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# Parental Support Towards Quality Religious and Moral Education Delivery at Primary School Level

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**ABSTRACT**

**The nature and functions of the school reflect the demands and expectations of the larger society including parents. The objective of this sequential explanatory mixed method design study was to obtain the views of RME teachers and headteachers regarding how parents (of primary school pupils) were influencing quality delivery of Religious and Moral Education (RME) in Cape Coast, Ghana. Data were sought from 264 RME teachers and 15 headteachers through questionnaire, interview and lesson observation. The instruments were pre-tested and validated to obtain high degree of reliability and dependability. The questionnaire data obtained reliability co-efficient value of r =. 845, the observation data obtained Cohen's Kappa value of .765 (k = .765, p < .000) and the interview data were duly validated to ensure interview trustworthiness. Frequencies, percentages, charts, tables, means and standard deviations were used to analyze the research questions while inferential statistics (multiple regression) was used to analyze the quantitative data. The research questions were discussed based on quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data collected. The variable (parent support) correlated averagely with r = 0.433, p = .000 with the teaching of RME at 5% significance level (α = .05); indicating that parental support has significant effect on quality delivery of RME (Teaching of RME) in the metropolis. Upon the findings it was recommended to parents to collaborate with RME teachers to ensure adequate provision of basic resources that can facilitate dispassionate and objective teaching and learning of RME.**

**Keywords:** Curriculum, implementation, religious and moral education, parental influence, parental involvement, parental attitudes, character education, moral behaviour, parent-teacher relationship

## INTRODUCTION

Generally, family backgrounds affect children's academic achievement especially at an early stage of children's development and so it is with parents' religious backgrounds. Parents compete for high-quality educational and better educational opportunities that can lead to better academic performance among children. Again, parental attitudes and educational support for children aim to revive children's learning habits and affect their academic performance. In the same way parents have the right and responsibility to ensure that their wards receive proper religious and moral values both at home and in school and this role of religion in educating young people has been continuously recognized by many because of its impact on human life (Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000). Therefore, want to be satisfied with the kind of religious and moral education that is offered by the school to make the youth religiously and morally educated people. This study explored teachers and headteachers' perceptions about how parents influence quality delivery of Religious and Moral Education (RME) in Basic schools in Cape Coast province of Ghana.

Parents constitute key stakeholders of the educational enterprise in Ghana. Their orientations, beliefs, values and attitudes consciously or unconsciously influence the RME curriculum implementation at all levels of Ghana's education system. Parents believe that it is religion that influence their parenting styles, their own beliefs, their success as well as their general wellbeing and quality of life. Consequently, parents decide contribute in kind and cash towards proper religious and moral education of their wards (Bour, 2009). For instance, parents and organized bodies spearheaded introduction of RME into public basic schools and other training institutions following the removal of the then cultural studies curriculum in 1997 from the basic school curriculum (Anamuah-Mensah, 2007; MOE, 2007). These findings have significant implications for how parents want their wards to be to taught issues about religion and morality so as to reduce indoctrination from arising in class and subsequently high pupils' academic performance in RME.

Alvestad (2000) and Erricker (2010) found parents and adults as rich resources that the schools can fall on to develop moral development of young people. According to them, their involvement can be enormous, as parents are regarded as an important component of the education system and have an input in curriculum development. Like teachers, parents have a role to play in the implementation of the RME curriculum because they would like to be convinced about extent to which the subject can prepare their wards morally and religiously for future adult life. The inadequacy of empirical studies on parental factors can negatively affect successful implementation of the RME curriculum, as no full implementation can take place without the support of other key stakeholders. For instance, apart from teachers, parents contribute significantly to enactment of the curriculum by providing their wards with both basic material and educational needs (Goodlad, 2003; Epstein & Salinas, 2004). Researchers have cited parental involvements as some of the conditions which are conducive for implementing and disseminating the RME curriculum.

This study is, therefore, intended to help determine level of parental contribution to the RME curriculum implementation process in the Basic schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana. Parental engagement is an important avenue for supporting student achievement. Positive relationships between parents and teachers are increasingly recognized as vital in influencing implementation of a school curriculum. Parent-teacher relationships have long been considered both a vexing problem and a potential resource for improving students' school success (Minke & Anderson, 2003). When parent-teacher relationships are productive they appear to exert a

significant, positive effect on children's academic success (Fan & Chen, 2001). Generally, it appears that involvement is associated with higher academic achievement (Jeynes, 2011) because there is evidence to suggest that increases in parent involvement are associated with improved social skills and decreased behavior problems (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Minke, Sheridan, Kim, Ryoo & Koziol, 2014).

Parental involvement is understood to be a multidimensional construct that encompasses parenting behaviours that support children's learning, including those that are visible to teachers. These include attending conferences, volunteering at school and supporting learning at home (Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000). Parent and teacher perceptions of parent involvement often differ. Teachers sometimes interpret a lack of visible involvement at school as evidence of parents' lack of support for their children's education, leading to unproductive working relationships (Lawson, 2003; Wong & Hughes, 2006). The work of character education in schools and in many homes always starts with parents, because parents are believed to have strong influence on the religious and moral development of their wards.

There is growing recognition that families and social institutions need the support of the school so far as children's education and character training are concerned. This is so because schools have become necessary partners with parents in the race to provide religious and moral training among the youth. Erricker (2010) take a positive stance and suggest that parents possess a variety of skills, talents, and interests that can enrich the curriculum, no matter how teachers might be. Parents become involved in their children's education as they increase their involvement in the implementation of a school curriculum.

Existing research has mostly focused on the impact of family background on the general educational attainments but it is worth pointing out how parental support and parental attitudes affect quality implementation of the RME curriculum in the schools

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Some significant studies have been done to unravel factors predicting instructional practices of the Religious and Moral Education curriculum in Ghanaian primary schools (Adu-Fosu, & Joyan, 2002; Owusu, Appiagyei, & Akaban, 2001). However, in spite of the increased parental contribution through the school Parent-Teacher-Association (PTA) system, not much research work has been done in the Cape Coast Metropolis to establish the degree of parental involvement with respect to teaching and study of RME. Research has proven that some parents are unable to provide the right type of religious and moral training and therefore expect the schools to take up the challenge in order to supplement their efforts.

It is in this regard that In 1997 parents and civil society called for the removal of the then cultural studies curriculum from the basic school calendar because they argued that the subject did not contribute enough so to shape moral behaviour of pupils. Subsequently, cultural studies was replaced with the existing RME curriculum which now seeks to address the religious and moral development needs of young people especially regarding formation of good behaviour and character training (Bour, 2009). After more than two decades it is imperative for researchers to examine the kinds of support given by parents with respect to teaching and study of RME. In their studies, Arweck and Jackson (2014); Epstein (2013) and Grimmitt (2000) found inadequacy of

parental support towards quality delivery of religion-related subjects and recommendation for adequate support. This study is, therefore, was intended to investigate degree to which parental support was influencing quality delivery of RME in the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine extent to which parental support was predicting quality delivery of Religious and Moral Education at the primary school level in Cape Coast, Ghana.

## Objectives of the Study

To examine extent to which parental support predicts quality delivery of Religious and Moral Education in primary Schools, Cape Coast, Ghana:

## Research Question

What parental support systems contribute towards quality Religious and Moral Education delivery in primary schools in Cape Coast?

## Hypothesis

***Ho*** = There is no significant relationship between parental influence and quality delivery of RME in primary schools in the Cape Coast province.
***H1*** = Parental influence does not predict significantly quality delivery of RME in primary schools in the Cape Coast province.

## Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it is intended to sensitize parents and relevant authorities about how they can influence effective implementation of the Religious and Moral Education in Basic schools in the study area and Ghana in general. Parents and other stakeholders of education will be informed about the importance of RME curriculum in human existence and national development. This will be achieved when stakeholders engage in discussions on how they can support the implementation process with their positive ideas and resources.

Teachers will be circumspect in their dealings with parents and ensure that RME lessons are delivered to the satisfaction of parents and stakeholders. On their parts, parents and other interest groups might lend their support for the implementation process by showing healthy attitudes, offering wise counselling and giving their wards the required motivation and assistance in their study of RME. The findings of the study are expected to serve as a knowledge base for future research in Ghana by adding to the already existing literature on the factors that influence implementation of the RME curriculum in the schools.

## Delimitation of the Study

This study was confined to activities of adults and parents of learners in the Cape Coast Metropolis of the Central Region of Ghana. Teachers and head teachers provided the required data for the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Parental Influence

Parents occupy the most strategic position than many other individuals and groups when assessing the overall effectiveness of a school education (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Parental examples and attitudes are essential elements in the education of their children because their influence is very significant and highly acknowledged in the faith development of young people far and above the influence of the Church (Asare-Danso, Annobil, Afriyie, & Agyemang, 2014; Maroney, 2007; McLaughin, 2005). Crawford and Rossiter (2006) citing empirical evidence from the Curriculum Corporation of the Australian National Values Education Study centre (ANVES, 2003) concluded that parents expect schools to promote personal and spiritual development of young people than either teachers, or the students themselves (pp. 259-261).

Parents also contribute to the implementation process by monitoring the learning and activities of their wards. Monitoring children's academic work such as homework by parents (adults) of pupils has also been shown to increase pupils' academic achievements. It is really not so much for parents to know answers to all problems that young children bring to them however it is more important for them to demonstrate their interest by providing conducive environments for academic work, by encouraging children's efforts, by making available to answer questions, and being willing to discuss what their children study about RME (Anti & Anum, 2003). A well-established institution in most schools is the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

The PTA has a long history of child advocacy and parent training. PTAs work to support and speak on behalf of young people in the schools and communities; they assist parents in developing the skills for raising and protecting their wards; and also encourage parent and public involvement in the schools. Finally, studies by Goodlad (2003) concerning the attitude of the public towards the teaching and learning of RME revealed that parents constantly want the RME curriculum to focus more on children's social, personal as well as their academic and vocational developments. It is evidently clear that parental involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, long-lasting, and well planned.

Studies on school and family have shown over and over again that parental involvement helps to raise the academic achievement of pupils, helps to improve attitudes and performance of children in school, helps parents to understand the work of the school, enables parents and children to communicate more and show their caring toward each other, and builds school-community relationships in an ongoing, problem-preventing way. Through collaboration, parents expect schools to educate pupils about emerging problems and other pressing concerns that seek to address the needs and interests of their wards. Studies by Amedahe (2007) as well as Conroy, Wenell and Lundie (2013) show that supportive home environments in the form of skills, talents and interests help children become successful both at home and in school. Parents demonstrate their connection to school goals by showing interest in pupils' academic work studying with them, by showing approval of their school activities, and by respecting their children's efforts.

Parents influence selection of educational experiences for schools and pupils. The content of RME is selected on the basis of the educational purposes and goals decided by the society so that content reflects the cumulative traditions, values, needs and aspirations of the society because the subject has the ultimate aim of meeting societal needs and improving the local environment (Anti & Anum,

2003). Parents have the duty of inculcating good moral values into their wards. Many parents support their wards to study RME with the view to encouraging character training among them. It was religious education that many parents and individuals looked primarily to, to assist in the task of re-defining and re-enforcing personal and social moral values and standards in the minds of children who would pass through the nation's schools (Anti & Anum, 2003; Reeves, 2004).

While research has pointed to the benefits of parental involvement, less is understood about the areas of involvement that are most effective in improving pupils' achievement in RME. Differences sometimes exist between parents and teachers regarding how parents should be involved in the implementation process (Afdal, 2010). Some educators prefer traditional types of parent involvement such as volunteering to help with activities planned by teachers, and helping their wards to do their homework. Although teachers may be very supportive of parents who volunteer to champion the implementation process, they may oppose parental involvement in academic planning of the subject or school policy, fearing parents will be too interfering or critical of how implementation of the curriculum ought to be (MOE, 2012). The challenge is to find ways for parents and schools to work together in a way that is not only mutually beneficial but also improves the lives of children.

Parents are their children's best advocates because they expect young people to study RME in order that they would be exposed to the world religions particularly the three dominant faiths practiced in Ghana, namely Christianity, Islam and Traditional African religion. Parents, individuals and other organized religious bodies spearheaded the reinstatement of the RME curriculum when it was removed from the basic school curriculum in the year 2007 (Anamuah-Mensah, 2007; Asuborteng, 2007; Bour, 2009; Catholic Bishop Conference, 2007; Finn, 2009; Forson, 2009).

In conclusion, many parents have high expectations for the religious and moral education to flourish and prosper. It seems apparent that, there is the need for a high level of co-operation and partnership between parents and schools as there is respect for the distinctive and complementary roles of both parents and teachers.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The study was rooted in the sequential explanatory mixed method design in which quantitative data were supported with qualitative data so that there were sufficient and detailed results of the study. Cape Coast was chosen as the study area due to a better option in terms of access to and availability of relevant data.

### Population and Sample

A sample size of 279 participants consisting of 264 RME teachers and 15 head teachers were sampled from a total population of 485 (446 teachers and 39 headteachers together) from public basic schools in the study area using the simple and purposive random sampling techniques. The sample size constituted 58.0% of the total population. Fifteen (15) of the head teachers were purposively selected and interviewed while 15 of the RME teachers were also interviewed and their lessons observed following the criteria of Krejcie and Morgan (2006).

## Research Instruments

Data were derived through questionnaires, lesson observation and interviews using relevant checklists and schedules. The questionnaire consisted of 17 closed ended questions and were structured on the five-point likert-type scales ranging from "Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D); Uncertain (U); Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA). The questionnaire produced an overall reliability co-efficient value of r = . 842. Ten (10)-item semi-structured interview guides with both closed and open-ended items were also designed and validated for both teachers and head teachers (Borg, Gall & Gall, 2007). Finally, a 15-item observation guide was also designed and pre-tested yielding Cohen's Kappa value of .765 (k = .765, $p$ < .000); indicating a good level of reliability of the observation results. The pre-testing and validation of the three instruments yielded high sense of reliability and dependability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison., 2007; Flick, 2000 Fraenkel, & Wallen, 2009).

## Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire data were obtained from 264 teachers of whom 15 were interviewed and their lessons observed. Fifteen (15) of the head teachers were interviewed on face-to-face basis for detailed qualitative information (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

## Data Analysis Procedures

The questionnaire data were categorized, coded, tabulated, scored, computerized, analyzed, and interpreted, summarized into reports, charts and complex statistical analysis (i.e frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and regressions). Instructional practices and other classroom interactions were checked and rated and (Braun & Clarke, 2006) classroom practices of the RME teachers which were of interest to the researcher were observed, written down, responses entered into a rating scale, and analyzed through recording and judgments made about the events observed. The interview data were manually analyzed into themes and eventually organized into themes and sub-themes.

## Results, Analysis and Discussion

The questionnaire, interview and lesson observation data provided grounds for the analysis of the findings. Frequencies, percentages, charts, tables, means, and standard deviations were used to analyze the research questions whiles regression was used to test the hypothesis (Field, 2009). The interview data were manually analyzed into themes taking into sub-themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Sub-themes such as 'provision of learning resources, occasional visits to observe RME lessons, helping children in their study of RME as well as supervising of homework on RMME lessons' and so on. The observation data were analyzed based on the summative content analysis.

## Questionnaire Data

Data in Table 1 represent the views of the teachers concerning the level of support given by parents towards teaching and learning of RME in the basic schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Results from Table 1 were also used to answer the research question

**Table 1- Contributions of the parents as reported by the teachers**

| Item | Sd (%) | D (%) | U (%) | A (%) | Sa (%) | *M(sd)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parents show interest in RME | 14 (5.3) | 20 (7.6) | 83(31.4) | 106(40.2) | 41(15.5) | 3.5(1.0) |
| Parents are aware the importance of RME | 10 (3.8) | 28(10.7) | 79(30.2) | 112(42.7) | 33(12.6) | 3.5(1.0) |
| Parents engage teachers on how regularly their wards attend RME lessons | 16(6.1) | 29(11.0) | 88(33.3) | 101(38.3) | 30(11.4) | 3.4(1.0) |
| Parents want their wards to study RME | 14(5.4) | 23(8.8) | 97(37.2) | 99(37.9) | 28(10.7) | 3.4(1.0) |
| Parents want RME to be compulsory or all pupils | 24(9.1) | 25(9.5) | 105(39.8) | 81(30.7) | 29(11.0) | 3.3(1.1) |
| Parents provide their wards with materials to enable them study RME. | 51(19.3) | 74(28.0) | 59(22.3) | 69(26.1) | 11(4.2) | 2.7(1.2) |
| Parents provide RME teachers with teaching/learning materials | 98(37.1) | 92(34.8) | 36(13.6) | 28(10.6) | 10(3.8) | 2.1(1.1) |
| Parents supervise children's homework/assignments on RME | 58(22.0) | 54(20.5) | 86(32.6) | 57(21.6) | 9(3.4) | 2.6(1.2) |
| Parents visit schools to discuss issues relating to the teaching and learning of RME | 101(38.3) | 78(29.5) | 37(14.0) | 41(15.5) | 7(2.7) | 2.2(1.2) |
| Parents show concern for performances of their wards in RME exams/exercises. | 60(22.7) | 66(25.0) | 58(22.0) | 64(24.2) | 16(6.1) | 2.6(1.2) |

Source: Field Data - Questionnaire (February, 2015) Key**:** SD = Strongly Disagree (1. 00 – 1. 80); D = Disagree (1.81 – 2.60); U = Uncertain (2.61- 3.40); A = Agree (3.41 – 4.20); and SD = Strongly Agree (4.21 – 5.00); (%) = Percentage, *M* = Mean, *SD* = Std. Deviation. Mean of Means score = 2.9 à Uncertain (U); Mean of Standard Deviations = 1.1.

Table 1 shows the kinds of supports that were provided by the parents of the pupils as reported by the teachers. As shown in Table 1, the high mean scores obtained on five of the items as well as the low mean scores obtained on another five items is an indicative that one-half of the RME teachers applauded the significant support made by parents/guardians towards teaching and learning of RME. The teachers were convinced that most parents do not provide their wards with the relevant materials to enable them study RME in the Metropolis. However, some parents did their best to provide the needed materials to their wards. Item eight, 'parents supervise children's homework/assignments on RME', attracted a mixed reaction from the teacher respondents. From the mean of means score of 2.9 and a standard deviation score of 1.1, it can be inferred from the questionnaire results that a reasonable number of the parents were not very much supportive towards the teaching and learning of RME in the Metropolis.

## Interview Data

The study also sought to explore from the teachers and head teachers about the contributions of parents (guardians) of the pupils to the teaching/learning of RME in the Metropolis using interviews. The major outcome from the interview session was that, majority of the parents and guardians are somehow supportive and to some extent contribute significantly to the teaching of RME. When they were asked to comment on the kind of support parents of pupils provide, they mentioned provision of learning materials, occasional visits to the schools, helping their wards to study topics that deal with good moral values, and ensuring that their children do their homework

on RME. These four sub-themes explain how supportive the parents were towards the implementation process. The following excerpts throw more light on the themes under discussion:

*Parents buy RME textbooks and other learning materials for their wards (HT 1*, Interview data, 2016).

> *Yes. Parents help both positively and negatively. The positive aspect is that some of the parents buy RME textbooks for their children. The negative aspect is that when I give children homework based on Islam and the children come from Christian homes some of the parents don't want to help them do the homework and vise visa. (PT 6, Interview data, 2016).*
>
> *Yeah, as the head of this school, some parents do come around to actually monitor or interact with me so as to get some information concerning how the teachers teach the subject. As and when they come I do get time for them and I also tell them how their children are also responding (HT 5, Interview data, 2016).*
>
> *Parents do contribute positively in the sense that some of the topics deal with morality and parents help in teaching these topics. I give them homework and parents make sure the homework is done so parents are really helping in implementing the RME curriculum (PT 4, Interview data, 2016).*

It can be seen from the foregoing extracts that the parents of some of the pupils are very supportive and contribute positively to the teaching and learning of RME because among other things they provide their wards with basic study materials and help them to do their homework.

**Lesson Observation**

Almost all the lessons observed indicated that some parents were playing their respective roles to ensure a effective study of RME by their wards through provision of RME textbooks, writing materials, educative religious objects and supervising their homework/assignments and other forms of projects in RME.

## REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULT

### Analysis of Hypothesis

***Hypothesis 1***

There is no significant relationship between parental influence and quality delivery of RME in basic schools in the Cape Coast province.

***Hypothesis 2***

Parental influence does not predict significantly quality delivery of RME in basic schools in the Cape Coast province.

The two hypotheses sought to establish relationship between parental influence and quality delivery of RME and extent to which parental support predict quality teaching of RME (Teaching_of_RME) using a multiple regression procedure at 5% significance level ($\alpha = .05$). The dependent variable (DV) used in the multiple regression is, 'Quality Delivery of RME (Teaching_of_RME)' while the independent variables (IV) is parent factor/influence. The descriptive statistics of the factor used in the multiple regressions.

**Table 2- Descriptive Statistics of the parent factor/influence**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parent Factor | 264 | 10 | 50 | 29.25 | 7.442 | 55.377 |
| Delivery_of_RME | 264 | 19 | 54 | 42.63 | 10.243 | 33.800 |

From Table 2, parental influence registered an average mean score of 29.25 (SD = 7.44); showing that the teachers recognized efforts parents in the metropolis were making towards the teaching and learning of RME while the "Teaching of RME (dependent variable)" had an average score of 42.63 (SD = 10.24), which indicated that the implementation of the RME curriculum was being influenced by the parents. Data in Table 3 show bivariate correlation of regression factor of .433.

**Table 3- Bivariate correlation of regression factor**

| ***Teaching of RME*** | **Parent factor** |
|---|---|
| Teaching of RME | 1.00 |
| Parent factor | .433 |

As is shown in Table 3, the parent factor correlated strongly with the dependent variable (Delivery of RME) at $r = 0.433$, $p = .000$ . These findings indicate that the parent factor recorded a considerable positive high correlate ($r = 0.433$) with the delivery of RME. The result is in line with Epstein's (2008) findings which indicate that parents possess a variety of skills, talents, and interests that can enrich the curriculum, no matter how teachers might be.

They are involved in their children's education by acting in a positive way to increase involvement of their wards in the implementation of the school curriculum. Research question which sought to predict the relationships between parent factor with the implementation of the RME (Teaching of RME) using a multiple regression procedure at 5% significance level ($\alpha = .05$).

An ANOVA of regression significance of the *parental support* $(4, 227) = 44.31$, $p < 0.001$ results indicate that the linear combination of independent factor significantly influence delivery of RME in the province. Parental influence also recorded a β value of 0.124 which shows that as contribution of parent to the delivery of RME increases by one unit (1%), an extra 12.4% of the delivery of RME was realized. The result of a *t*-test showed that parent factor ($t\ (124) = 3.905$, $p < 0.001$) was making a significant contribution to delivery of the RME curriculum. From the magnitude of the *t*-statistics one can see that parent factor had a significant impact on the implementation process in the study area.

Parent factor also recorded a standardized $\beta$ value of 0.218. This value also indicates that as contribution of parent increases by one standard deviation (7.442), delivery of the RME curriculum increases by 0.218 standard deviation. The standard deviation of delivering the RME curriculum is 10.243 and so this constitutes a change of 2.23 ($10.243 \times 0.218$) (22.3%). It therefore implies that, for every 7.442 standard deviation contribution from the quarters of parents in the province, an additional 22.3% of delivery was realized. Zero-order correlation (Pearson's correlation) is the correlation coefficients of the individual factors against dependent factor (Teaching Factor). $T^2$. Support from parents (Factor 4) contributed 3.6% (Part-Square = .036) to the value of delivery of RME.

## DISCUSSION

The questionnaire, interview, observation and regression analysis results data together showed that the parents in the metropolis were not so much supportive to teaching and learning of RME. From the mean of means score of 2.9, it can be inferred from the questionnaire results (see Table 1) that a reasonable number of the parents were not very much supportive of the implementation process. The interview revealed that even though not all the parents were directly involved in the implementation process, it was clear that majority of the parents and guardians are somehow supportive and to some extent contribute positively to the implementation of the RME curriculum in the Metropolis. For example, the interview sections revealed the following excerpts:

> *Parents buy RME textbooks and other learning materials for their wards (HT 1, Interview data, 2016).*
>
> *Yeah, as the head of this school, some parents do come around to actually monitor or interact with me so as to get some information concerning how the teachers teach the subject. As and when they come I do get time for them and I also tell them how their children are also responding (HT 5, Interview data, 2016).*

## OBSERVATION

For example, the observation revealed that *some of the pupils had in their possession some RME textbooks which had been provided by their parents whiles others had assisted their wards to do their homework and other assignments.*

The results clearly show that parents possess a variety of skills, talents, and interests that can enrich the curriculum, no matter how teachers might be. This is because they are involved in their children's education which contributes positively to the implementation of the school curriculum. The findings of the results also give backing to the views of researchers (Marsh & Willis, 2007; Maroney, 2007; McLaughin, 2005) that parents occupy the most strategic position than all other groups of planners to assessing the overall effectiveness of a school programme.

They found that parental examples and attitudes are the most important elements in the faith education of children. The results also corroborate the study by Crawford and Rossiter (2006) who found that parents seek to promote personal and spiritual development of young people than either teachers, or the students themselves. Standard regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship of a linear combination of the predictor variable (parent factor) with the teaching_of_RME in schools in the study area.

The variable recorded a considerable positive high correlate ($r$ = 0.433) with the implementation of the RME curriculum. The result is in line with findings by Conroy, Wenell and Lundie (2013) which indicate that parents possess a variety of skills, talents, and interests that can enrich the curriculum, no matter how teachers might be. They are involved in their children's education by acting in a positive way to increase involvement of their wards in the implementation of the school curriculum.

The finding revealed a significant partnership between the school and the parents. The present results confirm similar studies by Ericker (2007) and Epstein (2001) in which the quality of the parent-school relationships was grounded in the communication skills of the parents and teachers (Epstein, 2008; 20213). Lambert (2003) found in their study that parents have a duty to supplement

the efforts made by schools through effective communication between the school and individual homes.

The results give cognizance to the works by researchers (Lambert, 2003; Epstein & Salinas, 2004; Reeves, 2004) which show that there are seven levels of parental participation, ranging from the most passive (receiving reports about their children's progress) to the most active (making decisions). According to these authorities, the levels of participation include parents doing the following: receiving reports about their children's progress; parents' attending special events organized by the schools; helping to raising funds; passively participating in educational activities; assisting and participating in both educational and non-instructional activities; as well as assisting teachers in instruction and making decision.

## CONCLUSIONS

Parents recognized the importance of RME and its extreme manifestation on moral behaviour and contribution to knowledge. The parents showed a positive sign towards the implementation of the RME curriculum by supporting and contributing to its implementation Most of the respondents indicated that parents and guardians show some interest in the RME curriculum; they know the importance of RME; they encourage their wards to attend school early and on regular basis; they want their wards to study RME to the highest academic level; and most of them supported their wards by providing them with the basic needs such as buying books, feeding, and money among others.

The study however indicated that the behaviour of some parents negatively affected curriculum implementation because they did not provide the needed support. For instance, some parents did not provide their wards with materials to enable them study RME, some did not supervise their children's homework/assignments on RME, some did not visit the schools to discuss issues relating to the teaching and learning of RME, and some parents did not show concern for performances of their wards in RME exams/exercises.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

School authorities could engage in awareness creation regarding the importance of the primary school RME curriculum as a major source of moral education and moral development of the youth so that its implementation will attract the support of parents.

Parents should find it important to engage teachers on how regular or not their wards attend or participate in RME lessons as well as their level of participation so that appropriate action can be taken by both parents and teachers to ensure regular attendance to class by pupils.

Parents should provide conducive environment by way of providing relevant motivation and boosting interests of their wards towards study RME for a broader understanding of issues relating to religion and morality

Teachers should constantly appeal to parents for provision of basic resources that would promote active participation of young people in RME lessons. They can do this through regular visits to the schools and making available useful suggestions and instructional resources for effective delivery of RME.

Teachers and school authorities should find it necessary to explain to parents on the need for their involvement in children's learning of RME.

## Implications for Policy and Practice

It was recommended to parents and guardians of pupils to contribute their quota to the teaching and learning of RME through regular visits and provision of resources. Since the work of character education in schools and homes always starts with parents, they are expected to take active part in decisions which may affect their children's learning of RME such as provision of textbooks and pupils workbooks and intensifying their supervisory roles to ensure that their wards study RME both at home and in school. .

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