

AN INVESTIGATION INTO SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS'
PERCEPTIONS OF THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT QUALITY
EDUCATION IN WINDHOEK EDUCATION REGION

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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Approval Page

This research project has been examined and is approved as meeting the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Education.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate into secondary school teachers' perceptions of the factors that affect quality education in Windhoek Education Region. Answers were sought to the following five questions:

1. What are the secondary school teachers' perceptions of quality education in Namibia?
2. What are the factors that secondary school teachers perceive to be contributing to the attainment of quality education in the country?
3. How do the secondary school teachers in Namibia rank the following factors of quality education: quality teachers, facilities, environment, finding, instructional, and learning materials?
4. What are the major obstacles encountered by the teachers in the attainment of quality education in Namibia?
5. What steps should be taken in order to attain quality education in Namibia?

A questionnaire was developed and used in collecting information from the teachers on their perceptions of quality education in Namibian secondary schools. The questionnaire was administered to 230 teachers in 14 secondary schools. Stratified sampling was used to select schools while stratified and simple random sampling methods were used to select 230 teachers from the schools.

Oral interviews were also conducted with 10 secondary school teachers to obtain their views on the factors that affect quality education in Namibia, in addition, some interviews were held with 5 principals. Frequency tables and percentages were used to present and analyze the data collected. The results of the study showed that the

majority of the teachers sampled 89.2% perceived quality education as ensuring the students' mastery of the objectives and goals of education, which should be tested at the end of every grade. Another 86.6% of the teachers perceived quality education as the preparation of young people either for post secondary education/training or for work, while 83.9% perceived quality education as the acquisition of general knowledge about Namibia, science, history and technology.

The key factor that were identified to be the attainment of quality education were: provision of qualified teachers in all the schools in Namibia (92.6%); making sure that all teachers in the schools were qualified in the subject of specialization (90%); equitable distribution of funds to all the schools in Namibia (88.7%); building laboratories and libraries in all the schools in Namibia (86.9) and having a good learning environment in the country (86.5%).

The above findings were supported through the interviews held with the five principals who enumerated some obstacles to the attainment of quality education such as, lack of quality teachers in both the primary and secondary schools; lack of educational facilities in the schools; disintegration of discipline in schools, and overcrowded classes. They suggested that if government employed qualified teachers in all the school, provided educational materials to the learners and teachers, schools maintain discipline and class sizes reduced to below 30 in all schools, quality education would be attained. However, the development of curriculum that suits the Namibian learners and the provision of qualified teachers in all the schools in Namibia were ranked highest (92.6%) by the teachers, as factors contributing to the attainment of quality education in the country.

The study recommended among other things that the Government and Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture should ensure that more qualified teachers are employed into the teaching profession in spite of the finances involved; teachers should be sufficiently motivated by increasing their salaries and providing accommodation; teachers should be trained to become more efficient and effective; class sizes should be reduced to 25 learners in all schools as indicated in the secondary school policy because many teachers complained of large class size of 38 – 45 learners per teacher during the interviews; the government should increase, allocate and distribute educational materials equally, and corporal punishment should be re-visited in the schools because of student misconduct at school towards the teachers and fellow learners.

In conclusion, the teachers in the Windhoek Education region demonstrated knowledge of the factors that contributed to and obstacles to the attainment of quality education. Their perceptions of quality education in Namibia and the factors that affect the attainment are in line with those held by Winch (1996:9) who stated that, “Any quality education system should be able to manufacture products or individuals that are suitable for the purpose for which they were designed or educated”, and Lewis et al (1999) observed that “Without well prepared, caring and committed teachers, our children will not be prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Dr. N. O. Ama and our children:

Chukwunonyerem Ama-Njoku

Ezinne Ama-Njoku

Ada Ama-Njoku

Torti Ama-Njoku

And

Chioma Ama-Njoku

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This work was completed by the author at the UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA in the year of our Lord 2002/2003. It is an original work and contains original ideas of the author and has not been submitted to another University for a degree award. All the sources the author has used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature of Student

Date

List of ACRONYMS

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Agency
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Educational Fund
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MBESC	Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
EFA	Education for All
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
NAAEE	North American Association for Environmental Education
BETD	Basic Education Teachers Diploma
PGDE	Postgraduate Diploma in Education
MED	Master degree in Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Concept of Quality Education

At an international forum on quality education in Beijing (UNESCO, 2001:5-6), quality education was defined with respect to developed and new industrialized countries in terms of:

The competitiveness of the outputs of education (graduates from schools, Universities and colleges) in increasingly, competitive global knowledge-based economies and world information society, in which the excellence of education, exemplified in the competences of the workforce, or the human capital, has become a fundamental driving force and a strategic resource (pg.5-6).

In the same paper, the developing countries re-defined quality education from the reference point of:

How successful education is in preparing young people to cope with the changing world of work, to strengthen democracy, consolidate national identity, to harmonize ethnic relations and to develop national economy under new conditions (pg.6).

In other words, quality education is meant to develop, make efficient and effective the learners' potentials to become completely whole individuals and remain productive persons for the society (UNESCO, 2001:6). It can therefore, be deduced from the above definitions that, quality education not only develops personality in an individual but also builds confidence in the person so as to face challenges in life especially in the world of work. Quality can, therefore, be measured here by the products' or individuals' effectiveness and efficiency, which in turn is measured by

either the economic values (that is how effective the product or successful the individual is) or the worth of the product or the individuals' status in the field of work.

Dare (1999:14), defined quality education as a “system that provides students with knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and work habits needed to become productive fulfilled citizens. It requires clear goals, high standards, good teachers and a well-organized curriculum”. According to Dare, quality is about outputs, not inputs. He disagreed with status quo educators (those who believe that inputs are more important than outputs, and they include educators like Allen (1998) Alison (2000) and Kuhn (2000). The status quo educators defined quality education primarily in terms of inputs to the education system, such as funding levels, class size, and teacher certification.

Dare (1999) (who beliefs that output in educational outcome is more important than input in the pursuit of quality education) and the status quo educators (those who believe that input, for example teacher quality, funding and environment are more important than the output in any quality education system) do not agree on which one is more important between the input and output in quality education. In whichever way it is considered, the quality of any education system is dependent on both the input and output. They are contributing factors in examining the efficiency and effectiveness of any education system.

Funding, class size, quality teachers, learning environment, facilities, content of curriculum, and family support, can affect quality education in an education system. The above factors of quality education, in most cases, are difficult to achieve by both international communities and individual countries. However, Watkin (2000: 1) noted that:

Even though there is a strong international consensus that education is vital to poverty reduction, economic growth and democracy, the international community has demonstrated an inability to tackle the education crisis with any conviction.

According to Watkin (2000:5), some of the reasons for the crisis and challenges in achieving and attaining quality education are that;

- Governments of many developed and developing countries adopted ambitious and ambiguous targets to achieve, which were not met,
- There were no clearly defined strategies on how to implement and improve quality education, and
- No strong commitment was made in countries concerning sustainability of the financial aid from the international communities.

As a result of not meeting the educational budgets, crises like non-payment of the teachers' salaries, lack of appropriate school facilities and equipments started coming up in many educational systems. Also, the maintenance of the existing facilities and the mismanagement of school funds were problems encountered in some countries especially in the developing countries.

Despite difficulties experienced by developing countries as indicated by Watkin (2000), countries like Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe have, however, formulated some educational policies. Njabili (1998: 13) enumerated some of these policies in education for example,

- Education for self- reliance (1967) in Tanzania;
- Education for Kagisano (1977) in Botswana;
- Toward Education for All (1993) in Namibia and,
- Education for Production (1980) in Zimbabwe

Namibia had her crisis in education in form of lack of qualified teachers, textbooks and other school facilities like school structures (buildings), computers, science equipments and hostel accommodation for the learners before and after independence. These will be discussed under two headings namely education in Namibia prior to independence and after independence.

Education in Namibia Prior to Independence

The Namibian education system prior to independence could be summarized as follows:

Education was skewed and shaped by apartheid policies. Formal education was essentially inequitable and discriminatory; it was neither compulsory nor freely accessible for every learner who needed to be at school. Infrastructure and materials were poor to non-existent in some areas. Distances in many rural areas were such that boarding was necessary, even at the lowest grades. The curriculum, imported from South Africa, was standardized for all students; it was examination-driven, and based on a premise that only the best few students should succeed. Texts and materials were often targeted well above the average student. Student-teacher ratios in black schools were typically 60:1, and less than 25 percent of teachers graduated from high school. About 82 percent of the children who enrolled dropped out, failed, left or became repeaters during primary schools (USAID, 1991:2)

From the above, it is clear that there were inequality, lack of quality and access to education, and poor examination and assessment methods in the education system for majority of Namibians.

Although this research is on Namibia, there are also problems of inequalities in the education system of other countries of the world. For instance, OXFAM's (2000) Education Performance Index shows that there is inequality in basic education within countries like Latin America, parts of South Asia and the Middle East. According to OXFAM, failure to overcome inequalities in basic education already creates inequalities in the national income distribution of any country and even among individuals and Namibia is not an exception.

However, in Namibia, the people's hopes were raised at independence believing that some of the issues as found in the colonial education system would be resolved by the reforms taking place in the education system. Thus, MEC (1993:31-44) emphasized the concept of access, equity, quality and democracy in Namibia in order for everybody to be educated.

Although efforts had been made to alleviate some of the odds found in the colonial system of education, yet after ten years of independence comments such as "OUR CHILDREN ARE REJECTED FROM THE SCHOOL"; "STOP DISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOLS" still appeared in the newspapers (The Namibian, Friday 12th April, 2001:9; 13th May, 2001:6). Unstructured interviews

conducted using parents during the process of my course work showed that the unequal education that was shaped by apartheid policies still existed in Namibian schools. Parents complained bitterly why their children were not accepted in a school of their choice. However, the extents to which the educational goals have been achieved need further examination by individuals, the Government or the Ministries of Education and by other assessment bodies.

Education in Namibia after Independence

After independence, the new government embarked upon a major reform in the education system (MEC, 1993). The Government of Namibia with her noble policies and plans to foster and provide quality education in the country made quality a third major goal to which Namibia is committed to achieve in the school system. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC, 1995) reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing quality education in the country, decreeing that the ministry's effort shall be on quality. To achieve this, teachers had to be prepared because they were the people who structure the learning environment and keep learning "exciting and satisfying"(p.10).

The Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture made sure that textbooks and instructional materials suitable to the learners were provided to all the schools; the physical conditions of the schools were also improved in order to ensure the learners' comfort. More schools were provided to enable more learners to have

access to education especially in the rural areas where there were only few or no schools at all (MEC, 1993; Njabili, 1998).

In as much as the government tried to provide the necessary school pre-requisites like textbooks, building more schools and other instructional materials, my personal discussions with parents and some teachers showed the following problems still persist:

- Schools are still over crowded because of the parents' demand that their children be admitted in certain schools. This is probably due to the high success rate of learners in these schools.
- Large class sizes resulting in over populated schools.
- Insufficient number of qualified teachers to teach certain subjects like Mathematics and the Sciences in the schools.
- In some schools especially in the rural areas, the quality of education continues to deteriorate because of insufficient number of qualified teachers, essential school materials and lack of commitment by both the learners and the teachers.
- There is also the inability of the MBESC in recruiting high-level human resources because of financial constraint in the country.

In addition, Voigts (1998) noted that; “the availability of educational materials still seems to vary considerably despite a more equitable budget allocation introduced after independence”. He further observed that, “lack of adequate facilities and

equipment is a major reason for low educational quality and also affects learners' achievement” (p. 52).

Some of the above listed problems constitute the major factors that hinder the achievement of quality education. As a result of not having properly defined priorities, quality education still experiences some short falls in accomplishing the educational goal of “Quality” not only in Namibia but also in other developing countries. Therefore, how well quality education has been achieved, maintained, improved and sustained in the Namibian education system need to be assessed. Hence, this study examined the secondary school teachers’ perceptions of the factors that affect quality education in Namibia.

Statement of the Problem

The concern of the Namibian society and educational administrators has been to have a quality education system. The public is also concerned about the increasing rate of school dropouts in the country, the increasing unemployment rate, and the impact of lack of qualified teachers on the learners’ academic performance, especially in the rural areas. Although, there has been work done in the search for excellence in education (Auala, 1999; Njabili, 2000; Zimba, 2000; Inwa and Indabawa, 2000; Phiri, 1998; Mahalie, 1997), no work has been done to determine the stakeholders’ opinion with respect to the factors that affect quality education in Namibia. This study fills up this gap. The study therefore, seeks to find out the perceptions of the secondary school teachers on the factors that affect quality

education in Namibia. In addition, the study also sought to find out whether differences exist in the perception of quality education by male and female teachers, and by young and old teachers respectively.

The teachers' opinions are crucial since they are the most important factor in any teaching and learning environment (Pattern, 2000). More so, since the teachers are the implementers of the school curriculum, their opinions will therefore help the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation the country to focus properly on how to improve the quality of education in the Windhoek education region.

Research Questions

This study sought to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the secondary school teachers' perceptions of quality education in the Windhoek Education Region?
2. What are the factors that secondary school teachers perceive to be contributing to the attainment of quality education in the country?
3. How do the secondary school teachers in the Windhoek Education Region rank the following factors of quality education: quality teachers, facilities, environment, funding, instructional and learning materials?
4. What are the major obstacles encountered by the teachers in the attainment of quality education in the Windhoek Education Region?

5. What steps should be taken in order to attain quality education in Windhoek Education Region?
6. Is there any difference in the perception of quality education by the male and female teachers in the Windhoek Education Region?
7. Is there any difference in the perception of quality education between the "old" and "young" teachers in the Windhoek Education Region?

Rationale for the study

This study provides the secondary school teachers' perceptions of the factors that affect quality education in the Windhoek Education Region. This information will be helpful to policy makers, educational and curriculum planners in addressing the weaknesses and consolidating the strengths of quality education in the Windhoek Education Region. Addressing these weaknesses and consolidating the strengths of quality education in the Windhoek Education Region will not only improve quality education, but will also create more awareness to the stakeholders on what is lacking and what to incorporate into the education system. It will also open more opportunities for people from other countries to study in our country because of the high standard of the education system, and this will increase the economic resources in the country.

Limitations of the study

This study will not be able to cover all the schools from the different regions in the country, as a result of financial and time constraints. The study will therefore concentrate on schools in the Windhoek Educational Region.

Delimitation of the study

This study will concentrate on the views of 230 secondary school teachers selected from ten secondary schools in the Windhoek Education Region.

Definition of Terms

Input: This refers to those instruments employed to facilitate a desirable outcome. In terms of quality education, the input includes the teachers' efforts, funding and environment.

Output: This is the result of or the outcome of a process. For example, the examination performance of the learners in the education system.

Old teacher: It refers to the age of the teacher and not the experience of the teacher (from 40 years and above).

Young teacher: It refers to the age of teachers in terms of years (between 21- 39 years).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter gives an overview of the thoughts, opinions and suggestions of some authors and educationists especially the teachers on their perceptions of what quality education is. In reviewing the available literature, not much has been done on the essence (importance) of quality education and how to practically achieved it. Even where suggestions where made, it has been difficult to apply them in the education system. Therefore this literature review examines why it has been difficult to attain in many schools, so, the factors that affect quality education were critically examined.

Quality Education

Assessing the achievement and attainment of educational goals helps for positive development and growth in any education system. It also helps to bring out the weaknesses and strengths of the education system and suggest ways of amendments for further development and more areas of research in the system.

For instance, one of the barriers to quality education is lack of parental and family involvement in the education of their children (Dare, 1999; National P.T.A's Components for Effective Schools, 2000; Williams and Chavkin, 1989; Henderson, 1987; Office of Educational Research and Involvement, 1993; Epstein, 1991).

Some of the common barriers encountered by parents in their quest to fully participate in the education of their children as enumerated by these authors include:

- Parents do not have enough time for their children during the school week to go through their children's schoolwork or find out what the children's problems were at school.
- Parents feel that they have nothing to contribute towards their children's academic achievement.
- Many parents do not understand the educational system nor do they know how to be involved in the children's schoolwork.
- Many parents feel intimidated in anything concerning schoolwork and the activities involved.
- Parents are not available during the time school functions are scheduled
- Language and cultural differences may prove an impediment to parents' understanding of new technological advancements and hence feel inadequate to help their children. Further, many parents feel that they do not understand the language of the new generation any more, which creates problems and barriers between parents and their children.
- Lack of transport for children who live faraway or even for parents to attend school meetings.
- Parents do not feel welcome at schools where their children are, and
- Lack of childcare facilities at schools.

Lack of quality teachers in the schools is another barrier to quality education for many countries especially the developing countries of the world.

According to Wise (1999:6), the teacher and teaching quality make a measurable difference in student learning. However, the main barrier to lack of quality teachers is the economic standard of a country. In as much as money is needed to support teacher quality, there are other barriers to teacher quality and they include the following:

- Large class size.
- Teacher salary, and
- Other amenities to make teaching and learning interesting.

Other barriers to the attainment of quality education include lack of a peaceful learning environment encouragement from parents, family and the society at large.

In Namibia, the book *Towards Education for All: A Developmental Brief for Education, Culture, and Training*, embodies educational policies, goals and priorities. The purposes of education should include:

To provide policy makers and programme developers a solid foundation for informed decision making;

- Serve as a broad guide for setting priorities and allocating resources among the various dimensions of education, culture and training;

- Outline alternative approaches to reforming particular sectors of the education system; and
- Enable decision makers to assert a national initiative in negotiating with international and national education assistance agencies (MEC, 1993: 20-21).

This study examined in detail only one of Namibia's educational goals- **“Quality”** (among the four major educational goals of **access, equity, quality and democracy**). These goals were oriented towards the needs of the society at independence. Although quality is the goal of interest here, the other three are discussed briefly below.

Access: The government of Namibia was committed to providing ten years of comprehensive education to the citizens by the year 2000 (MEC, 1993). To achieve this, more schools were built, barriers that kept children away from school were also stopped. For example, boys rearing cattle, and girls who were initially kept at home, were all encouraged to go to school by the government. The government's effort was aimed at improving the lives of the citizens through education to reduce poverty in the country. The government's efforts were bootstrapped when, in April 2000, 180 governments met at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal and adopted a Framework for Action aimed at achieving quality education for all by 2015 (OXFAM, 2000).

Equity: This has to do with fairness. It stands for fairness in the distribution of opportunities for education especially as it affects disadvantaged groups; women, rural populations, the poor, proletariat, and minority populations especially the blacks in America (Page and Thomas, 1979:145) and in Namibia too. In the Namibian education policy, the government was committed to promoting equality through encouraging fairness in the admission of learners to the school of their choice; equitable distribution of learning materials and other facilities to all the learners and schools. Although the government has been trying to meet this need of equity in the country, the challenges of achieving this goal constitutes one of the problems being faced in the educational system, because of Namibia's historical background (MEC, 1993:37). Equity therefore, constitutes an important factor in achieving quality education in Namibia and should be researched to find out to what extent this aim has been achieved.

Democracy: "A democratic education system is organised around broad based participation in decision making and the clear accountability of those who are the leaders" (MEC 1993:41). In this regard, the policy states that:

...it has to be clear that decisions about education and its implementation should be taken with the participation of a majority of the citizens: parents, neighbours and the community at large; having input in school management and administration, as well as in evaluation of the quality of instruction and learning. Similarly, adult learners should be involved in the design of the content, scope and orientation of their curriculum (MEC, 1993:94).

This implies that education should empower the citizens to be acquainted with the rules and regulations of the country. In other words, citizens should know their

fundamental human rights and freedom. Some of these fundamental human rights protect the following basic rights of the citizens, rights of liberty, rights of human dignity and rights to education (Namibian constitution, 1990). Learners being the future leaders of the country should be taught the principles of democracy, which has variously been defined as the government of the people for the people and, by the people.

In the approach to democracy, Namibian education system changed from teacher centred to learner centred approach in 1993. This democratic system was to build knowledge and confidence into the learners and equip them for making right decisions and be more responsible for their actions. Thus the Ministry of Education and Culture commented that;

As we make the transition... from teacher-centered to learner-centered education... what teachers do must be guided both by their knowledge of the concepts and skills to be mastered and by experiences, interests and learning strategies of their students. Our challenge is to harness the curiosity of learners... (MEC, 1993:10)

In this type of approach, “the learner actively participates in the learning process through critical analysis, judgment and decision making, from interpreting sources of data, to planning, carrying out, and using data collected (Grannis, 1998:56). It is also believed that democracy increases excellence in the teaching and learning processes because of the active participation of both the teacher and the learner. Effective leaders therefore, aspire for excellence in the education system. With excellent education system, obstacles to economic development may be eradicated. According to Auala (1999:14), in order to achieve excellence in education in any

country in the world, a conducive atmosphere of peace, stability and democratic way of doing things should prevail. Having rights to education is a major way of preparing citizens for self-reliant jobs and also eliminating poverty in a country. Auala (1999:19) noted that "Poverty is a principal and probably the major obstacle to democracy development". Therefore, education is imperative in combating poverty.

Quality: Quality has to do with the standard and worth of a thing. Access and equity are all measures of quality (MEC,1993: 39). Having schools without quality teachers, facilities, teaching and writing materials make it difficult to implement high quality education in the education system. In Namibia, the government is providing a lot of inputs to establish a quality system of education, but the more efforts are made the more the challenges increase.

The World Bank Review (1995:4) has noted that, the main ways in which governments could help improve the quality of their education systems were setting standards in relation to facilities, staffing, curriculum, supporting inputs, monitoring performance and monitoring of the programs. Although, setting norms or standards do not guarantee quality (MEC, 1995:13), the implementation and administration of quality standards in relation to the set goals, will ensure appropriate curriculum development and proper methods of assessments of learners, which will produce efficiency in the educational system.

MEC (1995:15) agreed that quality education is also affected by motivation and training of the programme personnel, the physical environment, the materials used and the support available to the providers.

In Namibia, quality education should therefore be considered alongside the educational goals and the motivational aspects put in by all the stakeholders, which should be based on the country's priorities and strategies set for accomplishing the purpose of this major goal of 'quality' in the education system. This goal of quality can only be achieved through education being accessible to the learners (access), fair treatment to all that are involved in the education system (equity) and freedom of speech and school choice by the learner which shows democratic attitude in the education system. How and what should be done to attain the desired goal of quality education will be part of the researcher's contribution in this study.

The three Namibia's educational goals namely access, equity and democracy are closely tied to quality, the major educational goal. As earlier noted, quality education develops the personality of the individual and builds confidence in the person to face challenges of life especially in the world of work. For these developments in the individual to be possible, the person must have had access to quality education and freedom to study in an environment of the person's choice. Also, to be able to demonstrate expertise as a result of acquisition of quality education an enabling and democratic environment need to be provided. The

individual needs to be fully aware of his/her rights and privileges due to the fact that he/she will be accountable to the society.

FACTORS OF QUALITY EDUCATION

The factors that affect quality education in any education system incorporate even the barriers and include; quality teachers, academic progress, learning environment, governance, facilities, content of the curriculum, funding, family support, discipline, assessment and outcomes, administration and learning materials to mention but a few (Sullivan, 2000; Bergman, 1996; MEC, 1993; Njabili, 2000; Brenda, 2001). These factors will be briefly discussed in subsequent sections. The study will assess the teachers' perception of these factors of quality education using percentages.

Teacher Quality

Teaching is an essential profession and teachers are the facilitators in any teaching and learning situation. They are facilitators of the development of knowledge in any learning situation and so need to be prepared for efficient and effective teaching. With the rapid increase in technology, one can not help agreeing with Lewis, et al (1999: 4) that, "Without a well prepared, caring, and committed teacher, our children will not be prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century".

Njabili (2000) also noted that any education system that aspires for excellence, the quality of teachers employed into the system should be one of the central issues to be considered. This is because, the teachers are the implementers of the curriculum and they should be equipped for their job, by having a deeper mastery of both their subject matter and pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Otherwise the educational quality will be affected since the students' achievements, especially beyond basic skills of reading and writing, depend largely on teachers' command of subject matter (Mullens, Murnance and Willet, 1996) and their ability to use that knowledge to help students learn. Lewis et al (1999) quoted President Clinton, thus, "Every child needs and deserves dedicated, outstanding teachers, who know their subject matter, and are effectively trained, and know how to teach to high standards and to make learning come alive for students".

Considering, the teacher quality factor will be helpful in the Namibian situation in that it will clarify the fact that it is not a matter of "anybody can teach any subject", but only those who are qualified and trained teachers. It will also help the government to seek out well-trained and qualified teachers in order to sustain and maintain quality education in the country. This factor will be measured by finding the percentage of teachers that agree or disagree on factors that affect quality education.

Furthermore, Auala (1997:3) observed that, "the drive to have properly trained teachers is a very commendable (sic) one, since haphazardly recruited teachers would destroy the profession". Further, Auala (1999:11) added that, "Namibia

should investigate the training of teachers for entrepreneurship as well as applying education for self reliance". He continued by enumerating factors that negatively influence the image of the teaching profession. They include among others absenteeism, high school dropouts, increase in failure rates of learners, teachers abuse drugs, low qualifications and non-professional behavior of teachers.

Academic Progress

A quality education system aims at providing students with the opportunity to master high academic standards and develop skills for life long learning, sound moral skills and functional mathematical abilities and the ability to collect and critically analyze information (Steen, 1999).

However, quality curriculum should also incorporate and provide for individual differences, closely coordinated and selectively integrated subject matter, and focused on results or standards as well as targets for student learning (Glatthorn and Jailall, 2000). The assessment programmes of the learners' performance should help the teachers to determine whether there is any significant improvements in the outcomes from their teaching or not (Colby and Witt, 2000: 19).

Therefore, a quality curriculum is that which can meet the society's needs and at the same time meeting the needs of the learners while appropriate learning materials are provided by the government to help the learner develop the required skills. This will help the teachers in the schools to assess themselves in terms of their

performance in accomplishing what is in the curriculum and how relevant it is to the students.

The learning Environment

Learning can take place anywhere, but the positive learning outcomes generally sought by educational systems happen in quality learning environments. (UNICEF, 2000:7). UNICEF (2000) classified learning environment into physical (access to quality school facilities like water and sanitation), psychological (safe and peaceful) and service delivery (provision of quality health care services and nutritional policies) (see also Semper, 1996). The learning environment has been shown to be strongly correlated with pupils' achievement in mathematics in India (Carron and Chau, 1996) as well as class size that also plays an important role in improving the quality of education (Hanushek, 1998). Well-maintained schools (in terms of school buildings and grounds, sufficient space for learning) help to improve the educational achievements and needs of the learners. Psychologically, for quality education to be maintained in any education system, the environment must be peaceful, and safe for all the learners. In some schools the learning environment is poor. Learners are not disciplined, and behave in the way that suits them. In such an environment, there is a high risk of girls becoming pregnant (Bergmann, 1996).

Learning environment can also include facilities like sports facilities. In many of the schools that the researcher visited, sports fields were not available. These are useful for physical education, as part of the school curriculum. "Physical education is important for

the learners' attention span or level of concentration and plays an important role in the learners' personality building and social adjustment" (Mwamwenda, 1995:55). There is therefore, need for schools to have sports fields and sporting equipment.

Governance

Quality education encourages schools to have clear goals and objectives set by governing boards made up of people from the community, parents, principals and supervisors which can help in the learners' academic achievement. These selected groups of governing boards help the principal to run the school effectively. A system without a good administration does not function well. Musaaazi (1994:43-47) says that the administrators showed help to see that there are good teachers, enough and quality teaching materials, and that appropriate funding needed by the school for its maintenance and function is provided.

In Namibia, some heads of schools may not have undergone any formal training on leadership or management skills. So, training the principals and teachers will help them to maintain a quality system of education.

Family Support System

The family support system plays an active role in the maintenance of quality education in the society because, the family first sees the need for education in a child's life. Research have shown that children that come from a loving, caring and understanding family background do better in their learning processes than children

without a caring family (Sullivan, 2000; Culkin, 1999; Henderson, 1987; Patten, 2000). The family support also includes sharing financial responsibility at all levels of education. A quality education system therefore needs a sustainable financial support and also an effective and efficient management system. If there is sustainable provision of quality health care services and nutritional policies that can help learners to concentrate more on their studies, learners will achieve the desired education outcomes (Carron and Chau, 1996). In most of our schools, learners complain of going to school without food in the morning and they walk long distances to their schools. Such learners may not perform well as expected.

In addition, an extensive body of research has found what many parents and educators already know that children prosper when their parents are actively involved in their education (UNICEF, 2000). Research has also shown that support from families, including greater family involvement in children's learning, is a critical factor leading to high-quality education (NCES, 1999:4; Willms, 2000; Caron and Chau, 1996). All these help in improving quality education in any education system.

Learning materials

Learning materials like textbooks are very important factors in any education system because, they help the learners to develop and master some reading and writing skills. This helps them in their academic work. Learning materials should be designed with local materials in teaching the learners because they make

learning more meaningful if the learners are familiar with the context of the materials. Access to quality learning materials gives the learners the opportunity of expanding their knowledge and also grow with the world of technology. Schools should have libraries and learners encouraged to use the materials in the library. Such materials should encourage learners to explore different perspectives and form their own opinions. Different cultures, races, sexes, social groups and ages should be taught at schools in respect to the goal of equity. The materials should use unifying themes and important concepts rather than presenting a series of facts. The materials should provide the learners' opportunities to arrive at their own conclusions about what needs to be done based on thorough research and study rather than being taught that a certain course of action is best. The learning materials should aim to strengthen learners' perception of their ability to influence the outcome of a situation (NAAEE, 1996).

Improving quality education needs a lot of commitment from all stakeholders (especially the educators). It is not the burden of the government alone nor that of the international bodies, but, also that of the parents and the entire society. For instance, a three-week seminar was held at Harvard University in July 2001 where educational leaders, decision-makers, managers, policy analysts and planners discussed the new insights and strategies for effectively tackling the pressing issues on quality education.

The participants at the conference examined issues related to the definition, assessment and pursuit of quality education in the context of the social, technical and economic changes sweeping the world. Some of the issues discussed included the following:

- How to define quality in the context of broader national developmental goals and objectives.
- How to ensure the definition of coherent, integrated education policies.
- How to plan and implement quality improvement programs.
- The to strengthen systems for assessing and monitoring educational quality.
- The quality standards and the key performance indicators to be used, and
- What other countries are doing improve quality education and what works best for them and why (Brown, 2002:1).

Nevertheless, their main emphasis was on strategies balancing concerns about quality with ongoing efforts to increase access, equality and manage resources efficiently in order to improve quality. But in whichever way quality education is considered, the values and needs of countries are very important. In order words, the perspectives of national development objectives in education contribution a lot to the successful pursuit of economic-social goals.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the research design, the population, the data collection instruments and methods used to collect data from the sample are described. Data analysis methods are also given.

Research Design

In this study information was obtained from the secondary school teachers in the Windhoek Education Region on their perceptions of the factors that affect quality education in secondary schools. The study made use of, principally, the qualitative method in obtaining the required information. The qualitative method is useful when seeking to describe human experience or behavior. It relies principally on the written or spoken word or the observable behavior of the person being studied as the principal source of data for analysis. The purpose of such research is to obtain a greater understanding of the issues as seen from the unique viewpoint of the people being studied (in this study, the secondary school teachers in Windhoek Education Region) (Bloland, 1992). However, the quantitative method was employed (using percentages) while entering the data in the computer in order that the responses from the teachers would be compared. The use of qualitative research approaches combined with quantitative methods in this study (Luzzo,

1991:5) greatly helped in explaining our understanding of the perceptions of the teachers with regards to what quality education is, and the factors involved.

Population

The target population for the study was all the 1110 secondary school teachers from the 50 secondary schools in the Windhoek Education Region (MBEC, 1999:6, 88). The Windhoek Education Region, where this study was conducted covered the Otjozondjupa, Omaheke and Khomas administrative zones. There were altogether 16 secondary schools and 261 secondary school teachers in Otjozondjupa; 10 secondary schools and 154 secondary school teachers in Omaheke; 22 secondary schools and 695 secondary school teachers in the Khomas region (MBEC, 1999:4). The reason for using this population is that the Windhoek Education Region has the highest population of teachers than all the other regions and can be a good representative of the teachers' population in the country (EMIS, 1998:45-56).

Sample size

A total sample size of 14 secondary schools and 230 secondary school teachers in the Windhoek Education Region were selected for this study. These figures represented 28% of the population of secondary schools and 21% of secondary school teachers respectively. These proportions of schools and teachers selected were to ensure an adequate coverage of the population of secondary schools and teachers in the Windhoek Education Region (EMIS, 1998:13).

The teachers were used in the study because of their involvement in the education system.

That is without teachers the schools will never exist.

Sampling procedures

The Windhoek Education Region was divided into three zones namely, Khomas, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa. Each of the zones, constituted a stratum of the population. The method of stratified sampling was first used to select the number of schools and the number of teachers that were sampled from each zone in the Windhoek Education Region. Using the stratified sampling technique, the number of schools and teachers to be studied from the zones under the Windhoek Education Region were as follows: Otjozondjupa, four Secondary schools and 61 teachers; Omaheke, three schools and 43 teachers, and Khomas, seven schools and 126 teachers. These figures also represented about 28% of the schools and 21% of the teachers in each of the zones (See Table 1).

Table 1: Number of Secondary Schools in the Windhoek Education Region.

	Education Zone			Total
	Omaheke	Khomas	Otjozondjupa	
Number of school	10	22	16	50 (48)
Number of schools selected	3	7	4	14

The stratified sampling technique is essential where the units within the population under study (in our case, the teachers) are not identical (because of the geographical location where they work) but can be grouped together (that is, the education zones) such that

within one education zone, the units are nearly identical with respect to the study variables (Patton, 1990:183-4).

In order to get the specific schools, the researcher obtained the list of secondary schools in each of the education zones in the Windhoek Education Region from the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. The simple random sampling method was then applied in selecting the particular schools to be studied from the zones. The selected schools in each education zone are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Sampled Schools (N=14)

Zone	Schools
Omaheke	Wennie Du Plessis Secondary School Gymnasium Secondary School Paresis Secondary School
Otjonzondjupa	Okhandja Senior Secondary School Otjiwarango Secondary School Donatus Secondary School Epako Junior Secondary School
Khomas	Windhoek High School Centaurus High School, Pioneers Boys Emmanuel Shifidi Secondary School Augustinieum Secondary School Windhoek Technical High School Jan Jonker Afrikaner High School.

From the list of secondary school teachers in the selected schools in each of the education zones, the simple random sampling method was again applied to pick the names of teachers to administer the instrument to. This method produced the names of the 61

teachers from Otjozondjupa, 43 teachers from Omaheke and 126 teachers from the Khomas education zone (see Table 3).

Table 3: Number of Secondary School Teachers in the Windhoek Education Region.

	Education Zone			Total
	Omaheke	Khomas	Otjozondjupa	
Population of teachers	154	695	261	1110
Sample size selected	43	126	61	230

The Principals of the selected schools helped the researcher to identify the teachers whose names appeared in the sample from their schools.

The simple random sampling is appropriate in any study where the units within the populations are identical or nearly identical with respect to the study variable which in this study were the factors affecting quality education (Borg and Gall, 1998:220). More so, through simple random sampling, every teacher from the selected schools had an equal chance of being assigned to the sampled group (that is, the randomly selected secondary school teachers). The simple random sampling method also permits generalization from the sample to the population it represents and is a fair comparison of the samples in the study (Bickman and Rog, 1998:163; Patton, 1990:182).

Research Instruments

The instrument for this study was a questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher. In order to test the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was given to the supervisor and also sent to the Head of the Department of Statistics, University of Namibia for comments and suggestions. The comments from these experts were incorporated into the questionnaire before its administration.

The questionnaire was made up of three sections. Section A sought demographic information of the teachers and comprised seven questions. Section B has only question eight and sought to find out the teachers' perception of quality education. While section C had questions nine to 24 that addressed how the teachers ranked the given factors of quality education in order of importance and how these factors contribute to the attainment of quality education in Namibia's schools.

The questionnaire sought information from the teachers on their perceptions of quality education; factors that contribute to the attainment of quality education, the major obstacles to the attainment of quality education and suggestions on how to attain quality education in Namibia.

Administration of Instruments

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher to the teachers in all the selected schools in Khomas region. A period of four days to one week was allowed for the teachers to complete the questionnaire, after which the researcher went and collected

them. The differences in duration for the teachers to complete the questionnaire were because some teachers specifically requested the researcher to come back after one week and collect the completed questionnaire.

In the Otjozondjupa and Omeheke regions, the researcher administered the questionnaires personally to the teachers and waited for them to complete the questionnaire. Not all the questionnaires were collected immediately because some teachers did not finish completing them. Self addressed and stamped envelopes were left with the Principals of those schools, who collected the questionnaires from the teachers after completion and sent them to the researcher through the mail.

In addition to administering the structured and unstructured questionnaires, some secondary school teachers and five Principals of secondary schools were interviewed by the researcher to find out what they considered to be the factors that affect quality education in Namibia and what can be done to attain quality education. Their views, opinions and suggestions have been incorporated in this report.

Research Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter from the University, the supervisor and the Windhoek Educational Director to permit her to conduct the research in the schools. These letters were taken to the Principals of the sampled schools, and the teachers were briefed on the purpose and procedure of the research.

Data Analysis

The questionnaires were coded and the data entered into the computer using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme. Frequency tables using percentages were run for each component of the questionnaire. The results are given in Chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The analyses of the data obtained during the course of the study are presented in this chapter. The questionnaire, being the main instrument used, addressed the teachers' perceptions on quality education and asked the teachers to enumerate the factors that they thought affected quality education, the obstacle, which they experienced and to suggest how quality education could be attained in the schools.

General and Demographic Characteristics of Teachers

The first part of the questionnaire dealt with the general and demographic characteristics of the teachers studied in terms of name and location of schools where the teachers were drawn, their sex, age, teaching grades and their qualifications.

Table 4 gives the number and percentages of teachers from all the 14 schools that were sampled.

Table 4: Number of teachers per school (N =230)

Name of School	Number of Teachers (%)
Windhoek High School	11 (4.8)
Centaurus High School	13 (5.7)
Pioneers Boys	16 (7.0)
Emmanuel Shifidi Secondary School	19 (8.3)
Augustinicum Secondary School	22 (9.6)
Epako Junior Secondary School	17 (7.4)
Donatus Secondary School	17 (7.4)
Otjivwologo Secondary School	11 (4.8)
Paresis Secondary School	15 (6.5)
Okahandja Senior Secondary School	19 (8.3)
Windhoek Technical High School	24 (10.4)
Jan Jonker Afrikaner High School	21 (9.1)
Wennie Du Plessis Secondary School	19 (8.3)
Gymnasium Secondary School	6 (2.6)
Total	230 (100)

Table 4 shows that the distribution of the teachers from the sampled schools was not equal. The highest number of teachers 24(10.4%) came from Windhoek Technical High School, followed by Augustinicum Secondary School 22(9.6%), Jan Jonker Afrikaaner High School 21(9.1%), Wennie Du Plessis Secondary School 19(8.3%), Emmanuel Shifidi Secondary School 19(8.3%), and Okahandja Senior Secondary School 19(8.3%). The least number of teachers came from Gymnasium Secondary School 6(2.6%).

Table 5 gives the total number and percentage of teachers studied according to the educational zones the teachers came from.

Table 5: Teachers classified according to the location of school within the Windhoek Education Region (N=230)

Educational Region	Number of Teachers	Percent (%)
Khomas	126	54.8
Omaheke	43	18.7
Otjozondjupa	61	26.5
Total	230	100.0

Table 5 shows that 54.8% of the sampled teachers were from the Khomas Education zone, 26.5% were from Otjozondjupa and 18.7% from the Omaheke zones. These figures also reflected the population proportion of teachers in the Windhoek Educational Region where over 50% were from the Khomas administrative zone.

Table 6 shows the number and percentage of teachers studied according to their sex

Table 6: Teachers' sex (N = 230).

Sex	Number of teachers	Percent (%)
Female	124	53.91
Male	102	44.35
Not indicated	4	1.74
Total	230	100.00

Table 6 shows that 124(53.91%) of the teachers sampled in the Windhoek Education Region were females while 102 (44.35%) were males. However, four (1.74%) of the teachers did not indicate their sex.

Table 7: Teachers' age (N=230)

Age interval (years)	Number of teachers	Percent (%)
15-24	14	6.1
25-34	67	29.1
35-44	76	33.0
45-54	36	15.7
55-64	10	4.4
Not Indicated	27	11.7
Total	230	100.0

From Table 7, it can be seen that there were more teachers (33.0%) in the sample between the ages of 35 – 44, followed by those whose ages were within the range of 25 –

34 (29.1%). About 68.2% of the sample were below 45 years of age. The majority of the teachers were, therefore, still young and likely to remain in the teaching profession for a long time before retirement. However, some of the teachers whose ages were within the 45 - 54 years range expressed the desire to resign from teaching. During the interview, some of the teachers indicated that;

Our counterparts in the private companies, ministries and other parastatals earn more money than those of us in the teaching field. The Principals and the Government of Namibia are not appreciating our efforts. There are no proper incentives to keep us going in the teaching field. Above all the teachers are really neglected in the society.

It can be inferred from the above statement that some teachers are very dissatisfied with their conditions of service and have the desire to leave the teaching profession and go for greener pastures or at least move into professions where their services might be better appreciated by their employers. If many qualified teachers leave the teaching profession in search of greener pastures, it might affect the students learning processes and adversely affect the quality of the products of the education system in Namibia. This might also lead to a situation where the teachers sought for a second job in addition to their present teaching jobs. A study in Latin American countries found that children in schools where many teachers work in other jobs in addition to teaching are 1.2 times more likely to have lower test scores and/or higher grade repetition (Willms, 2000) than countries where teachers concentrate only on their teaching jobs in order to achieve higher test scores. Effective teachers are highly committed and care about their students (Craig, Kraft, and du Plessis, 1998). They therefore need supportive working conditions to maintain these positive attitudes.

Teachers' qualifications

The respondents' qualifications are given in Table 8.

Table 8: Teachers' qualifications (N = 230)

Teachers qualification	Frequency (%)
Grade 12 only	8(3.47)
Teacher Training	10(4.35)
Diploma in technical skills	18(7.83)
Other Diplomas	47(20.43)
B.ED	35(15.22)
BETD	40(17.39)
PGDE	67(29.13)
M.ED	5(2.17)
Total	230(100)

Table 8 reveals that 68.27% of the teachers were holders of professional teacher qualifications while 31.73% did not. The percentages of teachers with Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), Postgraduate diploma in education (PGDE) and Masters degree in education (M.Ed) were 15.22%, 29.13% and 2.17%, respectively. This shows that many teachers in the Windhoek Education Region were professionally qualified.

Choy and Ross (1998) and Mullens et al. (1996) conducted a research and noted that professionally trained teachers enhanced student learning more than unprofessional teachers. Students learn more from teachers who are qualified in the subject they are teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goldhaber and Brewer, 1997; Monk and King, 1994). It has also been observed in China, Mexico and Guinea that teachers who had little training before entering the profession neither master the subject matter they taught nor the pedagogical skills required for good presentation of the material (Carron and Chau, 1996). This affects education since student achievement, especially beyond basic skills

depends largely on teachers' command of subject matter (Mullens, Murnance and Willett, 1996) and their ability to use that knowledge to help students learn. It is, therefore, not surprising that students in the Windhoek Education Region have continued to perform well in the various examinations including the Junior Secondary Examinations (EMIS, 1998: 74) and the H(IGCSE) (Vd Merwe, 1998:61) possibility because of the large number of professionally qualified teachers. Highly qualified teachers display a higher command of subject matter content and the ability to use that knowledge to help students learn (Mullens, Murname and Willet, 1996: 139-157).

Table 9 shows the grades the selected teachers were teaching. The teachers were grouped according to whether they were teaching the Junior Secondary School grades only, the Senior Secondary School grades only or taught at both the Senior and Junior secondary school grade levels.

Table 9: Teaching grades of the teachers (N = 230)

Teaching grade of teacher	Frequency (%)
Taught at the Junior Secondary School only (grade 8 - 10)	97 (42.17)
Taught at the Senior Secondary School level only (grade 11 - 12)	23 (10.00)
Taught both at the Junior and the Senior Secondary School levels (8 -12)	96 (41.74)
Not indicated	14 (6.09)
Total	230 (100)

Table 9 shows that there were slightly more teachers teaching at the Junior Secondary School level (42.17%) than those teaching at both the Junior Secondary School and the

Senior Secondary School levels (41.74%). Only 10% of the teachers taught in the Senior Secondary School grades. However, 14 teachers (6.09%) did not indicate what grades they taught. The next section of this study discusses the teachers' responses to the questions of the study.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY EDUCATION

The following question was addressed: What are the secondary school teachers' perceptions of quality education in the Windhoek education region schools?

For this question, the teachers were required to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or were neutral to some suggested perceptions of quality education. The teachers' responses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Teachers' perceptions of quality education in Windhoek Education Region (N = 230)

Items	Number of teachers (Percent (%))					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not indicated
1). It is the acquisition of basic skills and writing, reading and Mathematics.	107(46.5)	75(32.6)	17(7.4)	11(4.8)	10(4.3)	10(4.3)
2). It is the development of sound moral character and good citizenship	97(42.2)	88(38.3)	22(9.6)	13(5.7)	4(1.7)	6(2.6)
3). Acquisition of general knowledge about our country, science, technology and our world.	90(39.1)	103(44.8)	19(8.3)	9(3.9)	1(0.4)	8(3.5)

4). The understanding of the fundamental discipline of science, literature, history and technology.	78(33.9)	101(43.9)	30(13.0)	12(5.2)	1(0.4)	8(3.5)
5). Social /Cultural development and physical fitness	62(27.0)	99(43.0)	31(13.5)	20(8.7)	3(1.3)	15(6.5)
6). The preparation of young people either for post secondary education/ training or for work	105(45.7)	71(30.9)	26(11.3)	14(6.1)	6(2.6)	8(3.5)
7). A functional use of the second language (Afrikaans, German and English).	59(25.7)	94(40.4)	29(12.6)	28(12.2)	10(4.3)	10(4.3)
8). Student's mastery of the objectives and goals of education should be tested at the end of every grade.	134(58.3)	71(30.9)	9(3.9)	2(0.9)	7(3.0)	7(3.0)

By combining strongly agree and agree responses of the teachers, it could be seen from Table 10 that over 70% of the teachers perceived that quality education in Windhoek was:

- Students' mastery of the objectives and goals of education which should be tested at the end of every grade (89.2%);
- Acquisition of general knowledge about our country, science, technology and our world (83.9%);
- The development of sound moral character and good citizenship (80.5%);
- The acquisition of basic skills, writing, reading and Mathematics (79.1%);
- The understanding of the fundamental discipline of science, literature, history and technology (77.8%); and
- The preparation of young people for either post secondary education/ training or for the world of work (76.6%).

These perceptions are in line with those indicated by UNICEF (2000), when they defined quality education to include "content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life; outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society". These perceptions were also supported by Dare (1999) who defined quality education as "a system that provides students with knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and work habits needed to become productive fulfilled citizens".

From the interviews, 40% of the female teachers believe that quality education can be attained if parents can be actively involved in their children's education by helping the children in the homework, be active in school activities which on the other hand helps in promoting the morals of the teachers. More so, parents should provide enough childcare for the children despite some barriers like poverty, cultural and socioeconomic isolations, single-parenthood, non -English literacy and time (The National PTA, 1992:18). Findings of State of the Iowa in one of their researches and found out that, parents involvement gave result to higher achievement in reading, home works were done even on weekends, student achievement improves and good relationship between the parents, the school and the teacher (Davies, 1998; Epstein, 1992; Lontos, 1992). While the male teachers believe that output is more important than the input in order words the process justifies the means.

The difference between the two strongly coincides with what Dare and the status quo educators argued on in this study as seen above. It could be related to Dare's like in the

case of the female teacher, they believe that quality education can only be attained from the input and not the output. The male teachers on the other hand agreed that output is more important than the input.

In considering the perceptions of the older teachers (that is by age not by experience) about quality education in the schools, their responses were not quite different from that of the young ones. The following factors were considered:

- Indiscipline;
- Rights of the child;
- Corporal punishment;
- Violence; and
- Late coming to school.

Both the young and the old teachers agreed that discipline should be an important aspect of quality education because it will help not only the learners to be responsible citizens but also sanity in the society, that undisciplined children breeds violent citizens in the society. However, they also agreed that every child should have the right of being educated but the elderly teacher comments that parents should be responsible for their child's late coming to school while the young teachers opinion was that the child should be responsible for coming to school late.

From the two perspectives, one can easily ascertain that the young teachers' want the learners to be democratic and responsible for their actions.

OTHER PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY EDUCATION AS EXPRESSED BY THE TEACHERS

While Table 10 summarized the teachers' opinions to some suggested perceptions of quality education in Windhoek education region, they (the teachers) were further requested to indicate on their own, some other perceptions of quality education. The teachers' responses are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11: Teachers' expressed perceptions of quality education (N=230)

Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
Evaluation of learning objectives should be based on the mastery of the subject matter	6	6
Gifted learners should be allowed to move ahead of others	1	1
The development of inquisitive minds (independent of critical thinking)	15	15
It is the acquisition of knowledge and skills to compete in the job market	6	6
Education based on the need of the society	5	5
Accommodating other peoples culture	2	2
Theoretical application of knowledge achieved right from primary school	3	3
It is nurturing and development of learners' individual abilities	9	9
Education that provides good values, leaders and stable future occupation	12	12
Education that helps prepare one for all changes and the basic things of life	1	1
A real understanding and practicing of democracy in Namibia	1	1
There should be a real relationship between what the learner knows and what is learnt	4	4
Acquisition of religious and moral education is part of quality education	7	7
Unsuccessful grade 10 learners should be allowed to repeat in their schools	5	5
Education that instills ethical values	3	3
Education that enjoys international recognition	5	5
Education that leads to increased productivity	6	6
Education that is a source of investment on young people who are leader of tomorrow	6	6
Education that will help to improve standard of living of a society	3	3
Total	100*	100

* This means that not all the 230 teachers for the study responded to this question.

Table 11 shows that the teachers' expressed perceptions of quality education in Windhoek education region are different from the ones listed in Table 10. Over six percent of the teachers who freely gave their expressed opinion perceived quality education to include:

- Education that provided sound moral values, leaders and stable future occupation (12%);
- The development of inquisitive minds for independent thinking (10%);
- The nurturing and development of learners' individual abilities (9%);
- Acquisition of religious and moral education (7%);
- Evaluation of learning objectives should be based on the mastery of the subject matter (6%);
- The acquisition of knowledge and skills to compete in the job market (6%);
- Education that leads to increased productivity (6%);
- Education that is a source of investment on young people who are tomorrow's leaders (6%).

The fact that the teachers' perceptions of quality education (Table 10 and 11) are in line with various authors (Dare, 1999; UNICEF, 2000), showed that the teachers have an understanding of what quality education is.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ATTAINMENT OF QUALITY EDUCATION

The research question that was addressed in this section was: What are the factors that the secondary school teachers perceive to be contributing to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek education region?

To answer the question, the teachers were required to indicate if they strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed or were neutral to some suggested factors that contributed to quality education. The teachers' responses are given in Table 12.

Table 12: Factors that contribute to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek Education Region (N=230).

ITEMS	Number of teachers (Percent (%))					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not indicated
1). Large class sizes (from 30 and above) are difficult to manage by a teacher and so, there is no thorough assessment conducted in such situations	175(76.1)	31(13.5)	6(2.6)	1(.4)	7(3.0)	10 (4.3)
2). Poor learning environment (building) can affect quality education in our country	132(57.4)	67(29.1)	15(6.5)	7(3.0)	3(1.3)	6(2.6)
3). Funding schools by the government does not in any way contribute to the attainment of quality education.	50(21.1)	44.(19.1)	27(11.7)	39(17.0)	58(25.2)	12(5.2)
4). Supervising the schools by the educational directors to see how the teachers are doing their works is an important factor in attaining quality education	104(45.2)	83(36.1)	15(6.5)	12(5.2)	6(2.6)	10(4.3)
5). Sending teachers to workshops /seminars at the least twice in a year	102(44.3)	76(33.0)	26(11.3)	13(5.7)	6(2.6)	7(3.0)
6). Providing qualified teachers in all the schools in Namibia.	145(63.0)	63(27.4)	6(2.6)	1(4)	3(1.3)	12(5.2)
7). Providing textbooks to all the schools in Namibia is difficult to attain	79(34.3)	70((30.4)	32(13.9)	23(10.0)	12(5.2)	14(6.1)
8). Making sure that all the teachers in the schools are qualified in their subject of specialization	131(57.0)	75(32.6)	12(5.2)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	8(3.5)
12). Developing curriculum that is suitable to the needs of Namibia	153(66.5)	55(23.9)	9(3.9)	2(0.9)	2(0.9)	9(3.9)

Combining the strongly agreed and agreed responses, Table 12 revealed that the majority of the teachers perceived the following factors to be contributing to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek education region schools. They included:

- Developing curriculum that is suitable to the needs of Namibian learners (90.4%);
- Providing qualified teachers in all the schools in Namibia (90.4%);
- Reducing class sizes to below 30 in all classes (89.6%);
- Making sure that all teachers in the schools are qualified in the subject of specialization they are teaching (89.6%);
- Building laboratories and libraries in all the schools in Windhoek education region (54.1%);
- Good learning environment in the country (86.5%); and
- Equipping all the laboratories and libraries in the schools in Windhoek education region (86.5%).

The identified factors that affect quality education were in line with the views expressed by the World Bank Review (1995:4), which noted that the main ways in which governments could help improve the quality of their education were setting standards in relation to facilities, staffing, curriculum, supporting inputs, monitoring performance and monitoring the quality of programmes. Also, Voigts (1998:52) agreed that lack of adequate facilities and equipment were major reasons for low educational quality and

affected learners' achievement. Thus, provision of adequate facilities and equipment in schools alongside a good curriculum and programme could improve the quality of the products of the education system in Windhoek education region and in the country too.

Apart from indicating their agreement and disagreement to the suggested factors contributing to quality education as summarized in Table 12, the teachers were requested to write down those factors, which, in their opinions, contributed to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek education region. These views have been summarized in Table 13.

Table 13: Teachers' own identified factors contributing to the attainment of quality education (N= 230).

Items	Number of responses	Percent (%)
Pass marks of 30% are unacceptable	4	6.5
Automatic promotion of learners is a disaster to both the learner and the teacher and needs to be discouraged	9	14.5
Grading students (A=80%; B=70%, etc) should not be compromised	5	8.1
There should be proper discipline learners	6	9.7
Principals should be allowed to discipline learners	6	9.7
Parents and stakeholders should cooperate with teachers	4	6.5
Stakeholders, learners should be involved in Curriculum development and decision making	5	8.1
Supervisors should effectively monitor progress in schools	7	11.3
Teachers salary should be increased	4	6.5
Learners and teachers should be accountable and responsible citizens	10	16.1
Dedicated teachers are very important	2	3.2
Total	62*	100

* Not all the teachers responded to this question.

Table 13 shows that the factors enumerated by the teachers' as contributing to the attainment of quality education in the country were:

- Learners and teachers should be accountable and responsible citizens (16.1%);
- Automatic promotion of learners is a disaster and needs to be discouraged (14.5%);
- Supervisors should effectively monitor progress in schools (11.3%);
- There should be proper discipline of learners (9.7%); and
- Principals should be allowed to discipline learners (9.7%).
- Grading of students using the scaling A = 80%, B = 70%, etc. should not be compromised (8.1%);

The importance of accountability and being responsible citizens in the education system do not need to be over emphasized. Sections 479-482 of MEC (1993) dwelt on this subject matter for the educators, subject specialists and school principals. In setting up the Task Force on the rationalization of the roles and functions of inspectors, education officers, subject specialist and school principals, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (1993:89) stated, "One of its principal (Task Force) responsibilities is to help develop clear accountability. Reforms for which no one is directly responsible are unlikely to get very far". There is need for both the teachers and learners to be accountable and develop into responsible citizens for the survival of the individual and the nation. Teachers should conduct themselves in a manner that the learners would see them as models of good citizens, which they (the learners) can emulate.

The teachers are of the view that only pupils who have passed a particular grade should be promoted to the next one. Automatic promotion to the next grade need to be

discouraged as it led often to promoting learners who were ill equipped for the next higher grade. In an interview on this issue, some teachers indicated that strict measures are now applied in schools to see that the learners master what they are supposed to know before going on to the next grade. There is need, therefore, for schools and teachers to communicate their expectations clearly to the learners, give frequent and challenging assignments and monitor performance regularly so that weak learners are discovered in time and special attention given to them (see also Craig, Kraft and du Plessis, 1998). This would facilitate improved performance of learners and enhance their promotions to the next grade while minimizing failures.

The quality of administrative support and leadership is critical for both the learners and teachers, and in the running of schools. Teachers need governments who are supportive of the education systems, that advocates for better conditions of service and professional development, respecting teachers' autonomy and professionalism, desirous of knowing how well the learners are performing before their promotional examinations (UNICEF, 2000). Unfortunately, “the activities of school supervisors in Namibia are not promising at all”, were the comments of some teachers interviewed. The teachers said that they were not aware if there had ever been any supervisor in their schools for the past seven months. Supervisors should be encouraged to visit schools more often in order to assess the education system accurately well and make recommendations to the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture on the shortfalls in the performance of the teachers in using appropriate teaching methods, assessment of the learners and learners performances in order for remedial steps to be taken, to rectify the situation.

Indiscipline is on the increase in the secondary schools and this might adversely affect the quality of education in the country and the quality of the products from the secondary schools. Principals of schools should therefore be allowed, under proper guidance by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture, to discipline learners. However, the Principals, for effective implementation of discipline in the schools would need the cooperation of the parents, the communities, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, teachers and all other stakeholders.

TEACHERS' RANKING OF FACTORS OF QUALITY EDUCATION

This section addresses the research question: How do secondary school teachers in Windhoek education region rank the identified factors of quality education which included quality teachers, facilities, environment, funding, instructional and learning materials?

Table 14: Teachers ranking of factors of quality education (N=230)

Factors of quality education	Ranking of quality factors by teachers (%)
Qualified teachers	1(90.4)
Facilities	2(86.5)
Environment	3(86.5)
Funding	4(80.2)
Instructional and Learning materials	5(64.7)

Table 14 shows that having qualified teachers was ranked highest, first by (90.4%) of the teachers among the factors of quality education. This was followed in the second place by facilities (86.5), and good environment indicated by the teachers as the third (86.5%). In

the fourth place was funding indicated by (80.2%) of the teachers. Instructional and learning materials, though still rated higher by the teachers in 5th place by (64.7%), was ranked lower. One would have expected that adequate funding of schools, which could affect the nature of the school environment, facilities at the school, and quality and type of instructional and learning materials would have been rated higher than the fourth place, but the teachers did not seem to think so. Probably this is an indication that other factors are considered as much more important in attaining quality education in the school environment than the mere funding.

OBSTACLES TO ATTAINMENT OF QUALITY EDUCATION

The study answered the following research question in this section: What are the major obstacles encountered by the teachers in the attainment of quality education in Windhoek Education Region?

The teachers' suggested obstacles to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek Education Region are given in Table 15.

Table 15: Obstacles to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek Education Region (N=230)

Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
Disintegration of discipline in the classroom	44	8.6
Learners misuse time and lack discipline to work alone	27	5.3
Teachers are stressed with too much work load	9	1.8
Ministry often support learners and parents against teachers	18	3.5
Lack of qualified teachers in both primary and secondary schools	60	11.7
Learners do not watch educative programs on the television	15	2.9
Learners are ignorant of the benefits of education	18	3.5
Learners lack interest and have low moral values	12	2.3
Parents relinquished their responsibilities to the teachers	27	5.3
Lack of functional use of English	21	4.1

Lack of educational facilities	49	9.6
Change BETD programmes because it is of low standard	4	0.8
Learner centred education is creating problems at schools	6	1.2
Classes are over -crowded	34	6.6
Standard of education is lowered to accommodate every learner	5	1.0
Teaching package not attractive	19	3.7
Experienced teachers leave the profession for better paid jobs	15	2.9
There are chaotic circumstances in schools	12	2.3
There is problem in the socio economic background of learners in schools	7	1.4
Integration of learners and teachers in black and white schools	2	0.4
There should be more libraries for the learners in schools	11	2.1
Education is affected by cultural differences in classes and schools	7	1.4
There is a problem of age differences in Namibian schools	10	1.9
Promotion is not given to the teachers when they are due for it	21	4.1
There are inadequate career challenges for both teachers and the learners.	13	2.5
Teachers are neglected	15	2.9
Teaching is not a profession any more	7	1.4
Absenteeism and late coming of teachers	15	2.9
Stealing and using narcotics by both the teachers and learners	10	1.9
Total	513*	100

* The total number of teachers is more in number because, some gave more than one obstacles.

The main obstacles to the attainment of quality education in Namibian schools that were identified by the teachers' given in Table 15 were:

- Lack of qualified teachers in both the primary and secondary schools (11.7%);
- Lack of educational facilities in the schools (9.6%);
- Disintegration of discipline in schools (8.6%);
- Overcrowded classes (6.6%);
- Learners' misuse of time and lack of discipline to work alone (5.3%);
- Promotion is not given to the teachers when they are due for it (4.1%); and
- Teaching package not attractive (3.7%).

The teachers' identification of lack of qualified teachers as one of the main obstacles to quality education has been identified over and over in the study by the respondents and is very much in line with recent publications (MBESC, 2001). The MBESC has identified this as a hindrance to the attainment of quality education also. Since schools exist because of students, a quality education system puts the students at the center of the educational process and their achievement becomes the schools' first priority. Continuous efforts should be made by the government to ensure that there are sufficiently qualified teachers in all primary and secondary schools in the country. This would enhance the quality of the products of the education system.

The lack of educational facilities (well equipped laboratories, libraries, relevant textbooks) and equipment (computers, sports facilities) affect many schools in the Windhoek Education Region. According to Voigts (1998: 52), lack of educational facilities lowered the quality of education and affected the level of students' performance. In Latin America, a study that included 50,000 learners in grades three and four found that children whose schools lacked classroom materials and had inadequate libraries were significantly more likely to show lower test scores and higher grade repetition than those whose schools were well equipped (Willms, 2000). Similar studies, conducted in Botswana, Nigeria and Papua New Guinea, by Pennycuick (1993) supported Willms (2000) that proper educational facilities help learners in their educational pursuit. There is therefore, urgent need to provide the necessary educational facilities and equipment and improve the existing ones, in the secondary schools, in order to improve the quality of products coming out of these schools.

Discipline is important for the survival and achievement of the goals of any system. The teachers interviewed in this study complained about lack of discipline in the secondary schools. According to them, learners took authority into their hands by threatening teachers and fellow students. Some learners have been found with dangerous weapons, for example, small knives, yet others have been found smoking in hostels, in defiance of school rules. Some teachers said that the level at which discipline had disintegrated in the schools put them (the teachers) at the mercy of the learners. The learners claimed to have rights, which were acquired in the time of Justice Ishmael Mohammed, when he ruled out corporal punishment in the schools in April 1991 (Auala, 1999:24). Otaala (1995:27), noted that Namibian schools and other institutions where large groups of people were found, for example, in the factories, prisons, and other institutions, were facing serious problems of indiscipline which involved destruction of property and sometimes threatened personal safety of students and staff alike.

Zimba et al (1997:1) concluded that Justice Mohammed's ruling had led to rampant break down of discipline in Namibian schools. To back up their assertion, they cited cases in schools where, students took alcohol, abused other students, vandalized, and stole school property, verbally and physically assaulted teachers, carried knives and guns to school, and other flagrant violation of school rules.

It is being suggested that all the stakeholders should cooperate with the teachers and principals of schools to ensure that there is sanity and discipline in our schools.

Teacher's employment packages, for example, good salaries, housing, and transport allowances, help the teacher to concentrate more on teaching the learners than looking for other means of meeting individual needs. In many countries, teachers' salaries have declined in recent years and teachers are not always paid on time (Postlewaithe, 1998), but in Namibia the only problem mentioned by the teachers was that, " some of us are leaving the teaching field because inflation has taken up our salary". It is also important to note that teachers, like other civil servants, should be promoted when they are due. Incentives for hard work in the form of cash or certificate awards should be encouraged in schools, as added incentives, for the teachers to perform efficiently.

The reduction of classes to manageable sizes (below 30) should be encouraged in the secondary schools. Although class size has not consistently been linked to student achievement (Pennycuick, 1993), a reduction in class sizes will facilitate proper supervision of the learners while they are in class. The marking and correcting of previous exercises, before new ones are given, would be properly done with a small sized class than with a large one.

SUGGESTED STEPS TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ATTAIN QUALITY

EDUCATION IN WINDHOEK EDUCATION REGION.

This section addressed the research question: What steps should be taken in order to attain quality education in Windhoek Education Region? The teachers' responses to the above question are shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Suggested steps to be taken to attain quality education (N=230)

Item	Number of times the teachers indicted the item	Percent (%)
Teachers should be more diligent to carry out their duties	6	1.4
Best subject teachers should be employed from any nation	24	5.6
Teachers must be trained to be effective	34	7.9
Class size should be adjusted to 25 learners to a teachers	33	7.7
Motivate teachers by increasing salaries and official houses	42	9.7
Develop curriculum to meet the needs of Namibian learners	19	4.4
Partly do away with the old education system	8	1.8
Allow grade 10 learners to repeat at least once in school	7	1.6
Consider educational problem leading to street children	3	0.7
Facilities should be upgraded and maintained	25	5.8
There should be support from parents and community to teachers	11	2.6
School terms should be short	9	2.1
Probably, more schools should be constructed for more learners	8	1.8
Replace learner - centered education with teacher centered education	6	1.4
There should be inclusive education in Namibia	5	1.2
Increase, allocate , distribute equally educational materials	31	7.2
Reintroduction of corporal punishment in Namibian schools	27	6.3
GRN should revisit the old education policies	21	4.8
We should have our own peculiar and independent education system	3	0.7
Educate the community on the essence of education	7	1.6
Parents should be involved in the education of their children	18	4.2
Student teachers should be carefully selected for training	24	5.6
Suitable system for special learners in preparation for their future career	11	2.6
Foster relationship between teachers and learners	14	3.2
Access to internet for both teachers and the learners	3	0.7
Consistency in application of school rules and regulations	7	1.6
Education should be made a priority in /to Namibians	16	3.7
Parents must take up their roles as primary educators	2	0.5
There should be good learning and teaching environment	7	1.6
Total	431*	100

* The responses were more than the number of teachers because some gave more than one answer.

The teachers' responses (Table 16) show that the following steps should be taken to attain quality education in Windhoek education region. They are (in order of highest percentage responses):

- Teachers should be motivated by increasing their salaries and accommodation should be provided (9.7%);
- Teachers should be trained to become more efficient and effective (7.9%);
- Class sizes should be adjusted to 25 learners (7.7%);
- Increase, allocate, and distribute educational materials equally (7.2%);
- Corporal punishment should be reintroduced in Namibian schools (6.3%);
- Facilities in the schools should be upgraded and maintained (5.8%);
- Best subject teachers should be employed from any nation (5.6%); and
- Student teachers should be carefully selected for training (5.6%).

The suggested steps by the teachers to attain quality education in the Windhoek Education Region supports those suggested by UNICEF (2000). According to UNICEF (2000), "Many teachers face transportation and housing obstacles that hinder them from getting to school on time and staying until school hours are over. Many teachers held second jobs, which detracted their time and energy they spent in the classroom". This affected the quality of education in the country because the teachers never had adequate time for the learners. Teachers therefore needed

improved salaries and accommodation as an incentive for quality performance at work.

Teachers should be supported with in-service as well as external workshop training to improve significantly their abilities to use child-centred teaching and learning behaviors. Teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, should help teachers develop teaching methods and skills that enhance learners' understandings in and outside the classroom. This needs to be encouraged for the benefit of quality education in Namibia. Selection of teachers for training should be based both on aptitude and interest in the teaching profession by the applicant for sustainability of the profession.

Although many studies have found a relationship between class size and student learning (Willms, 2000, cited by UNICEF, 2000), class size has not been consistently linked to student achievement (Pennycuik, 1993). This is because the relationship between class size and academic achievement rarely took into consideration of other key quality factors such as teachers' perceptions of the working conditions. Therefore, reducing the class size without consideration of the teachers' professional development, improved facilities such as school structures (building), libraries, computers, among others, may not lead to enhanced academic achievement. Yet other studies, for example, (Haimson, 2003) have shown that reducing class size, particularly in early grades is one of the most effective strategies to increase student learning, lessen teacher attrition, lower the number of disciplinary referrals and enhance parental involvement.

The re-introduction of corporal punishment as a way of instilling discipline in schools, as suggested by the teachers, would need to be handled with caution because of its possible abuse and arbitrary use. Implementers of the decision themselves, need to be disciplined, have good morals and good sense of judgment of situations before being authorized to effect corporal punishment.

Schools in Namibia have been known to vary in the allocation and distribution of education facilities and materials (MBESC, 2001). There are also marked differences in the school fund paid by learners in different schools. In a country where one of the goals of education is equity, this is unhealthy. Since the secondary schools are under the same management, none should not be treated as if it is better than others because, unhealthy atmosphere is created without being noticed and the only ones that suffer is the learner.

In conclusion, the society as a whole will benefit from the education system if all the above mentioned factors are critically examined and properly implemented. The next chapter (five), will give the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The importance of teachers in the implementation of education policies in any educational system cannot be over emphasized. They are the ones who are closer to the learners and are the implementers of the curriculum. Accordingly, they are best suited to inform the policymakers of the strengths and weaknesses of the policies in fulfilling their set goals. Their understanding of what quality education is, the factors that affect quality education, and the obstacles to Namibian Government's attempts to provide quality education to the people are therefore important for the development and economic growth of the country.

This study investigated the secondary school teachers' perceptions of the factors that affect quality education in the Windhoek Educational Region. These factors included: qualified teachers, class size, school facilities and the school environment. It also sought to find out the teachers' own personal suggestions of the obstacles that hindered the attainment of quality education. These obstacles included, lack of qualified teachers in our schools, lack of educational facilities and disintegration of discipline in the classroom.

QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study addressed the following questions

1. What are the Windhoek Education Region secondary school teachers' perceptions of quality education?
2. What are the factors that secondary school teachers' perceive to be contributing to the attainment of quality education in the country?
3. How do the secondary school teachers' in Windhoek Education Region rank the following factors of quality education: quality teachers, facilities, environment, funding, instructional and learning materials?
4. What are the major obstacles encountered by the teachers in the attainment of quality education in the Windhoek Education Region?
5. What steps should be put in place in order to attain quality education in the Windhoek Education Region?
6. Is there any difference between the female and male teachers in Windhoek education region on their perception on quality education?
7. Is there any difference in the perception of quality education between the young and old teachers in the Windhoek education region?

The interview and questionnaires were used in collecting the teachers' responses to the questions. Stratified sampling and simple random sampling were used in the selection of schools and teachers from the different education zones and schools in the region, respectively. The information collected was displayed using frequency tables and percentages.

With regards to the teachers' perception of quality education in Windhoek education region, the study found that 89.2% of the 230 teachers perceived quality education as ensuring the students' mastery of the objectives and goals of education, assessed at the end of each grade. Another 86.6% of the teachers perceived quality education as the preparation of young people either for post-secondary education/training or for work; 83.9%, perceived quality education as the acquisition of general knowledge about Namibia, about science, history and technology; the development of sound moral character and good citizenship (80.5%); the nurturing of learners' individual ability and developing their abilities into cognitive thinking (80%) and the acquisition of basic skills of writing, reading, and mathematics (79.1%). Other expressed perceptions of quality education were: education that provided good values and stable future occupation (78%); the development of independent critical thinking (70%) and acquisition of religious and moral education (60%).

Therefore, based on the teachers' responses, quality education can be defined to include the students' mastery of the objectives and goals of education, preparation of young people either for post secondary education/training or for work through the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge in science, arts and mathematics, and correct attitudes, which will foster the attainment of the national goals of education in the country and positive participation in the activities of the society.

The key factors that were identified to be contributing to the attainment of quality education were: developing curriculum that is suitable to the needs of Namibian learners

(90.4%); providing qualified teachers in all the schools in Windhoek education region (90.4%); making sure that all teachers in the schools are qualified in the subject of specialization (89.6%); equitable distribution of funds to all the schools in Windhoek education region (88.7%); building laboratories and libraries in all the schools in Windhoek education region (86.9%); good learning environment in the country (86.5%); and reducing class size to between 25 – 30 learners in all classes (89.6%).

It is clear from the teachers' responses that for quality education to become a reality in not only in the Windhoek education region, but also in the all the schools in Namibia, emphasis should be placed on the development of curriculum that will take into consideration the yearning and desires of Namibians and qualified teachers employed in all the schools to implement the curriculum. There should be equity in the establishment of laboratories, libraries and provision of other educational facilities like computers, and sports equipments in all the schools.

The teachers ranked the provision of qualified teachers in all the schools in Windhoek education region highest (92.6%). This was followed by provision of facilities and a conducive learning environment as factors contributing to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek education region.

The major obstacles to the attainment of quality education enumerated by the teachers were:

1). Lack of qualified teachers in both the primary and secondary schools (11.7%): It has been shown (Mullens et al. (1996)) that teachers with too little preparation before entering the profession did not master the subject matter they taught or the skills required for good presentation of the materials. This affected educational quality since student achievement, especially beyond basic skills, depended largely on the teacher's command of the subject matter and their ability to use that knowledge to help the students learn. Teachers need to undergo proper training, particularly in the content of what they are going to teach after their training. They need to be qualified in the subjects that they would teach in the schools.

2). Lack of educational facilities in the schools (9.6%): Willms (2000) has shown that lack of classroom materials and adequate libraries significantly affected educational performance of learners and led to higher-grade repetition. The conditions of infrastructure, availability of textbooks and learning materials and class sizes all influence the teacher's experience as an educator (UNICEF, 2000).

3). Disintegration of discipline in schools (8.6%): Well-managed schools and classrooms contribute to educational quality. There is need for students, teachers and principals of schools to agree upon school rules and policies. These policies and rules should be clear and understandable to all concerned. Constructive discipline and reinforcement of positive behaviour communicates a seriousness of purpose to the students (Craig, Kraft and du Plessis, 1998) and should be encouraged in the secondary schools

4). Overcrowded classes (6.6%): Research has shown (Haimson, 2003: 23), that reducing class size, particularly in the early grades, is one of the most effective strategies to increase student learning, lessen teacher attrition, lower the number of disciplinary referrals, and enhance parental involvement. It has also been shown to be one of the few methods that narrow the achievement gap between ethnic and racial groups. The benefits of class size reduction in the early grades last throughout a student's educational career. In 4th, 6th, and 8th grade, students who attended small classes in the early grades were found to be significantly ahead of their regular-class peers in all subjects. By 8th grade, they were still almost a full year ahead of their peers (Haimson, 2003:23).

5). In high school, students who had been in smaller classes in the early grades had significantly lower drop-out rates, higher grades, and received better scores on their college entrance exams. For those who attended a smaller class in grades K-3, the difference between black and white students who took college entrance exams was cut in half (Haimson, 2003:23). Overcrowding of classrooms, apart from making it difficult for the teachers to pay attention to individual learners who need their assistance, would increase the burden of marking and correcting the learners' assignments.

6). Other obstacles to attaining quality education in Namibia included, learners' misuse of time (5.3%), lack of discipline to work alone (5.3%); parents relinquishing their roles of caretakers of their children to the teachers (5.3%) and Parental support is essential in the children's education. The parents' education has been known to influence the parent-child interactions related to learning. Children whose parents had primary school education or less, were more than three times likely to have low test scores or grade

repetition than children whose parents had at least some secondary schooling (Willms, 2000).

7). Promotion not given to the teachers when they are due (4.1%) and teachers not having attractive pay package (3.7%): Teachers' working conditions affect their ability to provide quality education. Teachers' remuneration significantly plays an important role in the teacher's delivery of their duties (UNICEF, 2000). Low remuneration was perceived not be commensurate with one's qualification, commitment effort and service, and this can result in neglect of duty and the learners still suffer it, even to the society at large.

CONCLUSION

Based on the outcome of the study, the teachers in the Windhoek Education Region demonstrated knowledge of the factors that contributed to and obstacles hindering the attainment of quality education as seen in Tables 10-16. Their perceptions of quality education in Windhoek education region schools and factors that affect the attainment of quality education are in line with what a number of authors have observed (UNICEF, 2000; Willms, 2000; Pennycuick, 1993; Mullens et al, 1996; Voigts, 1998; Zimba et al, 1997).

The majority of the teachers accepted the fact that quality education in Windhoek education region schools can be improved if the curriculum was geared towards the achievement of the national goals of education with qualified teachers in their subject areas being appointed in all schools to teach the learners. Furthermore, the teachers

agreed that there was also urgent need to restore discipline in the schools in order to create an enabling school environment for the teachers to impart knowledge to the learners and for the learners to study and acquire the necessary skills for higher education or fit in the world of work. Infrastructure and learning facilities in the schools needed to be improved (where they already existed) or provided (where none existed). The teachers' conditions of service needed to be improved to avoid the mass resignation of teachers, which will invariably affect the quality of teaching and the quality of the products of the learners in the Windhoek education region secondary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Teachers, not only in the Windhoek region, but also in other regions should be the principal players in the implementation of the curriculum and in ensuring that the principal goals of education for quality are achieved. According their welfare in terms of an attractive salary package and other incentives should be given top priority by the Government and the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. According to some of the interviewed teachers in the study, if their salary is constantly adjusted upward in line with inflationary trends, the teaching profession would become more interesting and many dedicated and intelligent individuals would opt to take up the teaching jobs. This will result in skillful learners being able to produce and thereby increasing the human resources in the country.

2. Only teachers who are qualified in the subject areas should be employed to teach those subjects in the Windhoek education region by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. This is because, quality teachers who are specialized (that is those who are most capable of helping their students learn) should have deep mastery of both subject matter and pedagogy. The teachers used for the interview in this study were of the opinion that subject teachers should be employed from any nation without discrimination instead students of staying in a school without the needed teachers for each subject because no Namibia teacher can fill up the position. This is done not only for the benefit of the learners but also for the country.

3. The Colleges of Education and the Faculty of Education at the University of Namibia, before accepting students for training as classroom teachers should properly screen them and find out if they are willing and interested in teaching. Some principals suggested this during the course of this study. According to them, the training institutions should send delegates to secondary schools and select for training those learners who are both interested and intelligent. This will ensure that only students who have both the aptitude and desire to teach are trained and employed as teachers. Quality teachers will be produced through such a process.

4. More qualified teachers should be appointed and distributed in the Windhoek education region by the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation to teach in the secondary schools in proportion to the number of learners in the school. This will help to reduce the class sizes to between 25 and 30. The reduction in the class size will help the

teachers to supervise the learners effectively, mark the class work and assignments and return them to the learners in time. The learners benefit here because of the special attention given to each one of them and their performance increases too. So Namibia with its abundant natural resources should put quality education as a priority with the aim of having quality human resources.

5. The Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation should make sure that educational and teaching materials (textbooks and stationeries, chalkboards, computers, to mention but a few) should be readily available and distributed to the schools equally and equitably in the Windhoek education region to enable the teachers and the learners to concentrate on their learning activities. Learning experiences becomes more meaningful with the required teaching materials for the learners and the teachers than without them.

6. Implementation of disciplinary measures by the teachers on the learners should be revisited in the secondary schools in the Windhoek education region not only for the benefit of the learner, but also to the society. Principals of schools should be given maximum support, by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, the teachers, parents and the entire community, to discipline learners in schools. Such disciplinary measures which may include expulsion, suspension from schools, detention in schools for some hours after school hours, should be left at the discretion of the School Principal and School Boards for final decision instead of going to the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport

and Culture. These measures would act as serious deterrents to other learners who might want to misbehave in school.

7. Government should upgrade existing facilities like libraries, science laboratories and other school facilities or provide these facilities where they are currently not in existence in the Windhoek education region. This is necessary to respond to the needs of the different learners and to adapt to the changing world, especially in today's world, where use of computers has become the order of the day in different fields of life. It is therefore essential that foundation knowledge of computers be provided to the learners before they leave school. Government should provide computer facilities to all the schools. Laboratories and libraries need to be equipped with up-to date equipment and books, respectively.

8. The parents in the Windhoek education region should be vigorously encouraged to be involved more in the education of their children (learners) especially in the areas of helping the learners do their homework. This helps a lot in improving the educational quality not only for the learners but also for the country at large.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

Dear Teacher,

This questionnaire is seeking information from the teachers on the perceptions of the factors that affect quality education in Windhoek Education Region. You are kindly requested to answer the questions as honestly as possible by ticking (✓) the answer. The responses given will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

SECTION A

1. Name of your school -----
2. Location of your school -----
3. Your Sex (A) Female (B) Male
4. Your Age
5. What grade (s) are you teaching?
 - (a) Grade 8
 - (b) Grade 9
 - (c) Grade 10
 - (d) Grade 11
 - (e) Grade 12
 - (f) Administrative work (only as a Principal)
6. Teacher's academic qualifications
 - (a) Grade 12 certificate only
 - (b) At what level are you qualified to teach?

- (i) Qualified as teacher for the junior secondary schools only
- (ii) Qualified to teach only at the senior secondary school level
- (iii) Can teach at junior and senior secondary levels.

7. Indicate the Professional Teacher qualifications you possess.

(a) Teacher training certificate only

(b) BETD

(c) Post graduate diploma in education

(f) Masters degree in Education

(h) Any other, please specify -----

SECTION B

Answer questions 1-23 by choosing any of the following alternatives (i) Strongly agree (SA), (ii) Agree (A), (iii) Neutral/Do Not Know (N), (iv) Disagree (D), (v) Strongly Disagree (SD).

What is your perception of quality education in Windhoek education region?

		SA	A	N	D	SD
1	It is the acquisition of the basic skills of writing, reading, reading and mathematics.					
2	It is the development of sound moral character and good citizenship.					
3	Acquisition of general of general knowledge about our country, about science, technology and our world					
4	The understanding of the fundamental discipline of science, literature, history, and technology					
5	Social and cultural development and physical					

	fitness.					
6	The preparation of young people either for post-secondary education/ training or for work.					
7	A functional use of the second language (Afrikaans, German and English).					
8	Students' mastery of the objectives and goals of education should be tested at the end of every grade.					

9. Please specify below (if any) other perceptions of quality education in Windhoek education region which have not been mentioned in numbers 1-8

SECTION C

Factors that contribute to the attainment of quality education in Windhoek

Education Region include the following?

		SA	A	N	DA	SDA
10	Large class sizes (from 30 and above) are difficult to manage by a teacher and so, there is no thorough assessment conducted in such situations.					
11	Poor learning environment (building) can affect quality education in our country.					
	Hostility of teacher to the learner can affect quality education					
12	Funding schools financially by the government does not in any way contribute to the attainment of quality					
13	Supervising the schools by the educational directors to see how the teachers are doing their woks is an important factor in attaining quality education					
14	Sending teachers on workshops and seminars at least twice in a year					
15	Providing qualified teachers in all the schools in Windhoek					

- (a)-----

- (b)-----

- c)-----

- d)-----

- e)-----

- f)-----
