.

Tomsky (2007), conducted a research study entitled, *Administrators' Perceptions of Curriculum Integration in Jewish Community Day Schools*. His in-depth study investigated administrators' perception of the extent of curriculum implementation within Jewish community day schools in a North-Eastern state of Israel. This study was the largest study of its kind to date, investigating curriculum integration practices of nine to ten Jewish community schools in Israel. The study involved intensive interviews with directors of general and Judaic studies and principals. The major conclusions in this study were:

- i) While principals' perceptions of the degree of curriculum integration varied across and within their schools, there were also variations among administrators' perceptions within schools that had directors of Judaic and /or general studies.
- ii) The most complete models of curriculum integration as reported by Jacobs (1989), the 'integrated day model' and the 'complete programme design model', were beyond the capacity of the schools' abilities to implement.
- iii) Although the extent of curriculum integration varied among schools, almost all administrators reported distinct advantages for such implementation within their schools. These advantages included: greater appreciation of one's religion, increase

of relevance in subject matter, breaking down barriers between the curriculum, being more beneficial and meaningful to the students, and improved communication and teamwork among the staff.

- iv) Although administrators in this study cited numerous advantages of curriculum integration, a subset cited several potential disadvantages. These included: integrating when seemingly inappropriate, integration at the expense of covering the curriculum, and the potential trivialisation of the Judaic studies curriculum.

Twelve out of fourteen administrators cited numerous obstacles in implementing curriculum integration within schools. These included: a lack of planning time or a limitation of time for teachers to meet collaboratively, an increased cost to properly implement the curriculum, and a lack of qualified staff that can cross the curricula.

Though useful, Tomsky's research (above) is slightly different from this research. He studied administrators' perspectives on the integrated curriculum while this study will look at the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, which includes teachers' views on the integrated subject area.

## **2.4 African studies on curriculum integration**

Avotri (1993) reports that Ghana shifted from the British subject-centred curriculum to an integrated curriculum. The integrated curriculum was experimented in 1976 and implemented nationwide in 1987. The new integrated curriculum emphasised on an inquiry approach to teaching and learning. It also emphasised on the attainment of affective objectives, the development of vocational and creative skills, as well as the

attainment of cognitive objectives. Subjects such as social studies, cultural studies, life skills and vocational subjects were introduced.

The aim of the study was to find out how effective the new social studies curriculum and inquiry teaching and learning had been in developing positive attitudes to society and the environment in students educated in the integrated curriculum, as compared to those in the old curriculum during the period of overlap. The sample studied comprised 1,170 secondary school pupils, of whom 695 were studying the old curriculum and 475 the new curriculum. It was anticipated that the new integrated curriculum, particularly in social studies, would help students to develop more positive attitudes to society and the environment. The results, however, showed that this was not so as students in the old curriculum had a higher mean score than those in the new curriculum. However, this does not mean that the new integrated curriculum had completely failed. It was possible that some of the students in the new curriculum might not have gone through the six year primary programme that was supposed to prepare them for the new programme at the junior secondary level and had gone through the old curriculum instead. The decision to introduce the new system in Ghana was not based on any research findings. The new programme was introduced nationwide when the committee set up to evaluate the success of the experimental schools was still in its planning stage. The committee's report was submitted three years later.

The new programme, therefore, is faced with serious teething and implementation problems related to educational materials and teaching. There was an unavailability of books and other educational resource materials and equipment. The practical aspect of the

social studies curriculum, for example, was being neglected in most schools because of a lack of transportation and funding for practical or fieldwork. Anecdotal evidence also suggested that teachers were not properly trained for the new curriculum. Teachers who were trained in the old British system were made to teach concepts which they understood poorly. Some teachers revealed that they were confused about the replacement of the separate social science subjects with social studies, and advocated a change back to the old system.

Avotri's research is related to but also different from this research because the main aim of the study was change of attitude among students and was conducted on secondary school pupils. The current study aims to find out how effectively RE is taught in the new integrated curriculum in primary school and thus involves primary school pupils.

Another country that embraced the integrated curriculum is Botswana. MOE (2000) states that the Botswana Ministry of Education integrated its subjects at lower and upper primary school in order to facilitate the smooth teaching and learning of subjects. During the curriculum reforms, some subjects were integrated while others were not. The subjects that were not integrated include English, Setswana and Mathematics, though the reason for not integrating them is not given in the source of information. However, Music, Physical Education, Design, Art and Craft were combined into Creative and Performing Arts. Agriculture, Home Economics and Science were combined into Environmental Sciences. Moral Education, Religious Education and Social Studies are taught as Cultural Studies. However, it is not indicated whether this kind of integration is effective or not.

The integration being implemented in Zambia is slightly different from the one done in Botswana because Zambia has integrated all the subjects at primary level, while Botswana has still maintained Mathematics, English and Setswana as stand alone subjects.

## **2.5 Zambian studies on curriculum integration**

Henze (2004), Carmody (2004) and Cheyeka (2005) argue that SDS will lead to the demotion, marginalisation and eventual extinction of RE in schools. Cheyeka (2006) further contends that RE in Zambia faces extinction as a distinct subject at middle basic education level (i.e. grades 1-7) because of its integration in SDS (with geography, history and civics). This integration has countless implications for RE. It is likely that the subject (SDS) will be taught as geography and history with little time accorded to RE proper. Pupils will hardly learn from religion and about religious matters any more. The three scholars concern about the possible dilution of RE as a result of integration is directly related to this research because the study is intended to find out exactly what is happening to the teaching of RE as part of SDS in the schools.

In his 2005 study, Cheyeka conducted an interview of some basic school teachers and Education Standards Officers on the integration of RE in SDS. His findings were that there was a huge problem with the teaching of RE in the lower, middle and upper basic school levels. The first problem was that there was a lot of skipping of RE topics by most teachers. This implies that the teachers have a negative attitude towards RE related topics. The second problem is that it was difficult to stimulate the affective domain of the child if

RE was taught as part and parcel of SDS. Cheyeka (*Ibid*) further states that the Ministry of Education liberalised the writing and publishing of school textbooks and gave CDC the mandate and right to approve the books before they are sold to schools. The bone of contention is, who writes the RE textbooks to be specific? In most cases if not all, the writers are not RE specialists, as most writers have not presented the topic of ‘God in our lives’ satisfactorily. RE specialist writers are well grounded in Kohlberg, Erickson, Piaget, Fowler, and other theorists and as such they are able to relate topics to stages of religious development in our Zambian children and work out appropriate teaching methods and children’s exercises.

Cheyeka’s interviews with the teachers and Education Standard Officers on the integration of RE in SDS, is closely related to this study as this research partly involves looking at the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS. The writing and publication of school textbooks is also related to the study because teaching materials like RE textbooks have a great influence on the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS. Thus effectiveness is dependant on well written and produced teaching and learning materials.

Contrary to the foregoing, Simuchimba (2005) explains that the rationale behind the introduction of the integrated curriculum, including SDS is that current approaches to curriculum planning and syllabus design for lower levels of education prefer integration to compartmentalisation of subjects. Rather than experiencing life in a fragmented and compartmentalised manner, children at lower and middle levels of education, view life holistically and in an integrated way as opposed to viewing life in neatly

compartmentalised segments. Primary or lower and middle basic education pupils are likely to learn or acquire knowledge better through an integrated approach to education, which they are naturally closer to than a fragmented one. In addition, he points out that by introducing a integrated curriculum, CDC was simply implementing what Zambians already agreed in the National Education Policy document, *Educating our Future*.

According to Simuchimba (*Ibid*), the other reason for opting for the integrated curriculum is that it allows the education system to be less content-based and more skills-based in approach and emphasis. It will help learners acquire life skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making and self-reliance. Integration will help greatly to reduce on rote memorisation and reproducing of facts and enhance the acquisition of various specific skills such as numeracy, literacy, innovation, self-expression, design and of course, religious and moral literacy. Furthermore, it will help pupils to see links between different learning areas such as to understand that what they learn has meaning outside the school; relate new learning to previous learning; and transfer skills from one area of learning to another.

Simuchimba (*Ibid*) further explains that the source of spiritual and moral education is not only on RE but other areas of human experience also such as the past events (history), nature and environment (geography) and politics and economics (civics). Hence there is need to bring these subjects together at the lower and middle levels. He also argues that there is enough specific RE topics, general outcomes or aims and specific outcomes or objectives to ensure that important religious and moral issues at this ( grade1-7) levels of education are taught and learned. Topics were selected from the old RE syllabus for

inclusion in the integrated SDS syllabus firstly, because of their potential to promote religious/spiritual and moral understanding, and secondly, because of their correlation with the selected SS topics or themes for each particular grade. He observes that SS has more topics in SDS than RE because the former is a combination of geography, history and civics.

Simuchimba's study is not directly in line with this study. However, it is still important to this research because it gives reasons why the Ministry of Education through CDC decided to introduce the new integrated approach to education in the basic schools.

Simuchimba (2006) argues that the integration of RE and SS into SDS has been professionally done by CDC such that given the syllabus booklet and pupils' and teachers' books, no trained lower and middle basic school teacher will fail to teach as the aims, specific outcomes or objectives for the RE are clearly stated. In addition, teachers who were trained in Zambia Primary Course (ZPC) and Zambia Basic Education Course (ZBEC) who are not familiar with the integration approach are being trained through short, in-service programmes within schools, zones, districts and provinces. Simuchimba further contends that 'there is no serious problem with school RE in Zambia and that the introduction of SDS at Lower and Middle Basic Education level is just part of normal and positive curricular reforms by the Ministry of Education.' There is no problem with this integration because there are many overlaps and similarities in our school subject syllabus, which can be easily integrated.

This research study is related to what Simuchimba has argued here because it will try to find out on the training of teachers who are teaching the new integrated curriculum. Teacher training has a great bearing on the effectiveness of teaching.

Simuchimba (*Ibid*) further argued that teacher's negative attitude and reluctance to accept change and make the necessary adjustments in their work as individuals and schools is likely to negatively affect the smooth implementation of these curriculum reforms. The liberalised supply and distribution of textbooks might also prove to be a stumbling block in the implementation of new curriculum if it fails to work as efficiently as expected and if the state fails to adequately fund the schools or District Education Boards. For RE/SDS, it seems the most serious problem is the manner in which the pupils and teachers' textbooks are being written. As Cheyeka (2005) argues, unless at least one professionally trained religious educator is included by all the publishers dealing with SDS, RE topics in the syllabus will not be properly interpreted explained, and illustrated in the pupils and teachers' books.

McGivern (2005) argues that the compressing of RE components with many objectives into three (3) outcomes from grade 1-7 has an implication of not covering topics in detail. He argued that the ratio of one (1) topic of RE to four (4) topics of SS was not evenly done. This meant that many topics for RE were removed. In addition SDS was allocated three (3) periods per week which was in the past allocated to each subject. However, he concluded that RE in schools was not dead but alive and thriving.

McGivern's concerns are slightly different to those of this research because he was looking at implications that are likely to occur as a result of the new integrated curriculum while this research is looking at effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS.

In his 2007 study, Yambayamba alludes to the fact that before CDC carried out the education reforms in Zambia, a delegation was sent to countries like Malawi and Botswana on a baseline survey. Their report indicated that there were education reforms taking place in the visited countries. Zambia opted to take on Botswana's reforms model because it was similar to what Zambia proposed to implement.

Yambayamba (*Ibid*) conducted his research in Nakonde and Isoka districts on the 'Real and Perceived' Consequences of Integrating RE with SS at lower and middle basic education levels. His findings were that 77% of the respondents indicated that integration would be helpful, 16% of them indicated that it would not be helpful, and 7% were neutral. Those who thought that integration would be helpful argued that it would reduce the workload for the teacher. Instead of the teacher planning and preparing similar topics separately, they would be integrated into one lesson. The approach would also help pupils to relate RE issues into SS and instead of using two textbooks, they would use one textbook. In addition, RE and SS had some related topics which made integration easy. The respondent against integration argued that it would result into neglecting components like RE. It would also be difficult to teach the morals effectively to the pupils. There would be no teaching in details and only basics of the subjects would be taught. Important concepts would not be assimilated by learners. The reduction of periods from three (3) for each to three (3) for SDS per week would lead to ineffective covering of RE content. It

would be costly to buy new books for the integrated course, especially since the government had reduced on funding to schools. About 66% of the teachers interviewed were not trained and 44% were trained. However, the kind of training received was not adequate.

Yambayamba's research study is not exactly in line with this research because he researched on the 'Real and Perceived' consequences of integrating RE with SS at the Lower and Middle Basic Education levels, while this research is looking at the effectiveness of the actual teaching of RE as part of SDS in the integrated primary school curriculum.

In this chapter, I have reviewed the existing and related literature on the integration of RE in Social and Development Studies. The five categories of literature discussed were the theory and definition of curriculum integration, history of the integrated curriculum, foreign, African and Zambian related and actual studies on the research topic. The insights gained will be very helpful in both my data analysis and discussion in chapters 4 and 5.

# **Chapter 3**

## **Research design and methodology**

This chapter discusses the research design, research site, target population, study sample, the sampling techniques, research methods, research instruments, data collection procedures, and finally the data analysis used in the study.

### **3.1 Research design**

Qualitative research design is a method of experimentation used extensively by scientists and researchers studying human behaviour and habits (Shuttleworth, 2008). In order to study the teaching of RE in Social and Development Studies, the qualitative research design was used so that the researcher could be accorded a chance to record the spoken words of the respondents. The approach also enabled the researcher to observe the participants' behaviour and record it accurately. Participants were also studied in their natural environment. Apart from that, the approach allowed the researcher to ask and answer questions of different kinds and to explore the subject at hand in depth.

According to Ghosh (1992: 224) a case study is “an intensive study through which one can know precisely the factors and causes of a particular phenomenon. It is a kind of qualitative analysis.” The case study design was used because the study sought to study the topic in detail. The case study of Solwezi urban basic schools allowed an in-depth investigation of the problem at hand.

### ***Research site***

The study was carried out in Solwezi district, North-Western Province of Zambia. Solwezi District was selected as the study site as it has the largest number of basic schools and teachers in the province. The Solwezi urban basic schools themselves were purposively selected and sampled as the study locations because Solwezi urban has a cluster of basic schools and has two resource centres that provide in-service training to teachers. Solwezi urban basic schools are also accessible because of their central location and are, therefore, often used for experimenting new education programmes. Apart from that, the schools are often monitored by Provincial and District Education Standards Officers.

### ***Target population***

Target population is an entire population which the researcher is interested in and to which he/she would like to generalise the results of the study. The target population for the study was the head teachers, senior teachers, teachers and pupils of this target population. They were chosen because they are directly involved in the implementation of the new integrated curriculum in the schools.

### ***Study sample***

According to Ghosh (1992), a sample is a subset of the whole population which is actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalised to the entire population. The respondents of the study were drawn from the 4 Solwezi urban basic schools. These included 96 pupils, 40 teachers and 4 administrators. The total sample was 140 respondents. All the respondents were purposively selected on the basis

of being directly involved in the implementation of the new integrated curriculum or course. Head teachers play the administration role, senior teachers perform the supervisory role, teachers plan and teach in class while pupils are on the learning side.

### ***Sampling techniques***

As explained above, the researcher used purposive and convenience sampling procedures in selecting respondents for the study. The participants were deliberately selected on the basis of the information or ideas they were likely to give about the teaching of RE in SDS, and their availability to take part in the study. They represented the rest of the target population.

## **3.2 Research methods**

Three different methods of data collection namely lesson observation, one- to- one interview and focus group interview (FGI) were used in the study.

### ***Lesson observation***

This is a qualitative method of data collection. A total number of 28 lessons were observed. Seven lessons were observed from each school and Grades 1 - 7 classes were sampled for observation in each school. An observation instrument was used to assess the effectiveness of the teaching of RE as part of SDS. The observation technique was chosen because it does not rely on what people *say* they do, or what they *say* they think, it draws on the direct evidence of the eye of the researcher who witnesses events first hand. It is based on the premise that for certain purposes, it is best to observe what actually happens (Babbie *et al*, 2009).

### ***One - to - One interview***

This method was used to collect data from the administrators, teachers and pupils. A total of 40 pupils, 20 teachers and 4 administrators from Solwezi urban basic schools were interviewed.

### ***Focus group interview (FGI)***

FGI was used for collection of (qualitative) information from pupils on the teaching and learning of RE as part of SDS. The interviews were conducted at each of the four Solwezi urban basic schools and a total of 40 pupils were involved. Each group comprised 5 boys and 5 girls from Grades 5, 6 and 7.

### ***Research instruments***

The following instruments were used in the data collection processes:

Lesson assessment sheet for lesson observations, an interview guide for one-to-one interviews, and an interview schedule for focus group interviews. The tools used in recording data were cassette recorder, pens, and field note books.

### ***Data collection procedure***

The data was collected mainly through lesson observations, interviews and focus group interviews. The researcher sought for permission from the 4 basic school head teachers to have access to the members of staff and pupils who were selected for the study. The researcher also sought the teachers' and pupils' consent before interviewing them. Some teachers and pupils refused to be interviewed while others agreed. Only those who agreed or consented took part in the study

### **3.3 Data analysis**

The first stage was the familiarisation with the data. The aim of this was for the researcher to immerse himself in the details and get a sense of the interviews and observations as a whole before breaking the information into parts. The researcher listened to the recorded interviews, read the transcripts in their entirety several times and read observation notes taken during interviews and summary notes written immediately after the interviews.

The next stage involved identifying a thematic frame-work. At this stage descriptive statements were made. The researcher wrote short phrases, ideas or concepts arising from the texts and began to develop categories.

The third stage, indexing, comprised sifting the data, highlighting and sorting out quotes and making comparisons both within and between cases. The fourth stage was charting, which involved lifting the quotes from their original context and re-arranging them under the newly- developed appropriate thematic content.

In this chapter, I have discussed three major components of the study, namely, research design, research methods and data analysis. The research methodology and procedures discussed in this chapter were applied in the collection and analysis of data for chapters 4 and 5.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Presentation of findings**

This chapter presents the findings of the research study. As may be recalled, the objectives of this study as stated in chapter 1, were, firstly, to assess the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS; secondly to examine the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS and thirdly to establish the competence of the teachers teaching RE as part of SDS in handling an integrated curriculum. The findings are presented under the same three headings namely, effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS, and competence of the teachers teaching RE as part of SDS.

Before I present the findings, there is need to describe the setting, the subjects of the research and talk about the indicators of effective teaching of RE in SDS.

This research was conducted in four urban basic schools of Solwezi district in North-Western Province. The schools have been given pseudo names as school A, B, C and D. Basic School A was opened in 1967. By then it was a fee paying school (private) dominated by children from well to do families. The school has nineteen (19) classrooms and pupil enrolment of two thousand thirty-nine (2039). Out of which one thousand thirty-six (1036) are boys and one thousand three (1003) are girls. The basic school runs from grades one to nine out of which grades one to seven has four streams each and grades eight and nine has six streams each. The school has sixty-eight (68) teachers out of which twelve (12) are males and fifty-six (56) are females. Out of the sixty-eight teachers,

nine teachers initially ZPC trained, twenty-seven (27) are ZBEC trained, thirty (30) are ZATEC trained and two have diplomas. Apart from the head and the deputy head teachers, the school has six senior teachers who supervise the teachers. All the senior teachers have Zambia Primary Course (ZPC) certificate and secondary teaching diplomas. The head and deputy head teachers have ZPC, Diploma and degrees.

Basic school B was opened in 1948. The school has thirty (30) class rooms and the total pupil enrolment of three thousand ten, out of which one thousand twenty-six (1026) are boys and one thousand nine hundred fifty-four (1954) are girls. The school has a total number of five streams running from grades one to nine, this includes the deaf unit. There are ninety (90) teachers in all, of which sixty-two are females and twenty-eight are males. These teachers have different qualifications. According to the information collected, 36 teachers have primary methods certificate, one has an Advanced Diploma, and seven have degrees. The head teacher has ZPC, Diploma in Education and a Bachelor of Arts with Education.

Basic school C was opened in 1992, and started as a UNIP school. The first class was taught in a tavern and in 1994 the school shifted to the current site. The school has twenty-five classrooms and the streams run from A to F. It has a total enrolment of three thousand four hundred thirty (3420). Out of which one thousand six hundred twenty (1620) are boys and one thousand eight hundred ten (1810) are girls. There are sixty-eight (68) teachers at the school. Out of which four are ZPC, four are ZBEC, and forty-two (42) are ZATEC and eighteen (18) are diploma holders. The teachers are supervised by eight senior teachers. The senior teachers were ZPC trained they also hold diplomas. The head

teacher has a ZPC certificate, Advanced Primary Course (ZPC), Diploma in Industrial Arts, education management training (EMT) and Primary Diploma by Distance Learning (PDDL).

Basic school D was opened in 1984, it started as a self-help school. Currently the school has twenty (20) classrooms. The school has five streams from grades one to six and four streams from seven to nine. The total pupil enrolment is two thousand five hundred forty-eight (2548) out of which one thousand two hundred forty-five (1245) are boys and one thousand three hundred three (1303) are girls. There are fifty-one (51) teachers and nine are males and forty-two are females. Five teachers are ZPC, ten are ZBEC and thirty-six are ZATEC trained. There are also five senior teachers, four are ZPC and one is ZATEC trained. Both the head and deputy head teachers are ZPC trained.

To find out the effectiveness of teaching and learning of RE in SDS, the researcher used the following observable features to find out the effectiveness of the teaching of the subject: syllabus, integrated schemes, integrated weekly forecast, integrated lesson plans, integrated records of work, teachers' knowledge of religious component of the syllabus, integrated lesson, child- centred methods, out-come based learning, integrated teaching and learning materials used in a lesson, pupils knowledge of religious components of syllabus, SDS corner and how well is the teacher vested with knowledge on integration. If these features are visible then the teaching and learning of SDS is effective.

In order to bring out what the respondents said and make their voices come out clearly, I will as much as possible state their actual words or answers in bullet form. This will

enable me to avoid reported speech, which has the tendency of burying the voices of the respondents.

#### **4.1 Effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS**

As may be recalled, effectiveness in this study as stated in chapter 1, refers to the success and usefulness that the new integrated curriculum approach through SDS has brought to the teaching of RE in middle basic or primary schools.

##### ***4.1.1 School managers***

In order to get the actual situation obtaining in schools on the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, the school administrators, that is the head teachers and senior teachers, were asked how they ensured effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS in their various schools. This is what they had to say:

- We are all aware of SDS as a subject in our schools.
- We teach SDS in our schools.
- The Ministry of Education has provided SDS teaching and learning materials to schools to facilitate teaching and learning.
- As schools we also buy SDS materials to supplement on what the Ministry of Education provides.
- Teachers are encouraged to plan together or to team plan.
- Teachers demonstrate SDS lessons during teacher group meetings (TGMs) to their fellow teachers on some selected topics.

- In TGMs teachers share their challenges in the preparation of SDS schemes of work, lesson planning and use of some teaching and learning materials.
- Challenges in SDS that are difficult to solve during the TGMs are referred to the head teacher in-service meeting (HIM).
- To ensure effective teaching and learning in schools, a programme called School In-service Monitoring (SIMON) has been put in place to monitor school activities such as teaching and learning.
- Once in a term, a professional meeting is held where problem areas are identified and brought to the TGMs for discussion and where necessary members are asked to make consultations for more information.
- There is regular checking and monitoring of teachers' work by ourselves.

#### ***4.1.2 Teachers***

As people who are directly involved in the teaching of SDS in the schools, teachers were asked, as a way of ascertaining the effectiveness of RE teaching, how they taught RE in SDS. The following is what the teachers said:

- The teaching of SDS is basically done by following what has been laid down in the teachers' guide.
- The common teaching and learning materials used in schools are: teachers' guide, pupils' books, charts and bibles. We use the teacher's guide to prepare schemes and lessons. In the absence of the teacher's guide, we use pupils' books to prepare and plan for lessons.

- From the teachers' guide and pupils' book, we prepare schemes of work, weekly forecast and lesson plan. Each unit in the guide is developed into particular lessons. In the pupils' grade 7 books, there are 13 topics which the teacher breaks into 3 terms' topics. For instance, term one 4/5 topics, term two 4 topics and term three 3/4 topics for scheming.
- When making lesson plans, we follow the topics as they appear in the teachers' guide or pupils' book. For example, unit 9, sub-unit 6 in the teachers' guide book 7 has a topic on 'religious teaching about marriage,' which is developed into lessons like, introducing religious teaching on marriage and looking at Christian teaching on marriage, Muslim teaching on marriage, and Hindu teaching on marriage. However, at times the lessons on marriage were integrated with information about HIV/AIDS.
- We prepare and teach RE and SS contents separately as before.

As a follow up to the first question, the teachers were asked whether the coverage of RE content in SDS was enough to bring about effective teaching and learning, and the following were their responses:

- There are more topics of SS than RE (more of living together than spiritual moral values).
- RE topics are reduced compared to the way they were in the old syllabus.
- Some topics are too difficult for some grades, for instance 'religious festivals', a topic in SDS grade 3.

- The instructions in the teacher's guide are not clear; hence some teachers have problems on how to prepare lessons.
- SDS lacks additional teaching and learning materials like the charts for SS and has made it difficult to teach RE concepts.
- There is good coverage according to this level of pupils.

The researcher also observed that most of the schemes of work in the four schools were not integrated and had more SS than RE content. The lessons were also not integrated. Lessons were planned and presented the way the units appeared in the pupils' book or teachers' guide. For example, when a teacher taught on 'pollution' under SS, it was not integrated with any content from RE. However, one teacher managed to integrate some HIV and AIDS material in the lesson he taught on the day he was observed. There was also one outstanding lesson in one of the Grade seven classes on 'consoling a friend who has lost a parent' where pupils participated very well. The teacher divided the pupils into two groups depicting school and funeral house scenarios. After dramatising, some pupils who lost their parents and relatives narrated real life situations in which they were consoled by friends. The class asked some questions to their friends on how they felt before and after consolation. Although the pupils were struggling with their sentence construction, the quality of questions and answers was good. The lesson was so good that both girls and boys got fully involved in the lesson. The teacher's role in the lesson was that of a facilitator and the lesson was truly learner-centred. The teacher introduced and distributed materials to the pupils, making sure that both boys and girls had chance to express themselves.

The researcher further observed that teachers did not make teaching and learning aids instead they depended on the pictures in the pupils' books. Teachers' files have no much to look at that can indicate that so much time was spent on them.

#### ***4.1.3 Pupils***

In order to get the actual situation obtaining in the classrooms on the effectiveness of teaching RE under SDS, the pupils were also asked how the learning of RE was going on.

This is what they had to say:

- We do not learn RE but instead we learn SDS.
- We learn the following topics in SDS: government, constitution, corruption, population, and human rights. Others were Hindu prayers, Moslem prayers, marriage, Muhammad, Christianity, physical features of Zambia and the world, economic and social activities of Zambia, initiation ceremonies, the Bible, Bantu migrations, Iron Age, living together, human relationships, solar systems, continents, famous leaders of the world, traditional religious activities, and common churches.
- We learn RE and SS in SDS at different times.

A follow up question on how they learn RE in SDS was asked to establish how learning materials in SDS were helpful to the learning of RE. The pupils had this to say:

- The learning material such as pupils' books and charts are friendly and open up our minds to understand what was happening to us and our environment.
- What we learn is helpful because it causes us to remember the past.
- They are helpful because we learn about religions.
- The pupils' books have pictures which help us to understand.
- The pupils' books have enough information on human rights which make us aware of issues concerning us.
- There are a lot of reading and writing activities.
- We learn more of SS than RE.
- What we learn is not helpful because it does not come in the final examination.

Pupils were also aware of the religious component of the SDS syllabus. They indicated that SDS consists of RE and SS. They were able to mention some topics in both RE and SS contained in the SDS syllabus.

From the foregoing data, it can be said that RE as part of SDS is partially effectively taught. This is so because the teaching of RE as part of SDS has more challenges that need to be overcome than successes. Some of these challenges include inadequate teaching materials, lack of integrated methodology for RE and SS, reduced and skipped topics, and lack of teachers' creativity.

## **4.2 Attitude of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS**

As may be recalled, attitude in this study refers to the views and opinions of head teachers, teachers and pupils on the teaching and learning of RE as part of SDS.

### ***4.2.1 Managers***

The managers, who are teachers and supervising officers of teachers, were asked to give their views or comments on the teaching of the integrated curriculum, and their responses were as follows:

- We are happy with the new integrated curriculum because the teaching materials have been simplified and the work load reduced.
- The reduction in the work load has made teachers have time to complete the topics and revise at the end of the term.
- It is good because RE and SS materials are in one book.
- It is good because it is a background to future subjects like geography, civics, history and RE.
- It is easier to prepare because one scheme of work caters for RE and SS.
- The content is enough to prepare pupils for examinations.
- The integrated skills acquired in SDS have an impact on pupils' morals.
- Some topics are advanced for some grades, e.g. those in the grade 4 SDS pupils' book.
- Some sections of the pupils' books are not well written and have some mistakes.
- RE has lost some content because of the merging of SS and RE in SDS.

- No follow up has been made by CDC since the inception of the new integrated curriculum to give direction.
- The new curriculum has been hurriedly implemented

#### ***4.2.2 Teachers***

Teachers, who actually plan and teach the new integrated curriculum, were asked to give their views on the course and they had the following to say:

- The new integrated curriculum is good because it has reduced our work load.
- The reduction of periods per week has given us more time to plan and prepare effectively.
- The course is good because it engages pupils into child-centred learning.
- The course is good because it calls for hard work. A teacher who does not take time to prepare finds it difficult to teach.
- The course is effective because there are readily available materials to use.
- We use so many methods to teach SDS.
- Information in the teachers guide is not enough such that we find it difficult to prepare lessons.
- Pupils understanding of the content is much better than before.
- Some topics and activities are difficult for pupils.
- It has created space on the timetable.
- Some units are too congested.
- There is no integration, we thought we shall be teaching RE and SS content in one lesson but that is not the case.

#### **4.2.3 Pupils**

Pupils are the actual beneficiaries of the new integrated curriculum, including SDS. They were also asked to give their comments or views on the course so that the researcher could get an idea of what their teachers actually did in class and what their attitude towards the teaching of RE under SDS was. The following is what had to say:

- We learn a lot of information in SDS.
- What we are learning in SDS is what we used to learn before the new integrated curriculum.
- We do not learn everything that is in our books.
- SDS books are not enough for us to use.
- Some exercises are difficult for us.
- Some topics are easier while others are difficult for us.
- Most of the time is spent on revising past papers.

During the lesson observations in some classes, I observed that most of the pupils were not actively participating in the lessons. The classrooms had speaking walls with some charts of SDS, but the teachers did not involve the pupils in the lesson. At one of the schools in a grade five class, the teacher introduced a lesson on ‘crops grown in the province’, she asked some pupils to read aloud from the pupils’ books. Thereafter, she the class asked some questions on each paragraph read by pupils. She wrapped-up the lesson by asking the pupils to copy the pictures of crops from the pupils’ text books into their exercise books. Most of the pupils were spectators because they had no access to the

pupils' text book. In most classes, about 8 pupils were sharing a copy of the pupils' text book.

From the data under both 4.1 and 4.2 above, it is clear that teachers have a semi negative attitude towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS. Most of the teachers have not accepted the change. They are still teaching using traditional methods, and some are frustrated because they expected better integration than what is currently in place; they feel that the new approach has an implication and it was hurriedly implemented. I will discuss this teachers' attitude further in the next chapter.

### **4.3 Competence of the teachers teaching RE/SDS in handling an integrated curriculum**

As earlier referred to in chapter 1, in this study competence refers to knowledge of the subject and capability of teachers to teach RE as part of an integrated SDS syllabus within the integrated middle basic education curriculum, grades 1-7.

#### ***4.3.1 Managers***

The managers who supervise the teachers and who attended the initial integrated curriculum trainings with some teachers had this to say in response to this question: Are your teachers trained to teach the new integrated curriculum?

- Teachers received in-service training.
- An orientation workshop was first held at Kikombe Basic, then at Provincial Resource Centre and Solwezi College of Education (where teachers from

neighbouring schools were trained). The first group was trained by the District Resource Centre Coordinator, District Education Standards Officer and Curriculum Development Centre Officers. Those that received the first training trained the rest of teachers at the school level in teachers' group meetings.

- During the training, the teachers were trained in the integrated curriculum approach where RE and SS were integrated in SDS. Therefore, planning of schemes, weekly forecasts and lesson plans should be done as one.
- Another important factor that was tackled was how to use the new books (teachers' guides and pupils' books) for the new integrated curriculum.
- Team planning was part of what was taught at the training, teachers were divided into groups and asked to prepare a scheme of work for SDS. Teachers were expected to work together in their schools.
- The training was more of an orientation than real training.
- There was no demonstration of lessons. The teachers were only taught how to conduct lessons in SDS without a demonstration lesson.
- It was done simultaneously with the orientation on the outcome-based learning.
- The training was not adequate because it was a crash programme.
- Some information on how to use some materials was not explained.
- The so called 'training' was too brief. In some cases the orientation was done in one day by student teachers who were on teaching practice.
- It was more of an announcement than training.
- They were informed that subjects are integrated and the examinations would follow the same pattern.

As a follow up to the first question, the managers were asked to mention the measures they had put in place to create competence in the new teachers teaching the SDS syllabus.

In response, the managers explained that new teachers from colleges were supposed to be more familiar with the new integrated curriculum approach than the old teachers in schools. However, the new teachers were still oriented on the SDS syllabus and helped on to plan and teach the syllabus during TGMs.

#### ***4.3.2 Teachers***

Teachers who are the implementers of the new integrated curriculum in class were asked how competent they were to teach the new integrated curriculum. This is what they had to say in response to the question: How effective was your in- service training to teach SDS?

- Some of us did not receive any training.
- We learnt by consulting others on what they knew about the integration.
- The training at school level was not effective because the trainers were not grounded in the new integrated curriculum.
- We were inadequately trained because one of the trainers from CDC passed away during the training and the training was abandoned.
- There was no need for a series of training meetings because there is nothing difficult in the integration of subjects.
- We learnt through TGMs.

A follow up question on whether they needed more training in SDS was asked to establish their competence in the subject. The teachers had this to say:

- We need more training on how to plan and teach SDS.
- We need to be trained by people with vested knowledge in the subject.
- As long as we have been provided with teaching materials there is no need of training.

During the lesson observations I observed that teachers were teaching the SDS content material using teacher centred methods. One of the teachers taught a lesson on ‘pollution’ she introduced the lesson and defined pollution without involving the pupils. She further mentioned the types of pollution. The pupils were only involved in the lesson during the conclusion and the exercise. Some of the teachers involved the pupils in the introduction but forgot about them in the lesson development. Other teachers hardly used teaching and learning aids in the lessons. In most cases, if not all, the teachers were teaching social studies content. When asked why they did not plan and teach RE content that term, they pointed out the following:

- We follow the topics as they are in the teachers’ guides.
- The RE content appear and are planned for in the coming term.
- We cannot teach RE and SS contents in one lesson because the guide has not suggested so.

The foregoing data shows that the teachers were not very competent to teach SDS because they were inadequately trained to handle the new integrated curriculum approach.

The time taken for training and the content covered was not enough. However, the schools are using TGMs for in-service training of teachers.

In this chapter, I have presented the findings of the study under three headings: effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS, and competence of the teachers teaching RE as part of SDS. As might be seen, these headings are related to the three objectives of the study. The findings will be further discussed in chapter 5.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion of research findings**

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the study findings. As in the presentation of data in chapter 4, the discussion here is guided by the three themes namely, effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS, and competence of the teachers teaching the subject in handling an integrated curriculum.

#### **5.1: Effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS**

In this study and discussion, effectiveness refers to the success and usefulness that the new integrated curriculum approach through SDS has brought to the teaching of RE in middle basic or primary schools.

In order for the schools to enhance effectiveness in the teaching and learning of SDS, the four basic schools had put in place some measures. One of these measures were teacher group meetings (TGMs). During TGMs, teachers planned together and demonstrated lessons to each other on some selected topics. It was through TGMs that teachers who were not trained in the integrated curriculum were trained. In TGMs teachers shared their challenges such as scheme of work preparations, the use of teaching and learning materials, teachers' guide and pupils' books in the teaching of SDS. I found the TGMs to be effective because they offered in-service training to both the teachers who received initial training in handling the SDS curriculum and those who did not. It was due to

TGMs that some teachers were able to confidently handle the integrated curriculum, including SDS.

Apart from TGMs, the schools also discussed the challenges faced by teachers during the Head teacher In-service Meetings (HIM). Another measure put in place by the manager was to ensure that there was effective teaching and learning in schools generally, a programme called School In-service Monitoring (SIMON). This is intended to monitor school activities in general. However, SIMON was not as active as TGMs as no records were produced to show that monitoring was taking place. Teachers did not acknowledge it also. However, if this programme was implemented seriously, it would help strengthen various school activities including teaching. In addition, once in a term, a professional meeting was held where identified problem areas were brought for discussion and where necessary members were asked to make further consultations for more information. Other measures put in place by schools were regular checking of teachers' work and monitoring teachers by managers. This seems to be one of the important measures that can help to bring about effectiveness in the teaching and learning of RE in SDS.

However, the managers should go beyond regular checking and monitoring of teachers if effective teaching of RE in SDS is to be sustained. This is because pupils from the four schools revealed that some of the teachers skipped some RE units. The skipping of RE units was also alluded to by Cheyeka (2005) in his research on the views of some Basic School Teachers and Education Standards Officers on the integration of RE in SDS. He revealed that there was a lot of skipping of most RE topics by most teachers. If there was serious monitoring, the managers would discover the problem and solve it. The

monitoring of teachers should be taken seriously by the school managers and should not just be a matter of fulfilling school routine. After a teacher has been monitored and talked to, several follow ups should be made until the teacher improves. The four basic schools have enough senior teachers to do adequate monitoring and follow ups so that the teaching of RE as part SDS can be more effectively done.

The teachers from the four basic schools argued that they followed what was in the teachers' guide when preparing and teaching SDS. In the SDS teachers' guides for the different grades, topics for RE and SS are listed and for each topic, background information is given and instructions on how to teach that particular topic are given. The teachers prepared and taught RE and SS as separate lessons in SDS. The failure to integrate lessons in SDS emanated from the kind of training the teachers received when the new integrated curriculum was introduced. Moreover, there is nowhere in the teachers' guides where there is a suggestion that topics belonging to RE and SS in the same units should be prepared and taught in one lesson.

However, although the teachers' guides have not suggested how RE and SS topics can be taught as integrated lessons, teachers are capable of preparing such integrated lessons. Teachers can use CPD to prepare and develop fully integrated RE/SS lesson plans, teach them and observe each other's lessons. Depending on the observations, adjustments can be made to the lesson plans before they are represented to another class. Teachers again can meet to evaluate the lessons and if the lessons were regarded to be successful, then the lesson plans can be filed for further use. In other words, teachers can use the Lesson Study Circle in CPD to prepare RE/SS integrated lessons. This is line with Simuchimba's

(2006) view that teachers who were not familiar with the integrated curriculum approach would be trained through short, in-service programmes within schools, zones, districts and provinces. Teachers need to be innovative and creative and not totally depend on what the textbook says if RE as part of an integrated SDS syllabus is to be effectively taught.

The teachers revealed that the most common teaching and learning materials used in schools were teachers' guides, pupils' books, Bibles and charts. In some cases teachers used both teachers' guides and pupils' books to prepare lessons. However, the researcher observed that some teachers had no copies of teachers' guides; even at the schools where copies of teachers' guides were available, two to three teachers shared a copy. This is not good for effectiveness of teaching the RE component of SDS as well as other learning areas or subjects of the new integrated middle basic education or primary school curriculum. As pointed out earlier, it is the responsibility of school managers and the MOE at large to provide such materials to their school teachers.

The teachers complained that the information in the SDS charts was only for SS. This was a serious observation by the teachers. Teachers in their TGMs can begin studying the RE content and see which information can be put on charts and make suggestions to CDC. CDC is more than ready to receive suggestions from the users of school materials which they have approved and recommended for use in schools. Therefore, complaints like instructions in the teaching and learning materials not being clear and mistakes in the books can be taken care of by CDC, through the publishers of such materials.

Teachers who argued that there were more topics of SS than RE (i.e. more of Living Together than Spiritual and Moral Values) were right. For example, the following topics were developed into SDS lessons for grade seven classes:

*Our district, Life in the past, People in our district, Work and wealth, Vulnerable people in the community, Rural and urban communities, Needs and rights, Taking part in the community, Gender, Zambia's independence, Faith and prayer, Life and death, Food, Forest and wildlife, Sanitation, Environmental activities, Transport and communication.*

From the seventeen topics listed above, fifteen are from SS and two are from RE. As a matter of fact, when two subjects are integrated, each contributory subject loses some content. Simuchimba (2006) argues that SS has more topics because it is a combination of subjects like geography, history and civics. Therefore, the ratio of SS and RE topics could not be the same. However, the two units of RE are sub-divided into sub-topics. For example, 'faith and prayer' has a topic on marriage and marriage is sub-divided into sub-topics such as traditional marriage, Hindu marriage, and Muslim marriage and so on. The syllabus was made in such a way that topics build on each other from grades 1 to 7, but this was not followed through in the distribution or allocation of topics.

However, the reduction in RE topics is not so bad that it can lead to the extinction of the subject. The ineffectiveness of teaching of the SDS syllabus is partly as a result of the type of integration adopted by CDC and partly due to lack of teachers' creativity. Teachers have the right to rearrange the topics or where possible to fuse units on RE with the units on SS. Lack of thematic integration was a big cause of reduced coverage of RE content. For instance, a unit like 'transport and communications' could be easily integrated with an aspect of RE like the importance of transport and communication in the

spread of different faiths. An approach like this could have taken care of the reduced coverage of RE topics in the whole SDS syllabus. As things are now, there is a lot more to be done to have a meaningful integration of the two subjects. Simuchimba (2006) points out that there are many overlaps and similarities in our school subject syllabuses, which can easily be integrated. We have not seen this kind of integration that takes care of the overlaps and similarities alluded to by Simuchimba. What is prominent in the SDS syllabus is that topics from RE and SS have been bundled in one text book. Bishop (1985) argued that even when the subjects are integrated, textbooks and examination papers continued to reflect sharply the separate disciplines. He further said that the unifying of courses should be done gradually out of those principles and methods from the separate disciplines which are inter-related and fundamental. As such what was expected of the RE and SS integration was that the similar content from both subjects should have been put in the same units and further taught in the same lessons. If the RE and SS integration was based on the overlaps and similarities referred to by Simuchimba, we were going to have a good SDS syllabus and the teaching of RE as part of it would have been more effective than it is now.

Apart from RE having fewer topics, the teachers argued that some topics were too difficult for some grades. For example, ‘religious festivals’, a topic in grade 3. The teachers argued that the content found in this topic are not fit for grade 3. Although what the teachers said does not seem to have been supported by the pupils, the level of difficulty of topics can compromise the effectiveness of teaching RE under SDS. Nevertheless, the teachers’ line of thought seems to be in line with Cheyeka’s (2005) view that in most cases if not all, the writers of SDS books were not RE specialists, as

they have not presented the topic of ‘God in our lives’ satisfactorily. RE specialists are well grounded in theories of Kohlberg, Erickson, Piaget, and Fowler. They are therefore able to relate topics to stages of religious development in our Zambian children and use appropriate teaching methods and children’s exercises. However, it is important for teachers to realise that it is their responsibility to simplify work for their learners. If the teacher realises that the work to be taught is beyond his/her learners’ ability, they should break it down into manageable components. Such an approach will help to make the teaching of RE within SDS much more effective than it seems to be now.

The pupils revealed that most of the SDS materials were helpful and friendly. They were helpful and friendly because they had all the necessary teaching and learning qualities, such that the pupils’ minds are opened and are reminded of the past. The pupils appreciated the materials because they learnt matters of religions and human rights. The pupils’ books have pictures that were matched with the activities. Some of the materials were so friendly to pupils that pupils easily followed and understood the topic. In addition, the pupils’ books have a lot of reading and writing activities. The SDS materials are also interactive.

Despite the SDS teaching and learning materials being helpful, they were inadequate. In most cases, pupils shared copies of reading materials. In one of the focus group interviews, pupils suggested that there was need to provide each pupil with a copy of the pupils’ books so that they could read even at their own time. The pupils’ demand was reasonable but the shortage of pupils’ books were partly caused by over enrolment in the urban schools. For the past five years the population of Solwezi has been increasing

because of job seekers in the mines. Some classes have over eighty (80) pupils, making it difficult for schools to provide each pupil with a copy of pupils' books. In addition, most of the teachers were using pupils' copies instead of teachers' guides.

The inadequacy of pupils' books has compromised the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS. Wicklein and Schell (1995) identified three primary factors that can lead to success or failure of integration. One of the factors relates to provision of materials and the other relates to teachers and school administration commitment to the integration approach. Teachers are expected to plan and deliver while the administrators' commitment is seen in facilitating the provision of materials and taking the supervisory role. Lack of teaching and learning materials in schools contributes to ineffectiveness in the delivery of the subject content matter. The pupils in Solwezi also expressed the fear that what they learnt was not examined in the final examinations. However, the pupils' observations or fears are misplaced because they had in mind the past examination papers in the old syllabus. Examinations in the new integrated SDS syllabus are yet to be written.

In addition, the pupils observed that they learnt topics of RE and SS separately. As already mentioned, this is true. Despite the integration of the two subjects, RE and SS are still taught as separate subjects under the cover of SDS. This implies that RE and SS still exist as stand alone subjects in lesson preparation and presentation. Bishop (1985) describes this type of integration as threading blue and yellow beats on top of the other to create a blue and yellow syllabus. This is the easiest way of making a syllabus, but the main idea is not to have a blue and yellow syllabus but a green syllabus. The green syllabus or the integrated curriculum approach can only be achieved by integrating

subjects through themes, topics and concepts. As the case is at the moment, the fear of RE's extinction expressed by Henze (2004), Carmody (2004) and Cheyeka (2005) may not arise but if some of the few RE topics included in the SDS syllabus are either skipped or poorly taught, then the effectiveness of the subject's teaching will be doubted.

Data shows that pupils were aware of the RE component of the SDS syllabus. They were aware that SDS consisted of topics from SS and RE and they were able to remember some of the RE topics in the SDS syllabus. However, awareness alone cannot be taken to mean effectiveness of learning because there are other things such as teaching methods, the development of concepts and teaching materials that need to be considered. During the lessons observations, the researcher observed that very few teachers used child centred methods. Most of the teachers were still using traditional teacher-centred methods. Few teachers used child centred methods, like debate and role play. For SDS to be effective, there was need for teachers to use child-centred methods. Teachers who depend on traditional methods may find SDS unfriendly. Such teachers may end up skipping topics, especially RE topics, and give unexplained work to pupils. This, as pointed out above, negatively affects the effective teaching of RE components of SDS.

## **5.2 Attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS**

Generally teachers were happy with the new integrated SDS syllabus because it had reduced the work load as it was two in one, i.e. RE and SS. Previously, teachers used to prepare for RE and SS but now the two subjects are prepared as SDS. According to the teachers, they now had enough time to prepare adequately since the numbers of periods on the timetable had reduced. However, the gained time was in most cases not

professionally used as it was not translated into more teaching and learning material production. My observation was that the teachers were depending on pictures in the pupils' books for their teaching instead of making extra large teaching and learning materials. It can therefore be said that the reduction of periods on the time table has not contributed to the effectiveness teaching of RE as part of SDS. The teachers' files did not reflect the standard that showed that more time was spent on preparing them. The quality of planned work was not different from or better than that of the work prepared before the new integrated curriculum approach. So the teachers' attitude towards the use of time and the teaching of RE as part SDS needs improvement.

As pointed out earlier, it was observed that most of the teachers used traditional methods such as storytelling and teacher disposition to teach the new integrated curriculum. As far as teaching approaches are concerned, the teachers seem not to see any need for change because each subject (RE and SS) was still being taught as a distinctive subject. Some teachers have not accepted change at all. As pointed out by Bishop (1985), 'traditional loyalties die hard'. Some teachers felt that the old methods they were trained in and which they have been using for many years are far better than the new methods. They therefore resent the new methods suggested in the teachers' guides. Simuchimba's (2006) contention that the teachers' negative attitude and reluctance to accept change and make the necessary adjustments in their work as individuals and schools was likely to affect the smooth implementation of SDS is therefore valid. In the new approach, teachers are expected to teach using methods that would help to adequately cover the curriculum, encourage natural learning that builds on pupils' interests and learning that is more flexible. Some of the recommended (enquiry) methods in the teachers' guides are role-

play, dramatisation, problem solving, experimenting and questioning (Manda, 2007). Enquiry methods are more pupil-centred than presentation methods. They stimulate pupils' learning, thinking and questioning. These methods also allow pupils to learn individually and in small groups. Pupils are 'taught' less by the teacher, but encouraged to enquire for themselves, to find out by doing, and therefore, to learn to remember. So the teachers' attitude towards the new approaches to teaching RE and or SDS should change for the better. The teachers should be ready to abandon the old methods and adopt the new recommended learner-centred methods.

Another attitude-related problem among the teachers was the idea that despite integration, RE and SS were still separate subjects and should be taught as such. Although the CDC shares the blame here because of the incomplete manner in which the two subjects were integrated (into SDS), the teachers are expected to integrate existing topics further through their schemes of work, forecasts and lesson plans. As I stated earlier, teachers are free to re-arrange and fuse topics and units at planning stage so that they can achieve better integration. So comments like: 'I thought we shall be teaching an integrated syllabus but we are still teaching RE and SS separately', show a negative and apathetic attitude towards integration among some of the teachers. If the teaching of RE as part SDS in basic schools is to be effective, the teachers need to change and begin to see RE and SS as one SDS subject.

The managers admitted that if the integrated curriculum was well handled, it was likely to improve teaching and learning in schools but were quick to point out the cost implications. They argued that schools had spent so much money on the old curriculum

that to supplement the buying of books by MOE for the new integrated curriculum was too much for them to afford. To make matters worse the new curriculum had been introduced at a time when the government had reduced grants to schools and the schools were financially struggling. In line with this, Simuchimba (2006) alludes to the fact that the liberalised supply and distribution of textbooks might also prove to be a stumbling block in the implementation of new curriculum if it fails to work as efficiently as expected and if the state fails to adequately fund the schools or District Education Boards. This challenge has dampened the morale of most of the school managers and their attitude towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS and the entire integrated curriculum is therefore rather negative.

The managers also observed that the new curriculum had been hurriedly implemented. The text books had mistakes, some SDS topics were too advanced while others from the old RE and SS syllabuses were missing. These problems too seem to contribute to both the teachers and school managers' frustration with the new integrated curriculum, including SDS.

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that both teachers and managers have a negative attitude towards the teaching of SDS. This needs to change if the teaching of the subject or learning area including RE is to be effective or successful.

### **5.3 Competence of the teachers teaching RE as part of SDS in handling an integrated curriculum**

The respondents revealed that teachers were inadequately trained to handle the new integrated middle basic education curriculum. This indicates that most of the teachers were not aware of what they are supposed to do. Bishop (1985, 97) lists similar problems encountered in some earlier attempts at integration of general science and social studies in the 1940s and 50s in England. Teachers were not adequately prepared for the change through in-service courses and continued to think and teach in terms of biological, chemical and physical topics. In this case too teachers were not well prepared on how to go about the new integrated curriculum. As mentioned in the previous section of the dissertation, this has contributed to the teachers continuing to think and plan in the old way. This is confirmed by the report by the District Resource Centre Coordinator (DR CC), where only 46 participants consisting of Zone, head teachers and Zone Inset Providers (ZIPs) in the whole of Solwezi district were trained. The workshop took place from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2004. One of the objectives of the workshop was to introduce the new six subjects or learning areas to participants. The participants felt that the two sessions allocated to discussion of the six learning areas were not enough. The objective of the workshop clearly indicates that it was not training as such but an introduction of the new course or curriculum to the teachers, as some respondents said. During the workshop, not much detail about planning and teaching the learning areas was discussed to equip the teachers. So the teachers do not have adequate competence to teach the integrated SDS syllabus.

Government through CDC has not done much in preparing the teacher to confidently handle the integrated course. Bishop (Ibid) said a delegate to the National Workshop on Primary Education argued that if you want to teach a green syllabus and you have blue and yellow teachers, in the first place the teachers must be turned green before they can teach effectively. The majority of the teachers in the schools are ZPC and ZBEC trained. For them to teach the new learning areas effectively, they must be properly trained in the integrated curriculum approach. The findings of Avotri (1993) in Ghana also show that most of the teachers were trained in the old British system but were required to teach concepts that they understood poorly. The consequences were that the teachers were confused about the replacement of the separate social science subjects with social studies, and advocated a change back to the old system. This means that teachers need to be properly trained in the new methods if they are to teach SDS effectively.

On the contrary, five percent of teachers argued: ‘there is nothing difficult in the integration of subjects.’ Simuchimba (2006) also argued that no trained teacher can completely fail to teach an integrated curriculum or syllabus. Examining the course text books, one may agree with this position; there is nothing so difficult that a teacher needs detailed training to be able to handle. The major difference between the old course and the new one might be that RE and SS are now in the same books, otherwise the two subjects appear as stand alone components and teachers plan and teach them separately. In addition the teaching materials were selected from the old RE syllabus for inclusion in the SDS syllabus. So there is nothing strange in SDS which teachers can fail to teach when provided with the necessary materials and if they are ready for change.

However, the TGMs where teachers discuss problems faced during lesson preparations and also demonstrate lessons to each other are crucial in helping all the teachers to adapt. Data shows that teachers who were not originally trained in the new integrated curriculum approach were being trained through the same teacher group meetings. This is in line with Simuchimba's (2006) observation that teachers who were not familiar with the integrated curriculum approach were being trained through short in-service programmes within schools, zones, districts and provinces. This was the only reliable source of training as teachers trained each other and did not wait for people from MOE headquarters or CDC in Lusaka. If TGMs or continuous professional development were well handled by schools and the activities were monitored and supported materially and financially by the school managements and the government, there would be no doubt that they could contribute greatly to the effective implementation of the new integrated curriculum. Data from the four schools shows that the TGMs started very well but of late there is no financial and material support from the government. The schools alone may not manage to sustain the in-service programme for a long time and its discontinuation might have a negative effect on the teaching of RE as part of SDS.

This chapter was focused on the discussion of the study findings. Like in chapter 4, the discussion in this chapter was guided by the three themes namely, effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS, attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS, and competence of the teachers teaching RE as part of SDS in handling an integrated curriculum. The insight from this discussion will help in concluding the study to determine the effectiveness of the teaching of Religious Education as part of Social and Development Studies in the integrated primary school curriculum in Zambia.

# **Chapter 6**

## **Conclusion and recommendations**

This chapter states the conclusion of the research study before giving appropriate recommendations. As may be recalled, the objectives of this study as stated in chapter 1 were, firstly to assess the effectiveness of teaching RE as part of SDS; secondly to examine the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS, and thirdly to establish the competence of the teachers teaching SDS in handling an integrated curriculum. The conclusions below are therefore guided by these objectives.

### **6.1 Conclusions**

From the findings of the study, it is clear that although the teaching of RE as part of SDS is going on, the teaching and learning of the subject is not very effective because of some problems such as some topics being too difficult for some grade levels. RE has lost some of its original content in the process of integration. Despite enough teaching and learning materials for new integrated curriculum being produced and being available on the market, the schools have a deficit. This is due to erratic funding of the Solwezi District Education Board and schools by the government.

Secondly, it is also clear that although the teachers seem to be happy with the new integrated curriculum because of reduced planning work and creation of space on the time-table, most of them actually have a negative attitude towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS. Instead of teaching SDS properly, some teachers give unexplained work to learners and skip some topics, including those from the RE component of the syllabus.

They feel that the syllabus was hurriedly implemented and it is too costly for MOE and schools to sustain.

Finally, although the teachers in the four basic schools were not teaching SDS properly, claiming that they were not trained or adequately oriented in teaching an integrated curriculum, they were fairly competent to handle the learning area (SDS) and the rest of the new integrated curriculum. Any professionally trained primary school teacher did not need long detailed training to be able to prepare integrated RE/SS lessons. The orientation provided through TGMs was adequate, provided the teachers had a positive attitude and were ready to embrace change. An effective SDS lesson was one where all or most of the features or characteristics listed in Appendix 4 on page 77 were present.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

1. The CDC and the book publishers should integrate elements of RE and SS to make it easier for teachers to prepare one lesson that can cover content for RE, HIV and AIDS and SS.
2. Since the National In-Service Teachers College (NISTCOL) or Chalimbana College of Education is likely to be reverted to its original role of offering refresher courses for teachers, it would be prudent for MOE to use the college to offer short courses in the new integrated curriculum approach to basic school education to teachers who were trained in the old methodologies. Teacher Group Meetings alone may not be enough since they may not be active and regular in all schools throughout the country.

3. Book publishers should include RE specialists on their writing panels so that they can help relate SDS topics to stages of religious development and design appropriate teaching methods and activities.
4. There is need for the Education Standards Officers, CDC and other stakeholders to follow up and monitor the implementation of the new integrated curriculum approach in schools.
5. MOE and schools should procure more of the needed teaching and learning materials for effective implementation of the new integrated curriculum, including SDS.
6. DRCCs and College of Education Lecturers should be involved together in capacity building teachers in the new methods at district and zone levels.

### **6.3 Recommendations for further research**

Since the issues raised in this study are many and it was not possible to exhaustively deal with some of them, the following could be considered for further research:

1. Are the methodologies and teaching strategies recommended for teaching SDS appropriate for RE?
2. What role can parents and communities play in ensuring the success of the new

integrated approach to primary education?

3. How can the teachers' attitude towards the teaching of RE as part of SDS be

Changed or improved?

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## *Appendix 1*

### **Interview guide for basic school head teachers**

1. For how long has your school been teaching RE as part of SDS?
2. Are your teachers trained to teach the new integrated curriculum?  
If yes, who trained them? What kind of training did they receive? Was it adequate?
3. What measures have been put in place to ensure the effective teaching/learning of SDS?
4. What are your comments and recommendations concerning the teaching of RE as part of SDS?

## ***Appendix 2***

### **Interview guide for basic school teachers**

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How do you use integrated curriculum approach to prepare your schemes of work, weekly forecast, lesson plans and records of work?
3. How effective was the in-service training to teach SDS?
4. How do you teach RE in SDS?
5. How is the coverage of RE content in SDS lessons?
5. What kind of teaching/learning materials do you use in SDS and how do you use them?
6. What are your comments and recommendations concerning the teaching of RE as part of SDS?

### ***Appendix 3***

#### **Focus group discussion with pupils**

1. Do you learn RE? What are some of the topics you learn in RE?
2. How do you learn RE in SDS?
3. How are learning materials in SDS helpful to learning in RE?
4. How is the coverage of RE content in SDS lessons?
5. What are your comments and recommendations on the learning of RE as part of SDS?

## *Appendix 4*

### **Observation check list**

<b>FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE SDS/RE TEACHING</b>	Tick	Tick
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

Syllabus

Integrated schemes

Integrated weekly forecast

Integrated lesson plans

Integrated records of work

Teachers' knowledge of religious components of the syllabus

Integrated lesson

Child- centred methods

Outcome based learning

Integrated teaching and learning materials used in a lesson

Pupils knowledge of religious components of syllabus

Is the teacher well vested with knowledge on integration

SDS teaching corner

Comments by the observer.....

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