

Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum Approaches in European Countries

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Abstract:

The aim of this study is exploring some of the main approaches of Religion, Ethics and Moral education Curriculum in European countries. Two of the main research questions include: (1) What are the main approaches?, and (2) how it is designed religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to grades in European countries?

Hypothesis of the study include: (1) Religion, ethics and moral education curriculum in general is spread up in all of the grades of pre- university education, and (2) occupies a small proportion of taught time in pre- university education in European countries.

The method is based on quantitative approach supported by qualitative approach. The instruments used in the study include: (1) format for review of official documentation, (2) Interviews. The sample consists of civic education curriculum teachers in (a) two primary schools, (b) two secondary schools in Tirana, Albania.

The study conclusions highlight that Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught: (1) in primary and in lower secondary education only in 5 European countries or in 15.63% of them. (2) from grade 1st up to grade 12th in 13 European countries or in 40.63% of them. (3) as flexible curriculum where schools or local authorities decided in two European countries or in 6.25% of them, and (4) is not taught in the core curriculum in 8 European countries or in 25% of them.

The knowledge and skills in history 6th and 7th of social curriculum in Albania is about religions facts or learning about religion concept.

Key words: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum, learning religion, learning about religion, learning from religion

1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The international Commission on Education for the twenty-first century (Learning: The Treasure Within, 1996) has stated four principles, four pillars of education: (1) learning to know (acquiring the instruments of understanding), (2) learning to do (to be able to act creatively on one's environment), (3) learning to live together, learning to live with others (so as to participate and co-operate with other people in all human activities), (4) learning to be, the aim of development is the complete fulfilment of human being in all the richness of his personality. This can be seen as elements of a holistic approach to education, an integrative understanding of education, where body-mind-spirit are not fragmented and isolated but integrated. Education must simultaneously provide maps of a complex world in constant turmoil and the compass that will enable people to find their way in it (UNESCO, 1996, 85).

According to Council of Europe (2005) knowledge of religions is an integral part of knowledge of the history of mankind and civilizations. It is altogether distinct from belief in a specific religion and its observance. Even countries where one religion predominates should teach about the origins of all religions rather than favor a single one or encourage proselytizing.

Religious freedom and freedom of education according to Religion Monitor (2008) are two principles which influence the place of teaching about religions in the education systems of EU member countries. They represent two fundamental principles

of the constitutions and legal frameworks of most EU member countries.

In France, following the 1905 law, even 1882 Jules Ferry law, the separation of church and state is almost complete. The very principles that underpin the French Republic, particularly *laïcité*, have been established by excluding the church and religion from public places and thus from schools. Only since the 1990s, and in particular since 2002, has the school curriculum been opened up, not to religion as such, but to knowledge of religious facts (Pépin, 2009).

In England according to Eberle (2011) the queen is the head of Church of England and defender of the faith. In this country, the education system is built on this close collaboration between church and state, and the teaching of religion took on an obligatory character very early on in all state maintained schools. Teaching today, however, is no confessional and multi faith.

In the Netherlands according to Hooker (2009) the separation of church and state goes back a long way, to the 1848 constitution. The country is one of the most secularized in Europe, but religion continues to play an important role. The Dutch multicultural model, which for a long time was known as *pillarization*, has its origins in the way in which Dutch society (just as in Belgium) was divided into *pillars*, representing the different groups in society according to their religious or philosophical affiliations.

The three other EU countries where there are state churches are: (1) Finland- the Lutheran Evangelical Church and the Orthodox Church, (2) Denmark- the Lutheran Evangelical Church, and (3) Greece- the Greek Orthodox Church (Pépin, 2009).

It is an ongoing task to reflect on our public education systems. Schools are seen as learning organisations. Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum has to be aware of contemporary tendencies of cultural and religious plurality,

individualization and secularisation. (1) Plurality: Competing belief systems; People can choose freely to live without religion and religious denominations have to compete for the loyalty of their constituencies in an open marketplace of ideas. (2) Individualization: each of us has to find his/her own way. (3) Secularization: The role and influence of institutionalised religion is diminished, but trends of desecularization are obvious. Secularism promoted science and technology as the basis for common belief and public policy. Religion and ethics, on the other hand, were restricted to the emotional sphere. Since religion and ethics could not be subjected to empirical critique, they were assumed to be private, personal and subjective (Schreiner, 2002).

The aim of the study is to explore some of the main concepts as well as the approaches of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum in European countries.

Research questions include: (1) what are the main concepts of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum? (2) What are the main approaches of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum in European countries? (3) What is the big map of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum implementation in European countries? (4) How it is structured religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to grades in European countries? (5) How it is structured religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to taught time in European countries? (6) How it is structured religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to curriculum type in European countries?

Hypothesis of the study include: #1: There is a small map of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum implementation in European countries. # 2: Religion, ethics and moral education curriculum in general is spread up in all of the grades of pre- university education. # 3: Religion, ethics and moral education curriculum occupies a small proportion of taught time in pre- university education in European countries.

Tyler (1949) in his tentative list of common elements in the social studies curriculum' concepts suggest to include *an effective social group must provide both for individual needs to be satisfied and for integrated productive group activity*. Hence, group organization involves problems of: (a) ethical and moral standards for the individual and the group, (b) the place for religions in individual and group life (Tyler, 1949; 91).

Basic Concepts of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum

Learning religion describes the situation where a single tradition is taught as the religious education curriculum and is taught from inside, so to speak. The teachers are expected to be believers in the religion themselves and the object of the instruction is to enable pupils to come to believe in the religion or to strengthen their commitment to it. Typically, a specific religious community controls the curriculum and the methods of teaching as well as the training of teachers. In situations where there has been a strong anti-religious secular movement, one can perfectly understand the desire and the need on the part of religious communities to retain control over their own instruction rather than falling into the hands of an unsympathetic secularity. A variation of the learning religion approach is faith-based Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum, where various religions are presented in separate teaching, but still from the point of view from one religion (Schreiner, 2002).

Learning about religion means that instead of being taught from the inside, religion is taught from the outside, from a descriptive and historical approach. Holy scriptures like the Bible or the Qur'an are not taught as religious or sacred books, but as literature, often from a non-religious perspective. It involves learning about the beliefs, values and practices of a religion but also seeking to understand the way in which these may influence behaviour of individuals and how religion shapes

communities. Sometimes this kind of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is called education in comparative religion or religious studies following disciplines evolved by the study of religion such as the history of religions or the phenomenology of religions or the ethnography of religions (Jackson, 1997).

A disadvantage of this learning about religion approach is that it tends to focus upon the content of religions and, therefore, the pupils are often not motivated to study it. Teaching the facts seems to be not enough (Hull, 2001, 4).

Learning from religion gives pupils the opportunity to consider different answers to major religious and moral issues, so that they may develop their own views in a reflective way. This approach puts the experience of the pupils in the centre of the teaching. The question is to what extent, and in what ways, children and young people can gain educational benefit from the study of religion. The principle objective of this kind of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is making a contribution to the pupils' moral and spiritual development.

In the first two kinds of religious education, learning religion and learning about religion, religion is taught for its own sake, whether as an object of faith to which the children are summoned, or as an object worthy of critical study. However, in the third kind, learning from religion the central focus switches to the children as learners (Hull, 2001, 5).

This differentiation of three main models is somehow idealistic because good Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum can include elements from different models. In a situation where teachers can expect little knowledge of religion at all, learning about religion must be a central element in Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum. And even providing time and space for religious experiences like silence exercises or meditation which can be seen as part of learning religion can enable cognitive and affective development (Errickers, 2001).

Legal Arrangements of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum

Looking at the responsibility for Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum in European countries we can differentiate between three clusters or types due to different arrangements:

a) Confessional approaches, where religious communities are responsible for Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum. Mainly a voluntary subject for the members of a religious community sometimes a compulsory subject. Content, teacher and pupils belong to a common faith; the content is oriented to the specific religion/confession.

b) Religious studies model where the state is exclusively responsible for Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum such as Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Scotland. Where Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught non-confessionally, it is usually a compulsory subject for all pupils; where Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is confessionally oriented there is often a range of different subjects, and a separation of the pupils in different faith groups out of which pupils and/or parents can choose one, or sometimes Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is a voluntary subject.

This formal distinction has clearly its limits, because terms like confessional or non-confessional have different meanings in different languages and contexts due to historical developments.

Where Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is non-confessionally oriented, it must be emphasised that this approach is not automatically understood as the consequence of a state church or of a majority religion. Rather it is considered the realisation of state neutrality and the individual freedom of religion. The state does not have to influence the contents of the subject, but to be neutral in religions and world-views. Where Religion, Ethics and Moral

Education Curriculum is confessionally oriented, e.g. in the south of Europe, partly in Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Germany, central and eastern Europe different kinds of religious education are offered. In Austria, Belgium and partly in Germany confessional religious education is not limited to Catholic or Protestant teaching but it includes also Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist and other forms of religious education. In many cases there is an opportunity to opt out and to choose alternative subjects such as ethics or philosophy on an equal basis.

Most of the countries with a religious studies approach, e.g. Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Scotland do not have a general right to opt out, although in some countries it is given to members of religious minorities. General aims are to transmit religious knowledge and understanding, as well as to deal with human experiences. The neutrality of the state and the right of religious freedom are to be guaranteed with this approach as well. In this case, however, it occurs in a different way than with denominational religious education. The religious studies approach is carried out under the sole authority of the state. Instruction is not to be neutral in respect to values but must be neutral in respect to worldviews including religion, a demand which corresponds to the religious neutrality of the state. From this perspective, this neutrality guarantees that this kind of religious education is equally acceptable to all denominations and religions.

These two models are often seen as the two ends of a spectrum. An overlapping area can be identified in which there is cooperation between the state and religious communities in designing Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum syllabuses. Examples of this are the Agreed Syllabus system in England and Wales but also the shared responsibility of state and religious communities for the Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum syllabuses in Germany. Cooperative models between religious communities and state agencies e.g.

in matters of content, teacher training, curriculum etc. Under this label we find confessional, e.g. Germany, Italy, Austria models and non-confessional models, e.g. England and Wales, Scotland.

By *integrative* Religion Education Alberts (2008) understands non-confessional education about religion where the entire class is taught as a whole. The opposite of integrative Religion Education is *separative-confessional* Religion Education where the class is split up so that the pupils receive different education according to their confessional adherence. In Germany, for instance, classes are normally divided into groups receiving Roman-Catholic, Protestant or general non-religious ethics.

Alberts (2008a) in her own programmatic article *Didactics of the Study of Religion* identifies three tasks for the didactics of the study of religion: (1) analysis of models of education about religions, (2) development of concepts for education about religions, (3) engagement in practical issues related to education about religions, including participation in political and public debates about religion, religious plurality, education, and religious education.

Both religions according to Davidsen (2010) as well as secular outlooks on life and representations of religions should not only be studied, but also are subject to ideology critique. Religions should be criticized if, for example, they breach human rights. Representations of religions should be criticized if they present an untrue and ideologically distorted or essentialist depiction of the religion in question. The huge problem is that many Religion Education textbooks repeat ideological and essentialist stereotypes. It is worth emphasizing that Alberts (2008) criticizes both overly negative representations, such as the representation of Islam in Swedish textbooks as essentially violent, fundamentalist and intolerant, and overly positive ones, such as the Western misconception that Buddhism is inherently open and tolerant.

2. METHODOLOGY

The main method used in *Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum Approaches in European Countries* research is mainly quantitative, but supported by qualitative one. The techniques used in the study include: (1) review of official documentation, (2) observation by self-declaratory instruments. Instruments used in *Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum Approaches in European Countries* research are: (1) Format for review of official documentation, (2) Interviews. The format for the review of official documentation, as well as interview format contains dimensions and statements that focus on: (1) main concepts of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum, (2) main approaches of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum, (3) map of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum implementation, (4) structure of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to grades, (5) structure of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to taught time, (6) structure of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to curriculum type.

Sample of *Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum Approaches in European Countries* research is been compounded by civic education curriculum teachers in (a) two primary schools, (b) two secondary schools in Tirana. The selection of schools was intentional based on the list of pilot schools that have implemented competencies based curriculum. Teachers were willing to answer the questions of interviews. The findings of the two instruments were summarized in synthetic way to use as the basis for the analysis of the findings. For the processing of data collected two main analyses were used: (1) descriptive analysis, (2) typology qualitative analysis.

Limitations of the study include: (1) The instruments used included a relatively small number of respondents to

collect the necessary data, (2) The data obtained from interviews were focused on teachers of two schools in Tirana only, (3) Sample of the study is not representative and the conclusions of the study can not be generalized.

3. RESULTS

Religion, Ethics and Moral Education curriculum includes subjects whose aim is to teach the principles and history of one or more religions and subjects such as Ethics or Philosophy which aim is to determine how to live and behave in accordance with human and social principles (Eurydice, 2013). The following are summary data on Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design in European countries.

Table 1: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design in European countries

No	Country	Grades	Number of classes	Type of curriculum	Deviations
1	Belgium	1 st – 12 th	50	Defined curriculum	
2	Bulgaria	10 th -12 th	50	Defined curriculum	
3	Czech Republic	N/A	0		
4	Denmark	1 st – 7 th ; 9 th - 10 th	50	Defined curriculum	
5	Germany	1 st – 12 th	50	Defined curriculum	Grades 3 rd and 4 th = 150 classes
6	Estonia	N/A	0		
7	Ireland	1 st – 12 th	130	Defined curriculum	
8	Greece	3 rd – 9 th	50	Defined curriculum	Grades 3 rd – 6 th = 70 classes
9	Spain	1 st – 10 th	50	Defined curriculum	Grade 10 th = 120 classes
10	France	N/A	0		
11	Italy	1 st – 10 th	120	Defined curriculum	Grades 6 th – 10 th = 50 classes
12	Cyprus	1 st – 12 th	50	Defined curriculum	
13	Latvia	1 st -3 rd	40	Defined curriculum	
14	Lithuania	1 st -12 th	30	Defined curriculum	
15	Luxembourg	1 st -10 th	140	Defined curriculum	Grades 7 th -9 th =130 classes; grade 10 th =40 classes
16	Hungary	7 th - 12 th	20	Defined curriculum	Grades 11 th -13 th =40 classes
17	Malta	1 st -11 th	150	Defined curriculum	Grades 9 th -11 th =80 classes
18	Netherlands	Flexible	Flexible	Defined curriculum	
19	Austria	1 st -9 th	70	Defined curriculum	
20	Poland	N/A	0	Defined curriculum	
21	Portugal	1 st -12 th	40	Defined curriculum	Grades 5 th -9 th =30 classes; grades 10 th -12 th =50 classes
22	Romania	0- 9 th	30	Defined curriculum	
23	Slovenia	N/A	0		
24	Slovakia	1 st -10 th	30	½ flexible curriculum	113 classes on grades 1 st -4 th ; 113 classes on grades 5 th -9 th ; 20 classes on grade 10 th

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25	Finland	1 st -9 th	35	½ flexible curriculum	171 classes on grades 1 st -5 th ; 142 classes on grades 6 th -9 th
26	Sweden	N/A	0		
27	United Kingdom	Flexible	Flexible	Flexible curriculum	
28	Iceland	N/A	0		
29	Liechtenstein	1 st -5 th	30	Defined curriculum	Grades 4 th -5 th =50 classes
30	Norway	1 st -10 th	65	½ flexible curriculum	427 classes on grades 1 st -7 th ; 153 classes on grades 8 th -10 th
31	Croatia	N/A	0		
32	Turkey	4 th -12 th	50	Defined curriculum	Grades 9 th -12 th =30 classes

Source: Eurydice, 2013

3.1 Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design according to grades in European countries

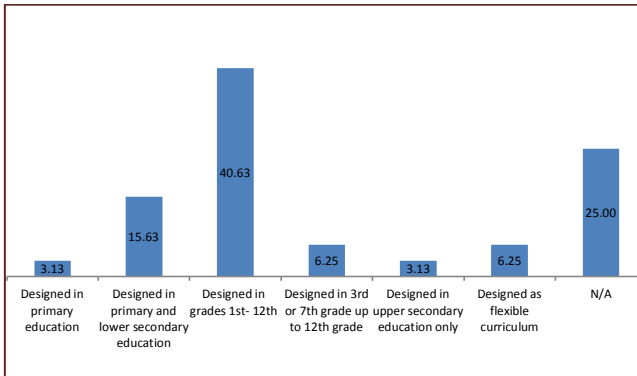
Based on secondary data obtained from Eurydice (2013) it has been presented below data on the development of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum according to grades or key stages in European countries.

Table 2: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design according to grades in European countries

No	Curriculum design according to grades	Number of countries	%
1	Designed in primary education	1	3.13
2	Designed in primary and lower secondary education	5	15.63
3	Designed in grades 1 st - 12 th	13	40.63
4	Designed in 3 rd or 7 th grade up to 12 th grade	2	6.25
5	Designed in upper secondary education only	1	3.13
6	Designed as flexible curriculum	2	6.25
7	N/A	8	25.00
	Total	32	100.00

By analyzing the data obtained on the development of the curriculum by grades it has been resulted that Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught: (1) in pre- primary education only in a country (Romania) or in 3.13% of them, (2) in primary and in lower secondary education only in 5 countries or in 15.63% of them, (3) from grade 1st up to grade 12th in 13 countries or in 40.63% of them, (4) kicks off in grade 3rd or 7th and continues up to grade 12th in 2 countries or in 6.25% of them; (5) takes place only in upper secondary education in a country (Bulgaria) or in 3.13% of them; (6) takes place as flexible curriculum where schools or local authorities decided in

two countries or in 6.25% of them; (7) is not taught in the core curriculum in 8 countries or in 25% of them.



Graph 1: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design according to grades in European countries

3.2 Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design according to taught times in European countries

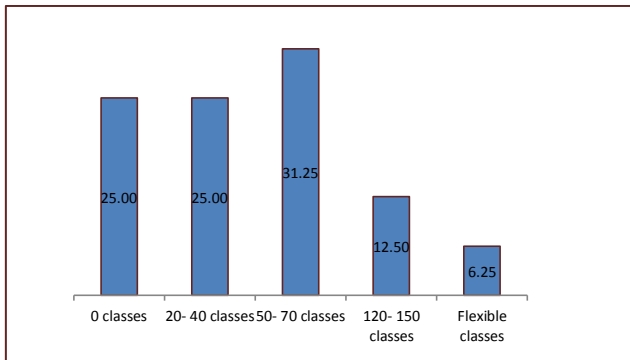
Based on secondary data obtained from Eurydice (2013) it has been presented below data on the development of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum according to classes in European countries.

Table 3: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design according to classes in European countries

No	Curriculum design according to classes	Number of countries	%
1	0 classes	8	25.00
2	20- 40 classes	8	25.00
3	50- 70 classes	10	31.25
4	120- 150 classes	4	12.50
5	Flexible classes	2	6.25
	Total	32	100.00

By analyzing the data on Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum development by classes it has been resulted that: (1) in 8 countries or in 25% of them are held 0 (none) classes, (2) 20- 40 classes are held in 8 countries or in 25% of them, (3) 50-

70 classes are held in 10 countries or in 31.25% of them, (4) 120- 150 classes are held in 4 countries or in 12.50% of them, (5) takes place as a flexible curriculum, where the number of classes are set by schools or local authorities in 2 countries or in 6.25% of them.



Graph 2: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum design according to classes in European countries

3.3 Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum type in European countries

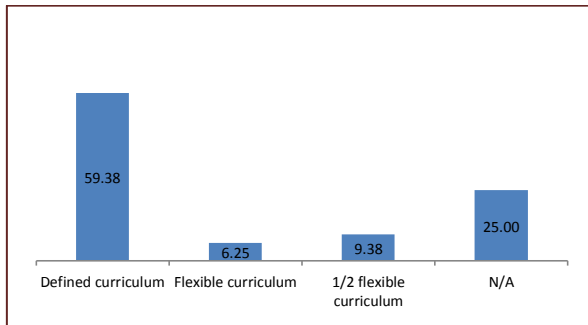
Based on secondary data obtained from Eurydice (2013) it has been presented below data on the development of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum according to curriculum type in European countries.

Table 4: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum type in European countries

No	Type of curriculum design	Number of countries	%
1	Defined curriculum	19	59.38
2	Flexible curriculum	2	6.25
3	1/2 flexible curriculum	3	9.38
4	N/A	8	25.00
	Total	32	100.00

By analyzing the data on Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum by the type of curriculum it has been resulted that: (1) in 19 countries or in 59.38% of them is been developed as the

defined curriculum that means classes are set by the central authorities, (2) in 2 countries or in 6.25% of them is been developed as flexible curriculum where number of classes are determined by schools or local authorities, (3) in 3 countries or in 9.38% of them is been developed as a half flexible curriculum where a number of classes are distributed in grades or in key stages by schools or local authorities, (4) in 8 countries or in 25% of them is not taught.



Graph 3: Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum type in European countries

3.4 Countries specific notes

According to Pépin (2009) In Denmark ‘study of Christianity’ is a compulsory no confessional subject; in Estonia there is an optional no confessional teaching; schools to provide appropriate teaching if a minimum of 15 students are registered.

In Finland new programmes adopted in 2004; organization by confession but no confessional content; recognized denominations can set up a religious course if a minimum of three students registered; in Slovenia there is an optional subject on ‘religions and ethics’.

In United Kingdom (Scotland) there is compulsory no confessional teaching – ‘moral and religious education’; possibility to opt out. United Kingdom (Wales) there is multi

faith teaching; in 2008 new skill based framework for religious education for 3–19-year-olds.

In Belgium there is a compulsory choice in state schools between no confessional moral education and religious education (Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, Orthodox or Protestant); in the Republic of Ireland 94 per cent of primary schools are Catholic; growing number of schools (currently 15) are now multi confessional, set up by parents.

In Italy according to Concordat (1984) Catholic religious education must be offered by schools but it is optional for students; Europe and diversity_21 church recruits teachers paid by the state, chooses the textbooks and defines the curricula; no alternative subject, decisions left to individual school; In Hungary there is an extra-curricular and optional teaching; responsibility lies with the religious denominations concerned; the school makes space available and the state gives a subsidy to pay teachers.

In Latvia since 2004 there is a choice between introduction to Christianity and ethics; schools must provide teaching if minimum of ten students register; in Lithuania there is moral education, with a choice between religious education in one of the recognized traditional denominations and ethics.

In Luxembourg there is compulsory teaching with choice between religious and moral instruction, and moral and social education; in Poland according to Concordat (1998) there is a choice between religious education and ethics; minimum of seven students required to set up a course.

In Portugal according to Concordat (1940) revised in 2004 there is an optional moral and religious education (Catholic); teachers appointed by bishops and paid by state; in Slovakia according to Concordat (2004) there is a choice between religious lessons and ethics.

In Austria there is a religious education financed by the state, under the responsibility of the different churches and

recognized confessions; inter confessional cooperation; in Bulgaria there is part of the elective compulsory subjects and the group of subjects 'social sciences, civic education and religion'; mainly Orthodox teaching.

In Cyprus there is one of the compulsory subjects (mainly Orthodox teaching); pupils of other faiths can be exempted; In Malta there is teaching of the Catholic religion is a compulsory subject in the curriculum; optional for students.

In Germany: according to the Basic Law, religious education is part of the ordinary subjects of a state school; cooperation between the state and religious denominations; teaching mainly Catholic or Protestant; there is inter confessional cooperation; often ethics or another subject is an alternative; situation varies according to the region (*Land*); there are also no confessional approaches, such as in Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg.

In Greece there is teaching of the majority Orthodox religion, part of the compulsory curriculum; optional since 2008 for all students; until then parents wishing to have their children exempted had to declare their religion in their written request to the school.

In Northern Ireland the majority of Protestant children go to state schools and Catholics go to grant aided Catholic schools; only 5 per cent of children go to integrated schools which accept both Protestant and Catholic children. Religious education is compulsory in all grant aided schools; syllabus is common to all (mostly Christian in nature) and has been agreed by the three largest Protestant churches and the Catholic church; revised in 2006, now includes other world religions (Pépin, 2009).

3.5 Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum in Albania

The curriculum according to IZHA (2015) is understood as a system composed of several elements with educational goals,

tied between them, allow the orientation and functioning of education system through educational and administrative plans. The curriculum is based on historical realities, social, linguistic, political, religious, geographical and cultural of the country. The curriculum ensures equal education for every member of society, regardless of ethnicity, gender, social status and other changes.

Social curriculum field in primary education in Albania according to IZHA (2016) is been focused on students opportunities to develop necessary competencies to fulfil their role as members of a multicultural and democratic society. One of learning results in primary education in Albania is been focused on identifying and respecting cultural diversity, ethnic, regional, linguistic, social, economic, technological, political and religious differences of the people.

Social curriculum field in lower secondary education in Albania according to IZHA (2016) is been focused on cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic diversity of the people. In history course of grade 6 there are knowledge and skills on Arab civilization that include: (a) historical conditions of birth and spread of Islam; (b) the features of Arab civilization; (c) the extent of Arab Caliphate; (d) the achievements of the Arab civilization in art, culture and science.

In history course of grade 7 there are: (a) religious changes in Europe; (b) the sources of the Reformation, (c) Protestant doctrine, (d) Catholic reform. The knowledge and skills in history 6th and 7th is about religions facts or *learning about religion* concept.

In upper secondary education in Albania according to IZHA (2016) Social Sciences include Citizenship, History, Geography, Philosophy, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, etc. Social Sciences are developed as a core curriculum in the 10th and 11th- Citizenship, History, geography and philosophy, and as an optional curriculum in the 12th grade- Economy, Sociology, Psychology. Social Sciences emphasize the

development of skills of young people to take responsibility for their lives and to participate as active and competent citizens in society.

3.6 Qualitative analysis

Question: What do you understand by basic concepts: Learning religion, learning about religion, learning from religion, Confessional approaches, and Non- confessional approaches?

The majority of teachers' respondents (79%) answered correctly regarding their meaning and implementation in school curriculum; the others about 21% of them answered not correctly some of the basic concepts. There is a little misunderstanding about Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum' basic concepts between different respondents.

Question: What are the main approaches of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum?

The majority of teachers' respondents (83%) did not offer any answer regarding the religion, ethics and moral curriculum types and implementation; the others about 17% of them answered that religion, ethics and moral curriculum has been implemented in the same way as the other part of curriculum. The minority of respondents claimed the Religion, Ethics and Moral Curriculum is been designed in two forms: (a) as integrated curriculum, (b) as separated curriculum.

Question: How it is designed religion, ethics and moral education curriculum according to grades, taught time, courses in Albanian curriculum?

The most of interviewed respondents (90%) stated that ethics and moral education curriculum started from 1st grade of primary education and continues up to upper secondary education. Meanwhile religion education curriculum in school is based on historical facts only in lower secondary education and in upper secondary education. A very few classes in social

subjects is been dedicated religion education curriculum in pre university education in Albania.

Question: Do you think the way is been designed religion, ethics and moral education curriculum in Albanian curriculum should change? Why? Are you in favour of learning religion curriculum in schools?

The most of interviewed respondents (95%) stated that ethics and moral education curriculum should not change. They have read some arguments in favour of religion curriculum implementation in school curriculum but they did not agree. They argued that in Albania where there are three or more religions it is very difficult to implement learning religion curriculum in schools. They are in favour of learning religion curriculum implementation in religious institutions, not in public institutions. A few of them, around 5% are in favour of learning religion curriculum implementation in schools although there are challenges. The big challenges are related to the curriculum content, teachers of this subject, their trainings, books, etc.

Hypothesis #1: There is a small map of religion, ethics and moral education curriculum implementation in European countries- is been failed.

Hypothesis # 2: Religion, ethics and moral education curriculum in general is spread up in all of the grades of pre-university education- is been verified.

Hypothesis # 3: Religion, ethics and moral education curriculum occupies a small proportion of taught time in pre-university education in European countries- is been verified.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on quantitative analysis as well qualitative analysis it has been resulted the following conclusions:

- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught in pre- primary education only in a European country (Romania).
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum in primary and in lower secondary education only in 5 European countries or in 15.63% of them.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught from grade 1st up to grade 12th in 13 European countries or in 40.63% of them.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum kicks off in grade 3rd or 7th and continues up to grade 12th in 2 European countries or in 6.25% of them.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught in upper secondary education only in a European country (Bulgaria).
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught as flexible curriculum where schools or local authorities decided in two European countries or in 6.25% of them.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is not taught in the core curriculum in 8 European countries or in 25% of them.
- In 8 European countries or in 25% of them are held 0 (none) classes of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum.
- 20- 40 classes of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum are held in 8 European countries or in 25% of them
- 50- 70 classes of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum are held in 10 European countries or in 31.25% of them.
- 120- 150 classes of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum are held in 4 countries or in 12.50% of them.
- In 2 European countries or in 6.25% of them Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is taught as a

flexible curriculum, where the number of classes are set by schools or local authorities.

- In 19 European countries or in 59.38% of them Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is been developed as the defined curriculum that means classes are set by the central authorities.
- In 2 European countries or in 6.25% of them Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is been developed as flexible curriculum where number of classes are determined by schools or local authorities.
- In 3 European countries or in 9.38% of them Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is been developed as a half flexible curriculum where a number of classes are distributed in grades or in key stages by schools or local authorities.
- In 8 European countries or in 25% of them Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum is not taught.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum in some European countries is taught as a compulsory no confessional course.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum in some European countries is taught as an optional no confessional course.
- Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum in a few European countries is taught as a compulsory curriculum.
- One of learning results in social curriculum field in primary education in Albania is been focused on identifying and respecting cultural diversity, ethnic, regional, linguistic, social, economic, technological, political and religious differences of the people.
- In history course of grade 6 of social curriculum field in lower secondary education in Albania there are knowledge and skills on Arab civilization that include:
(a) historical conditions of birth and spread of Islam; (b)

the features of Arab civilization; (c) the extent of Arab Caliphate; (d) the achievements of the Arab civilization in art, culture and science.

- In history course of grade 7 of social curriculum field in lower secondary education in Albania there are: (a) religious changes in Europe; (b) the sources of the Reformation, (c) Protestant doctrine, (d) Catholic reform. The knowledge and skills in history 6th and 7th is about religions facts or learning about religion concept.
- In upper secondary education in Albania social Sciences emphasize the development of skills of young people to take responsibility for their lives and to participate as active and competent citizens in society.
- The majority of social sciences teachers' respondents understand correctly content of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum' basic concepts.
- The minority of social sciences teachers' respondents understand correctly Religion, Ethics and Moral Curriculum design.
- The majority of social sciences teachers' respondents stated that ethics and moral education curriculum started from 1st grade of primary education and continues up to upper secondary education
- The majority of social sciences teachers' respondents stated that religion education curriculum in school is based on historical facts only in lower secondary education and in upper secondary education in a very few classes in social subjects in Albania.
- The majority of social sciences teachers' respondents stated that ethics and moral education curriculum should not change
- The majority of social sciences teachers' respondents are in favour of learning religion curriculum implementation in religious institutions.

4.1 Recommendations

- Central institutions of education should consider strengthening of students' competencies in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education with cultural, ethnic, regional, linguistic, social, economic, technological, political and religious diversity.
- Central institutions of education should consider strengthening of students' competencies in upper secondary education with the development of skills of young people to take responsibility for their lives and to participate as active and competent citizens in society.
- Central institutions of education should consider teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences in pre- university education system in Albania.
- Central institutions of education should consider teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education in Albania.
- Central institutions of education should consider teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences as flexible, ½ flexible, or defined curriculum in Albania.
- Central institutions of education should consider number of classes for teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education in Albania.
- Central institutions of education should consider compulsory confessional or non- confessional curriculum approach for teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education in Albania.

- Central institutions of education should consider compulsory or non compulsory curriculum approach for teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education in Albania.
- Central institutions of education should consider optional confessional or non- confessional curriculum approach for teaching of Religion, Ethics and Moral Education Curriculum as part of social sciences in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education in Albania.

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