RECONCILING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND MONO-RELIGIOSITY

THE CASE OF TEACHERS AT ORTHODOX PROTESTANT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Hanna de Jong-Markus

RECONCILING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND MONO-RELIGIOSITY

THE CASE OF TEACHERS AT ORTHODOX PROTESTANT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Hanna de Jong-Markus

RECONCILING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND MONO-RELIGIOSITY

THE CASE OF TEACHERS AT ORTHODOX PROTESTANT
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE NETHERLANDS

HET AFSTEMMEN VAN RELIGIEUZE DIVERSITEIT EN MONORELIGIOSITEIT

EEN VERKENNING ONDER LERAREN
OP ORTHODOX-CHRISTELIJKE SCHOLEN IN NEDERLAND

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Protestantse Theologische Universiteit te Amsterdam – Groningen,
op gezag van de rector, prof. dr. P.M. Wisse,
ingevolge het besluit van het college voor promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen te Amsterdam
op maandag 27 juni 2022 om 15.45 uur

door

JOHANNA JANNA DE JONG-MARKUS

geboren op 12 augustus 1987 te Nieuwerkerk aan den IJssel

Promotor: Prof. dr. M. Barnard
Tweede promotor: Prof. dr. A. de Kock
Derde promotor: Prof. dr. G.D. Bertram-Troost
Vierde promotor: Prof. dr. A. de Muynck

Preface

This dissertation does not appear in a vacuum but responds to all sorts of developments in Dutch society. For example, the dissertation can be read as a response to the almost simultaneously published report by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP), which concludes that religious groups in the Netherlands have become minorities (De Hart et al., 2022). Following that conclusion, the authors state:

> "The SCP [Netherlands Institute for Social Research] advises policymakers to focus on mutual understanding and acceptance and to promote a society in which everyone can participate fully. (...) In addition, schools can be an excellent place to meet others and a place where pupils learn to deal with opinions and values that are different from their own." (SCP, 2022, par 5; translation JJdJ-M)

I hope and believe that the results of my research can contribute to this. At the same time, it has become even clearer to me over the past few years that dealing well with diversity is an immense task that cannot be done without the prayer of Dona Nobis Pacem.

The dissertation was not written in a vacuum but is the result of cooperation between various parties. It is great and important that Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education (DCU) and the OJKC (Research Centre for Youth, Church and Culture), as part of the Protestant Theological University (PThU), have made this research possible and as a result ensure a connection between science and practice. In the background, the cooperation with North-West University Potchefstroom and the National Institute for Christian Education Research (Canterbury Christ Church University) has also played a stimulating role. This dissertation is the story of teachers who put their heart and soul into good education. Their openness and enthusiasm was inspiring and showed me once again how wonderful and challenging the teaching profession is. Many thanks to the participants for meeting with me!

Finally, I did not have to work on this dissertation in a vacuum. The insights and support of my supervisors were of great importance. Each of them contributed their expertise in a collaboration that was always constructive. Professor Marcel Barnard, Professor Jos de Kock, Professor Gerdien Bertram-Troost and Professor Bram de Muynck, each of you encouraged me in your own way to express myself. For that I am very grateful to you. I have learned a lot from you and that continues to be significant.

In addition, I have been blessed with the presence and interest of many other people around me. I am thinking of colleagues at DCU and PThU, fellow researchers I have met elsewhere, 'good neighbours' from the Hodshonhof residential group, and certainly my family and friends. It is with you that I *live*. Dear Matthijs and Ruben, I cannot imagine better travelling companions than you in my life and that makes me intensely happy and thankful. I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Huib and Josien Markus-Schuurman.

Utrecht, March 2022
Hanna de Jong-Markus

Contents

Citation Information

The following chapters were originally published in peer reviewed journals. When citing these, please use the original sources. Apart from adapting the references to APA style (7th edition) and the addition of section numbers, the originally published articles have been incorporated in this dissertation without changes.

Chapter 3

Markus, J. J., De Kock, A., De Muynck, A., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Barnard, M. (2021). *Religious tolerance as educational goal in orthodox Protestant schools: Exploring the concept and tensions teachers potentially experience* [Manuscript submitted for publication]. Practices, Protestantse Theologische Universiteit.

Chapter 4

Markus, J. J., De Kock, A., De Muynck, A., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Barnard, M. (2018). How cohesion matters: Teachers and their choice to work at an orthodox Protestant school. *Journal of School Choice, 12*(4), 567-587. https://doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2018.1437313

Chapter 5

Markus, J. J., Bertram-Troost, G. D., De Kock, A., De Muynck, A., & Barnard, M. (2019). Stimulating inquisitiveness: Teachers at orthodox Protestant schools about their roles in religious socialization. *Religious Education, 114*(4), 513-527. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2019.1581874

Chapter 6

Markus, J. J., Bertram-Troost, G. D., De Muynck, A., De Kock, A., & Barnard, M. (2021). Distinction, identification, and recognition: Teachers in orthodox Protestant schools on their faith and religious others. *International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society, 11*(1), 137-154. https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8633/CGP/v11i01/137-154

Chapter 7

Markus, J. J., De Muynck, A., De Kock, A., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Barnard, M. (in press). Beyond right-or-wrong thinking: Alumni and teacher educators about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education. *International Journal of Christianity & Education*.
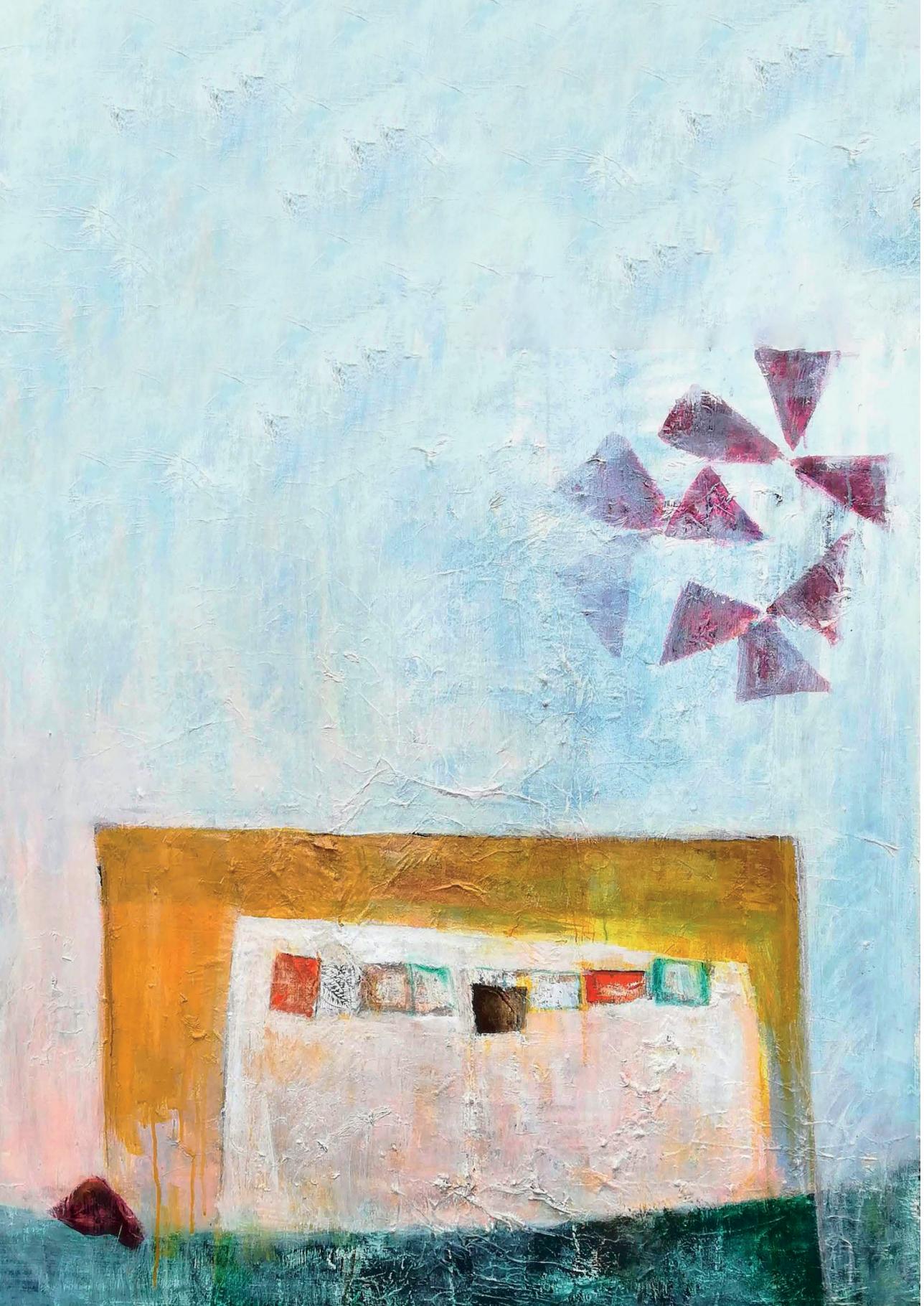
CHAPTER 1

General Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement

The motivation behind this research is the increased religious diversity in society and the ensuing, commonly heard call for more social cohesion. Citizenship education is seen as a way that could contribute to strengthening this social cohesion. For strong religious schools, and more specifically orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs), however, dealing with a religiously diverse society raises specific questions. For example, tolerance—conceived as a central value for dealing well with diversity in a liberal democratic society—might not always be self-evident for these schools. To strengthen citizenship education within OPPSs it is important that the teachers be best equipped for the task, because they play a key role in how questions of religious particularity and diversity are dealt with in educational practice. However, there is little empirical understanding of how teachers in OPPSs handle the context of religious diversity in relation to the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what this means for how teacher education can best prepare future teachers to provide citizenship education.

If we are committed to society and the future generation, it is necessary to gain more insights in this respect. By doing so, we are connecting to the drive that many teachers feel and that was put by one of the teachers I interviewed as follows:

> I want to be some sort of an idealistic improver. I want all children to be happy in their education and to make the most of all the talents they have been given. I want to show that everyone has their own strengths (...), because Jesus also shows differences[1] to children and to the people around Him. And I think we can do that for each other as well. We have an obligation to help each other. (...) And so you try to create a bit of a peaceful society and prepare the children as well as possible for the future. (Jasmijn; translation by the author)[2]

This problem statement will be further elaborated in the following sections, where I will focus on the increased diversity and the call for social cohesion in society, the place of citizenship education in Dutch schools, the meaning of religious diversity in strong religious schools, and the teaching profession and teacher education. Next, I will introduce the research question and research aims of this doctoral dissertation, and provide an outline of the chapters, identifying my role and responsibilities as well as those of other contributors.

---

[1] Note, in this quotation it is about different qualities of people and not about religious differences per se.

[2] To increase the readability of the quotations, the verbatim transcribed text is slightly adjusted throughout the dissertation.

1.2 Increased Diversity and Social Cohesion

In recent decades there has been a recurring focus in the Netherlands and other Western countries on the increased diversity in society (cf. An, 2014; CBS, 2015, 2020; Dobbernack et al., 2013; Estellés & Fischman, 2020; Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2020; Yemini et al., 2019). While the value of diversity is emphasised—it is important for diversity to be openly manifested as this would promote the well-being of individuals and of society (cf. An, 2014; Boli & Elliott, 2008; Hamer, 2018)—concerns are raised about the increased diversity and lack of social cohesion in society (cf. An, 2014; Boli & Elliott, 2008; Veerman, 2020).

Globalisation and individualisation

The increased diversity in the Netherlands can be related to globalisation and individualisation (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; De Hart, 2021). Globalisation is about the global flows of goods, ideas and individuals, which became possible since the late 20th century through the development of ubiquitous communication and transportation technologies (Hassi & Sorti, 2012). For example, the number of residents with a migrant background grew from 9.2% in 1972 to 22.1% in 2016. Today migrants come from many more different countries than some fifty years ago (Jennissen et al., 2018). According to predictions of the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and Statistics Netherlands (CBS) these developments will continue, with 31% to 40% of the Dutch population expected to have a migration background by 2050 (NIDI/CBS, 2020, 2021).

Globalisation can lead to more homogeneity and integration between cultures thanks to the exchanges, yet also creates more diverse practices because cultures that were previously distant and unknown come closer (Hassi & Sorti, 2012). This means, among other things, that "… adolescents and emerging adults seldom grow up knowing of only one culture in a globalizing world. Rather, they increasingly have interactions with people from diverse cultures, either first-hand or indirectly through various media." (Jensen et al., 2011, p. 286).

In connection with globalisation, individualisation can also contribute to increased diversity (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Whereas traditions and institutions used to have authority and determined a person's path in life, personal freedom of choice increasingly becomes the norm (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; De Hart, 2021; Schnabel, 2004). For the individual, this means that reflexivity has become more important. Instead of following

a standard biography, people form a biography of choice in which different roles can be integrated (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; cf. Boeve, 2005). Duyvendak (2004; cf. Rasborg, 2017) shows that individualisation does not automatically lead to more diversity because—especially in the Netherlands—there is also uniformisation of choices. The ties that people enter into are, however, less strong and less encompassing than in earlier times. As a result, individuals can be connected to more networks simultaneously. To a large extent, the increased diversity has mainly to do with groups (e.g. through migration) and less with individuals and their choices (Duyvendak, 2004).

Increased religious diversity

Increased diversity is also seen in the field of religion and worldview (Weisse, 2009), and has developed following similar patterns to those described above. Boeve (2005) depicts the development of religion in Europe by pointing to 'detraditionalisation' and 'pluralisation'. Detraditionalisation is about the decline of the authority of religious institutions and traditions, and at the same time the increase of individualisation or subjectification through which individuals construct their own religiosity (Boeve, 2005; cf. Miedema, 2017; Tromp et al., 2020). Comparably to biography of choice, religious identity is often a matter of bricolage: an eclectic mix of faith elements that can also come from outside one's own religious tradition (Bernts, 2007; Elshof, 2008; De Hart, 2007; Miedema, 2003). This leads to a change in religiosity, but not necessarily to a decrease in it (Bernts & Berghuijs, 2016; Davie, 2000; De Hart & Van Houwelingen, 2018; Taylor, 2002, 2007; Tromp et al., 2020). In the Netherlands, traditional Christian convictions and practices are becoming less and less widespread; religion and religious institutions have less influence on everyday life; and religious organisations are adjusting their messages to connect with secular ways of life (De Hart & Van Houwelingen, 2018).

Pluralisation, according to Boeve (2005, p. 106), means that "…geographic as well as mental mobility have brought the plural world of religions onto our doorstep". It is emphasised that traditional believers also have to relate detraditionalization and pluralisation because culturally it is no longer necessary to be a Christian and the Christian faith is no longer taken for granted in society (Boeve, 2005). Based on Beckford (1999), Martínez-Ariño and Teinturier (2019) indicate what the context of religious diversity means for religious communities:

> 1) an increase in the variety of religious groups in a particular context; (2) a growing presence of non-Christian religious groups; (3) the spread and popularity of the

so-called 'spiritual' practices and beliefs outside the so-called 'world religions;' (4) the internal diversification of religious groups that were previously characterized by internal homogeneity; and (5) the religious demonopolization of countries in which one single religious tradition was dominant over the rest. (p. 148)

Continuing polarisation

As in other Western countries, concerns about diversity in society are regularly expressed in Dutch society and politics. In addition to worries about limited integration of migrants (CBS, 2015; European Commission, 2020), these concerns also include increasing polarisation (Bovens et al., 2014; Carothers & O'Donohue, 2019; Goodhart, 2017; De Hart, 2021; Harteveld, 2021; Schmeets & Te Riele, 2014). Factors that promote polarisation can indeed be found in the Netherlands, such as the rise of 'high-choice media', negative campaigning by politicians, and the salience of cultural issues (Harteveld, 2021). Still, polarisation is less pronounced in the Netherlands than in other European countries or the United States (Bovens et al., 2014; Dekker & Den Ridder, 2014; Harteveld, 2021; Reiljan, 2020 in Harteveld, 2021; cf. CBS, 2015). Moreover, compared to the United States, polarisation in Western Europe today is mostly about issues related to globalisation, such as European integration, immigration and an open economy, and less about moral-religious issues (Bovens et al., 2014).

In the religious domain, a growing gap between the strong religious and others is also regularly mentioned. Research by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) shows, for example, that secularisation continues, but that especially youth who still count themselves as members of Protestant churches are becoming more churchy and more religious (De Hart & Van Houwelingen, 2018). Moreover, in the early 21st century more tensions between strong religious groups and liberal secularism have emerged in Western societies due to Muslim immigration and increased Muslim extremism (Exalto & Bertram-Troost, 2019; Hebling & Traummüller, 2018). At the same time, these tensions—particularly the 9/11 attacks—are also leading to an increased focus on religion, in the European context too. Whereas the Council of Europe previously wanted to be neutral, it now pays attention to religion, because:

> ... despite different views on religion at the personal and societal levels, all could agree that religion is a 'cultural fact' and that knowledge and understanding of religion at this level is highly relevant to good community and personal relations and is therefore a legitimate concern of public policy. (Jackson, 2009, p. 87; cf. Jackson & O'Grady, 2018)

Call for social cohesion

Calls for greater social cohesion are frequently made in response to concerns around diversity (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017; Schmeets & Te Riele, 2014). Most definitions of social cohesion include the following three components: social relations between groups and individuals, sense of belonging to the social entity (identification), and orientation towards the common good (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017). This leads to a description of social cohesion like "individuals and groups with different cultures, values, beliefs, life styles, and socio-economic resources have equal access to all domains of societal life and live together without conflict" (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017, p. 584). Or, as Koonce (2011) indicates, social cohesion is about the degree of trust society members have in each other and in society itself (see Chapter 5).

Schmeets and Te Riele (2014) note, based on data between 1989 and 2010, that there is limited empirical evidence for a general decline in social cohesion (cf. Dekker & Den Ridder, 2014), but that there are major differences between groups in Dutch society when it comes to degree of social cohesion. There is less social cohesion among the lower educated than among the higher educated (cf. Dekker et al., 2014), among ethnic minorities than among natives, and there are differences between the various religious groups. Statistics Netherlands (CBS) (2015) concludes that although there is no proven decrease in social cohesion, people do experience it and expect this decline to continue. The latter is also reflected in a publication by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) (2019, p. 17; translation by the author; cf. Dekker, 2021):

> Many Dutch people say they are concerned about increasing polarisation, intolerance, differences of opinion and the pressure to take sides. Social media play an amplifying role in this respect. What the Dutch do agree on, falls by the wayside in the discussion and remains mostly unaddressed, in contrast to what we disagree on.

The 2008 financial crisis does not seem to have caused changes in social cohesion (CBS, 2015). The extent to which the European refugee crisis, the Covid19 pandemic with its accompanying measures, and climate issues will have an impact remains to be seen (cf. CBS, 2015; De Hart, 2021; Dekker, 2021). De Hart (2021) concludes that the results of the 2021 Dutch general elections, which were characterised by fragmentation and radicalisation (cf. Trommels, 2021), show indeed a growing polarisation.

1.3 Citizenship Education in Dutch Schools

Schools are often considered among the most important environments that can contribute to promoting social cohesion and learning to deal with diversity in society (An, 2014; Kantzara, 2011; Koonce, 2011; Mason & Wareham 2018; Merry, 2020; Nieuwelink et al., 2016; Rissanen & Sai, 2018; Short, 2002; Van Waveren, 2020; Veerman, 2020). Veerman (2020, p. 11) identifies strengthening social cohesion as a 'core social task of education'. This core task is often referred to as 'citizenship education'[3] (Jackson, 2003; Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019; Onderwijsraad, 2012; Ten Dam et al., 2011). According to Ten Dam and colleagues (2010, 2011), it is worth taking 'civil society' as a starting point, because this underlines that it is not only about social cohesion and living together but also about the development of individuals and their norms and values. Not only the political, but also the social and individual domain are involved (Ten Dam et al., 2010, 2011; cf. Van Waveren, 2020). Citizenship education should contribute to pupils' ability to perform four social tasks in a democratic, plural society: acting democratically ("acceptance of and contribution to a democratic society"), acting in a socially responsible manner ("taking shared responsibility for the communities to which one belongs"), dealing with conflicts ("handling of minor conflict situations or conflicts of interest to which the child is a party"), and dealing with differences ("handling of social, cultural, religious and outward differences") (Ten Dam et al., 2010, 2011, p. 357; cf. Dijkstra et al., 2018).

Since 2006, citizenship education in the Netherlands has been explicitly described as a statutory duty for primary, secondary and post-secondary vocational education (Bron, 2006; Bron & Thijs, 2011; Staatsblad, 2005; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019).[4] In evaluations ten years after the introduction of this duty, it is noted that the development of citizenship education in the Netherlands is stagnating: in schools citizenship education is not very goal-oriented, activities around citizenship lack coherence, and there is limited monitoring of the outcomes of citizenship education (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2016, 2018). Moreover, international comparative research shows that Dutch youth, for example, have less knowledge about democracy than peers in similar countries, and that the differences between pupils are greater than elsewhere (Munniksma et al., 2017). In response, the statutory citizenship task has been tightened as of 1 August 2021

---

[3] Related to and/or overlapping with citizenship education are character education, civic education, democratic education, human rights education, global citizenship education, moral education, and multicultural education.

[4] Note that the discussions about this Act started in 2002, the year that Pim Fortuyn was murdered (BBC News, 2002). According to Dekker & Den Ridder (2014, p. 103), that is also the moment when "long-standing differences in trust in and commitment to politics are revealed and sharpened by the electoral opportunity to speak out forcefully against the establishment".

(Staatsblad, 2021; see Appendix I for both the new and the old law text). The aim is to clarify the general citizenship objective and its applicable guiding principles for schools, and thus also to provide better opportunities for supervision by the Inspectorate of Education and make citizenship education less optional (Staatsblad, 2021; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019). The changed law is referred to by the overarching terms 'active citizenship and social cohesion' (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019). Active citizenship is about the willingness and ability to be part of Dutch society and to make an active contribution to it. In its explanation of social cohesion, the legislature emphasises that learning to live together with each other is central (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019).

Greater emphasis on basic values

For schools, in practice the new law means that they have to develop a vision on citizenship education with a coherent programme describing what pupils have to learn and how this will be evaluated. In addition, the 'basic values' that recurred in the Supervisory Framework accompanying the law (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2006) are given greater emphasis. Schools must now show how basic democratic values are expressed in the school culture and how they can be actively practiced by pupils (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019; cf. Verus, 2020; VGS, 2019). The new citizenship law likewise emphasizes that pupils and staff should feel safe and accepted within the school, despite differences (Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2020). The basic values that serve as the foundation of the Citizenship Act are human dignity and, ensuingly, freedom, equality and solidarity. These basic values make it possible for people to live and to learn to live together in peace despite having divergent standards and values (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2021a; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019). In the Supervisory Framework this is concretized in eight basic values: freedom of expression, equality, understanding of other people, tolerance, rejection of intolerance, rejection of discrimination, autonomy and sense of responsibility (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2006, 2021a; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019)[5]. The recent advice of the Dutch Education Council on the Freedom of Education (Article 23 of the Dutch Constitution) shows a comparable emphasis on the framework that is set by the democratic society. It is, for example, stated that the mandatory common core of education that should be followed by all publicly funded schools, must be defined more clearly in terms of democratic society (Onderwijsraad, 2021).

_____

[5] Sense of responsibility was not mentioned in the Supervisory Framework of 2006, but has been added in the Supervisory Framework of 2021.

Tolerance

Within the set of basic values, tolerance takes an important place: both the promotion of tolerance and the rejection of intolerance are explicitly mentioned (cf. Bron, n.d.; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2006, 2021a; Willems, 2013). According to the Supervisory Framework, in this context tolerance means:

> (...) that you accept the opinion or behaviour of others, even if you don't agree with it at all. And it also means that you want to give everyone the space to have this opinion or that behaviour. Of course, in doing so everyone must follow the law. (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2021a, p. 151; translation by the author)

The focus on tolerance is also apparent elsewhere, as mutual tolerance between different groups is seen as a prerequisite for social cohesion in a society where diversity is an important feature (Forst, 2003; Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017; Vogt, 1997; Vollhardt et al., 2008; Weisse, 2009; Willems et al., 2010). Habermas (2005) provides a specification when it comes to religious tolerance: that the acceptance of religious minorities in society exemplifies the inclusion of other minorities and is therefore of great importance.

For tolerance, however, it is also the case that it is a "profoundly contested concept" (Sremac & Ganzevoort, 2017, p. 6): there is no common definition and it is interpreted very differently. This is why it can be difficult to define what promoting tolerance in education means (Afdal, 2006; Bertram-Troost & Miedema, 2017; Forst, 2004; Van den Brink, 2002; Vogt, 1997). In Chapter 3 it is further explained what promoting tolerance in education entails, especially what that might mean for orthodox Protestant schools.[6] After all, it is not taken for granted that strong religious schools promote a value such as tolerance, just as there is a broader public and political debate about citizenship education in religious schools (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2020, 2021b; Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019; Onderwijsraad, 2021).

1.4 Religious Diversity and Strong Religious Schools

When it comes to religious schools and citizenship education, the public and political debate often revolves around whether such schools can prepare their pupils for life in a diverse society because of the school's emphasis on particularity, both in terms its ideological principles and the community (Bertram-Troost, 2011; Breemer & Lammers,

---

[6] Religious tolerance is then defined as tolerance in which the religious other is the object of tolerance (see Section 3.1).

2014; Evans 2016; Godwin et al., 2004; Graham et al. in Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019; Halsema, 2019; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2020; Mason & Wareham, 2018; Terry et al., 2019; Tuastad, 2016). Evans (2016), for example, has argued that "It's hard to see how schools can effectively teach 'mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs' if they don't even want kids with different faiths and beliefs in their schools". In the Dutch context, these questions are mainly expressed in relation to orthodox Protestant (Reformed) and Islamic schools that advocate more or less mono-religious education[7] (Exalto & Bertram-Troost, 2019; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2020; Merry & Driessen, 2014). The raised questions tend to be about the viability of a perhaps-outdated dual education system in the Netherlands, the right of parents to send their children to publicly funded religious schools, and the right of schools to pursue student admission or teacher recruitment policies (De Jong-Markus, 2020). Similar questions are observed in other Western European countries and the USA (De Wolff et al., 2002; Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019).

In this study, I will focus on OPPSs, which cover about 5% of all primary school in the Netherlands (De Muynck et al., 2014; Markus et al., 2018). These schools adhere to Reformed doctrines and often have connections to local religious communities (De Muynck, 2008; De Wolff et al., 2002; Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003). As described in Section 3.1 more extensively,[8] these schools strongly emphasise their personal religious convictions and/or religious community (cf. De Wolff et al., 2003; Sterkens, 2001). Strong-religious schools are therefore explicitly challenged to articulate how they stand in relation to basic societal values (Dujardin, 2020; Inspectie van Onderwijs, 2020)[9]:

> In all schools, active promotion of basic values is important. This is especially true in schools where pupils (…) may misunderstand the views conveyed by the school. Although these schools comply with the legal task, this still requires attention because the core of the citizenship task is that schools promote the values that make our free and democratic society possible. Educational freedom gives room

---

[7] See Chapter 3 for a more extensive description of mono-religious education.

[8] Chapters 4 through 7 all contain short descriptions of these schools, highlighting different aspects – depending on the theme of the chapter. Section 2.2 describes how OPPSs were selected for the empirical part of this study and makes it clear that in practice this involves Reformed (Dutch: *reformatorisch*), Reformed Liberated (Dutch: *gereformeerd vrijgemaakt*) and Protestant (Dutch: *protestants-christelijk*) schools. See Exalto & Bertram-Troost (2019) for a more detailed description of orthodox Protestant schools in the Netherlands and Dutch Bible Belt Culture.

[9] Although it is highlighted that the basic values must be promoted more actively, the Inspectorate of Education (2020) also found that in schools with moral views that strongly deviate from the mainstream, no education is provided that is contrary to the basic values of the democratic constitutional state.

to transmit one's own views, but this is only possible if there is also room for people—including pupils—who live, think or believe differently. (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2020, p. 3; translation by the author)

This challenge is recognised in the schools themselves: they feel the need to be socially accountable for, among other things, their civic education goals (Bertram-Troost et al., 2015b). Also from a religious and pedagogical perspective, the question of how best to equip pupils for participation in today's society is alive in orthodox Protestant schools (Bijl, 2021; Exalto, 2018; Exalto & Bertram-Troost, 2019; Molenaar, 2019; Slagboom, 2021). Schools sometimes hesitate about how to interpret the legislature's description of citizenship education, as among other reasons it would clash with the school's own moral values and would require too much openness to other religions or worldviews (Bosma, 2020; Kunz & Van Doleweerd, 2021; Schreuders, 2021; Van den Brink, 2020).

Internal and external religious diversity in OPPSs

There is little explicit understanding of how OPPSs balance religious diversity in society in relation to their mono-religious characteristics (De Muynck & De Kock, 2009; Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019). When dealing with religious diversity in society and the contribution of education, the academic debate is mainly about secular versus multi-religious or interreligious education in religious schools instead of mono-religious education (De Muynck & De Kock, 2009; Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019).[10] A number of Dutch empirical studies from the last twenty years indirectly describe how OPPS teachers relate to the particularity of their schools and/or to the diversity of society (e.g., Bakker & Rigg, 2004; Beemsterboer, 2018; Bertram-Troost, 2011; Bertram-Troost et al., 2015b; Boele-de Bruin & De Muynck, 2018; Budak, 2021; De Muynck, 2008; De Wolff et al., 2003; De Wolff, 2000; Pike, 2005, 2010; Rijke, 2019; Toes, 2015; Van Hardeveld, 2003; Van der Want et al., 2009; Wardekker & Miedema, 2001). I discuss some of these studies below, namely those dealing with the characterisation of orthodox Protestant schools and those dealing with the goals or motives of teachers in these schools. In addition, I point to recent literature from the context of Islamic education in the Netherlands.

---

[10] In this thesis I use the terms 'religious schools' and 'public schools' as they most closely reflect the Dutch situation, where the literature also speaks of 'faith-based schools' and 'secular schools', respectively. Later on I will also use the term 'denominational schools' to refer to the non-public schools in the Netherlands. These are not only schools with a specific religious orientation, but also those with an educational or other ideological orientation (cf. Glenn & De Groof, 2005).

Several studies deal with the characterisation of different types of religious or Christian schools, including orthodox Protestant schools, in relation to each other. Based on conceptual analysis and empirical research, Wardekker and Miedema (2001) distinguish four types of Christian schools based primarily on how schools interpret religious truth claims.[11] In the context of current research, their distinction between 'segregated schools' and 'programme schools' is interesting: both types have exclusivist programmes, yet in contrast to programme schools segregated schools do not admit pupils from other religious backgrounds. Some programme schools display an inclusivistic praxis, despite more exclusivistic principles. The research of De Wolff and colleagues (2003) about what constitutes the identity of a Christian school involves one orthodox Protestant school. For the teachers of that school, the religious dimension is all-important for identity— in contrast to teachers from other Christian schools who also define identity based on pedagogical and/or educational and organisational dimensions. The mentioned school holds an exclusivistic view of the Christian faith, compared to an inclusivistic or pluralist view in other schools. According to the teachers of this orthodox Protestant school, the Christian faith also plays a decisive role in their pedagogy and education, therefore they perceive their teaching to be distinctive. However, the researchers note ambiguity in this regard when it comes to concrete goals and daily practices, because the same teachers indicate that these do not differ from those of non-Christian teachers. Bertram-Troost and colleagues (2013) examine specifically how Dutch Protestant primary schools position themselves in relation to society's cultural and religious diversity, and examine the extent to which the previously mentioned characterisation of Wardekker and Miedema (2001) is still appropriate after more than ten years. The researchers found that the reality is more diffuse than Wardekker and Miedema's (2001) typology suggests, and conclude that schools' interpretations of religious truth claims seem to be less important than the typology suggests. It also appears that especially the government's policy (including budgets) and an increasing focus on output are recent developments that have an impact on the schools, and less so, for example, the Christian backgrounds of the schools or the increasing diversity amongst pupils and/or teachers. So called segregated schools can barely be found because many schools have a heterogenous population. It should however be noted that the strongest Christian schools were not represented in the

---

[11] Broadly speaking, the following positions are distinguished: exclusivism (the conviction that salvation applies only to those who confess Christ as Saviour, therefore there is little room to positively value other religions), inclusivism (the conviction that also those outside Christianity can be saved, but through what Christ has done and is still doing; other religions are therefore both accepted and rejected), and pluralism (the conviction that all religions are equal paths to salvation, thus rejecting any claim to (Christian) normativity and superiority) (Moyaert, 2011).

study of Bertram-Troost and colleagues (2013). However, the researchers mention that diversity in the population of these schools is increasing too.

Other research relates to the motives and/or ideals of teachers in orthodox Protestant schools. De Muynck (2008) relates that the twenty OPPS teachers interviewed in his study are good representatives of the formal identity of the school, but that in doing so each teacher "[finds] a unique balance between demonstrating loyalty to the body of traditional thought and serving critique on it" (p. 436). This is also reflected in the aspirational main motives of teachers: ensuring security, providing care, knowing and learning to know God, bringing about an awareness of God, prompting inquisitiveness, and wanting to help in development. With regard to the last motive, teachers sometimes express anxiety about the future of their pupils in a secularised society. De Muynck (2008) also points out that teachers in schools with a diverse student population (multiple church denominations) have an alert attitude when dealing with differences. For example, teachers are keenly aware of nuanced differences in parents' theological or lifestyle views. When it comes to issues that teachers believe have to do with the core of faith or confession, they name how they think about it—even if it contrasts with what pupils bring in. Teachers who work with younger children feel they do not need to address that yet. It also proves to be inspiring for teachers when they have pupils in the classroom with a different church background because the teachers become more aware of their own values, and what is at the core of the faith for them (De Muynck, 2008). Boele and De Muynck (2018) examined how faith is present in the professional ideals of teachers from conservative Protestant primary and secondary schools. It turned out that "teachers' ultimate end of excellent education seems to be passing their own ideal of a good Christian life on to children" (p. 20), which is living a life as a sincere believer. When it is about how they teach, teachers link their faith to the attitudes and moral behaviour they want to practice, not to their teaching materials or didactics. In a study of what teachers at secondary schools want to achieve with the formation of pupils in relation to their own worldview and the policy of the school, Bertram-Troost and colleagues (2015b) explain that teachers at the two involved orthodox Protestant schools, more than at other schools, explicitly relate the worldview formation objectives to Christianity. It is characteristic of these schools that they want to teach pupils to think from a Christian commitment and that pupils learn to relate to aspects of society from this attitude. This may mean that the educational objective of 'learning to think critically' is primarily the adoption of critical perspectives from others (including teachers), and to a lesser extent, for example, 'thinking for yourself' or 'forming your own opinion'. In orthodox Protestant schools, getting to know other religions or religious movements

is considered important because as pupils recognise differences and similarities with the Christian tradition they are better equipped to defend their own Christian faith. The teachers experience a dilemma that is related to the absolute truth claim: they strongly wish for pupils to believe or start believing in the God of the Bible like they do, yet they also feel that the school is primarily a formative community (rather than a faith community), in which the development of autonomy is important. Within orthodox Protestant schools, there is also diversity of opinion regarding views that are important to the school and its constituency, even when people formally share the same religious identity. As with other Christian schools, teachers sometimes feel inhibited to talk about these differences within the school. The diversity within orthodox Protestant schools is also evident in the sociology of law research of Rijke (2019). He finds that internal diversity has increased in recent years, and as a result clashes are more likely to happen within the school around teachers' identity-based recruitment policies. These clashes arise particularly when people already work at a school, then, for example, become members of a different church denomination or start unmarried cohabitation. Rijke (2019) characterises these clashes within orthodox Protestant communities as similar to the clash that can also be seen at the societal level between secular liberals and orthodox Protestants.

In the European context, the REDCo[12] research project was conducted on the ideas of 14-16-year-olds on the multicultural and multireligious society (Knauth et al., 2008; Valk et al., 2009). In the sub-study that focused on religious education teachers in secondary education, the Dutch researchers concluded that the personal biography of teachers, more than their professional biography, influences how they view diversity and what they aim for in religious education (Van der Want et al., 2009). Bertram-Troost (2011) identifies some lessons that can be drawn from the above-mentioned research for investigating religious diversity in secondary schools. She notes that there is no single definition of 'religious diversity', and that it is therefore important to define the concept in the research context plus always check how this is interpreted by participants. This seems to be in line with what becomes clear in the previous discussed studies, namely that not only does external religious diversity—the different religious and non-religious worldviews manifested within society—play a role, but that religious differences also emerge within schools, for example due to different church denominational positions. Therefore, in current research I will pay attention to the individuals' perceptions about religious diversity and religious others (cf. Section 6.1).

_____

[12] Religion in Education. A Contribution to Dialogue or a Factor of Conflict in Transforming Societies of European Countries.

Religious diversity and Islamic schools

Recently, Budak (2021) described the development of Islamic primary education in the Netherlands between 1988 and 2013. His study shows that it was precisely the social debate on the place of Islamic education in society which focused on the integration of Muslims and security after the 9/11 attacks, which ensured that these schools developed differently than, for example, Christian schools. According to Budak (2021) the identity formation of Christian primary schools is influenced by secularisation, de-churching and individualisation, while Islamic primary schools had to relate to suspicion of poor integration from politicians, media and the Inspectorate of Education. This has caused those involved with Islamic schools to express themselves more explicitly and extrovertly about the task of preparing their Muslim pupils for participation in Dutch society. Beemsterboer (2018) also pointed out that the Dutch societal context is a central feature within Islamic education because schools want to prepare their pupils for a future in the Netherlands, and tensions between Islam and that societal context are assumed; the school is perceived by pupils and parents as a safe place, therefore sensitive issues can be discussed and thus schools contribute to Muslims' integration into Dutch society (cf. Budak, 2021). Moreover, an important characteristic of Islamic primary schools is that they are very diverse, given the great diversity among Muslims themselves and the relatively limited number of Islamic schools. This creates major differences in the backgrounds of pupils within the schools. In addition, teachers in Islamic schools are not necessarily Muslim themselves. In the practice of Islamic education much attention is paid to this diversity, so that those involved in the school grow closer to each other (Beemsterboer, 2018; Budak, 2021). The most important differences between Islamic schools have to do with the balance that is chosen between the alignment with the Islamic home environment and that with the Dutch societal context (Beemsterboer, 2018). Interestingly, both aspects deemed characteristic of Islamic education seem to have appeared in orthodox Protestant schools as well: these schools experience suspicion— or at least the need to defend themselves—and the internal diversity among the people involved with the school has increased (as described above and in Section 1.2).

1.5 Teaching Profession and Teacher Education

Research on teachers' thoughts and actions is an important way to improve understanding of how the religiously diverse context is handled in schools with mono-religious characteristics. After all, the teacher is the one who ultimately realises education while playing a key role in educational quality (Hattie, 2012; Leu, 2005; Onderwijsraad,

2013; Weisse, 2009). Moreover, the literature evidences the ideal of the teacher as an agent of change, including social change: someone who brings about positive changes in people's lives, at both the individual and the societal level (Bourn, 2015; Fullan, 1993; Pantić & Florian, 2015; Van der Heijden, 2017). These two levels are—as described earlier—also explicitly recognisable in citizenship education. In the case of the teacher as agent of *social* change, the connotation is that the teacher plays a contributory role in social justice (Bourn, 2015; Pantić & Florian, 2015). The focus on the teacher as change agent has increased because of the rapid changes in our society and the high demands this places on teachers and other professionals (Leu, 2005; Van der Heijden et al., 2015; Vereniging Hogescholen, 2019). Important personal characteristics of teachers as change agents are mastery (giving guidance and being accessible, positive, committed, trustful and self-assured), collaboration (being collegial), entrepreneurship (being innovative and feeling responsible) and lifelong learning (being eager to learn and being reflective) (Van der Heijden et al., 2015; Van der Heijden, 2017). Pantić and Florian (2015) synthesise that knowledge and understanding, the capacity to engage with educational change, and the capacity to reflect on one's own beliefs and values are central teaching competencies when change agency is at stake. Within teacher education programmes it is also spoken about educating teachers as reflective practitioners (Leu, 2005; cf. Schön, 1973). Characteristics that are important for change agency, namely innovation and reflection, can be recognised in that idea. For example, for preservice professional training (undergraduate) it is stated that training to be reflective practitioners means paying attention to reflective skills, curiosity about knowledge and the ability to systematically acquire and apply knowledge (Leijnse et al., 2006; cf. Enthoven & Oostdam, 2014; Leu, 2005; Vereniging Hogescholen, 2019).

Teachers are expected to make intentional choices and decisions at work (Van der Heijden et al., 2018). The relative autonomy they have in doing so is peculiar to teaching as a professional endeavour (Kelchtermans, 2012; Kole, 2011; cf. Pantić & Florian, 2015). Moreover, teaching is a moral profession (Fullan, 1993; Hansen, 2011 in Bourn, 2015; Kelchtermans, 2012; Kole, 2011; Lukacs, 2015). Fullan (1993) states that the combination of moral purpose and change agency is necessary for good teachers. Right when it comes to citizenship education, nowadays the role of teachers themselves is emphasised and said to deserve more attention (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2016; Van Waveren, 2020). De Muynck (2009) shows that, as pedagogy is by definition normative, one can never fully rely on practice when it comes to action, but will also always use concepts that have a guiding load, often coming from philosophical sources (e.g., Aristotle or the Bible). In the citizenship task normative questions are clearly recognisable, for example, when it

comes to what the *just society* that the school wants to strive for looks like (cf. Dijkstra et al., 2018; Van Waveren, 2020). In relation to their actions in everyday, complex practice, it is important for teachers to have and/or build a normative framework on which to base their choices (cf. De Muynck, 2009; Van Waveren, 2020). In this study, I pose the question of how teachers reconcile the religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of the school in their professional thoughts and actions since these seem to be important aspects when it comes to citizenship education in OPPss (as described in previous sections). This includes normative beliefs on the particularity of the Christian faith and the religiously diverse society, especially openness or closeness to religious others (cf. Moyaert, 2011). Although personal and professional beliefs are related (cf. De Muynck, 2008; Häusler et al. 2019; Korthagen, 2004), this study is explicit on how they do so from their professional responsibility and role *as teachers*.

I further focus this issue on what it can mean for teacher education because it is the responsibility of teacher education programmes that teachers be ready to practice their profession (O'Neill, 2017). Moreover, it is the duty of such programmes to always be in tune with current societal issues, in this case the call for social cohesion (cf. Vereniging Hogescholen, 2019). Several studies mentioned above show that citizenship education in the Netherlands lags behind compared to that in other countries (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2016, 2018). It is stated that, among other things, the design and quality of the curriculum in preservice teacher education programmes are important focal areas for strengthening the quality of citizenship education (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2016; Onderwijsraad, 2012). Van Waveren (2020) notes that professionalisation and training of future teachers are particularly important precisely when it comes to citizenship education because it is crucial that teachers identify and recognize when citizenship themes come up in the classroom, and imperative that they relate to their own values and norms in doing so. In my research, a sub-study on teacher education is included as specific questions may apply to the target group of future teachers at OPPSs. As previously outlined, there is still little understanding of what teaching citizenship means for teachers from relatively homogeneous and/or strictly religious communities. It is recognised, however, that more than in other subject areas, teachers' own beliefs, values and experiences play a role in teaching citizenship (Van Waveren, 2020). The relatively homogeneous community of OPPSs means that there may be fewer and/or different experiences around religious diversity, and there may be tensions between teachers' religious beliefs and values and mainstream notions of citizenship (see Section 1.4). For teacher education, this would mean that there should be attention for specific issues in order to equip teachers of OPPSs for teaching on religious diversity.

1.6 Research Question and Research Aims

The problem statement shows that little is currently known about how teachers of OPPSs professionally reconcile the context of religious diversity in relation to the mono-religious characteristics of their schools and about what this means for how teacher education programmes can equip future teachers. At the same time, the problem statement shows that the reinforcement of citizenship education is desired for purposes of social cohesion, among other things. How OPPS teachers deal with religious diversity can be a relevant factor here, because the teacher plays a decisive role in education. To learn more about the position of the teachers, I conduct an empirical study based on the following research question:

> How do teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what are the implications for preservice teacher education?[13]

Several subquestions have been formulated, each contributing to map out an aspect contained in the research question. Subquestion 1 is: What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean, and how can the tensions that might emerge in orthodox Protestant primary schools around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective? Answering this question provides a theoretical basis for this research because the tensions that might emerge around religious tolerance can be illustrative of other potential tensions related to religious diversity and mono-religiosity.

Next, with subquestions 2 and 3 I explore what the mono-religious characteristics mean for teachers. Subquestion 2 asks: Is the mono-religious school characteristic important for teachers working at Dutch OPPSs, and what are the reasons for this? Because the answer to this question shows that the professional ideal of children becoming committed Christians is decisive, I next examine how teachers define their professional role in this process. Subquestion 3 therefore reads: What do teachers in OPPSs perceive as their role in religious socialisation, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents?

Next, the focus lies on how teachers relate to the religious diversity of society. Subquestion 4 asks: What do OPPS teachers believe about religious others, and how might this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith? Finally, this is further applied to teacher

---

[13] Dutch: *Hoe verhouden leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen zich als professional tot de levensbeschouwelijke diversiteit van de samenleving en de mono-religieuze kenmerken van hun school; en wat zijn de implicaties daarvan voor de initiële lerarenopleiding?*

education in subquestion 5: What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education?

Research aims

Because little is known about the topic, this study has an exploratory character. The first aim is to fill the gap of scholarly, empirical understanding of strong religious schools in plural societies. Second, the findings can inform the debate about the position of strong religious schools in a diverse society. Third, the findings may provide potential starting points for teachers, teacher trainers, education advisors, policymakers and others to further promote reflections on social cohesion in OPPSs. In line with the latter, the implementation of the research itself may also stimulate reflection on the central theme by participants and other parties involved in this study. Although the study focuses on OPPSs in the Netherlands, it is expected to be transferable (cf. Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Smaling, 2009) to other contexts, given that similar social issues surrounding religious schools are at play elsewhere in the Western world too.

1.7 Outline and Responsibilities

The next chapters report on the execution of the research introduced in this chapter. Each of the subquestions introduced in Section 1.6 are addressed in separate articles that have been published in, accepted by or submitted to academic peer-reviewed journals.[14] These articles reappear in full as chapters in this dissertation.[15] Although a methodology section can be found in each of those chapters, the research method used in the research project is explained in more detail in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides the theoretical basis for this research (subquestion 1). Chapters 4 and 5 describe empirical results that mainly have to do with the mono-religious characteristics of OPPSs (subquestions 2 and 3). Beginning with Chapter 6, the focus turns to the religious diversity of society (subquestion 4); Chapter 7 deals particularly with teacher education (subquestion 5). Finally, Chapter 8 contains the conclusions of the study, namely the answer on the central research question, and reflections on these conclusions. This outline of chapters and research questions is visualised in figure 1.

---

[14] See 'Citation Information' for an overview of the articles and the specific journals.

[15] For purposes of consistency, in all chapters the APA Publication Manual (7th edition) is used as reference style, although in some articles originally a different reference system was used due to the requirements of the specific journal. Although British English has been used in this dissertation, American English has been maintained in the chapters originally published as such.

Responsibilities

This research project was conducted as my doctoral studies and I am the primary researcher in the project. This is reflected in the use of the first person singular in the General Introduction (Chapter 1), Methods (Chapter 2) and General Conclusion and Discussion (Chapter 8). The supervisors of my doctoral studies are co-authors of the articles, so Chapters 3 to 7 are written in the first person plural. I refer to the cooperation between me and my supervisors as 'the research team'.[16]

As primary researcher I was responsible for the design and execution of the research project. My work started with clarifying the problem, formulating the research questions and writing a theoretical framework. In the next phase I designed the empirical part of the research, recruited participants and conducted interviews, then analysed and interpreted the data and described the results in the mentioned articles. Finally, I compiled the findings of the research project in this dissertation and drew overarching conclusions. Throughout the project the supervisors provided continuous expertise-based feedback (see also Section 2.5). I valued this feedback and used it to improve my research activities and sharpen my ideas.

Figure 1 Outline of the chapters and research questions

Chapter 1 General Introduction / Chapter 2 Methods				
How do teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what are the implications for preservice teacher education?				
Chapter 3	**Chapter 4**	**Chapter 5**	**Chapter 6**	**Chapter 7**
What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean, and how can the tensions that might emerge in orthodox Protestant primary schools around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective?	Is the mono-religious school characteristic important for teachers working at Dutch OPPSs, and what are the reasons for this?	What do teachers in OPPSs perceive as their role in religious socialisation, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents?	What do OPPS teachers believe about religious others, and how might this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith?	What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education?
(Subquestion 1)	(Subquestion 2)	(Subquestion 3)	(Subquestion 4)	(Subquestion 5)
Chapter 8 General Conclusion and Discussion				

---

[16] Exceptionally, 'research group' is used in Chapter 4, as it took place at an earlier stage and is thus mentioned in the article published in 2018.

1
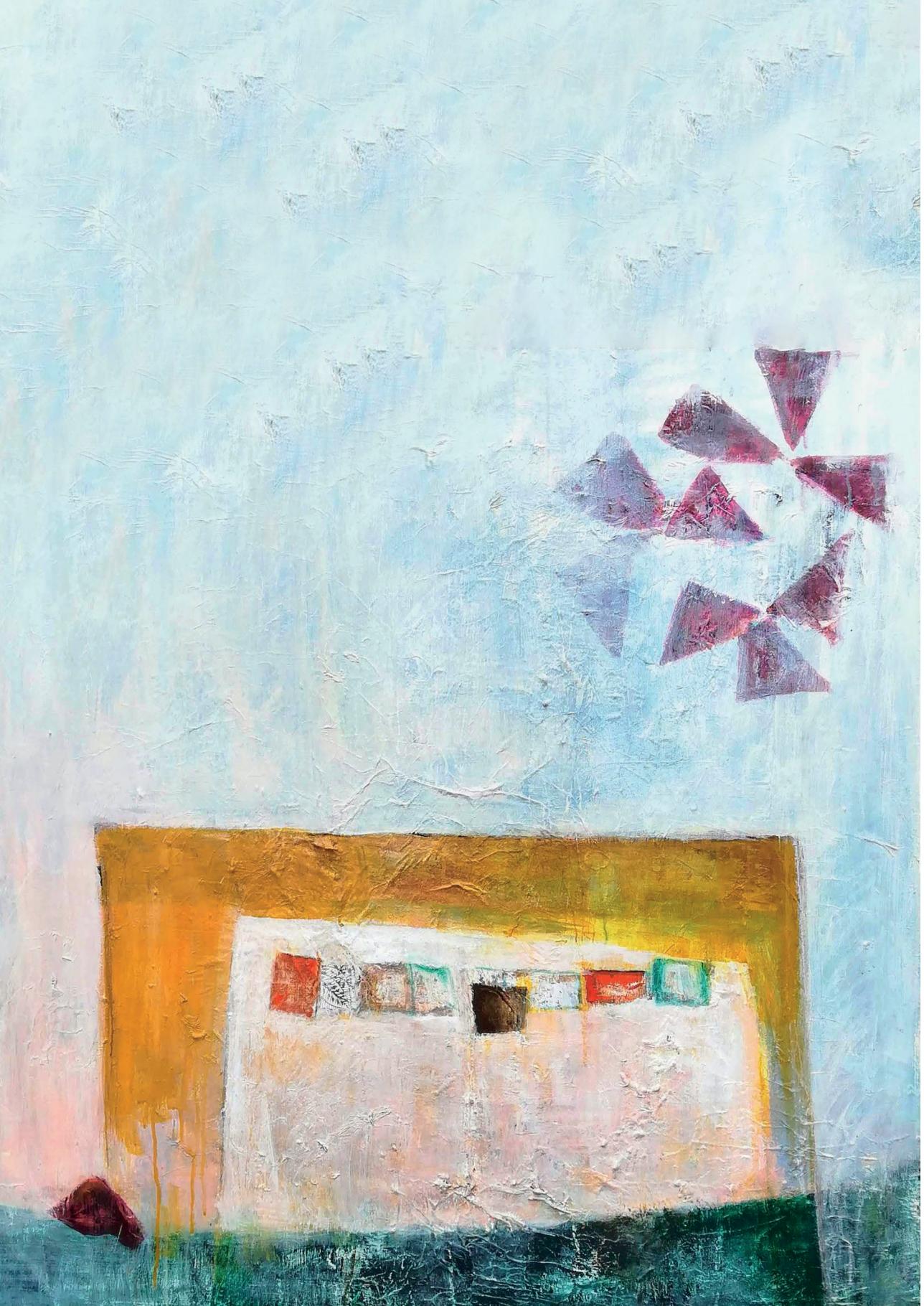
CHAPTER 2

Methods

2.1 Research Design

This study examines how OPPS (orthodox Protestant primary school) teachers professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what implications that may have for preservice teacher education. I have opted for a qualitative research design, as it suits the exploratory purpose of the study: this design can deal with the so-far limited empirical insights on this particular relationship. There is room for discovering unexpected areas within the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2014; Elliot & Timulak, 2005; Elliott, 1999; Evers, 2015; Holliday, 2007). Because it is important to gain insights into how teachers themselves understand their social reality, an interpretative approach was chosen in conducting the study (cf. Bhattacherjee, 2012;'t Hart et al., 2005). The research question is mainly descriptive in nature (cf. De Jong, 2018; Ivey, 2016). To align with the interpretative approach, I looked for rich and detailed descriptions in Results sections (Bhattacherjee, 2012; Creswell, 2007; Elliot & Timulak, 2005; Holliday, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because this study did not aim for generalisation, there was reluctance to use quantifying phrases and use of numbers was avoided (cf. Patton, 2015).

As the research is about discovering how different teachers professionally reconcile the central issues of religious diversity and mono-religiosity, data were collected by conducting in-depth interviews that reveal the beliefs of teachers (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). These interviews are especially conducive towards exploring personal and sensitive issues (Rubin & Rubin, 2012), like the religious and individual professional issues in this study. These interviews are further characterized by a search for rich and detailed information (e.g. examples or stories), open-ended questions and flexibility of the questions asked (Evers & De Boer, 2012; Rubin & Rubin, 2012); this all relates to the explorative goal and interpretative approach.

For reasons of valorisation and to further enrich mainly the data regarding the second part of the research question about teacher education, small focus groups with alumni and teacher educators were added to ensure a fit with current teacher education practices. The focus groups can provide a picture of how the theme of religious diversity has been and is being dealt with in a specific orthodox Protestant teacher education programme, Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education. Over half of the individually interviewed teachers graduated from this institution. focus groups are consistent with the explorative goal of the study (cf. Smithson, 2012). The focus groups allowed me to involve more participants in the study in a short period of time (cf. Patton, 2015). Interactions

between participants can provide in-depth insights into consensus and disagreement (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2012; Morgan & Hoffman, 2018), which are both relevant to cover the breadth of opinions around a possibly tense topic within an institution. Lastly, focus groups also fit the context of the study because encouraging participants to further think and reflect on their daily practices was desirable (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2007; Patton, 2015). For the focus groups a research assistant contributed to the data collection and data analysis, while I was the main researcher. In the following sections I discuss the details of the individual interviews study, followed by the details of the focus groups study.

2.2 Participants

Participants of the individual interviews study (teachers)

Qualitative research makes use of relatively small samples of information-rich cases for in-depth study (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Holliday, 2007; Patton, 2015). These cases are purposefully selected. In this study, I wanted to capture ideas about the religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of OPPSs across the research group of OPPS teachers. Because there is substantial variation among OPPSs, I used a sampling strategy of aiming for maximum variation (Patton, 2015). This strategy is based on the following reasoning: "Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon." (Patton, 2015, p. 283). The selection criteria cannot be viewed as variables, and neither can the sample be generalized to the whole population (Holliday, 2007; Patton, 2015).

Selection criteria

The participants are individual teachers. However, the sampling was based on school characteristics because the particular mono-religious school characteristics were the starting point of this study (see Appendix II). It was also less complicated to take school characteristics as starting point than looking for variation in teacher characteristics, because the latter are not readily available in datasets. I assumed a variety of teacher characteristics, like age, years of teaching experience or church affiliation, to be present in the sample. For practical reasons all schools were located within a 50-km radius of Utrecht, a mix of Bible belt and urban regions. To further ensure maximum variation, I did not involve more than one school in the same town. As selection criteria, the school's denomination (Reformed/

Reformed Liberated/Protestant),[17] the size of the town (largest cities/big cities/smaller cities/villages) and the number of orthodox Protestants living in that town (few/many) were used. The last two criteria were added, as it could be assumed that the environment of the school influences how religious diversity is experienced within schools. The size of the town and the presence of orthodox Protestants could be seen as indications of the number of religious (and/or cultural) others in the region. The bigger the town and the smaller the presence of orthodox Protestants, the more likely the presence of religious (and/or cultural) others. There were a total of 166 OPPSs within 50 km of Utrecht.

Selection procedure

The combination of selection criteria lead to 18 different categories of schools. Each of the 166 OPPSs was classified into one of the categories (see Appendix II). If there were multiple schools from one town in the same category, they were randomly ordered. For each category the principal of the first school was contacted by email, providing some background information about the study, and there was a follow-up call within a week. I asked the principal whether the teacher of grade 5[18] or, alternatively, the teacher of grade 4 could participate in the study. Some principals gave me contact information to directly invite the teacher(s) myself. Other principals asked their colleagues whether they would participate, or decided that participation was not possible or desirable, mostly arguing that teacher workloads do not allow time for participation. When a first attempt did not lead to a participating teacher, the process was repeated by contacting the principal of the next school in the same category. Principals were not involved in any further communication with participants. I approached a total of 47 schools, 15 of which participated (31.9% positive responses[19]). Three of the identified categories could not be represented in the sample: I was not able to find teachers willing to participate from a Reformed Liberated primary school in a village or from a Protestant school in a city with few orthodox Protestants. Also, there are no Protestant schools in one of the largest cities, so instead a Protestant school of a big city was approached.[20] Teachers who did not want to participate said that they weren't interested in such an interview or did not have time for it.

---

[17] Dutch: *reformatorisch/gereformeerd (vrijgemaakt)/protestants-christelijk*

[18] In the Netherlands the 5th grade is the penultimate year of primary school.

[19] In Chapters 4 and 5 a percentage of 38.5% instead of 31.9% was mistakenly mentioned, because it counted 39 instead of 47 approached schools.

[20] The fact that this school is officially registered as Reformed and not Protestant was missed, and that only turned out after conducting the interviews. Remarkably, the participants also spoke about the school as being Protestant. The school was kept in the sample because this was not expected to influence the outcomes negatively.

The preference for a 5th or 4th grade teacher is based on the value of clearly making a distinction from secondary education, therefore I did not choose the final year of primary school. On the other hand, I also opted for teachers of pupils who were not too young, as it was expected that the topic of religious diversity might be more present for older than younger pupils in primary schools—it is commonly heard that orthodox Protestants say there can be gradually more openness towards religious others when children grow older.

Description of participants

Sixteen teachers of fifteen different schools participated in this study: Adam, Anna, Danïel, Emma, Femke, Floris, Gijs, Hugo, Jan, Jasmijn, Lieke, Luuk, Nora, Ruben, Sanne and Teun—all fictitious names in order to preserve participants' confidentiality. Lieke and Sanne are teachers at the same school (school type VI), who worked in the same grade but in different classes. They only wanted to participate if they could be interviewed together. There were seven women and nine men. Most participated during their free time. Participants received a small present for their participation, and their school teams were invited to attend a presentation of the results of the study.

Because of the confidentiality, I do not relate any more details of the specific participants. Instead, I describe the total group of participants by focusing on their age, workplace situation, teaching experience and some religious characteristics. These background characteristics were collected by using a small written questionnaire with close-ended questions developed by De Muynck (2008), who also interviewed OPPS teachers (see Appendix III).

The oldest participant in the year of the interviews was 59 (born 1957), the youngest 23 (born 1993). Participants were on average 35 years old. Seven participants were between ages 28 and 30 (born 1986, 1987 or 1988).

The teachers came from seven Reformed schools, four Reformed Liberated schools and five Protestant schools. At least seven of these schools have an open admission policy for pupils, which means that all children are essentially welcome, irrespective of church affiliation. Their parents are asked to respect the school's identity and mission. Most teachers worked (almost) full-time, with 0.62 FTE as lowest and 0.9 FTE on average. Participants considered themselves representative of orthodox Protestant education to a large extent (7), to a slightly large extent (7.5)[21] and to a fair extent (1.5). All teachers agreed with the statement "I have a critical stance on what is happening in orthodox Protestant education", nine of them 'strongly' and seven 'slightly'.

---

[21] One participant selected both 'to a slightly large extent' and 'to a fair extent'. This one was counted as 0.5 for each option.

The number of years teaching varied from 1.5 to 35, with over 11 years on average. At the time of the interviews, half of the teachers worked at the school were they started their teaching career. All teachers were educated at Christian universities: nine of them at Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education in Gouda, five at Viaa (previously: Gereformeerde hogeschool) in Zwolle, one at Ede Christian University of Applied Sciences (CHE) in Ede, and one attended two of these institutes.[22]

Fifteen teachers declared that the Christian faith is very important to them, and one participant said it is important. Six participants found themselves very actively involved in their churches, eight actively involved, one slightly involved, and one participant did not answer this question. All participants were confessing members of their church. Participants were attached to the following denominations: Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken (Christian Reformed Churches) (2), Gereformeerde Gemeenten (Reformed Congregations) (4), Gereformeerde Gemeenten in Nederland (Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands) (1), Gereformeerde Kerken Vrijgemaakt (Reformed Church of the Netherlands (Liberated)) (4), and Protestantse Kerk in Nederland (Protestant Church in the Netherlands) (4). One participant did not clarify their church affiliation. All participants indicated feeling at home in the orthodox Protestant climate, seven of them 'strongly' and nine 'quite strongly'.

Participants of the focus groups study (alumni/teacher trainers)

The focus groups were meant to provide insight into how the theme of religious diversity has been and is being dealt with in a specific orthodox Protestant teacher education programme. To this end, there were two focus groups with alumni and two focus groups with teacher educators.

Selection procedure

In order to have participants start talking from a shared context of primary school practices in a given context with the focus on what the teacher education programme contributed in their situations, I aimed to include several participants of the same school in the focus group. Purposeful sampling was used (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2012; Patton, 2015), trying to select primary schools to which there is a steady outflow from Driestar Christian University, in order to ensure enough participants. The teacher education programme manager mentioned two schools that met that criterion. These schools

---

[22] www.driestar-hogeschool.nl, www.viaa.nl and www.che.nl

were approached via contact persons that had links to the research centre of Driestar Christian University. Both contact persons responded positively. After a phone call, an e-mail with information about the study was sent. In response, the contact persons at these schools assembled focus groups by inviting all their colleagues that were Driestar Christian University alumni. They were asked to invite those who had graduated less than five years ago, as it would be valuable to have participants who had recent experiences with the teacher education programme. The contact persons were not involved in any further communication with the participants, and the researchers and participants did not know each other before the interviews. The first focus group ended up having people who had been working for a longer time, including someone who had been working in another field before their teacher education. Both were Reformed primary schools with approximately 550 pupils, located in the Bible belt. The first school was located in a village of over 10,000 inhabitants, the second school in a larger village with a regional impact (over 25,000 inhabitants).

A convenience sample was used for the focus groups with teacher educators of Driestar Christian University (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2012). An invitation to participate was posted twice on the online staff platform and all teacher educators were alerted by email. Eight teacher educators responded positively (11%; ultimately one was unable to participate). Most of them had identifiable affinities with the topic, for example because of international duties or experience with multicultural education. The teacher educators were divided into two groups with as many different departments represented per group as possible.

Description of participants

A total of nine alumni participated in the focus groups, including seven women and two men. The first focus group (first school) consisted of five participants (3 female, 2 male), and the second group (second school) consisted of four participants (4 female). In the first focus group the average working experience was 6 years, in the second focus group it was 1 year. The first group involved one participant each from kindergarten, grade 3 and grade 6, and two participants from grade 4; the second focus group one participant from grade 2 and three participants from grade 4. In the second focus group two participants were still on their teacher-in training internship, the other two had been working in education for two years. The last two had taught the children of Dutch missionaries before they started working at the current school. The average age also seemed lower in the second focus group (23) than in the first, although exact ages are not known from the first focus group. All participated during their free time.

There were a total of seven participants in the focus groups with teacher educators, including four women and three men. The teacher educators came from the disciplines of geography, arts, history, and two participants each for religious education and Dutch language. The contribution of teacher educators was voluntary.

2.3 Data Collection and Research Instruments

Data collection and research instrument of the individual interviews study

Two interview moments with each participant were planned for the in-depth interviews. I expected that raising questions about religious diversity could evoke new reflections by the teachers in the meantime, which could be expressed during the second interview. The second interview also enabled asking more clarifying questions after transcribing the first interview. On average, the second interview followed 30 days after the first, with a minimum of 5 days and a maximum of 65 days in-between. I opted for semi-structured interviews as I value a conversational style in which the interviewer can react to participants and participants feel comfortable. This can create a rapport and thus enhance the chances that participants will share rich information (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2012), plus can make the interviews more focused and comprehensive (Patton, 2015; Verschuren, 2009).

Interview guide

The interview guide consisted of open questions and was mainly based upon the conclusions of the theoretical exploration (Chapter 3) and composed of questions used earlier by other researchers (Afdal, 2006; Bertram-Troost, 2006; Bertram-Troost et al., 2015b; De Muynck, 2008; De Ruyter & Kole, 2001; De Wolff, 2000; Van de Koot-Dees, 2013; Versteegt, 2010). Every question in the interview guide was followed by some sub-questions or topics (cf. Patton, 2015). In the first interview, participants were asked to elaborate on their entire school career (family background, primary and secondary education, higher education, workplaces), their ideals in education, their motivation for a Christian education, the internal diversity of the school population, their personal experiences with religious others, pupils' experiences with religious others, religious education, and briefly about religious tolerance as an educational goal (citizenship education). The second interview was used for further clarification of what was said in the first interview, and included questions to speak more thoroughly about religious tolerance, religious others and Christian values in education. The complete interview

guide, including the acknowledgements of sources, can be found in Appendix IV. In order to stimulate participants to think about their answers, especially in the interview with the two teachers together, I sometimes asked teachers to write down their thoughts about their professional ideals and about the tolerance concept before talking about it.

The draft of the interview guide was discussed several times in the research team. Three pilot interviews with primary school teachers from the researchers' networks (I knew one teacher personally) gave satisfying results. Goals of these pilots were to check whether the questions were clear, whether the right language and tone was being used, whether the questions fostered elaborating on the intended topics, and to get used to interviewing participants. The most important adaptations were splitting the topics over two separate interviews, specifying the questions about religious tolerance and adding questions about professional ideals and the school's identity. It could not be foreseen that several incidents happened that actually did resonate in the interviews, like the Charlie Hebdo attack in January 2015 (BBC News, 2015, January 7), the Tunisian beach attack in June 2015 (Amara, 2015) and on the same day the beheading attack in France (BBC News, 2015, June 26), the widespread images of the washed-up body of 3-year-old Syrian boy Aylan in September 2015 (Mackay, 2015), and the assault of a Dutch emergency setting for refugees in October 2015 (ANP, 2015). These incidents put the issue of religious diversity and issues of tolerance on the minds of teachers, especially in the light of radical Islam.

Conducting the interviews

Almost all interviews took place at the participants' schools, except for the double interview with Lieke and Sanne (who preferred to be interviewed at the researcher's office) and the second interview with Teun (as he planned attending the interview before going to another meeting in the vicinity of the researcher's office). To create a safe atmosphere, the researcher tried to sit down diagonally across the participant, while the participant could see the door. The interview started with questions about the personal school-life story of the participant, to promote confidence with the interview situation. During the interviews there was space for having a coffee break (not included in the mentioned length of the interview). Sometimes the participant invited the researcher to join the team coffee break. In one situation, the researcher suggested having a break because the participant seemed to get 'stuck' in his mind. Participants were interviewed for 173 minutes on average over both interviews, with 128 minutes as minimum and 228 minutes as maximum.

As interviewer I came as a representative of Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education, which is a Reformed institute. I was aware that participants might expect me to be 'one of them', which included knowing specific religious language and/or religious subcultures. However, I mentioned in the introduction to each interview that I would always probe, regardless of whether participants thought I should 'understand'. Most of the time the interviews had a conversational style (cf. Patton, 2015). There were moments of laughter and things move naturally from one topic to another. Participants seemed to feel comfortable: they shared personal information, like about being bullied, and some expressed things that they would have normally never said out loud to the school board. In the second interview participants referred to details of the first interviews, which shows that they were attentively involved.

The interviews were audio recorded. During the interviews I wrote down some key words of topics that I wanted to ask further questions about. I noted more or less extensively some reflections about the participants and the interviews before and after the interview, and after checking the transcripts. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and lightly edited by an external transcriber to improve legibility. Within four weeks after an interview I checked by listening to the recording and reading along the transcript. At that point I also replaced with pseudonyms or neutral descriptions any names or personal facts that could lead to identification of the participants.

Data collection and research instrument of the focus groups study

Two researchers were present at all four focus groups. I functioned as the lead researcher, who was responsible for moderating and interviewing. The second researcher[23] assisted and focused on facilitating the group and recording the data through notes and recordings (cf. Patton, 2015). In this process a less structured approach was deliberately chosen, which means, among other things, that participants could speak to each other and not only to the moderator (Evers & De Boer, 2012). To ensure that similar themes were covered in the different focus groups, a conversation guide was used (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2012).

Conversation guides

The semi-structured conversation guides with open questions were designed based on the results and experiences from the main study. The guides were structured as follows: an opening question (short question to help participants get to know each other), an

---

[23] In focus group 1 the second researcher was Prof. dr. Bram de Muynck, in the other focus groups Daniël Bos MSc contributed.

introductory question (low-threshold question to introduce the central theme and initiate interaction), a transition question (to build a bridge to the key questions), three (alumni) or six (teacher educator) key questions, and a concluding question (giving participants the opportunity to reflect on what they said) (cf. Kwaliteitsinstituut voor de gezondheidszorg CBO, September 2004). A key component in the conversation guide for alumni was a real-life case from the interview with Daniël. That case describes an extreme situation that can provoke the conversation. This specific case was chosen because the situation was described in detail, and lies at the interface of internal and external religious diversity. For the teacher educators I worked with a visualisation of the estimated entry levels and the desired exit levels of the trainee teachers. The conversation guides were piloted with five teacher educators. Based on that pilot, it was decided that the case indeed contained relevant starting points for conversation in the focus group. It was likewise decided to leave out the case from the conversation guide of teacher educators, as it provided little insight into answering the research question, and given that the desired focus lie rather on the perceived levels that trainee teachers have for the mentioned competences. The conversation guide for alumni can be found in Appendix V and the conversation guide for teacher educators in Appendix VI.

Conducting the focus groups

Before the focus group started, a few 'rules of game' were explained, such as there being no right or wrong responses and that the conversation would be centrally conducted (cf. Evers & De Boer, 2012). The focus groups with alumni took place after school hours, those with teacher educators were held mid-day. The focus groups with alumni lasted 75 and 90 minutes, the ones with teacher educators both lasted over 100 minutes. All focus groups were audio-recorded and the assistant created a report on the spot. The assistant subsequently developed the report further, based on the audio recordings, and the researcher checked it.

2.4 Data Analysis

To structure the analysis, the general framework for descriptive/interpretative qualitative research of Elliott and Timulak (2005) was broadly followed. This framework highlights that analysis already starts during the transcription of the data and their first reading (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). I also value involving the writing of the results as an integral part of the analysis, as I believe that the way in which the results are presented is also related to the interpretation (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2006; Holliday, 2007). This means that

the analysis started by listening to the audio files and reading the complete data set in order to get the whole picture of the phenomenon, while checking the transcripts. The insights and understandings that began to emerge were written down as reflections (cf. Elliot & Timulak, 2005). I subsequently edited the data by omitting obvious redundancies, repetitions and unimportant digressions (cf. Elliot & Timulak, 2005). Also, the data were uploaded to Atlas.ti[24], the software programme used for coding. Next, the data were divided into distinctive meaning units, namely parts of the data that stand out of the context and could communicate sufficient information to provide a piece of meaning to the reader (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). This was followed by organizing the data, by assigning headings on the basis of the meaning units' objects (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). Some headings were categories from the interview guide (e.g. 'Tolerance' and 'Religious others'), others were new (e.g. 'Refugees'). The meaning units with the same headings together were called a domain. The headings were defined in a code book (see Appendix VII). The definitions were continuously re-adjusted and compared to the meaning units, in order to reflect the content of the meaning units and domains clearly and comprehensively. Like all further coding, the coding was done in Dutch, because there would be a loss of meaning if the codes and concepts were translated into English in this phase already (cf. Van Nes et al., 2010).

The domains and the definitions of the headings gave a general overview of the contents in the data. After several discussions among the research team, based on the reflections of the researcher it was defined which domains were up for more elaborate analysis in subsequent phases and from which perspectives. In this process, the overall research question was the guide to see which were important topics that showed up at several points in the data, like one recognises a musical theme. Based on the domains, the original research questions were adjusted and the themes of the various sub-studies were delineated. For example, originally we did not foresee that the differences between the pedagogical agents would be such a relevant issue. At this phase it was also decided that the scope would be widened towards religious diversity instead of focusing on religious tolerance, as participants elaborated much more on the broader area of religious diversity instead of focusing on tolerance only. Eventually, almost all domains were involved in one of these delineated sub-studies. For each sub-study, the meaning units of the specific domains were thematically coded one by one (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2006; Elliot & Timulak, 2005). This process was like a dialogue of the researcher with the data (cf. Elliot & Timulak, 2005): on the one hand I tried to use codes close to the

_____

24 www.atlasti.com (initially version 7, later on version 8)

original language of the participants, on the other I also used ideas for categories that came from my earlier insights and from insights during the coding of earlier meaning units. The codes were continuously defined and redefined. Meaning units with the same codes formed categories (Elliot & Timulak, 2005; Miles et al., 2014). These categories were in turn also categorized (Elliot & Timulak, 2005) by looking for similarities and patterns between them, in this way forming increasingly abstract categories. Patton's guidelines (2002) for dual criteria judging categories—internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity—were helpful in this phase. Next, the main findings were abstracted by finding an answer to the question, 'What categories are required to communicate the essence of the phenomenon?' (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). In some sub-studies (described in Chapters 4 and 5) this step was extended by imparting the main findings with related information or examples from other data fragments (distinctive meaning units or domains) or by checking whether other data fragments contained contradictions with the findings. Finally, the results were written down by presenting the findings and describing the relations between them. I tried to regularly use quotations, as I wanted to be clear about the origins of the results plus stress the voices of teachers.

Data analysis of the focus groups study

For the data analysis in the focus groups study a generally comparable procedure was followed, but with detailed reports of the focus groups. These reports were created by the assistant and checked by the researcher using the audio recordings. The meaningful units were distinguished in close consultation between researcher and assistant, and thematically coded partly by each (cf. Braun and Clarke, 2006; Elliott and Timulak, 2005) while they checked each other's work. Because of the relatively small amount of data and prior experiences of the assistant, Microsoft Excel[25] instead of Atlas.ti was used. The codes were then jointly categorized (cf. Elliott and Timulak, 2005). Based on these categories and codes the results were described, with some of the pre-formulated questions reformulated. One of the supervisors in the research team read along critically during the whole process, while the results were also discussed with the entire research team. To stay close to the experiences of participants, the data were open-coded and the results were only compared with literature afterwards instead of using literature for defining the categories.

---

[25] https://www.microsoft.com/nl-nl/microsoft-365/excel

2.5 Validity, Reliability and Integrity

With regard to the quality of my research, I identify some activities and considerations on validity, reliability and integrity that were especially important and guided or supported methodological decisions I took. For validity it was relevant that I theoretically explored the central issues before starting the empirical part of the study. The revealed insights about professional beliefs and relevant issues, were used to make decisions about the research design and to develop the research instruments. Instrument validity was further enhanced by extensively piloting and discussing the instruments with the research team (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005). Next to that, the careful selection of participants contributed to the validity of the study as well (cf. Malterud, 2001). The validity is also demonstrated by the fact that the central theme of this research was approached from multiple perspectives adopted in the distinct research questions. These perspectives were based not only on the insights of the theoretical part but also on participants' contributions to the central topic, since some themes have emerged that were not expected beforehand, such as the position of teachers in relation to other pedagogical agents. This illustrates the openness and flexibility to take into account what was relevant according to the participants (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005).

To enhance reliability, it was valuable that structured and semi-structured instruments were used (cf. Robson & McCartan, 2016). To improve the quality of the data collection, the researcher attended specific trainings on both qualitative interviewing and focus groups (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005; Robson & McCartan, 2016). The reliability of the data collection and analysis also benefited from my familiarity with the participants' religious backgrounds because I lived in the vicinity of orthodox Protestant communities and worked at an orthodox Protestant teacher education institute. This appeared to be especially helpful for gaining participants' trust as well as for understanding their religious language, which is necessary for the interpretative approach and our research aims. However, there was still distance between researcher and participants, as I was not fully part of the orthodox Protestant subculture. For example, I myself did not attend an OPPS as a child. That made it easier to maintain a critical stance, which also benefits reliability (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005; Smaling, 1997). It is likewise important to note that, although I had a central role as primary researcher (see Section 1.7), other researchers were constantly involved (cf. Malterud, 2001). This concerns first of all the research team that extensively discussed all phases of the study and all sub-studies; the team consisted of five members with different and complementary expertise in the field of teacher education, religious education and practical theology, which helped prevent biases. Other researchers too were involved in

sessions that were organized to check the coding (inter-rater reliability). I also regularly presented the research to experts at national and international conferences, and each sub-study was subjected to blind peer review as it was submitted to international academic journals. For me as researcher, continuous reflection was also stimulated by the use of a notebook during the whole research process, which can benefit reliability (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005; Matlerud, 2001). Also for purposes of reliability, a detailed description of how the study was conducted is provided (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005). This makes the research transparent as a whole, and opens ways for theoretical generalization and transferability to other contexts (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

With regard to research integrity, the *Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* for scientific research at Dutch universities (VSNU, 2018) was followed. This code is based on the principles of honesty, scrupulousness, transparency, independence and responsibility. To maintain integrity, a data management plan was prepared before the empirical studies began, in accordance with the guidelines for data management of the Dutch National Centre of Expertise and Repository for Research Data (DANS 2015). All interviews and focus groups were recorded and the anonymized transcripts and reports stored in DANS[26], and are accessible for other researchers after permission of the research team. All participants signed an informed consent form (see Appendix VIII), thereby agreeing with their voluntary participation, the anonymous use of the interview material in this research study, the storage of the anonymised data in DANS, and access to and use of these materials by other researchers after permission of the research team. The participation of the teachers in the individual interviews and the participation of alumni and teacher educators in the focus groups were are at the heart of my research. It is for this reason that I consistently use the term 'participant(s)' instead of 'respondent(s)' to refer to them. An important question that was constantly present throughout the research process was: 'Am I doing justice to the participants?'

---

[26] DANS is the Data Archiving and Networked Services of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

CHAPTER 3

Religious Tolerance as Educational Goal in Orthodox Protestant Schools: Exploring the Concept and Tensions Teachers Potentially Experience

Abstract

Tolerance is an important educational goal in diverse societies; however, tolerance is also a complex concept. This article clarifies theoretically what the aim of fostering tolerance could mean for teachers in strong religious schools who may experience specific ideological and didactical tensions in promoting religious tolerance. These potential tensions are explored theoretically by examining what the educational goal might mean and by investigating theories about teachers' professional ideals and their belief systems. In this way, the importance of teachers' reflection on their professional beliefs is shown. The article's background is defined by Dutch educational legislation and orthodox Protestant primary schools.

3.1 Introduction

In Western societies, tolerance is frequently promoted as an educational goal because it is perceived to be essential for dealing with diversity in society (Bertram-Troost & Miedema, 2017; Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017; Van der Straten Waillet & Roskam, 2013). However, since there is no universal definition of tolerance, it is difficult to define what this educational goal means (cf. Afdal, 2006; Bertram-Troost & Miedema, 2017; Forst, 2004; Van den Brink, 2002; Vogt, 1997). Moreover, in strong religious communities, the value of tolerance is sometimes debated (Kater, 2017; Kole & De Kruijf, 2005; Sremac & Ganzevoort, 2017) and, although empirical evidence to support this reasoning has rarely been offered, public opinion sometimes holds that strong religious schools threaten the personal development of pupils and social cohesion through a lack of attention to individual autonomy and tolerance (Bertram-Troost, 2011; Everett, 2012; Miedema & Bertram-Troost, 2008; Willems et al., 2010). For teachers in strong religious schools, it might therefore be an especially challenging goal to teach tolerance. In the current article we aim for a better theoretical understanding of the potential tensions that teachers in strong religious schools might experience and what this means for teachers' professionalism. Our research questions therefore are: What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean, and how can the tensions that might emerge in orthodox Protestant primary schools around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective? When we speak about 'religious tolerance', we refer specifically to situations in which the object of tolerance is a religious 'other' instead of the object being certain views or behaviours, for example, about homosexuality, that are tolerated or not within a religious tradition.

This article also functions as a theoretical exploration to underpin a broader empirical research project on how orthodox Protestant primary school (hereafter called OPPS) teachers professionally reconcile a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools. Religious tolerance is chosen as a central topic because the tensions between strong convictions (mono-religiosity) within a religiously diverse context arise in a particularly notable way, since the confrontation between these two poles is central to the tolerance concept (see section 3.3). Furthermore, without tolerance, social cohesion in a diverse society cannot exist (cf. Sremac & Ganzevoort, 2017; Van der Straten Waillet & Roskam, 2013; Weisse, 2009). We expect that the insights we gain with this concept as starting point will also be helpful more broadly in understanding other aspects related to citizenship education in religious schools. Our starting point is the current situation of Dutch OPPSs. However, we assume that the outcomes of this

study can also be insightful for other contexts, because the relationship between the particularity of religious communities and the diversity of society is an issue for schools worldwide (Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019).

In the next sections we will start by presenting the background of our research topic— namely, the legislation on teaching tolerance in Dutch OPPSs and the specific tensions that might arise. Secondly, we will examine the concept of tolerance and how it is shaped as an educational goal in OPPSs, and we clarify the specific didactical tensions. Thirdly, we will explain the ideological tensions with the use of theories concerning professional ideals and educational beliefs. In the conclusion, we answer our central question, give a brief critique of our findings and make suggestions for further empirical research.

3.2 Legislation and Potential Tensions in OPPSs

In many reports on education, democracy and/or citizenship education worldwide, tolerance is mentioned as an educational goal (Albert Shanker Institute, 2003; Council of Europe, 2014; UNESCO, 2015; Van Driel et al., 2016; Wetenschappelijke Raad voor Regeringsbeleid, 2003). The need for this is often related to the (increasing) diversity in society and the need for social cohesion, as was explained in a European Commission project:

> As a result of increasing diversity, value pluralism means that we need a way of reconciling ourselves with differences we disagree with, which may be deep and difficult to bridge. Respect for the other's individuality, reason and human standing, or the fact of common citizenship, can provide grounds for putting disagreement into perspective and thus for tolerance (Dobbernack et al., 2013, p. 3).

Since 2006, schools in the Netherlands have been obliged by law to promote 'active citizenship and social cohesion' (until 2021 called 'active citizenship and social integration') (Bron, n.d.; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019). An important criterion for the Inspectorate of Education with which to evaluate schools' efforts on this, among other things, is whether schools adequately guarantee 'tolerance' and 'rejection of intolerance'[27] (Bron, n.d.; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2021a; Willems, 2013). Teaching

---

[27] 'Tolerance' and 'rejection of intolerance' are mentioned together with freedom of expression, equality, understanding of other people, rejection of discrimination, autonomy and sense of responsibility as 'basic values of the Dutch constitutional state' that stem from the Constitutional Law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Bron, n.d.; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2021a; Willems, 2013).

religious tolerance also especially relates to one of the core objectives in the regulations of primary education which states that pupils should learn '...essentials of religious movements that play an important part in the Dutch plural society, and [that] they learn to respect people's differences of opinion' (Greven & Letschert, 2006).

All Dutch educational legislation is constructed according to constitutional 'Freedom of Education'. This ensures that denominational schools are free to express their religious or (pedagogically) philosophical values and ideologies within the educational setting and are funded by the state the same way public schools are (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; Glenn & De Groof, 2005). Denominational schools must meet the same quality standards as public schools regarding qualifications of teachers, subjects that must be taught and educational targets (i.e., core objectives and examination requirements) (Bron, n.d.; Bron & Thijs, 2011; Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007). However, denominational schools have great autonomy in interpreting the attainment prescriptions and in defining the curriculum (Bron, n.d.; Bron & Thijs, 2011; Onderwijsraad, 2012). Regulations on teaching tolerance therefore do not prescribe in detail what teaching pupils about tolerance exactly consists of (Bron & Thijs, 2011).[28]

Approximately 5% of all primary schools in the Netherlands are OPPSs (De Muynck et al., 2014). These schools adhere to Reformed doctrines and often have connections to local religious communities (De Muynck, 2008; De Wolff et al., 2002; Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003). A Christian identity is seen as the most significant and essentially foundational feature of these schools' identity, which should therefore guide educational and pedagogical practices (De Muynck, 2008; De Wolff et al., 2003). The schools seek to deepen and consolidate pupils' Christian faith in accordance with their religious upbringing in the church and at home (De Wolff et al., 2003; Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003). In daily school practices, reading the Bible, praying and singing are important activities, as is doctrinal teaching in the higher grade levels (De Muynck et al., 2014). Teachers are practicing church members. Some schools restrict enrolment to pupils affiliated with specific churches, while others are open to church-going and non-church-going children alike (De Muynck et al., 2014; De Wolff et al., 2003; Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003).

OPPSs could be best characterised as schools with mono-religious characteristics. This means that the socio-cultural context (in our case, at least, the teacher team and the school's mission) is dominated by orthodox Protestantism, the normative basis is

_____

[28] See Zoontjens and Glenn (2012) for a comprehensive description of the educational system in the Netherlands.

the confession of the absolute truth and value of the (orthodox Protestant) Christian tradition and the pedagogic aim is the internalisation of that tradition (De Wolff et al., 2003; Sterkens, 2001). The tensions about religious tolerance as an educational goal have to do with the strong emphasis of OPPSs on their own religious identity, namely, their own convictions and/or community. We recognise the potential for both ideological and didactical tensions in that.

Ideological tensions stem from the normative basis and the related pedagogic aims of these schools. The normative basis is the exclusivist conviction that it is necessary for everyone to have a personal relationship with Christ through faith in order to be eternally saved. Those who are not Christians are excluded from salvation (Moyaert, 2011)[29]. Orthodox Protestant Christians then sometimes understand tolerance as surrendering to the Truth (Kater, 2017). For the same reason, orthodox Protestant Christians do not always automatically adhere to liberal democratic values in general, including tolerance (cf. De Ruyter & Merry, 2009; Kole & De Kruijf, 2005). Furthermore, contact with religious others is sometimes regarded as dangerous, as it might lead to religious relativism or secularisation and moral erosion (Pons-de Wit, 2017).

The didactical tensions have to do with the (relatively) homogenous school populations present especially in those OPPSs with restricted pupil enrolment. Having a homogeneous school population conflicts with the assumption that classroom diversity is necessary to teach children to live together with others who are culturally and religiously different (Bertram-Troost & Miedema, 2017; Elias, 2010; Ipgrave, 2004; Jackson, 2004; Martínez-Ariño & Teinturier, 2019; Orteza y Miranda, 2010; Turkenburg, 2005; Versteegt, 2010; Vogt, 1997; Willems, 2013).

3.3 Religious Tolerance as an Educational Goal in OPPSs

Before we examine the foreseen tensions in OPPSs in depth, we must examine the lack of clarity around the concept of tolerance in general and describe what this means for teachers in OPPSs. Tolerance can be understood as a personality trait, belief, commitment, attitude or action (Vogt, 1997). According to Vogt (1997), attitudes and beliefs are the most important of these and are always included in the other mentioned appearances.

---

[29] This is the ideal-typical description. In practice, the boundaries between exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism are regularly blurred, as is shown, for example, within the study by Wardekker and Miedema (2001).

Within philosophical and political discourse, as well as within educational policy, tolerance is accepted as extremely important to both individuals and societies. It is described as a fundamental civic virtue that enables individuals to function in a diverse, modern society, and the resilience of such societies increases when individuals living in them know how to cope with diversity (Forst, 2003; Sremac & Ganzevoort, 2017; Vogt, 1997; Willems et al., 2010). Despite this high level of commitment to tolerance as a fundamental virtue, its interpretation is often unclear (Afdal, 2006; Forst, 2004; Van den Brink, 2002; Vogt, 1997). In most definitions, two poles can be recognised: objection and acceptance (Afdal, 2006; Forst, 2003; Vogt, 1997). As Vogt (1997: xxiv) states, 'tolerance is putting up with something one does not like'. The lack of consensus on the interpretation of tolerance primarily concerns what should be the minimal amount of objection (phrased variously from dislike to moral disapproval) and what should be the minimal degree of acceptance (varying from ignoring to appreciating the other) (Afdal, 2006; Forst, 2004; Van den Brink, 2002; Willems, 2013).

We found three main characteristics of tolerance that are frequently mentioned in the literature and are relevant for how OPPS teachers could deal with this concept. First, tolerance is not a natural inclination. It would be possible, or even likely, for one to act in another way; tolerance is therefore conditioned by self-control and based on a conscious, deliberate and voluntary choice (Kole, 2005; cf. Vogt, 1997). Second, tolerance is not an absolute value but is qualified by other values or principles, such as autonomy or democracy (Forst, 2004; Kole, 2005; Van den Brink, 2002; Vogt, 1997). This implies that tolerance is not unlimited, as it is justified only when it serves these values or principles (Forst, 2004; Van den Brink, 2002; Vogt, 1997). Third, both the interpretation of the concept of tolerance and the decision as to whether to tolerate depends on the specific context and a person's specific normative justification (Afdal, 2006; Forst, 2004; Van den Brink, 2002; Vogt, 1997). This justification depends on the different normative maps—religious or worldview concepts, practices and rituals to which people adhere—of individuals and the communities in which they live (Afdal, 2006; Forst, 2003, 2004; Kole & De Kruijf, 2005; Willems, 2013). This also makes tolerance a value with a wide consensus in society in the shared public or liberal-democratic moral language, but one which can have different grounds for different groups in their primary moral language (Strike, 2000a, 2000b[30]).

All three characteristics imply that a certain degree of reasoning is needed before tolerance can be practised; tolerance is not a given, but one must consider the reasons

---

[30] This relationship between public moral language and primary moral language has also been described in other words or concepts, for example, by Afdal (2006), Forst (2004), Kole and De Kruijf (2005) and Willems (2013).

upon which one would base the decision to be tolerant in a certain situation. As Vogt (1997) concludes, an individual in a civilised society should know how to consider where, and on what principles, to draw the boundary between what is and what is not to be tolerated. This means that 'teaching tolerance effectively includes teaching how to think about both what should and what should not be tolerated' (Vogt, 1997: xix). That requires teachers to be able to reason about tolerance themselves, in order to teach it to their pupils.

When the question is about how to teach tolerance, we already mentioned that classroom diversity is often mentioned as a way of teaching children to live together with others who are culturally and religiously different. However, as we described in the previous section, the classroom in a strong religious school regularly has a homogeneous religious population and highlights its own community. Furthermore, encounters with religious others or exposure to stories of religious others might cause tensions in strong religious schools, since this could conflict with the emphasis on their own religious convictions (cf. Pons-de Wit, 2017). Yet, De Wolff (2006) argues that the characteristics of strong religious primary schools are not barriers to adequate citizenship education in liberal-democratic societies per se (cf. Bertram-Troost, 2017).[31] In fact, socialisation in a specific conception of 'the good' can be especially powerful in developing ethical reasoning (MacMullen, 2004), which includes reasoning about tolerance.

However, MacMullen (2004) argues that within the framework of the primary socialisation environment it is important to introduce a limited form of ethical reasoning. This means, for example, that the teacher should ask and encourage "questions that invite rational analysis and interpretation rather than recitation of dogma" (MacMullen, 2004, p. 613), and they should highlight 'hard cases within the religious doctrine where reasonable disagreement exists even among the faithful' (MacMullen, 2004: 613). This is also related to the 'dialogical competence' that pupils should learn at school with regard to the presence of religious others in society (De Wolff, 2006; Strike, 2000a; Van Leest-Borst, 2005). This competence involves three essential components: competence in the primary moral language, competence in the public moral language and competence in hermeneutical discourse between different moral languages (Strike, 2000a). This competence is not only relevant for strong religious schools, but for all schools. Which components are most challenging might differ: for strong religious schools, the second and third competences

---

[31] This is based on the assumption that it is necessary to allow peoples' personal moral views into the public debate about our society. That contribution should, however, meet certain criteria, namely that it is understandable and acceptable to everyone, and that it is not in conflict with values that are part of the public morality (De Wolff, 2006).

might need special attention, while for other schools, especially public schools, just the first competence might require more effort (Bertram-Troost, 2017; De Wolff, 2006).

With regard to the second competence (to know the public moral language), children in strong religious schools should learn to agree to its importance, to know how the public moral language is valued from the perspective of their own moral language and how those two languages strengthen each other. At a later stage, children will learn that there is a consensus on the public moral language, but that different world views have different views of that language, and they will need to learn how to introduce their own moral language into the public debate (De Wolff, 2006). Regarding the third competence, children should practice hermeneutical discourse, which means that they must learn that there are different world views—both religious and non-religious—and how these influence one's beliefs and choices (De Wolff, 2006). Based on the examples of the limited form of ethical reasoning and the didactical competence, we thus note that didactical tensions do not necessarily occur in strong religious schools when it is about tolerance as an educational goal. Instead, there needs to be attention to the didactical approaches in relation to the specific characteristics of strong religious schools. We can add to this that it is relevant to recognise that within religious homogeneous populations of pupils, diversity as such is not absent: pupils have, for example, different socio-economic backgrounds, preferences, life situations (cf. Veerman, 2020; De Wolff, 2006).

3.4 OPPSs: Teachers' Beliefs, Professional Ideals and Religious Tolerance

Knowing that didactical tensions are not necessarily at stake, teachers can still experience ideological tensions in dealing with the limited form of ethical reasoning and dialogical competence, because they hesitate to pay too much attention to anything other than their own religious beliefs (Pons-de Wit, 2017). To better understand how these ideological tensions function, we will examine teachers' beliefs. The concept of *beliefs* is often used with respect to the influence of teachers' convictions in educational practices (Borg, 2001; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Korthagen, 2004). A belief is 'a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior' (Borg, 2001: 186). Therefore, beliefs are strong predictors of classroom decision making (Korthagen, 2004; Pajares, 1992). Since beliefs are evaluative, they differ from knowledge that is based on objective facts—instead, they appear to be formed through personal experiences or cultural sources of knowledge (Pajares, 1992).

Educational beliefs are part of a person's general belief system (Pajares, 1992). The general belief system can be understood as an integrated system with substructures or nests of beliefs (Bryan, 2003; Fives & Buehl, 2012). Beliefs within a certain substructure are connected but might also have connections to beliefs in other substructures (Fives & Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992). This means that educational beliefs are most probably influenced by beliefs about matters beyond the teaching profession; for example, religious convictions (Pajares, 1992). Religious beliefs are even seen as especially powerful influences on educational beliefs (Mansour, 2008, 2011). Beliefs can strengthen each other, but it is also acknowledged that a teacher's belief system can contain incompatible beliefs (Bryan, 2003; Mansour, 2011; Pajares, 1992). These incompatibilities will remain until they are examined against one another (Green, 1971 in Bryan, 2003).

Because speaking about 'educational beliefs' is too broad and all-encompassing, Pajares (1992) recommends operationalising educational beliefs as 'educational beliefs about' a specific topic or aspect. Since the potential tensions have to do with what teachers want to realise or not realise in their profession, we will focus on the educational beliefs about what teachers want to strive for. The concept of *professional ideals* (De Ruyter, 2003, 2007) will help us to do this. The characteristics of beliefs mentioned in the previous paragraphs are found in the literature about professional ideals as well—for example, that they are evaluative and are formed by personal experiences or cultural sources of knowledge (De Ruyter, 2003, 2007). Therefore, we understand professional ideals as being a specific nest of educational beliefs.

Ideals are 'images of excellence that are not yet realized and they are aims or goals we deeply desire to realize' (De Ruyter, 2003: 468). Professional ideals provide orientation, motivation, inspiration and even transcendent anchor to teachers: the ideals serve as navigational tools for how teachers design their educational practices; they provide the energy and passion to practice the teaching profession; they give meaning and purpose to daily work and to being a teacher; and they make it possible to have an independent and critical attitude towards the practice and reality in which one finds themself (De Ruyter, 2007; Kole, 2007a; Kole, 2007b; Kole & De Ruyter, 2011). Because of these important functions, Kole and De Ruyter (2011, p. 7; translation by the authors) argue: 'Being aware of your professional ideals is important if you want to become, to be and to remain a professional teacher.'

De Ruyter (2007) distinguishes among different types of professional ideals in the teaching profession—namely, ideal aims, content ideals and ideal means. Ideal aims and content ideals are concerned with what teachers want to realise by or accomplish with their work,

influenced by what they perceive to be their role as teachers. Ideal means are the ways in which teachers want to work and the kind of teachers they aspire to be (De Ruyter, 2007). For purposes of the argument regarding ideological tensions around religious tolerance as an educational goal in OPPSs, our first focus is on ideal aims and content ideals. Teachers' ideal aims are the ultimate and regulative social goods they strive to achieve in their profession, namely, the social good of pupils and society as a whole. Teachers, for example, hold the ideal aim that their pupils should become autonomous adults (De Ruyter, 2007; De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). Content ideals are ideals, such as the virtue of equity, that teachers attempt to transmit to their pupils (De Ruyter, 2007). These ideals are inevitably influenced by teachers' own world views and conceptions of the good life. Ideal aims can be formal (e.g., self-sufficiency) or substantial (defined in religious terms, e.g., obedience to God). The more substantial ideal aims are, the more they overlap with content ideals (De Ruyter, 2007; De Ruyter & Kole, 2010).

Although different professional ideals are not inevitably congruent, the quality of education increases when the ideal aims and content ideals are in accordance with each other, and when teaching practices correspond to these (Bryan, 2003; De Ruyter, 2007). If ideal aims and content ideals are not congruent, teachers might revise their professional ideals and decide which ideal(s) is/are more important and should be retained and which ideal(s) should be reconsidered or added (De Ruyter, 2007). The relationship between particular content ideals and particular ideal aims is not self-evident because the same content ideal can be applied to very different ideal aims and vice versa (De Ruyter, 2007).

The educational goal of religious tolerance can be regarded as a content ideal, since it is about something teachers want to transmit (or not) (cf. De Ruyter, 2007; De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). Because of the religious pedagogic aim in strong religious schools, we hold the internalisation of the Christian faith as an ideal aim (cf. De Ruyter, 2006; De Wolff et al., 2003; Markus et al., 2018). With this distinction we understand that teachers might experience tensions because they may perceive tolerance as a content ideal that conflicts with their overarching—and substantial—ideal; i.e., promoting tolerance is in the eyes of teachers not automatically in line with the internalisation of the Christian faith. Furthermore, we assume that the ideal aim of teachers is mainly connected to their religious beliefs, while the content ideal is mostly linked to political (liberal-democratic) beliefs. The latter is, for example, reflected in what Anna van Dam[32], an OPPS teacher interviewed, said:

---

[32] Fictitious name of a female teacher who was a participant in our research project. The quotation is taken from an in-depth interview conducted in 2015.

> Yes, that is the difficulty of being tolerant as a Christian, of course. You can accept someone, but you would rather long for them to know Jesus. But, yes, in the end that is God's responsibility, of course. You can take your own responsibility by entering into a conversation or something, but as a citizen of this nation you probably just need to accept other persons for who they are, and you can't impose something on them. (Anna van Dam; translation by the authors)

Since inconsistencies in the general belief system of teachers can exist, it might be that teachers teach tolerance isolated in the context of citizenship education and do not link it to the nests of their own religious beliefs or beliefs about religious socialisation (cf. Schutz, 1970 in Pajares, 1992). But if teachers become aware of the inconsistencies, they can either ignore them or search for a resolution by adjusting their professional ideals and/or other beliefs in their general belief system. Since the quality of education increases when ideals are in line with each other and when teaching practices correspond to these (Bryan, 2003; De Ruyter, 2007), the latter is preferred.

Korthagen (2004) points out that belief change can be stimulated by reflection on the basis of concrete teaching experiences[33] (cf. Fives & Buehl, 2012). When teachers are stimulated to reflect on such experiences, they can become aware of the—often implicit—beliefs that play a role. Subsequently, by considering the disadvantages of this belief, they can arrive at an alternative theory through which different behaviour can ultimately be practised. Fives and Buehl (2012) note that the extent of belief change depends on various factors, such as the nature of the beliefs and the nature of the experience, as well as on individual and contextual factors. Some beliefs are more central than others, and the more central they are, the more difficult they are to change (Fives & Buehl, 2012). For example, content-related beliefs about mathematics proved to be more changeable than general or overarching beliefs (Beswick, 2008; Magos, 2006). The central question here is whether and how the content ideal of religious tolerance and the substantial ideal aim of the internalisation of the Christian faith relate to each other. Our analysis of the tolerance concept, which showed that religious beliefs fully count because the tolerance concept should be interpreted from peoples' own religious normative framework, provides a first opportunity to bring the professional ideals of teachers in line with each other. The Dutch theologian Kater (2017), for example, reflected on being tolerant from an orthodox Protestant perspective. As he concludes, tolerance might be a less tensed value than the orthodox Protestant teachers think, so it does not need to be in conflict with their ideal

---

[33] Korthagen (2004) describes this in the context of teacher training programmes, but it seems also relevant for practicing teachers (cf. Fives & Buehl, 2012).

aim and provides space for alternative beliefs. Just as teachers in this way can adjust their religious beliefs about the concept of tolerance and their professional beliefs about tolerance as an educational goal in order to reduce inconsistencies, it might also be the case that they need to change other beliefs. For example, if they reflect on their beliefs related to the value of citizenship education, this might influence their religious beliefs or their ideal aims or other professional beliefs (cf. Nieuwelink et al., 2016).

Finally, we can also apply the theory of professional ideals to the didactical tensions that were discussed earlier. In this case, another type of professional ideals is at stake, namely the ideal means: it is about how the teacher wants to be a teacher and what they perceive to be ideal educational approaches (De Ruyter, 2007; De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). The theory of professional ideals states that the ideal aims precede the ideal means, and that they should also be congruent with the content ideals (De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). Therefore, the starting point should not be whether certain didactical approaches normally applied in heterogeneous classroom situations can be realised in homogeneous situations, but whether there are didactical approaches in a homogeneous classroom situation that fit with both the content ideal of religious tolerance and the teachers' ideal aims. Because of different ideal aims or content ideals in strong religious schools, the ideal means change as well, as we noted in the previous section.

3.5 Conclusion

Our research questions were the following: What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean and how can the tensions that might emerge in OPPSs around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective? We conclude that, although tolerance is frequently promoted as an educational goal, it is difficult to define what this educational goal means. For our case, it is relevant to recognise that, based on some main characteristics of the tolerance concept, both the interpretation and the realisation of tolerance always depend on a certain degree of reasoning. For educational settings, this means that teachers should teach 'how to think about both what should and what should not be tolerated' (Vogt, 1997: xix) and thus it is necessary that they are able to reason about tolerance themselves.

The second part of our research question concerns the tensions that might be experienced in OPPSs, as examples of strong religious schools. These tensions potentially arise because of the mono-religious characteristics of OPPSs: their specific socio-cultural context, normative bases and pedagogic aim. The normative basis and pedagogic aim

can lead to ideological tensions because tolerance is seen as surrendering to the Truth and teachers fervently wish their pupils to be (orthodox Protestant) Christians. The socio-cultural context can lead to didactical tensions because of the homogeneous school population, while classroom diversity is often argued to be an important way of teaching tolerance.

Considering the latter, the examination of tolerance as an educational goal in OPPSs shows that didactical tensions are not necessarily at issue since socialisation in a specific conception of 'the good' can be especially powerful. It is important, however, that attention is paid to didactical approaches in relation to the specific characteristics of strong religious schools, because, for example, limited ethical reasoning and dialogical competence need to be addressed. In addition, differences do exist within a religiously homogeneous population.

Ideological tensions can be clarified by investigating theories of educational beliefs, and especially professional ideals. Professional ideals are important because they provide orientation, motivation and inspiration to teachers. Tolerance can be regarded as a content ideal: it is something teachers want to transmit to pupils. Internalisation of the Christian faith is seen as an ideal aim: it is the overarching professional ideal of OPPS teachers. Teachers could experience tensions because they might not perceive tolerance as a content ideal automatically matching their overarching ideal. Inconsistencies in the general belief system of teachers can exist, but for the sake of good quality education, tensions experienced should be resolved and professional ideals should be congruent. Therefore, teachers might adjust their professional ideals, religious beliefs and/or other beliefs in their general belief system. In our examination of the concept of tolerance and as part of the Dutch Freedom of Education Act, we find that both provide the possibility for teachers to involve their own religious normative beliefs when it comes to tolerance as an educational goal. Moreover, the theory of professional ideals also indicates that ideal means follow the other professional ideals—which is done when didactical tensions are resolved as earlier mentioned.

This theoretical exploration thus shows the need for reflection on tolerance as an educational goal for teachers, from an analysis of the concept of tolerance, the nature of educational freedom and from the analysis of professional ideals. Anna, the teacher who is quoted in this article, could therefore be stimulated to think further about what she describes as 'difficulty', and to eventually adjust some of her professional ideals or other beliefs in order to bring her beliefs in line with each other. Kole and De Ruyter (2011)

urge teachers, and in particular teacher education programmes, to pay more attention to professional ideals in general, because this will benefit the practices of the teaching profession. In this regard, the strength of denominational schools might be that these schools have a shared moral framework (Nieuwelink et al., 2016).

Our focus on professional ideals and beliefs does have some limitations. The larger belief system of teachers is very complex; much about how it actually functions remains unknown and unexamined (Fives & Buehl, 2012). For example, there are important questions on the influence of context and the relationship between beliefs and practices (cf. Fives & Buehl, 2012). However, as shown in this article, the use of theories about teachers' beliefs and professional ideals does provide some principles that can help develop a better understanding of the tensions. Furthermore, the findings described here are applicable to a wider spectrum of schools than only strong religious schools, since most schools present a certain world view that contrasts with other world views or religions (e.g., a political preference). Tensions arising from the promotion of tolerance, while claiming a certain truth or having a homogenous school population, are therefore not restricted to strong religious schools—although these tensions receive significant weight in strong religious schools by the exclusive view on truth and eternal salvation. Conversely, it is important to highlight that not all OPPSs are characterised as having a religiously homogenous school population. Classrooms in OPPSs with open pupil enrolment can be populated by pupils from various religious backgrounds. Still, in other cases and in addition to the other kind of differences that are likely to be present in religious homogeneous populations; children in OPPSs usually are related to different churches, which might give them some experiences of religious diversity (cf. De Wolff, 2006).

As noted in the Introduction, further empirical research is greatly needed. In our upcoming empirical study about how teachers professionally reconcile a religiously diverse society and mono-religious school characteristics, we will—in line with current theoretical exploration—particularly focus on teachers' professional beliefs and their reflection around possible tensions.

CHAPTER 4

How Cohesion Matters: Teachers and their Choice to Work at an Orthodox Protestant School

Abstract

Teachers' opinions are barely examined or involved in debates about school choice, although they are significant. In-depth interviews with 16 teachers revealed three interests for choosing to work at orthodox Protestant primary schools: experiencing education as inseparable from Christian socialization, feeling comfortable in the school's religious climate, and valuing cohesion in children's educational environments. Cohesion is a core theme, which corresponds with parents' motives for choosing orthodox Protestant schools for their children. Teachers prefer cohesion for their pupils, but also for themselves. The significance of cohesion is influenced by several religious, pedagogical, and formational factors.

4.1 Introduction

In research and debates about school choice, the choices of teachers seem to be overlooked (Forsey, 2010). That is a serious failing since the educational processes and the shaping of a school's identity depend to a significant degree on the teachers (Bakker & Rigg, 2004; Cannata, 2010; Forsey, 2010). Our empirical study focuses on teachers and shows how they value the monoreligious characteristic of their schools, not only for the children, but also for themselves. The study was carried out in the Netherlands, where the educational system is remarkably characterized by a large number of state-funded denominational schools. Teachers are free to apply wherever they prefer. Parents can choose a school that they believe to be the best for their child(ren) (Denessen et al., 2005; Dronkers, 1995; Merry & Karsten, 2010). At least 5% of Dutch primary schools are orthodox Protestant schools (De Muynck et al., 2014; see more in the next section). Knowledge about the motives of teachers who choose orthodox Protestant primary schools (hereafter referred to as OPPSs) could provide more insight into the specific characteristics and rationales of these schools. In this way, debates about school choice and the existence of (conservative) religious schools in plural Western societies can be better informed (cf. Maussen & Vermeulen, 2015). Examining what individual teachers think about religious schools has become even more important, as individualized religion is on the rise, while the formal ideas of school boards and church councils have become less influential, and thus, less insightful (Bakker & Rigg, 2004; Bertram-Troost et al., 2017; De Muynck, 2008). Furthermore, this study advances research about teachers' career decisions. Cannata (2010, p. 2928) highlights that, in research, more attention needs to be directed to "how perceptions of working conditions interact with the social and cultural contexts of schools and their students." Investigating choices in religious communities, as in this study, is likely to be related to this.

Our explorative study focuses on teachers at OPPSs in the Netherlands. We expect this study to provide not only knowledge of the Dutch context, but also to gain relevant insights for research about religious schools in other contexts. This study's central question is the following: Is the mono-religious school characteristic important for teachers working at Dutch OPPSs, and what are the reasons for this? To answer this question, we analyzed extensive interviews with 16 primary school teachers.

The structure of this article is as follows. First, we describe the OPPSs and the Dutch educational system. Then, we describe what is known about parents' motives for choosing an OPPS, after which we discuss the literature concerning how teachers perceive the

religious dimension of OPPSs and the relation between their faith and their job. After these theoretical sections, our empirical research is described in the Methods and Results sections which are followed by the Discussion section.

4.2 Orthodox Protestant Schools in the Netherlands and Freedom of School Choice

The Netherlands has a firm and unique tradition of the freedom of school choice (Denessen et al., 2005; Glenn & De Groof, 2005; Merry & Karsten, 2010). This freedom means that, in addition to the government initiating and providing public education, private organizations or people have the legal right to found and run denominational schools that express their religious, ideological, or educational beliefs through what is taught and how is taught (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; Glenn & De Groof, 2005). The Dutch government sets certain quality standards for both publicly and privately run schools, such as the required qualifications of teachers, the subjects that must be taught, and the attainment targets (Dutch Eurydice Unit, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2007). However, schools are highly autonomous on matters related to resource allocation, curriculum, and assessment (OECD, 2014). Since public and denominational schools receive equal governmental funding, all parents can choose whatever kind of school they want to send their children to (Denessen et al., 2005; Dronkers, 1995; Glenn & De Groof, 2005; Maussen & Vermeulen, 2015). Working conditions and salaries of teachers are comparable for every school, and teachers can apply wherever they want (Dutch Eurydice Unit, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2007; Glenn & De Groof, 2005). Home schooling is marginal (Glenn & De Groof, 2005; Merry & Karsten, 2010), and private, nonfunded schools can rarely be found (Glenn & De Groof, 2005).

In 2016, the Netherlands had 6,508 primary schools (DUO, 2016). A total of 32% of these were public schools, 30% were Roman Catholic, 25% were Protestant, 4% were orthodox Protestant,[34] 1% were Islamic, and 7% were of other denominations (DUO, 2016). Within the same denominational category, there can be important differences as to how the school's identity is expressed and experienced, based on, for example, the views on religious education and the religious backgrounds of the pupils and teachers (cf. Bertram-Troost et al., 2015a). For historical reasons, the mission statements of some Protestant

---

[34] These include "reformatorische scholen" (Reformed schools) and "gereformeerd vrijgemaakte scholen" (Reformed Liberated schools), which historically have backgrounds in different orthodox Protestant church denominations. Other labels could be used to describe these schools, like "strong Christian schools," "strict Protestant schools," or "conservative religious schools." We decided to define these schools as "orthodox Protestant."

schools are comparable to the mission statements of schools registered as OPPSs. Therefore, the total number of OPPSs is estimated to be at least 5% of all primary schools (De Muynck et al., 2014; DUO, 2016). Orthodox Protestants in the Netherlands form a modest subculture within Dutch society, for example, by having their own newspapers and political parties (cf. Stoffels, 1995). However, this subculture is not as closed as it was in earlier times. A teacher in our study clarified this: "The world changed. When I was young, everything was far more pillarized and stances were not questioned. ... Now the world enters the school [and daily life] from all sides." (cf. Pons-de Wit, 2017)

In the mission statements of OPPSs, references to the Bible and the Reformed or Calvinist faith claims (the so-called Three Forms of Unity) are central. The OPPSs are often connected with local religious communities, although they can only be founded by associations of individual parents and not by ecclesiastical organizations (De Muynck, 2008; De Wolff et al., 2002; Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003). Teachers in OPPSs are practicing members of orthodox Protestant churches. Some OPPSs demand this of the pupils as well, while other OPPSs are open to children of all backgrounds (De Muynck et al., 2014; De Wolff et al., 2003). In our study, teachers from 15 OPPSs were involved, and at least seven of these schools applied such an admission requirement for their pupils. In religious education, reading the Bible, praying, and singing are important daily practices, as is doctrinal teaching in the higher level classes (De Muynck et al., 2014). Furthermore, teachers are likely to make connections between their religious beliefs and the curriculum and pedagogy (De Muynck, 2008; De Wolff, 2000). Unlike most other Protestant schools ("mainline Protestant schools") which can be described by the multireligious or interreligious model, OPPSs deal with religious plurality in terms of the mono-religious model (Sterkens, 2001). This means that they have "a socio-cultural context characterized by the dominance of a specific religious tradition; a pedagogic aim, namely, the internalization of that tradition; and a normative basis, being the dominant religious tradition's claim to absolute truth" (Sterkens, 2001, p. 49). This truth claim is often interpreted as exclusivistic, i.e., the idea of salvation only exists for those who explicitly accept Jesus Christ as Savior (Moyaert, 2011; Sterkens, 2001).

4.3 Parents' Motives for Choosing an Orthodox Protestant School

There has been very little research on why teachers choose to work at OPPSs instead of mainline Protestant or other schools. However, studies about the school choice of parents are performed regularly in this field. Because teachers and parents together are seen

as important and cooperative pedagogical actors in a child's socialization, and because they are members of the same relatively strong religious communities, literature on the school choice motives of parents are a good entry to our topic. Seeing that, from a social identity perspective, religious identification seems to be an extremely powerful force guiding psychological and social processes, this membership may be seen as influential in their choices (Ysseldyk et al., 2010).

In our investigative research on parents' school choice considerations, we focus on Dutch studies published since 2000 involving OPPSs and/or orthodox Protestant parents. Dutch parents, in general, primarily consider the school's quality, accessibility, and worldview when they choose a school (Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003; Herweijer & Vogels, 2004). In the past, religious motives were the most important, but, today, the school's worldview no longer plays a role or not a major role in the choice of public and Roman Catholic schools.[35] However, for parents at mainline Protestant schools, this has remained important or most important, and this is even more the case for OPPS parents (Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003; Herweijer & Vogels, 2004). In comparison with the parents of pupils at public, Roman Catholic, and mainline Protestant schools, parents of OPPS pupils found it more important that the education at home and at school adjoin one another and that the pupils in schools have comparable religious backgrounds (Dijkstra & Miedema, 2003). A study on Dutch parents (N = 568) that recently involved the process of choosing a primary school showed that 89% of the orthodox Protestant parents found it important or very important that the school pays a great deal of attention to religion and worldview. For the total group of parents, however, only 38% rated this as important or very important (TNS Nipo, 2016). Parents of more or less orthodox Protestant primary schools seemed to stress the importance of continuity between home and school more than the parents of other Protestant schools (Ter Avest et al., 2015).

The findings of the abovementioned research indicate that the school choice of OPPS parents stands out from that of the parents of other Christian schools, as OPPS parents place a stronger emphasis on the school's religious dimension. They also highlight the close connection between home and school.

Dijkstra and Miedema (2003, p. 12) state that the choice of a school which corresponds to the parents' own religious preferences relates to "the desire to socialize children within a particular religious tradition, in accordance with religious or ecclesiastical doctrine; or

---

[35] It can still function implicitly as an argument, for worldview is also included in opinions about the quality of a school (Herweijer & Vogels, 2004).

teaching within a protected setting, connected with the religious climate of the family" (translation by the authors). We could add that Dutch orthodox Protestants are used to speaking about "the triangle" when referring to the strong bond between school, church, and family. This is linked to the baptismal promises in which parents promise to instruct their child in religious doctrine and to have it instructed in this doctrine by others (De Muynck, 2008; Spoelstra, 2016). Empirical research in the international context has shown related reasons why people of religious communities feel the need for separate schooling for their children; these are the following: education about religious and cultural traditions, protection from outside influence, offering a specific social and moral framework, and insuring continued adherence to the faith (McCreery et al., 2007; based on Hurst, 2000; Evan Kaplan, 2001; McKinney, 2004; Scholefield, 2004).

4.4 Teachers' Views on the Religious Dimension of the School

Realizing that the orthodox Protestant worldview of the school matters a great deal to parents making school choices, it is then essential to know whether teachers' school choices are influenced by a school's specific worldview as well. Generally, it could be assumed that when schools highlight their religious nature, a teacher's choice to work in such a school will be linked with his or her own religious convictions and socialization (De Muynck, 2008). However, no studies specifically discussing teachers' preferences for religious or other denominational schools were found in the databases of the U.S. Institute of Education Sciences, Web of Science, or various other agencies. However, there were several studies of OPPS teachers in the Netherlands that dealt with teachers' perceptions of the religious dimension of schools and the religious dimension of their job. These studies indicate that the mono-religious characteristic is important in the opinion of teachers (De Muynck, 2008; Markus et al., 2018; cf. Bertram-Troost et al., 2015b).

In a study concerning the definition of the identity of Christian schools, OPPS teachers, in contrast to teachers of two mainline Protestant schools, believed that the Christian worldview should resonate in everything that happens in their school, and this was believed to depend significantly on the teacher's role (De Wolff, 2000). According to them, socialization in the Christian faith is the most important aim to which all aims and activities in the school should contribute. When it came to concrete pedagogical or educational situations, there were no striking differences found among the actions of the teachers in the three schools (De Wolff, 2000; cf. Bertram-Troost et al., 2015a). However, religious education and worldview education in those three schools did differ: within the

OPPS, there was a focus on transmitting and deepening the Christian faith and lifestyle, whereas, in the mainline Protestant schools, the emphasis was on introducing pupils to the Christian faith and lifestyle and enabling them to make their own religious choices (De Wolff, 2000).

Regarding why people became teachers, a qualitative study of OPPS teachers in the Netherlands (N = 20) showed six motives behind becoming a teacher: ensuring security, (teaching children) to know God, providing care, bringing about an awareness of God, prompting inquisitiveness, and wanting to help children in their development (De Muynck, 2008). This study also very briefly refers to the specific school choice of teachers: Essentially, it is important for teachers "to feel at home" at their school (De Muynck, 2008, p. 197), and so they do not really consider working at a nonorthodox Protestant school (De Muynck, 2008).

Looking more broadly at studies about teachers' school choices in other countries, most studies are concerned with the normally espoused preferences of teachers, such as salary, principal support, and student characteristics (Cannata, 2010). These are often discussed in the context of research into the attrition and retention of teachers in order to improve working conditions and to promote an equal distribution of highly qualified teachers across schools (Guarino et al., 2006). However, Cannata (2010) highlights that, instead of what is expressed in the espoused preferences, teachers' feelings of comfort and familiarity play a decisive role in their actual decisions: teachers prefer to teach in schools where they have shared social and cultural experiences with pupils and staff.

4.5 Methods

Research design and participants

This study is part of a research project on religious tolerance as an educational goal in OPPSs. A total of 16 4th and 5th grade[36] teachers from 15 different OPPSs were interviewed from April 22, 2015 to February 18, 2016. Seven female and nine male participants were included. Their ages varied from 23 to 59 years (average: 34.5). Their years of experience as a teacher varied from 1.5 to 35 years (average: 11.3), and half still worked at their first place of employment. They were all trained in orthodox Protestant teacher training institutes.

---

[36] In the Netherlands the 5th grade is the penultimate year of primary school.

Sampling and procedure

Our aim was to capture ideas across the various OPPSs and not to generalize (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Therefore, we used a sampling strategy of maximum variation (Patton, 2002) by paying attention to the variety of the schools' official denominational backgrounds, locations in villages, towns or large towns, and the presence of orthodox Protestant believers in the area. We did not involve more than one school in the same location. For the sake of practicality, all schools were located within a radius of 50 kilometers around Utrecht city.[37] In this area, both Bible belt and urban regions were involved. Once we had an overview of all schools that could be involved in our categories, we made a random selection and contacted a school in each category. When there was no teacher available to participate, we contacted the next school in the same category. In total, we approached 39 schools (with a 38.5% positive response). Each participant was interviewed twice by the first author, with a maximum of 65 days between the two interviews. These interviews took place at the participants' schools.[38] The interviewer was familiar with the participants' religious backgrounds because she lived in the neighborhood of these orthodox Protestant communities and worked at an orthodox Protestant teacher training institute. This appeared to be especially helpful for gaining the participants' trust, as well as for understanding the participants' religious language. However, there was still distance between the researcher and the participants, because the researcher was not fully part of the stricter orthodox Protestant subculture. For example, she did not attend an OPPS herself as a child. That made it easier to maintain a critical stance. Participants received a small present for their participation, and school teams were invited to freely attend a presentation of the results of the research. We followed the ethical guidelines and the guidelines of data management for scientific research at Dutch universities (DANS, 2015; VSNU, 2005, 2012).

Materials

The interviews were semistructured with an interview guide based on an earlier theoretical study (Markus et al., 2021a) and interview questions from earlier research by

---

[37] In this area, approximately 52% of all Dutch "reformatorische scholen (schools)" can be found and 29% of all "gereformeerd vrijgemaakte scholen (schools)" (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, 2016). See footnote 1.

[38] Because of the teachers' preferences, one situation differed from the others in several respects: in this situation, two colleagues of the same school were interviewed together during one interview lasting 160 min (instead of one teacher being interviewed twice), and this interview was located at the office of the interviewer (instead of the participants' school). One of the other interviews was at the interviewer's office as well for practical reasons.

several authors (Afdal, 2006; De Ruyter & Kole, 2001; Versteegt, 2010). The interview guide was discussed in the research group and was adapted after three pilot interviews. The questions were mainly about the meaning of the school's mono-religious characteristic, the teachers' professional ideals, the teachers and pupils' experiences with religious others, and the teachers' opinions about this (see Appendix [IX]). The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. This provided 128–228 min of interview data per participant (173 min on average).

4.6 Data Analysis

Our analysis followed Elliott and Timulak's (2005) general framework for descriptive/interpretive qualitative research. This form of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) starts with initial reading and editing, followed by dividing the data into meaningful units and finding an overall organizational structure by assigning domains. Our domains were distinguished on the basis of the units' objects.[39] Part of the domain headings were categories of the topic list (e.g., "Tolerance" and "Religious Others"), but another part was new (e.g., "Refugees"). Then, the meaning units within a specific domain were coded with descriptive coding (Miles et al., 2014) and categorized. Because of our current research question, we then had three strategies. First, we focused on looking for similarities and regularities within the subcategory "School Choice" of the domain "Teacher." Doing so, we assigned more abstract categories (Elliott & Timulak, 2005). Second, in order to better interpret the outcomes of this first strategy, we examined the meaning units from the domains "Christian Schools" and "Homogenous Population." Third, when we came to certain interpretations, we checked whether the data contained contradicting elements. If so, we mentioned this.

We used the software program ATLAS.ti7,[40] and we did the coding in Dutch (Van Nes et al., 2010). For the sake of reliability, the coding and further analyses were discussed several times within the research group and with other researchers. If statements from participants were used in this article, two authors translated these into intelligible English sentences (Van Nes et al., 2010).

---

[39] We used the following domain headings (translated into English): Bible (44), Citizenship (Education) (84), Christian Schools (67), School Context (3), Didactics (97), Principal (5), Questioning/inquisitiveness [Doorvragen] (15), Faith (400), Homogeneous Population (2), Religious Education (95), (Professional) Ideals (258), Interview (38), Class/Pupils (179), Teacher (900), Social Media (11), Religious Others (463), Parents (50), Government (7), Society (87), School (236), Teacher Team (101), Tolerance (196), and Refugees (21). The numbers in parentheses indicate how many units are within this domain; some units are assigned to more than one domain (counting performed on January 20, 2017).

[40] www.atlasti.com

4.7 Results

Working at an orthodox Protestant school as an obvious choice

To begin with, the analysis showed that the option to teach at a type of school other than an OPPS did not really cross the minds of these teachers. They had grown up in orthodox Protestant families and had always attended OPPSs themselves, including in their professional education. They had all oriented their job search on vacancies in OPPSs. For example, Jan[41] declared, "It was obvious. I mean, you find yourself in the orthodox Protestant bubble and you are a teacher, so you will be working at an orthodox Protestant school." Or, as Floris said, "I never looked for jobs in general newspapers. It is common to look at websites of orthodox Protestant newspapers." Looking to the future, the teachers basically could not imagine working at a school that is not orthodox Protestant, although they were aware of some disadvantages of OPPSs (see section "Perceived disadvantages"). They viewed their choice for an OPPS as obvious and during the interviews they both explicitly and implicitly showed reasons as to why they did so. These motives mostly had to do with the mono-religious character of OPPSs. Some of them also stated that their preference for an OPPS did fit with certain conditions, such as the distance between their home and work.

Some teachers indicated that they were more or less aware of why they opted for an OPPS at the time they started to work there. Others formed their ideas over the years. Some teachers also indicated that their ideas were developed over time, such as Ruben, whom we will introduce here. Ruben declared that he initially wanted to become a teacher because he had the desire to teach children new things, but he added, "Later on, there was also the pleasure of talking with my pupils about the Christian faith and being an example to them." This statement indicates that being a Christian matters to Ruben when it comes to being a teacher. Moreover, he stated how he wants to practice this, such as by telling pupils about God, praying, and showing what it means to have a relationship with God. It is the mono-religious character of OPPSs that gives Ruben explicit opportunities to do so, and, as such, Ruben had an interest in working at an OPPS.

Overall, we could distill three different interests of teachers in the interviews: (a) experiencing education as inseparable from Christian socialization (as in the example of Ruben), (b) feeling comfortable in the school's religious climate, and (c) valuing cohesion in children's educational environments. We will outline these successively in the next sections. We will then give a more detailed profile of these interests by describing their

_____
[41] All of the names in this article are fictitious to preserve the participants' confidentiality.

common themes, tracing the influences that shape them, and presenting what teachers perceive as the disadvantages of OPPSs.

Interest 1: Education as inseparable from Christian socialization

In this study, teachers argued that educating children is inseparable from Christian socialization. They could not imagine teaching at a school without nurturing pupils' faith development, and in their opinion, Christian socialization should be intertwined with all education. As Luuk said, "I chose very consciously to go for a school in which the Christian faith is a prerequisite for teaching." Floris felt similarly: "Witnessing that the Lord Jesus died for my sins, perhaps, is essential for my teaching." The OPPS provides opportunities to highly integrate education and Christian socialization. Some of the participants experienced that God himself called them to do this job, such as Gijs and Emma. Gijs referred to Psalm 78 in the Bible, which is a song about the assignment to tell future generations about God's deeds. As Emma said, "I think that is the task God gives us, like 'tell as much as possible about me and the Bible etcetera.'" In these statements, we recognize a specific interpretation of the concept of "calling": the teacher feels that he or she is called to educate the children, especially into the Christian faith.

Some of the teachers also wondered whether it might be a calling for them as Christians to work at a mainline Protestant or public school. By doing so, they could possibly share the Gospel with children who normally would not hear the Biblical message. Teachers working at an OPPS with a more religiously diverse pupil population mentioned a comparable idea. For example, Emma said, "I try to fill them [nonfrequently churchgoing children] in as much as I can [with the Christian faith]. Maybe a double amount: On the part of the parents, as well as on my own part as a teacher."

Interest 2: Feeling comfortable in the school's religious climate

The second interest expressed by the teachers was that of feeling comfortable at the school in which they work, in the sense that the school's religious climate more or less corresponds with their own religious identity. Anna spoke about feeling at home: "I always feel at home at a school in which God is in the center." Others said that they experienced being able to be who they are. For example, Adam said,

> It was very important for me that I could teach at a school where I would be able to be myself and could express the opinions I have. … Honestly, I am not someone who can change his opinion, especially not my religious views.

Teachers recognized the norms and values at the school in which they worked. When they spoke about sharing their opinions in the classroom, this included, for example, issues about sexual diversity and swearing. It is striking that teachers frequently used formulations in which they contrasted their own school with more conservative or more liberal OPPSs. The differences between OPPSs that mattered to teachers were, for example, dress codes and how the school dealt with the diversity of church denominations. Even within one school, teachers designated differences regarding positions on these themes. Teachers said, for instance, that they were more attached to certain colleagues than to others because of shared opinions on Bible teachings.

A few teachers talked about "safety" when they explained why they work at an OPPS. They viewed a place where they can be themselves as a safe place. Some teachers also said that they believe a safe place to be important because there they can develop their professionalism and faith. This development was sometimes defined as a precondition when referring to whether they would ever work at a mainline Protestant or public school.

Interest 3: Cohesion between children's educational environments

The third interest was that the religious climates of the child's various educational environments need to correspond. This was stated as an essential part of their views on good education that they seek to realize and that OPPSs promote. Teachers frequently mentioned this cohesion, particularly the cohesion among school, family, and church and the cohesion between the teacher in one year and the teacher in another school year. Henk's statement reflects this: "It is very good that there is recognition and interconnectedness within the three worlds where a child spends a lot of time; … that makes the Christian faith a known stimulus." As with other teachers, Henk gives a religious basis for his preference, namely, socializing in the Christian faith. This is also expressed when teachers refer to the baptismal promises of parents, as with Jan who explained, "If one said 'yes' to what God asked him to do, one has to do it. So one has to seek a school where one's children will be raised with the Christian faith." However, pedagogically orientated grounds were given as well. Nora, for example, explained that, when family, school, and church are familiar, she as a teacher knows the backgrounds of the pupils herself, allowing her to anticipate and fit best with her pupils. Another aspect which was mentioned, is the large amount of time that children spend at schools, which makes it relevant to pay attention to cohesion. We will come back to these religious and pedagogical explanations later in this section.

Cohesion is an issue in all three interests

The interests can be distinguished from one another, but they are still strongly related. This was revealed when teachers mentioned several interests simultaneously. Daniël, for instance, said,

> Well, I think that it is important that … what is taught in church, at home, and at school, is more or less one. This way, [a teacher] does not need to think: "Let us see, now that I am at school, I should tell it in this way." [cf. Interest 2]. And also, for the children, it is clear if the same is told at home, at school, and in church. It would be double-hearted if [the parents] have to say to their children, "When you are at school, you should believe this, but not the other." [cf. Interest 3]

The close connection between the interests can also be explained because all three connect to the concept of cohesion. In our study, we found that people experienced cohesion when their orthodox Protestant beliefs and practices could be shared and expressed within different environments and/or domains. Interest 3 shows that teachers address this as an essential part of their views on good education for the children's sake. Interests 1 and 2 indicate that teachers prefer cohesion for the sake of their own well-being, too. Interest 1 is about cohesion between one's religious and professional ideals, while Interest 2 is about cohesion of one's private and professional environment as well as cohesion within the school.

Religious, pedagogical, and formational influences

The different interests showed different angles related to cohesion. In the interviews, we also found convictions that underlie these interests, which we call "influences." These explain something about why the interests have value for the teachers. We distinguished religious, pedagogical, and formational influences, which could mostly be applied to all three interests. However, the pedagogical influences do not seem to match with Interest 2.

First, there were religious influences. The Christian faith was very important to the teachers, and they strived to give it a central position within all aspects of their life, including their profession. They could not imagine keeping certain beliefs private. Luuk, for example, declared, "… I cannot deny myself. And I cannot deny God. It is so interwoven … so in everything the children will experience that I live in the Lord Jesus. And that is an ideal which surpasses everything." Furthermore, some teachers declared that, because the teaching profession is about the formation of young children and about norms and values, religion's influence on the profession is more obvious and important.

The teachers felt highly responsible for transmitting the message of the Bible, and they strongly desired that children adhere to the Christian faith in the end. For example, Femke said, "… it is the way to eternal life, and that is something I award for these children … with all my heart." Meanwhile, Nora said, "If you see this world, everything is destroyed and ruined. But God will give a message of peace. … I have to share this, both the incredibility and the beautiful situation of hope, with the children." In describing Interest 3, we already mentioned that teachers also refer to the baptismal promises of parents. However, some teachers explicitly pointed out that they do not have the highest responsibility for children's Christian socialization, as that role goes to their parents.

Second, teachers added pedagogical influences. In their eyes, it would be better, at least, for young children to grow up in surroundings that are cohesive and "safe" (Gijs). Because children spend so much time in schools, it would improve their well-being if the school's norms and values are in accord with those of their parents. Additionally, school is an ideal setting for children to learn a lot about the Bible, many Christian songs, and other religious aspects. When children are older and have taken root in the Christian tradition, they can enter into dialogue with religious others. Anna said that because children are so precious and malleable, they should be at a safe place. She added, "I can equip them to grow to be strong persons, so that they eventually are ready to enter 'that world,' or the secondary school." Gradually, there may be more openness and more contact with religious others, but ideally this occurs when the children are more resilient. Teachers sometimes position themselves as professionals in Christian socialization because they are better prepared than parents or the church to discuss the matters of faith at the children's level.

Third, we determined that Interest 2, at least, also has to do with feeling incapable of working at a school that is not orthodox Protestant. The first indication was the fact that the teachers themselves mentioned the disadvantages of being raised in OPPSs, and therefore, lacking experiences in meeting religious others and discussing their faiths (see section "Perceived disadvantages"). The second indication was the fact that some teachers expressed feeling the need to develop as a believer and as a professional before they could work at another kind of school (see Interest 2). Together, these signals suggest that, because they had limited learning about how to engage with religious others, they were hesitant to apply for jobs at non-OPPSs.

In general, the OPPSs seem to correspond with the teachers' three interests. However, if an OPPS has a wider population of pupils (i.e., not all pupils are from orthodox Protestant families/churches), some of the pupils might not experience cohesion between the

religious climate at school and that of their families and religious communities. It appears that teachers are then especially concerned about Interest 1 as they highlighted the religious influences.

Perceived disadvantages of the mono-religious school characteristics

Thus far, we have presented the teachers' interests in the OPPS. However, the teachers also seemed to see another side of the coin and drew attention to the disadvantages of the school's mono-religious characteristic. Most of them expressed regret at missing contact with people from other religious backgrounds from whom they could have learned more about how to defend and/ or deepen their religious convictions. Emma said, "I … learned that I grew up very protected. [When I came to work in another context] I was faced with myself profoundly. I questioned myself, 'Why do I actually support this?'" Daniël said that an OPPS actually became "a clique" in which almost everything was being spoon fed and children could not easily form their own opinions. Floris used this metaphor: "A tree that never was in a storm will blow over. But, if a tree has learned to stay strong and was in various storms, it will be rooted deeper." However, various teachers ascertained that the orthodox Protestant subculture is less closed nowadays than it was in their youth, for example, because of information and communication technology. Ruben declared, "The world enters the Christian school from all sides." Some teachers showed that they explicitly make their pupils aware of the negative side effects of growing up in a sheltered setting. The second negative effect of mono-religiosity mentioned by some teachers was that children in this homogeneous setting tend to look at each other and find small differences to criticize. Floris pointed out that this might happen because the children see each other so often, in church and at school, and because in schools that are very homogeneous, people do not get used to dealing with differences.

4.8 Discussion

The central question in this study is whether and why the mono-religious school characteristic is important for OPPS teachers in the Netherlands. Our empirical study revealed that this characteristics is of such importance to them that they would not work in a school that is not orthodox Protestant. Their choice was often an obvious choice, but we identified three different interests that are ultimately fulfilled at OPPSs: Interest 1, experiencing education as inseparable from Christian socialization; Interest 2, feeling comfortable in the school's religious climate; and Interest 3, valuing cohesion in children's educational environments.

Interest 1 connects to the idea of being called by God to educate children, especially into the Christian faith. Interest 2 conveys the idea that teachers can openly live out their own opinions, norms, and values and experience their school as a safe place. Interest 3 involves the cohesion among school, family, and church, as well as the cohesion within the same school for religious and pedagogical reasons.

The basis of all those interests is a desire for cohesion, which the teachers experience when they can share their orthodox Protestant beliefs and practices in different environments and/or domains. The data reveal that this desire is influenced by religious, pedagogical, and formational factors. The religious influences deal with the person's need to express his or her Christian faith in professional life, especially because teaching is about the formation of children. "Teaching for eternal salvation" is perceived as a high responsibility. The pedagogical influences have to do with providing children with cohesive and safe surroundings for the sake of their well-being and the possibility to spend time learning the Christian tradition. Children should first root themselves in the Christian tradition before they are resilient and can enter into dialogues with religious others. Sometimes, teachers interpret themselves as pedagogical professionals in Christian socialization. The formational influences mean that teachers feel themselves incapable of working at schools other than OPPSs. Teachers talked about lacking experiences with religious others. Furthermore, when they considered whether they would ever start to work at another school, they mentioned that they first should develop their professionalism and faith while working at an OPPS, before they could think about working elsewhere (cf. Interest 2). Meanwhile, they did mention that working at a school where pupils do not have Christian backgrounds could be a special answer to the calling of introducing children in the Christian faith (cf. Interest 1).

In addition to the teachers' appreciation of the mono-religious characteristic of the OPPS, they also mentioned that the absence of religious others can have some disadvantages. It might reduce experiences in which children learn to defend or deepen their faith, and it might lead to pupils criticizing each other on small issues. It was noted that cohesion between the religious climate of the school and the family will not be met when pupils without an orthodox Protestant background visit OPPSs with open pupil enrollment. In this regard, teachers seemed to prioritize the religious desire for Christian socialization (Interest 1) over the cohesion of pedagogical environments (Interest 3).

Furthermore, we see that the teachers' ideas about choosing an OPPS are comparable with those of the parents: Both stress the school's religious dimension and, in the case of orthodox Protestant parents, highlight the connection between the religious socialization at home and at school. However, among the teachers, the mono-religious characteristic is

4

valued not only because of the desire to raise children in a certain way, but also because of the teachers' concern for their own well-being. At this point, our study provides more detailed knowledge about teachers' preference to teach in schools were they feel at home and where they have shared experiences with pupils and staff (see Introduction).

These outcomes of our study need attention in further investigations because often the pupils' well-being is central to the research and debates on school choice, while the factor of teachers' own well-being is hardly examined. Our study is an explorative start, but it is important to get more in-depth insights into the weight of the different interests of teachers, extensive understanding of the considerations behind the interests in which the well-being of the teacher plays a role, and knowledge about how teachers' personal positions play a part in the existence and identity of religious schools. That teachers choose to work at certain denominational schools because of their own well-being may count for other (denominational) schools in other countries as well. We expect that it relates to the strong link between the personal and professional identities in the teaching profession, which makes personal safety important (Day et al., 2006). Furthermore, sociocultural influences might be involved, which, in our study, were reflected in what we called "the unconscious choice." In the case of religious schools, the sociocultural influences could be even more important because social identity theory suggests that religion is a strong force of psychological and social processes. In this context, it would be worthwhile to examine whether, in general, teachers seek, more so than people in other professions, a comfortable feeling in their professional environment, or whether this need to feel comfortable is higher among teachers in OPPSs or in other schools with specific religious denominations.

In addition to a further in-depth examination of how teachers' personal well-being plays a role in school choice, it would be worth investigating how personal well-being plays a role in parents' choices. Furthermore, it would be worth examining the motives of teachers with an orthodox Protestant background who have decided not to work at an OPPS.

Lastly, it strikes us that some teachers feel incapable of working at a nonorthodox Protestant school because they lack experience in dealing with religious others themselves. It should be questioned as to what this could mean for the next generation: Will they experience the same shortcomings? On the other hand, it seems significant that teachers consciously mention the disadvantages they had experienced, but still chose OPPSs. Does this mean that teachers consider the benefits for pupils outweighing the disadvantages? Or do they take into account the limitations they experienced themselves and try to improve their practices to compensate for that? Our study presents new perspectives on

the influences behind school choice and the rationale behind denominational schools in which the teachers' wellbeing plays a role.

4

CHAPTER 5

Stimulating Inquisitiveness: Teachers at Orthodox Protestant Schools about their Roles in Religious Socialization

Abstract

Previous research showed that strong religious communities wish for cohesion and cooperation between pedagogical environments in religious socialization. This explorative and descriptive study examines what Dutch orthodox Protestant primary school teachers perceive to be their role in comparison with others, such as parents. We extensively interviewed 16 teachers. Their professional ideals show that being an agent in religious socialization matters to them. Teachers experience cooperation with other agents with the purpose of children becoming committed Christians. However, they perceive their roles to differ in five ways. Stimulating inquisitiveness could be seen as exemplary for the teacher's role.

5.1 Introduction

In an age of increasing diversity, the importance of enforcing social cohesion in schools is stressed worldwide (Mason & Wareham, 2018; Rissanen & Sai, 2018; Short, 2002). In the Netherlands, for example, it was an important motive for the implementation of citizenship education as a compulsory subject in 2006 (Bron, 2006). Social cohesion can be generally seen as the degree of trust society members have in each other and in society itself (Koonce, 2011). When it is about the diversity of people, social capital can be seen as a necessary condition for social cohesion (Koonce, 2011; Putnam, 2007). Social capital consists of both bonding social capital (having "ties to people who are like you in some important way") and bridging social capital (having "ties to people who are unlike you in some important way") (Putnam, 2007, p. 143). Both can contribute positively to social cohesion (Koonce, 2011; Putnam, 2007). However, bonding social capital can also have a negative effect when a group's members isolate themselves from others outside the group (Koonce, 2011). Putnam (2007) concludes that, when it is about diversity in the neighborhood, working toward bridging, as well as bonding, is needed. He points out that more research is needed to see whether the same effects apply to schools and other environments.

The current study is on religious socialization, which we define as "the totality of practices, beliefs, ethos and habits of pedagogical agents that may be at the service of children's (continuing) membership of the religious community" (De Wolff et al., 2003; Homan & Youngman, 1982; Thiessen, 1993; Vermeer, 2010). Religious socialization in religious primary schools can be seen as a form of bonding social capital since these schools aim that pupils connect with the religious community and its faith. However, it is valued differently as to whether or not religious socialization (or teaching into religion; Alii, 2009; Grimmitt, 1981) at schools is an appropriate striving (MacMullen, 2018; Mason, 2018). Positions vary from limiting confession to the private domain and, thus, keeping it away from schools (Cliteur, 2004), to valuing the religious socialization of young children (primary education) under specific pedagogical conditions (MacMullen, 2004, 2018; Merry, 2005, 2013; Short, 2002), and to arguing that education and religious socialization cannot be split (Cooling, 2012; Pike, 2005). Concerns about religious socialization in schools are specifically expressed when it involves strong religious schools because these schools are often associated with promoting intolerance by claiming the tradition's ultimate truth and with having more or less homogeneous school populations (Jackson, 2004; Mason, 2018; Pike, 2010; Thiessen, 2001; Versteegt & Maussen, 2011). In terms of social capital one could suppose that bonding rather than bridging social capital is emphasized in these schools (Koonce, 2011).

In order to add empirical insights to the discussions about social cohesion and religious socialization in schools, we aim for a better understanding of how religious socialization actually functions at strong religious schools.[42] Therefore we present a qualitative descriptive study on the perceptions of teachers at orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs). Teachers' beliefs are important for they guide the teachers' thought and behavior (Borg, 2001). However, thus far, the opinions of teachers themselves have been mentioned only as a peripheral issue in a limited number of studies (Bertram-Troost et al., 2015b; De Muynck, 2008). In a previous study, we already concluded that the participating teachers perceive education and Christian socialization as inseparable (Markus et al., 2018). Now, we will focus on how they understand their role as pedagogical agents in religious socialization and whether it differs from the roles of other pedagogical agents. We use the term "pedagogical agents" for those who intentionally care for children's religious upbringing (e.g., teachers, parents, and Sunday school teachers). The focus on the potential differences is especially interesting since orthodox Protestants traditionally stress the cohesion and cooperation among the school, church, and family when it comes to religious socialization (Alii, 2009; Spoelstra, 2017). Our research question is: What do teachers in OPPSs perceive as their role in religious socialization, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents? Our results are also of interest for the international audience, since the reasons why religious schools are valued in religious communities are comparable in different countries (Markus et al., 2018).

Our focus on the cooperation in religious socialization relates to educational partnership (regularly referred to as parental involvement), which means the equal cooperation of parents and schools in light of the development of children, both in terms of improving learning outcomes and strengthening the community of values (Epstein, 2001; Prins et al., 2013). Epstein (2001) highlights that practices and discussions about the education of children should start with clarity on the roles of schools, families, and communities.

To answer our research question, we will use three perspectives in the analysis of our data: first, we investigate teachers' professional ideals, specifically the significance of their religious ideals; second, teachers' perceptions of their roles in relation to other pedagogical agents; and, third, what teachers believe and say about "inquisitiveness." This last perspective can be seen as exemplary for how teachers view their distinct roles. Before we present our empirical study, we will provide background information about the OPPSs and about professional ideals.

---

[42] It is beyond the scope of this article to determine whether religious socialization in schools is legitimized because that depends on many factors (MacMullen, 2018).

5.2 Orthodox Protestant Schools in the Netherlands: Cohesion and Cooperation

At least 5% of approximately 6,500 primary schools in the Netherlands are OPPSs, which means that they are rooted in the Reformed (Calvinistic) tradition (Markus et al., 2021a). They are free to express their religious beliefs through what is taught and how it is taught, and they are highly autonomous when it comes to resource allocation, curriculum, and assessment (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; OECD, 2014; Zoontjens & Glenn, 2012). Quality standards apply equally to publicly run schools as privately run (denominational) schools (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007). A majority of Dutch primary schools are denominational schools (69% in 2017; see CBS StatLine, 2018), determined by specific religious, ideological, and/or educational beliefs. The denominational schools are founded by private organizations or persons who might have private linkages to specific churches, but there are no official church schools. Both public and denominational schools are state funded (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; Zoontjens & Glenn, 2012). The teachers in OPPSs are practicing church members of orthodox Protestant churches. In some schools, this is the case for pupils as well, but other schools have an open enrollment for children (De Muynck et al., 2014). Schools are obliged by law to pay attention to other world religions and life stances in an informative and objective way, and to teach children to respect people's differences of opinion (Kuyk, 2007; SLO, 2006). Religious schools often pay attention to other religions and life stances in religious education "as it is taught in accordance with the particular identity of that school" (Kuyk, 2007, p. 136). Teachers in our study highlight the possibility to share and express their orthodox Protestant beliefs and practices in different environments (e.g., at home and at school) and/or domains (e.g., professional and personal life or in different school subjects). They value this cohesion because they think that upbringing, in general, as well as religious upbringing benefits from it and because it enhances their own well-being (Markus et al., 2018). The significance of cohesion in upbringing is widely recognized within the orthodox Protestant community, for example, in the common use of the word "triangle" as a reference to the cooperation of families, schools, and churches (De Muynck, 2008). There are various reasons underlying the desire for cohesion and cooperation, such as pedagogical convictions (e.g., providing children with recognition in educational environments) and religious convictions (e.g., the idea that parents are directed by the church or by God to allow their children to be instructed in the Christian doctrine within schools) (Boele-de Bruin & De Muynck, 2018; Markus et al., 2018).[43]

_____

[43] Although we speak about cohesion as the sharing of important beliefs and practices of the Reformed (Calvinistic) tradition, there are various internal differences since people from different Reformed churches are involved in one school. Differences have to do with the interpretations of Reformed doctrines, such as how people can have a relationship with God, or about various beliefs as to what are proper Bible translations and dress codes (Van Lieburg, 2007).

Professional ideals

As role definitions are related to what teachers feel themselves responsible for, we now introduce the concept of professional ideals since this is about what teachers are seeking for in education (De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). Ideals are "images of excellence that are not yet realized and they are aims or goals we deeply desire to realize" (De Ruyter, 2003, p. 468). Teachers' professional ideals then can be seen as the driving forces that give teachers direction, motivation, and inspiration to be a teacher (De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). Professional ideals refer to different aspects of the teaching job; for example, the ultimate ends to which teachers aspire or the way they want to do their work (De Ruyter, 2007; De Ruyter & Kole, 2010). Moreover, the professional ideals can stem from different domains, such as the social, economic, pedagogical, or religious (De Ruyter, 2003, 2006). Since we assess how teachers perceive their contribution to religious socialization, we are interested in how they describe ideals from the religious domain in relation to ideals that stem from other domains (Markus et al., 2021a).

5.3 Method

Research design and participants

This explorative and descriptive study is part of a research project that questions how teachers in OPPSs deal with their own religious community and its convictions and with the religious diversity of society. We had extensive individual interviews with sixteen fourth and fifth grade[44] teachers from fifteen different OPPSs. Every participant was interviewed twice during the period from April 22, 2015 to February 18, 2016. There were seven female and nine male participants who ranged in age from 23 to 59 years (average: 34.5); having teaching experience ranging from 1.5 to 35 years (average: 11.3).

Sampling and procedure

We aimed at capturing the widest possible range of ideas across the various OPPSs and not for generalization (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Therefore, we based our sample on the maximum variation of different orthodox Protestant denominations,[45] the sizes of the villages or cities, and the presence of orthodox Protestant believers in the school's

---

[44] The fifth grade is the penultimate year of primary school.

[45] Namely, reformatorische scholen (Reformed schools), gereformeerde scholen (Reformed Liberated schools), and part of the protestants-christelijke scholen (Protestant schools). In their mission statements, they all refer to the Reformed (Calvinistic) doctrines.

neighborhood (Patton, 2002). Based on these criteria, we identified 166 OPPSs within a range of 50 kilometers from Utrecht,[46] which covers 2.5% of all Dutch primary school locations. Next, we randomly selected a school for each combination of characteristics. We traced participants by sending an e-mail and making a follow-up call to the schools. If there was no teacher willing to participate, we contacted another randomly selected school with the same combination of characteristics. Eventually, we approached 39 schools, and the teachers from fifteen schools[47] got involved (38.5% positive response).

The first author interviewed every participant twice at his/her own school.[48] The interviewer was familiar with the participants' religious backgrounds, which was helpful in getting their trust and in recognizing their religious language. Because the interviewer was not used to OPPSs herself, she was able to have a critical stance. Also, the members of our research group had diverse backgrounds, in order to prevent biases. The ethical guidelines of scientific research at Dutch universities (VSNU, 2005, 2012) and guidelines for data management (DANS, 2015) were followed.

Materials

To conduct the semi-structured interviews, we used an interview guide, which was composed on the basis of an earlier theoretical study (Markus et al., 2021a). The interview format was applied in three pilot interviews and discussed in detail within the research group. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews took 128 to 228 minutes per person, with an average of 173 minutes.

5.4 Data Analysis

Our analysis was shaped by the general framework for descriptive/interpretive qualitative research of Elliott & Timulak (2005). After our initial reading and editing, we marked the meaningful data units and organized these into different domains on the basis of the units' objects. Our research question enabled us to examine three of these domains, namely, Professional ideals, Teacher (focused on Role perceptions), and Inquisitiveness. The first two domains were deductively realized since these topics were explicit parts of the interview guide; the third domain was inductively formed (Miles et al., 2014).

---

[46] This central region in the Netherlands was chosen for practical reasons and is believed to offer a maximum variation, since this area consists of both rural and urban parts, inside and outside the Biblebelt.

[47] At one school, two teachers of the same grade wanted to be interviewed together.

[48] Two interviews were held at the researcher's office, and, in one case, the two interviews were combined at one moment for practical reasons.

Each data unit within these domains was descriptively coded (Miles et al., 2014) and categorized. Looking for similarities and regularities, we developed categories that provided answers to our research question (Elliott & Timulak 2005). Next, we looked at all interview data that were collated in the domains Faith and Religious education, in order to determine whether our interpretations corresponded with the content of these domains and to better understand and describe the interpretations from the teachers' perspectives. We coded in Dutch (Van Nes et al,. 2010) and made use of the ATLAS.ti7 software program.[49] The coding was discussed several times with other researchers, and the analyses were comprehensively discussed in the research group.

5.5 Results

In this section, we present the results of our analysis of the professional ideals, the role perceptions, and inquisitiveness.

Professional ideals: Dominance of the religious aspect

After we showed teachers the definition of an ideal, we asked them to mention three personal ideals in education and to elaborate on these (cf. De Ruyter et al., 2003). The ideals that were described[50] originated from the religious, social-pedagogical, and academic domains. The religious ideal that children will be fully committed Christians was predominantly mentioned. It was expressed in various ways, such as "that children in every situation are aware and think about what God wants them to do" (Adam[51]); "that children will perceive from me that they are important. (...) in such a way that they may also taste the love of God (...)" (Anna); and "At the end of every day, it is the question whether you [teacher, pupils] have come closer to Him [God] or not" (Gijs). The religious ideals were regularly described as ideals that stand out above and beyond anything and/ or are at work in everything; this is the same as how teachers speak about the meaning of Christian faith for life and, as they say, for eternal life. Floris, for example, said, "To serve God, to love God and glorify Him. (...) I believe this is the purpose for which He has made us. (...) We should respond to this in every aspect of our lives."

---

[49] www.atlasti.com

[50] In the strictest sense, some of the mentioned ideals were not ideals as defined by De Ruyter, since they can be realized with a lot of effort (De Ruyter, 2003, 2006). However, because they do give an indication of what teachers strive for, they were taken into account in our analysis.

[51] All of the names in this article are fictitious to preserve the participants' confidentiality.

The social-pedagogical ideals could be described as pupils feeling themselves safe and valued and teachers hoping to create a good atmosphere in the classroom. As Adam mentioned, "My second ideal, which is somehow related to the first [religious ideal, see previous paragraph], is that children care for others enormously and will be there for anybody." Academic ideals were mentioned less often. What was mentioned had generally to do with developing the talents of pupils; to ensure that everyone is at his/her own level.

Some teachers made explicit connections between the ideals in the religious domain and ideals in other domains, as you can see in Adam's statement above about his "second ideal." Besides these connections, ideals in the social-pedagogical and academic domains were regularly described in more or less religious terms; for example, when Adam spoke about "[making] use of the [God-given] talents."

Role perceptions: School next to family and church

Our next focus was on how teachers conceived of their own role in Christian upbringing, compared to parents, Sunday school teachers, or others. They perceived that all pedagogical agents strive for the same purpose and that together they provide children with a "good foundation" (Daniël). However, teachers also talked about differences and we could distinguish these in five categories: other responsibilities, different tasks, different pedagogical opportunities, other relationships, and different settings. We will elaborate on these categories.

First, most teachers highlighted that parents have the highest responsibility for transmitting the Christian faith. Floris, for example, explained, "If God at a given time will call someone to account, then He will start with the father or the mother of that child, and not with me." Nevertheless, teachers felt themselves highly responsible. Lieke expressed it this way: "As a teacher, you aren't the one who is ultimately responsible. But, I find it difficult that you sometimes have an enormous task in this."

Second, with regard to different tasks, the school was seen as an environment which is primarily about the academic outcomes and qualification of children, which means that it provides knowledge, skills, and understanding. Parents' focus is primarily on upbringing (or socialization), and the church is related to liturgical and pastoral activities and doctrinal stances. In relation to religious socialization, stress on academic development was recognizable in the highlighting of explanation and understanding, rather than only appropriation of shared beliefs in the community. Emma, for example, stated, "It is

purely teaching from the Bible and explaining: telling the stories and clarifying the parts that raise questions."

Third, when it comes to different pedagogical opportunities, teachers are seen as experts on how to connect with the level of children. Meanwhile, it was supposed that parents sometimes find this connection difficult and that the message in the church regularly is over the heads of children. In relation to the church, Luuk said the following:

> We [teachers] can make the difference for the children. (...) In our churches, we are hindering children because we expect them to understand archaic language. (...) Because there is no interaction and everything [in the church service] is done in a one-way approach. (...) This is what makes children disengage after ten minutes.

Furthermore, teachers spend a great deal of time with the children and have a lot of opportunities during lessons to pay attention to religious upbringing. Anna put it this way:

> I know that parents find it very hard to talk about the Christian faith with their child and especially to talk about how they experience faith. (...) Instead, at school, we provide plenty of opportunities to do so because we have space and time for that.

The fourth category of differences, "other relationships," is determined by the degree of familiarity with the child. The fifth category is about the setting, such as an individual or group setting. However, teachers gave disparate explanations for both those differences, which is likely related to the different situations teachers were speaking about, such as the backgrounds of children. Emma said, "[I, as a teacher,] can create a safe environment, to talk with them about everything, also about their doubts and sorrows, which sometimes they cannot do with their parents." Opposed to that, Anna highlighted that parents can have more confident conversations, for example, when they bring their children to bed. Another example of such opposite explanations can be seen between the ideas expressed by Ruben and Nora. Ruben said that he can discuss things less in depth than parents can because some pupils will drop out of difficult group discussions, while Nora said that she can actually discuss things more in-depth than parents because she does not have actual parental responsibility.

Inquisitiveness: Awareness of other perspectives

Inquisitiveness came up as a recurring topic in the interviews, although it was not a theme in our interview guide. Several participants directly referred to it, while others mentioned related issues. It might be seen as exemplary for teachers' role perceptions with regard

to religious socialization because it reaches toward understanding and it shows teachers taking a different role than that of others. We use "inquisitiveness" as the translation of the Dutch verb "doorvragen," which, on the basis of our findings, could be described as "not taking a statement, answer, or situation for granted, but asking critical questions in order to deepen one's understanding of phenomenon, as well as others' perspectives of it."

According to the teachers, inquisitiveness is essential for people in order to develop their own opinions, to know why they have these opinions, and to be aware of other opinions. They believe that, in this way, people can overcome narrow-mindedness, are more deeply rooted in their faith, and can have more respect for people with other opinions. Jasmijn expressed this idea clearly:

> I hope that pupils have their own opinions and their own views on the world when they leave school. It is my experience that pupils from traditional families many times parrot their parents; it is often about Biblical issues. Then I realize, I really want the pupils to think things through for themselves.

Sometimes, teachers gave examples of involving inquisitiveness with regard to other than Christian worldviews. Nora, for example, told about showing a documentary on Buddhists living in extremely high mountains who offered the dead to vultures. She went on to explain this:

> I really enjoy talking things through with the children. (...) Because this documentary presents something from another place just like it is. (...) We can discuss it with each other: "What did you see happening? Why is this happening? What do you think about it?"

Other examples are reflections on the beliefs of Muslims and references to Jewish people celebrating Sabbath on Saturdays. However, most of the time, participants referred to inquisitiveness with regard to different opinions and practices among Christians, such as about Bible translations and properly spending Sundays. In these issues, participants regularly positioned themselves opposite of the parents. For instance, Nora said, "I think [pupils] are raised with an oversimplified view, which will give problems when they become teenagers because, by then, they will not think for themselves."

Around the issue of refugees,[52] we saw similar reactions of teachers, such as Jasmijn who said:

_____
[52] At the time of the interviews, the biggest refugee crisis since World War II occurred in the European countries (European Commission, 2016).

> Some people [parents] are very opposed to refugees. Then, I highlight Bible verses, especially for these people. (…) I will tell them that, in the Bible, it is often written to not discriminate against your neighbor, so also not against the neighbor who is a refugee.

Teachers suggested that parents lack nuanced positions, and parents were broadly depicted as being against refugees. Teachers themselves, however, argue that it is important to have a more nuanced opinion, or they will stress that refugees are welcome. The personal opinions of teachers seem to influence their efforts in the classroom, as Nora explained:

I say, "Well, some people think that the Bible clearly forbids women to wear trousers, while others, based on the same Bible, think that this is not a sin." Then, I hope that children will start thinking on their own about what is in the Bible on this topic. Personally, I believe it is no sin at all when a woman wears trousers. Of course, this makes it easier for me [to allow pupils room for arriving at their own conclusion].

However, at some points in the interviews, teachers took a reserved position in favor of parents and churches. Nora stated this concisely: "I don't want to be in the way of parents with what I'm saying or promoting at school."

In the data, we recognized three strategies for stimulating inquisitiveness: (1) Make (or be) aware that there are other perspectives. As Hugo said, "I want to wake them up, like 'you can see it in another way.' (…) I think it is very important if you can look at situations from at least two perspectives"; (2) Seek more information and thus formulate questions. Teachers, for example, stimulated pupils to ask why-questions and valued reactions that started with "But … "; (3) Create space for the pupils' questions or opinions and stimulate discussions about all kind of topics, while you wait before you give your own opinion. Teachers wanted to uphold different opinions in the classroom, and they did this sometimes by withdrawing themselves and letting children react to each other. Jasmijn recounted such a situation:

Some pupils say, "Psalms are to be isometrically sung." Then, I will ask them, "Why should that be done?" "That's the way we do it," they reply. I answer, "Yes, but, who is the 'we'? Oh, the church? So everything the church says is true?" I don't give my opinion, but I teach the children to think.

5.6 Conclusion

Our research question was: What do teachers in OPPSs perceive as their role in religious socialization, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents? The examination of

teachers' professional ideals revealed that one ideal stands out above and beyond anything, and/or works through everything; namely, the religious ideal of children being committed Christians. This was also recognized in how participants implicitly and explicitly connected their social-pedagogical and academic ideals to the religious ideal. Based on their professional ideals, we conclude that contributing to the religious socialization of children matters to teachers.

Analysis of how teachers perceive their role amid other agents showed that they experience working all together toward the same purpose. However, they distinguish a distinct role for themselves, shown in five categories of differences. First, although teachers feel themselves highly responsible, they think parents have the greatest responsibility for religious socialization. Second, teachers primarily focus on qualification of children and their academic development instead of upbringing (parents) or ecclesiastical activities (liturgy, pastoral care, and doctrines). In religious education, they want children to understand things rather than to only appropriate religious beliefs. Third, teachers see themselves as experts on how to connect with the level of children. They also say they have more time and opportunities to pay attention to religious upbringing. Fourth, teachers have other relationships with children, which means that they have another degree of familiarity with the kids than parents have. Fifth, teachers operate in different settings than parents do; for example, on a more individual base or in a group setting. However, what the differences in the last two categories mean is explained in different ways by the teachers. What is mentioned by one participant, as being a strong point of the teacher's role, is mentioned by another as being in favor of the parents' role. This might depend on specific situational characteristics, such as the pupils' backgrounds.

The uniqueness of the teachers' role is recognized in what some of the teachers say about inquisitiveness. Teachers describe inquisitiveness (Dutch: *doorvragen*) as essential in order to develop one's own opinions, to know why one has these opinions, and to be aware of other opinions. Thus, people can overcome narrow-mindedness, can be more deeply rooted in their faith, and can have more respect for people with other opinions. Inquisitiveness is mostly mentioned in relation to different opinions and practices among Christians, and several teachers stated that parents tend to have less nuanced stances. Teachers regularly positioned themselves in opposition to parents, but sometimes they took a more reserved position on issues. According to the teachers, stimulating inquisitiveness consists of three strategies: becoming aware that there are other perspectives, seeking more information by formulating questions, and engaging in stimulating conversations.

5.7 Discussion

This study shows that OPPS teachers want to affect children's religious socialization. Although the similarity of school, family, and church is often stressed within the orthodox Protestant community, this study proved that for teachers the differences among these environments and the meaning of these differences are important as well. It seems that teachers perceive that they add a specific contribution to religious socialization. Their emphasis on understanding can be related to MacMullen's position:

> The systematic religious instruction and supportive atmosphere of faith in a religious elementary school are the best means to ensure that the children of religious parents will have an adequate understanding of their family's religion, so that it can be the object of an informed choice in their future as autonomous agents. (2004, p. 608)

When children grasp their primary religious culture and learn the competence of ethical reasoning in their own context, it will be easier for them at a later stage to reflect on the religions of others and to be involved in religious dialogs (De Wolff, 2006; MacMullen, 2004). In this way, the bonding capital of the school can contribute to pupils' participation in broader society, the bridging capital (Putnam, 2007). Yet it is important that some pedagogical conditions are met, such as laying the foundations for autonomous reflection and the absence of coercion (MacMullen, 2004; Merry, 2005). At certain points teachers showed examples linked to bridging social capital, like when they opposed intolerant attitudes or when they supposed inquisitiveness to contribute to more respect for people with other opinions. Our data cannot indicate to what degree the pedagogical conditions are met and whether concrete educational practices are in line with teachers' ideas. However, with regard to the discussions about religious socialization in schools, it is relevant to notice that the religious socialization would miss certain influences when it would be limited to families and churches; at least, in the perspective of OPPS teachers.

We regularly observed abrasive views of teachers regarding their roles. For example, in how they describe their responsibility (enormous, but not the biggest); or that they want to consolidate the religious identity pupils develop at home, while they also sometimes oppose ideas of parents. These abrasive views can be clarified by looking at the characteristics of the religious nurturer and the religious educator, which Grimmitt (1981) describes. The religious educator's role is primarily governed by educational and, as Miedema (2017) adds, pedagogical principles: he or she has "commitment to 'education' as his [or her] first-order activity" (p. 43). However, for the religious nurturer, religious commitment is primary,

and the purpose of his or her first-order activity is that pupils gain greater insight into [the eternal Truth] and strengthen their commitment to it (Grimmitt, 1981). The teachers in our study seemed to consider their religious commitment as primary, but sometimes they mention aspects of educational commitment first, for example, when they highlighted inquisitiveness (Grimmitt, 1981; Miedema, 2018). Thus, the teacher in the role of religious nurturer fits in with the roles of other pedagogical agents, whereas, he or she sometimes diverges from it in the role of religious educator. It would be helpful when teachers themselves can explicitly and more comprehensively define and discuss what their role in religious socialization means (Epstein, 2001, see Introduction). Grimmitt (1981) states it is essential that teachers distinguish their roles in the education of pupils.[53] More clarity on their role might then reduce the abrasive views and help teachers to bring their ideals in line with each other, as well as with their teaching practices. As we know from earlier research, the quality of education will be served by that alignment (Markus et al., 2021a).

In further research, special interest could be paid to the dynamic we discovered whereby some teachers place themselves in opposition to parents, such as Jasmijn's idea about welcoming refugees. This is remarkable in the light of discussions about teachers being agents of social change in society, as teachers are often reluctant to engage in "controversial" or political issues (Holden, 2007 in Bourn, 2015; Kleijwegt, 2016; Speelman, 2014). Furthermore, since not all teachers spoke about inquisitiveness explicitly, additional research could clarify whether certain teacher characteristics stimulate or restrict this. It might, for example, be related to the educational attainment of teachers, as we found that most participants who spoke the most about inquisitiveness had an academic background. Overall, since this is a small scale explorative study, further research could provide a fuller picture of the teacher's role perceptions (e.g., about its impact and its sources). Our results show that the contributions of pedagogical agents to cohesion and cooperation in religious socialization in strong religious communities should not be simply understood as "more of the same."

5

---

[53] Miedema (2017) describes the roles and commitments of the religious nurturer and the religious educator as being mutually exclusive. At this point we will highlight the different emphases that come along with these roles.

CHAPTER 6

Distinction, Identification, and Recognition: Teachers in Orthodox Protestant Schools on their Faith and Religious Others

Abstract

Strong religious schools emphasize their own religious community and faith. However, in the interest of social cohesion, it is important to know what the teachers in these schools believe about religious diversity. We conducted sixteen in-depth interviews with Christian primary school teachers about the Christian faith and their beliefs regarding religious others. People's relationship with God is a central issue in their beliefs, and beliefs about religious others speak to issues of distinction, identification, or recognition. However, teachers show ambivalence when it comes to concrete encounters. We consider it valuable that teachers are stimulated to actively discuss contrasting beliefs.

6.1 Introduction

In our diverse world, the need for social cohesion is often underscored, and tolerance is often evoked as an important value. However, in public debates on citizenship education, it is regularly heard that highly religious primary schools cannot sufficiently support tolerance and social cohesion because of their homogeneous populations (Breemer & Lammers, 2014; Evans, 2016; Godwin et al., 2004; Halsema, 2019; Mason & Wareham, 2018; Terry et al., 2019; Tuastad, 2016). Evans, for example, has argued that "It's hard to see how schools can effectively teach 'mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs' if they don't even want kids with different faiths and beliefs in their schools" (2016).

This raises the question of how religious others are actually thought of and taught in highly religious schools. Thus far, only a few empirical studies have addressed this topic a little (e.g. Bertram-Troost et al., 2015a; Bertram-Troost et al., 2018; De Muynck, 2008; Exalto, 2017; Godwin et al., 2004). Therefore, in this explorative and interpretative empirical study, we conduct an in-depth examination of what teachers in Dutch orthodox Protestant primary schools (hereafter called OPPS) believe about religious diversity. Our central question is as follows: What do OPPS teachers believe about religious others, and how might this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith? We define religious others (in Dutch: *niet- of andersgelovigen*) as everyone who, from the participants' perspective, has a different worldview from theirs. OPPSs can be characterized as quite mono-religious schools in which the truth of the Christian faith is emphasized and where the population is homogeneous (Alii, 2009; Sterkens, 2001).

Knowledge about teachers' beliefs is relevant because teachers are key figures in educational processes, and their beliefs are strong predictors of classroom decision-making (Borg, 2001; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Gommers & Hermans, 2003; Hattie, 2009; Häusler et al., 2019; Kelchtermans, 2009). What teachers believe about religious diversity is likely, therefore, to influence what is taught to the next generations about perceptions of religious others. Furthermore, various studies show that teachers experience difficulties in dealing with diversity (De Muynck, 2008; Speelman, 2014). Through knowledge regarding what teachers of OPPSs believe about religious others, policymakers, teacher trainers, education advisors, and others who are involved with fostering social cohesion at OPPSs can improve their efforts. The current study also addresses the need for more research on the relations between teachers' religious beliefs and their professional thinking and acting (Häusler et al., 2019).

Beliefs about religious others as expressions of espoused theology

In identifying what teachers in OPPSs believe about religious others, it is overly simplistic to look exclusively at the denomination of the school. Several factors need to be

considered. First, several empirical studies show that teachers critically evaluate aspects of their school's formal identity or how this is interpreted by the school board (Bertram-Troost et al., 2017; De Muynck, 2008; Van Hardeveld, 2003). Second, the influence of traditional, institutionalized religions and fixed dogmas has generally decreased, and the emphasis on personal convictions has increased (Bernts & Berghuijs, 2016; Davie, 2000; Taylor, 2002, 2007), a trend that has also influenced Dutch orthodox Protestant communities (Dekker, 2016; Exalto, 2018; Visscher, 2014). Third, some studies show that teachers experience tensions in what they are assumed to believe as Christians (theology) and teachers (pedagogy) and have difficulty integrating their aspiration of a distinctively Christian education with their professional role as teachers (Cooling et al., 2016; Häusler et al., 2019). Thus, teachers' beliefs do not automatically reflect the formal identity of their schools. Therefore, this study examines beliefs at the level of individual teachers.

A belief can be defined as "a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment" (Borg, 2001, p. 186). When unconscious beliefs are accessed by interviewing, the nature of these beliefs might change into conscious beliefs (Fives and Buehl, 2012). We start by paying attention to the concrete interactions of teachers with religious others, since beliefs are activated by context demands (Fives & Buehl, 2012). Teachers' religious or worldview beliefs are assumed to influence professional beliefs and teaching practices at the educational, didactical, and psychological levels (Häusler et al., 2019). Teachers at strong Christian schools consciously create links between their personal religious faith and their profession and communicate about that (De Muynck, 2008; Häusler et al., 2019). Within the "theology in four voices" approach (Cameron et al., 2010), religious beliefs can be seen as expressions of espoused theology, i.e., the articulated theology of believers. These expressions are developed in relation to other strands of theological communication, namely, normative theology (e.g., scriptures and official church teaching), formal theology (e.g., theology of theologians), and operant theology (theology embedded in actual practices) (Cameron et al., 2010; Ward, 2017). Before presenting our methods and results, we will now clarify the position of OPPSs in a diverse Dutch society.

Orthodox Protestant schools and religious diversity

In the Dutch context, freedom of education means that—next to public education, which is initiated and provided by the government—private organizations or persons have the legal right to found and run denominational schools in which specific religious, ideological, or educational beliefs are expressed in what is taught and how (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007;

Exalto & Bertram-Troost, 2019; Glenn & De Groof, 2005). Denominational schools have to meet certain quality standards, such as the required qualifications of teachers, mandatory subjects, and attainment targets, but they are highly autonomous on matters related to resource allocation, curriculum, and assessment. These schools receive the same amount of governmental funding as public schools (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; Exalto & Bertram-Troost, 2019; OECD, 2014). However, there are no official church schools in the Netherlands.

About two-thirds of Dutch primary schools are denominational. At least five percent of primary schools are OPPSs, namely, "reformatorische scholen" (Reformed schools), "gereformeerde scholen" (Reformed Liberated schools), and part of the "protestants-christelijke scholen" (Protestant schools).[54] In their mission statements, they refer to Reformed (Calvinistic) doctrines (De Muynck et al., 2014; DUO, 2016; Markus et al., 2018, 2021a).[55] Orthodox Protestant churches acknowledge that "the forgiveness of man's sins, and thereby salvation and eternal life, is only possible after repentance and rebirth, by the grace of God through the work of redemption on the cross of his son Jesus Christ" and that—regularly based on a literal Bible interpretation—people should "try to live according to God's will in personal and social life" (Rijke, 2019, p. 96). Adherence to God is not self-evident, and therefore, it is a central issue in life. Some churches approach this in a more emotional (subjective) way, while others do so in a more rational (objective) way; but both forms of spirituality are found among OPPSs (De Muynck, 2008; Rijke, 2019).

Orthodox Protestants value OPPSs as key institutions in passing on and strengthening community values and identity. Parents hope that their children will become adults of strong faith, which they are expected to maintain in their interactions with religious others (Oomen & Rijke, 2013). Teachers in OPPSs are practicing members of orthodox Protestant churches. It differs whether schools only accept children from specific denominational backgrounds or practice open enrolment (De Muynck et al., 2014; Rijke, 2019).

Dutch law requires primary schools to pay attention to important religious movements in society and to teach children respect for people's differences of opinion. Religious schools often do so in line with their religious identity (Greven & Letschert, 2006; Kuyk, 2007). The way in which religious schools position other religions or worldviews in relation to their own religious identity can be described through the lens of mono-religious, multi-religious, or interreligious learning (Alii, 2009; Sterkens, 2001; Wardekker

---

[54] Evangelical schools could also be seen as orthodox Protestant schools, but they are small in number and have a different doctrinal basis. Therefore, we did not include them in our study.

[55] These doctrines are the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Belgic Confession (1561), and the Canons of Dort (1618–1619).

& Miedema, 2001). Strong religious schools are mono-religious: the socio-cultural context is dominated by orthodox Protestantism; the normative basis is the absolute truth claim of Christianity; and the pedagogic aim is the internalization of its own tradition (Alii, 2009; Sterkens, 2001; Wardekker & Miedema, 2001).

When it comes to religious diversity, the soteriological categories of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism are especially important. The mono-religious model is mostly related to exclusivism (only those who explicitly confess Christ as Savior can be saved) and, occasionally, inclusivism (Christ is involved in the process of salvation, but a personal confession regarding Christ is not necessary) (Alii, 2009; Moyaert, 2011; Sterkens, 2001; Wardekker & Miedema, 2001). Exclusivism and inclusivism are regularly perceived as not taking the religious other seriously enough, while pluralism is often seen as the best starting point for interreligious dialogue or acknowledgment (Moyaert, 2011). However, pluralism denies the particularity of faith commitments, while the proposed alternative of the irreducible particularity of religions does not provide much room for interreligious dialogue (Moyaert, 2011). Instead, Moyaert (2011) concludes that it is important to recognize that the religious will always experience a tension between particularity (faith commitment) and diversity (openness) and that it is not possible to find a precise balance between the two. We should be aware that the differentiation between schools seems to be more diffuse than the conceptual typology of mono-, multi-, and interreligious learning suggests (Bertram-Troost et al., 2015a).

6.2 Methods

This study is part of a larger research project in which we interviewed seven female and nine male participants who worked in grades 4 or 5 of fifteen OPPSs between April 2015 and February 2016.[56] This sample was purposefully selected by a maximum variation strategy (Patton, 2002) because our aim was as in-depth understanding of the central themes around the variation among OPPSs. Our aim was not empirical generalization. The criteria used were variation of denominational backgrounds (Reformed schools, Reformed Liberated schools and Protestant schools), variation regarding location sizes (villages, towns, big cities and very big cities), and variation regarding the presence of orthodox Protestant believers in the schools' neighborhood (many and few). We identified how orthodox Protestant schools in a central region of the Netherlands[57] could be categorized according to these features and then aimed for the participation of one school for every unique combination of features.[58] For

---

[56] The 5th grade is the penultimate year of primary school in the Netherlands.

[57] Namely, within a radius of 50 km around Utrecht. Approximately 52% of all Dutch Reformed schools and 29% of all Reformed Liberated schools were included in this region (DUO 2016).

[58] For three unique combinations of features, no schools were available.

every combination, we randomly contacted a teacher to participate. In total, we approached thirty-nine schools (with a 38.5% positive response). The teachers' ages varied from 23 to 59 years (average: 34.5), with 1.5 to 35 years of teaching experience (average: 11.3). All teachers were trained in orthodox Protestant teacher training institutes. They were all interviewed twice by the first author, and the interviews took place at their respective schools.[59] The interviewer was familiar with the participants' religious backgrounds because she worked at an orthodox Protestant teacher training institute. This appeared to be especially helpful in terms of gaining the participants' trust and understanding their religious language. However, there was still distance between the researcher and the participants because the researcher was not fully immersed in the stricter orthodox Protestant subculture, which made it easier to maintain a critical stance. Also, the members of the research group were of diverse backgrounds, which helped mitigate bias. We followed the ethical guidelines as well as the guidelines of data management for scientific research at Dutch universities (DANS, 2015; VSNU, 2005, 2012).

The interviews were semi-structured, and the topic list used was composed on the basis of an earlier theoretical study (Markus et al., 2021a) and interview questions from earlier research by several authors (Afdal, 2006; De Ruyter & Kole, 2001; Versteegt, 2010). The interview guide was discussed in the research group and adapted after three pilot interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. This provided 128–228 minutes of interview data per participant (173 minutes on average).[60] At the time of the interviews, Europe was experiencing its biggest refugee crisis since World War II as well as a higher number of attacks related to Muslim extremism than in previous years (European Commission, 2016; Tierolf et al., 2018). This resonated in the interviews, with the participants referencing specific incidents.

6.3 Data Analysis

For our thematic data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), we used the general framework for descriptive/interpretive qualitative research (Elliott & Timulak, 2005). Following this framework, the first step in our analysis comprised initial reading and editing. We then divided the data into meaningful units and searched for an overall organizational structure by looking for the subjects discussed in the units. All units about a certain subject were placed into "a domain,"

---

[59] Because of the teachers' preferences, one situation differed from the others in several respects: two colleagues of the same school were interviewed together during one interview lasting 160 minutes (instead of one teacher being interviewed twice), and this interview took place in the interviewer's office (instead of the participants' school). Another interview took place in the interviewer's office for practical reasons.

[60] This procedure is described in a similar way in Markus and colleagues (2019).

yielding twenty-three domains in total.[61] Some domains were assigned following the topics in the interview guide (e.g., "[professional] ideals" and "religious others"), while others were inductively formed (e.g., "refugees" and "social media") (Miles et al., 2014). In the next phase, we used descriptive coding of meaningful units within the domains of "religious others," "faith," and "religious tolerance" in order to answer our current research questions (Miles et al., 2014). In our search for similarities and regularities, we placed the codes in more abstract categories, which we could then interpret (Elliott & Timulak, 2005). The appendix [Appendix X] contains an overview of the relevant codes. We used the software program ATLAS.ti8 and performed the coding in Dutch (Van Nes et al., 2010). For the sake of reliability, the coding and further analyses were discussed several times within the research group and with other researchers. The participant statements used in this article were translated into intelligible English sentences by two authors (e.g. Van Nes et al., 2010).[10]

6.4 Results

Our data can shed light on the central topics from various perspectives. As noted in the introduction, it is important to have an image of whether and how teachers interact with religious others. Therefore, we will first examine their concrete interactions with religious others. Afterwards, we will address their beliefs about religious others and the particularity and distinctiveness or truth of the Christian faith. We do so because it is the combination of these concepts that raises questions about whether and how strong religious schools can foster social cohesion and tolerance. Lastly, we relate the insights from the various perspectives to each other.

Teachers' interactions with religious others

The teachers described several kinds of interactions with religious others, such as contact with the neighbors, family, and friends or others (e.g., the Muslim school cleaner or their parents' friends), meeting people on the streets, during sports matches, during studies, at work (former jobs or summer jobs), or during missionary activities. These are interactions in daily life, and the teachers did not deliberately create interactions with religious others

---

[61] We used the following domain headings (translated into English): Bible (44); citizenship (education) (84); Christian schools (67); school context (3); didactics (97); principal (5); questioning/inquisitiveness [Doorvragen] (15); faith (400); homogeneous population (2); religious education (95); (professional) ideals (258); interview (38); class/pupils (179); teacher (900); social media (11); religious others (463); parents (50); government (7); society (87); school (236); teacher team (101); tolerance (196); and refugees (21). The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of units within this domain; some units were assigned to more than one domain (counting performed on January 20, 2017). [10] This procedure is described in a similar way in Markus and colleagues (2019).

(except during missionary activities). Some teachers explicitly stated that they had little to no contact with religious others because they did not believe that religious others were present in the area where they lived or because they themselves worked in an orthodox Protestant setting. For example, Adam said the following concerning the possibility of inviting a Muslim into his classroom: "Where I live now, in my neighborhood, I actually don't know any Muslims."[62] Those teachers with little to no contact with religious others regularly considered this as a possible shortcoming. According to Floris, "It would have been interesting, but I have never come across any Buddhists or Jews." Other teachers highlighted that it was impossible to have no contact with religious others. For example, Lieke said that "You do come into contact with non-Christians. For me, they are not remote, not at all."

The analyses revealed three types of evaluations applied by the teachers to their concrete interactions: whether it was pleasant and/or difficult, whether they got more insights into the ideas of religious others or themselves, and whether they deliberately referred to God or faith. First, most teachers found the interactions pleasant because they experienced an open atmosphere in which they could share their thoughts. Femke, for example, said, "We sometimes share dinner with Buddhist colleagues of my husband....It is very special to hear how they do things, and to share how we do things, and to talk about that. These are very enjoyable, interesting conversations." At the same time, some teachers believed that the interactions were challenging, as they found it difficult to be the only Christians in certain situations or to give the right answers or reactions. There were also situations in which they had experienced a hostile attitude toward the Christian faith. Others revealed that they found it painful to realize that religious others did not acknowledge Jesus as their Savior. Jasmijn, for example, said, "When I see on television that young people die, I think: 'And now?...If you didn't believe, you will now discover that it is actually too late.' I find that very difficult."

Second, some teachers believed that they gained more insights into the ideas of religious others—entering new worlds or discovering new knowledge—by interacting with them. Luuk, for example, highlighted having gained new knowledge as a result of such interactions:

> In my youth, I had a prejudice against religious others and Moroccans....I was not happy with that because, when I grew older, I felt that every Moroccan had his or her own personality, like every Turkish person and every Surinamese person, and that there are a lot of differences between them. But that only started to develop when I [interacted with them] myself.

---

[62] All names and other details that could make the data traceable to the participants were pseudonymized to preserve the participants' confidentiality.

Meanwhile, interactions and conversations with religious others also helped the teachers think about their own faith, confirm their own beliefs, or slightly change their beliefs, as in Adam's case: "But there are positive things in [the other people's views]....Knowledge about that can make you more lenient. On the other hand, it confirms what I stand for even more."

Third, some teachers wanted to openly portray the Christian way of life, tell others about it, ask questions to open up conversations about faith, and organize missionary activities. Emma, for example, said: "When people pass the church and they are interested, I invite them in and say: 'You may have a look....' In that way, I try to share our faith with others." Later on, she described her motivation for acting in this way: "It is God's instruction for us: 'Proclaim your faith and share it as much as you can with others.'" However, some teachers felt unease about mentioning God or faith in every situation or at any time. During former or summer jobs, for example, it did not always feel appropriate, as in Daniël's case: "I came there to package vegetables and not to evangelize." Some teachers said that, although they wanted to share their faith, they did not believe that it was effective to be intrusive, for example, when the religious other is angry, when one does not have a personal relationship with him or her, or when one has previously talked about faith.

Teachers' beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith

Beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith compared with that of other religions were remarkably unequivocal and can be divided into three categories, each about the teachers' arguments relating to the uniqueness of the Christian faith. The first concerned the view that Christians did not need to do good works in order to receive salvation. As Lieke said, "[In other religions], you have to earn faith by working hard. I, however, think that God gives faith by grace." Second, it was mentioned that there was only one God according to the Bible and that the qualities of God described in the Bible (e.g., grace, love, and the possibility of having a relationship with Him) could not be attributed to other gods. Therefore, most of the teachers rejected the idea that Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists worshipped the same God as Christians. Within the third category of beliefs, the teachers referred to the doctrine of the Trinity (i.e., the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as three persons in one Godhead) and paid special attention to the divinity of Jesus and his role as Savior. As Jasmijn said, "Sometimes people say 'It is the same God.' Then I reply: 'But if you do not accept Jesus as your Savior, then it is not open for discussion really.'" The belief that Jesus is the Savior and that people must acknowledge this was decisive for many teachers. As Nora clarified, "I believe that there is an eternal life after this life but also an eternal death. And when you do not choose Jesus Christ in your life, then you ultimately

choose eternal death because Jesus Christ is the doorway to eternal life." This conviction, therefore, makes the distinctiveness of Christian faith a very serious issue.

Reluctance

However, at the same time, we encountered reluctance regarding decisive statements, such as those relating to the acknowledgment of Jesus. This was expressed most clearly in the following quotation, which is cited in full to show how the teacher formulated her beliefs while searching for them:

I maybe ought to say "no" [to the question of whether the God of Muslims is the same God as the God of Christians]....And I do believe in the Bible as truth....Maybe believing in the Lord Jesus is a very essential thing, but I am very reluctant to say that because I believe in God the Father and in the Bible and in Christ the Lord, I am more blessed than, for example, a Muslim is....I also think it is something I should leave with God....I also believe that it has a lot to do with trying to be a good person and loving God above everything and your neighbor as yourself. Those are essential things. I see, for example, a Muslim doing that; or any other person from any other religion. Religions are difficult to compare with each other. If you believe in a God, does a Muslim believe in the same God as a Protestant does? I don't know; maybe he does. Sometimes, I almost feel even more sympathetic with Muslims, for example, than with someone who is very extreme in Christianity...And I don't have the truth in my hands. I try to do what is good based on the Bible. Yes, I believe in God. And I find it very difficult to tell whether someone else believes in the same God...

It is notable that this teacher started with "I maybe ought to..." and that she then highlighted earlier-mentioned beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith before explicating her reluctance. She then formulated her own counter-voices and showed that her beliefs were part of a searching process, triggered by certain experiences ("When I see a Muslim..."). Comparable comments were made by several other teachers, mostly relating to Jews and Roman Catholics and sometimes in terms of ethical issues and Muslims. Further, the belief that it is God's work to realize that the religious other acknowledges Him and that it is not Biblical to judge someone's eternal destination generated reluctance among the teachers—even those who strongly emphasized that people have to acknowledge Jesus as their Savior. Teun, for example, said,

You ultimately believe that people who don't believe [in Jesus as their Savior] will not have eternal life with God....And if you know that someone adheres to a different faith, which is not the right faith, then you know what can happen to him or her, no matter how kind

that person is—although it is not really for us to say, as you don't know that person's heart.

In these moments of reluctance, we also observed some ambivalence between what the teachers said at one moment and the other.

Our data showed two other moments in which reluctance and a change of beliefs were observed. First, several teachers mentioned that they grew up thinking that church or a specific church was very important or even decisive and they now highlighted that one's relationship with God mattered most. Furthermore, several teachers mentioned holy wars in Christian history and their resemblance to violent attacks by Muslim extremists, which made them more cautious and humble when they talked about Christian history. As Jan said,

I used to tell the story of the crusades from my point of view, as if I was a crusader myself….But they were disgraceful, those crusades. "God wills it!" A lot of people said that, but look at what happened…That is just the same as "Allah wants it!"…I will never again tell the story about the crusades so proudly.

Teachers' beliefs about religious others

On the question of how to define the non-religious other, the teachers' responses varied considerably. Some teachers remarked that there were no non-religious people, since everyone held certain assumptions in life, "even if it is the assumption that there is no god." Non-religious people were defined in three ways: as people who did not believe in the existence of a higher power; those who had not yet made a choice regarding a certain set of religious beliefs; or those who did not believe in the same god as that of Christians. The teachers believed that religious others did believe in a higher power, though not in the same way as they themselves did. Not all the teachers explained the differences, with some giving various criteria (which also depended on how they defined non-religious people), including whether their Christian life influenced daily life decisions, whether Jesus Christ was seen as the Savior, or whether one believed in Biblical authority and inerrancy.

At various points in the interviews, the teachers demonstrated what they believed about religious others. Their beliefs could be distinguished into three categories with several subcategories: distinction, identification, and recognition (in alphabetical order).[63] We present them in the next paragraphs. Most teachers mentioned beliefs in different categories, although some had more beliefs in one category, and others had more beliefs in another.

---

[63] Dutch: *Afstand nemen, herkenning, and erkenning*.

Distinction

The teachers expressed beliefs that mainly highlighted distinctions between themselves and religious others, which contained the subcategories of anxiety for the religious other, feeling sorry for the religious other, the importance of clarity, and a duty to spread the Biblical message. First, the teachers regarded religious others with anxiety and caution because of stories about Islamic radicalism, earlier unpleasant confrontations, or the idea that (radical) Islam could become predominant in the Netherlands. Jan, for example, realized that he was occasionally suspicious when he saw Muslims and that he thought about radical Islam.

Second, they highlighted the importance of being clear about the differences between the Christian faith and other religions because the differences were, indeed, serious. Some added that if a Christian was insufficiently resilient, he or she could be negatively affected by ideas from religious others. Others mentioned that they wanted room to live out their Christian norms and values. Some declared that this clarity should not reduce love for the other, with the distinction being between rejecting the religious other's ideas, not rejecting them as people.

Third, the teachers felt sorry for the religious others because the latter did not know God and, therefore, would not live with God in eternity. For example, Emma said that she felt sad when people did not accept the biggest gift they could get, namely, the gift of belonging to God. Some explicitly added that it would end badly for the religious other. For example, Daniël said, "If Muslims, for example, think that they will go to heaven and they commit a suicide attack, then I think that they will not go to heaven. I feel sorry for those people. They do their best for their religion, whilst in fact they will be disappointed."

Fourth, the teachers saw it as their duty to spread the Biblical message of salvation. Therefore, they believed that they had a responsibility to show their faith "in words and deeds." We encountered this belief in the previous section, where Emma was quoted: "It is God's instruction for us: 'Proclaim your faith and share it as much as you can with others.'"

Identification

There were also beliefs related to the teachers' identification with the religious other. In this category, we distinguished between two, sometimes highly related, subcategories: having shared norms and values and having a shared position in contemporary society. Because the religious other had comparable or desirable norms and values, the teachers could relate to and learn from them. Henk, for example, said, "Take humanists, for example. They treat the creation much better than the average Christian….Then I think: 'Well, we can still learn a lot from other religions about how to live.'" The orthodox

Protestant teachers also identified with religious others because the latter also comprised the religious minority in society. Teun, for example, said

Look, you can take issue with Islam, but sometimes, they do have similar views….Couldn't you sometimes connect then and say: "We are very different in some things, and in other things, we think the same." And do we then actually differ? If you look at our position and theirs, and how the outside world sees us, we are actually quite similar.

Recognition

The third category contained beliefs expressing the teachers' recognition of the religious other: the religious other as a human being who deserves his or her own position. This contained the subcategories of beliefs about freedom of choice, beliefs about God seeing the heart, beliefs about human value, and beliefs about love. First, the teachers recognized or respected religious others because it was good that people (including teachers themselves) were not forced to have certain convictions and could live beside others in society with different opinions through freedom of choice. As Ruben said, "It is sad that people do not choose Jesus, but they do have that freedom. And that is good."

Second, the teachers believed that they could not and did not have to judge the relationship between the religious other and God, since God knew the hearts of religious others and that people could not transpose the Christian faith onto others. This belief often went along with feeling sorry for others or the duty to spread the faith, with teachers mentioning regularly that they pray for the religious other. According to Jan, "Experience has taught me that it comes to a point when it does not depend on you but on God….We will leave it to God." Third, the teachers recognized religious others because they were valuable humans like all humans and that they were created by God. As Sanne noted, "I don't know why God brought Ali Baba[64] into this world….But God has a plan with that, just like He has with you. He is desired by God." Fourth, the teachers showed love and kindness toward religious others and were regularly motivated by the idea that a Christian should treat all people as such. This belief was mentioned by most teachers. Teun, for example, said, "Just a Christian attitude, that is, loving your neighbor as yourself, with both believers and non-believers, and that you treat everyone just the same."

God as the third party

As presented above, the subcategories of distinction, identification, and recognition depicted what the teachers believed in terms of the relationship between themselves

---

[64] The teacher used "Ali Baba" to indicate a random Muslim.

and religious others. It is, however, remarkable that the participants also involved God as a third party in these relationships, as they had both implicit and explicit beliefs about how they positioned themselves and religious others before God. This happened in a different way in each category and can be variously interpreted.

First, in the category of distinction, there was a tendency for the teachers to emphasize that they belonged to God and were connected to Him. They then highlighted the differences with the religious other, who did not know God and who was, thus, remote from God. Because of the perceived distance between God and the religious other, the teachers also experienced some distance between themselves and the religious other. Second, in the category of recognition, the teachers foregrounded the idea that religious others are human beings like they are. They highlighted the connection with the religious other's distance from God: both teachers and religious others held the same positions as human beings before God. Both teachers and religious others were human beings known by God, deserved their position in the world, and had the freedom of choice for or against God. Third, regarding beliefs in the category of identification, God was indirectly involved, for He was the anchor point for Christians. However, "society" was also an important party when the teachers described their relation to religious others in this category. They identified themselves with religious others because they felt a shared distance from society, i.e., by being a religious minority and having certain norms and values. Society was also mentioned as a party regarding the subcategory of beliefs about "freedom of choice" (recognition). The teachers recognized that freedom of choice was a necessary condition for a functioning society.

The distinctiveness of the Christian faith, and religious others

The second part of our research question concerned the relation between beliefs about religious others and the Christian faith. These beliefs were in line with each other, both in the content and the nature of the different beliefs. First, God and how people could have a relation with Him was central to beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith. This was also a central point in the beliefs about religious others, as we showed that God was involved as a third party. Second, on the nature of beliefs, both sets of beliefs were characterized by some ambivalence. On one hand, the teachers showed clear beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith. On the other hand, they also showed reluctance toward decisive statements and were clearly searching for what to believe. This ambivalence was also reflected in beliefs about religious others: beliefs about distinction and identification, for example, were not unequivocal.

6.5 Conclusion and Discussion

We set out to answer the following research question: "What do OPPS teachers believe about religious others, and how can this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith?" The teachers in our study did not deliberately create interactions with religious others. Their experiences differed, and they defined the "religious other" in different ways. They believed that the Christian faith was distinct from that of other religions in three ways: Christians do not need to do good works in order to receive salvation; there is one God, and the qualities of God described in the Bible cannot be recognized in the images of the god in other religions; and religious others do not believe in the Trinity, specifically the divinity of Jesus and his role as Savior. This last belief makes the distinctiveness of the Christian faith a very serious issue because the acknowledgment of Jesus as Savior was seen as decisive for the eternal life of people.

Meanwhile, the teachers regularly showed reluctance to statements about whether the religious other would be saved or not, sometimes appearing to show that they were searching for what to believe about religious others. The beliefs of teachers about religious others could be classified into three categories: beliefs about distinction from, identification with, and recognition of the religious other, each with several subcategories. When the teachers described the relation between themselves and religious others, they not only referred to themselves and religious others but also explicitly or implicitly to God and sometimes also to society. The relation between teachers with religious others did not stand alone: it was also about the relationship with God and society. The teachers highlighted either the connection to or distance from God in relation to the religious other. Beliefs about religious others and the Christian faith were related because of similarities in the content and nature. In both sets of beliefs, God and whether people can have a relation with Him were depicted as central issues, and ambivalence was shown to exist.

Ambivalence surfaced when the religious other came into view. Beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith (i.e., salvation by Jesus' sacrifice) and its importance were remarkably unequivocal, reflecting the belief that adherence to God was central to orthodox Protestants. However, when applied to religious others, the teachers were more reluctant; they expressed counter-voices, searched for what they believed, or vacillated. We could interpret the unequivocalness as the echo of a strong formal and/or normative theology. This voice also echoed in the long quotation provided earlier, when the teacher said, "I maybe ought to…" and first mentioned some beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith before articulating her counter-voices. The consequences or interpretations of a formal and normative theology in the practice of perceiving religious others were less straightforward,

for example, and were also shown in the long quotation. This ambiguity shows the specific identity of espoused theology and lived religion and/or the tensions that inevitably come with interreligious dialogue (e.g. Moyaert, 2011). Our results confirm that one cannot conclude from a school's official denomination what people think about religious others. We should be aware of the existence of varied beliefs about religious others among teachers in OPPSs, perhaps also among orthodox Protestants, in general. It would be worth investigating which beliefs are dominant and how they affect teachers' practices. Cameron and colleagues (2010) argue that people's espoused theology might be less developed than their actual practice and that its relation with people's practices is not always clear or coherent.

In the introduction, we addressed the importance of knowing teachers' beliefs about religious others, as this might give an idea about whether education in strong religious primary schools supports the need for tolerance and social cohesion in society. Our results indicate that, although there are some beliefs that stress distinction, there also regularly are expressions of recognition and identification. It, however, is striking that teachers not always can explain how (aspects of) their beliefs relate to each other; hence, the ambivalence in their beliefs. The foregoing raises the question about what level of consistency in teachers' espoused theology should be pursued. In practical theology, a certain degree of inconsistency in lived religion (beliefs included) is seen as a given. Furthermore, there is a distinction between ordinary believers and academics or professional ministers of religion (McGuire, 2008 in Ward, 2017; Ward, 2017). Teachers are not academics, but the systematic religious instruction in schools, besides the religious socialization within families, is important (MacMullen, 2004). The teachers in our study acknowledged that they had a specific role in the understanding of religion (Markus et al., 2019). However, the ambivalence in their beliefs seemed to contradict this systematic religious instruction. This is all the more questionable because pedagogical theory emphasizes that contrasting beliefs should be brought in line with each other to enhance the quality of education (Bryan, 2003; De Ruyter, 2007). Because of their profession as well as their task in contributing to social cohesion, we could expect more coherent theologies from teachers than from, for example, parents. Therefore, we consider it valuable that teachers are stimulated to actively discuss contrasting beliefs and to then bring them in line with each other. This can even take a form of acknowledging the insolvability of a precise balance between particularity and diversity, as described by Moyaert (2011). This also means that there needs to be room for teachers to confront their espoused theology with formal and/or normative theology and that the variations among teachers receive the necessary attention, since beliefs about religious diversity within schools are not as homogenous as one might expect. Further research should show whether and how these beliefs show up in educational practices.

6

CHAPTER 7

Beyond Right-or-Wrong Thinking: Alumni and Teacher Educators about Religious Diversity in Orthodox Protestant Teacher Education.

Abstract

As schools are to promote social cohesion, trainee teachers must be equipped to deal properly with religious diversity. However, students in orthodox Protestant teacher education programs have limited experience with religious diversity. Therefore, we explored what alumni and teacher educators of a specific orthodox Protestant institute thought was especially helpful in their program. They mentioned very similar aspects to what is generally recognized as significant in the literature. However, the participants in this study primarily applied this to dealing with diversity within the orthodox Protestant community itself. They especially focused on promoting less right-or-wrong thinking and balancing personal and professional beliefs.

7.1 Introduction

At least 5% of all Dutch primary schools have an orthodox Protestant foundation (De Muynck et al.,2014; DUO, 2016). Those schools are characterized by emphasizing their own faith and/or community (Markus et al., 2018, 2021a). In society, there is a need to promote social cohesion and schools are assigned an important role for this (Mason & Wareham, 2018; Rissanen & Sai, 2018; Short, 2002; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019). For example, this is reflected in the recently revised law on citizenship education (Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2020). Among other things, the explanatory memorandum states: "It is precisely the contact with fellow pupils who are different or have other ideas that enables pupils to develop a tolerant attitude towards one another" (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019, p. 2; translation by the authors). This raises the question of what learning to deal with religious others looks like in orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs) since these schools have a relatively homogenous populations, based on the religious identity of the school (Markus et al., 2021a). Since teachers are key figures in shaping education, we previously conducted an extensive explorative research study[65] on how OPPS teachers think about the particularity of the school within the context of a religiously diverse society (Markus et al., 2018, 2019, 2021a). Overall, with regard to religious diversity, the interviewed teachers wanted to stimulate inquisitiveness among their pupils, because:

> [This is] essential in order to develop one's own opinions, to know why one has these opinions, and to be aware of other opinions. Thus, people can overcome narrow-mindedness, can be more deeply rooted in their faith, and can have more respect for people with other opinions (Markus et al., 2019: 520).

However, our study also showed that teachers are primarily focused on differences among Christians (Markus et al., 2019). They barely think about what less contact with religious others means for their teaching (Markus et al., 2018, 2019). Moreover, the teachers had attended orthodox Protestant primary and secondary schools themselves and they received their professional education at orthodox Protestant institutes (Markus et al., 2018). That (trainee) teachers have limited contact with religious others in their education, work, and life contexts, raises the question of what OPPS teacher education can do to equip teachers for teaching on dealing with religious diversity. Indeed, it is the responsibility of teacher education programs that teachers are ready to carry out

7

---

[65] In 2015–2016, in-depth interviews were conducted with 16 teachers who worked in the last and penultimate years of OPPSs. This yielded a total of over 43 hours of interview data. This study was reported in Markus and colleagues (2018, 2019, 2021b).

their profession (O'Neill, 2017). This issue is very important because, often times, existing literature on how to train trainee teachers does not assume that those teachers will work in schools with a relatively homogeneous population and that they have spent their school career in such an environment (cf. Reid & Major, 2018).

Therefore, in addition to our previous research, we conducted another explorative empirical study. Our research question is: What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education? We aimed to indicate current practices, and from there provide an impetus for reflection on the contribution that orthodox Protestant teacher education programs can offer.[66]

In the following sections, we first describe the context and examine literature on teacher education in relation to religious diversity. We then describe our methods and empirical results.[67] Finally, we relate the various insights we obtained in order to answer the research question, we reflect on the outcomes and make recommendations. Although our starting point is the Dutch situation and a specific university for teacher education[68], we will draw parallels to other contexts.

OPPSs and religious diversity

The Dutch government has to ensure that public education is available throughout the country. Those who wish to provide education based on their own religious, ideological, or educational beliefs can establish schools for denominational education (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; Glenn and De Groof, 2005). Both public and denominational education are funded by the government and must meet comparable quality requirements. There is no national curriculum, but there are attainment targets (Dutch Eurydice Unit, 2007; Glenn and De Groof, 2005). About two-thirds of the primary schools are denominational schools, and at least 5% of all primary schools are OPPSs (DUO, 2016; Markus et al., 2021a). OPPSs refer in their mission statements to the Reformed (Calvinistic) doctrines (De Muynck et al., 2014; DUO, 2016; Markus et al., 2021a). Teachers at these schools are expected to be practicing members of orthodox Protestant churches. Some schools also have an enrolment policy for pupils (De Muynck et al., 2014).

---

[66] This study does not aim to evaluate concrete practices; rather, it focuses on alumni' and teacher educators' views.

[67] We thank Daniël Bos MSc for his contributions to conducting the empirical part.

[68] Namely, DCU, where two of the authors work. They do not work in the undergraduate program, which is the subject of this article.

The law on citizenship education describes, among other things, that education must focus on "teaching knowledge about and respect for differences in religion, worldview, political affiliation, ethnicity, gender, disability or sexual orientation, as well as the value of treating equal cases equally" (Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2020, p. 1; translation by the authors). In current study, we focus on the obligatory attention to differences in religion and worldview. In our earlier study among OPPS teachers, we saw that it is important to distinguish between internal and external religious diversity. Internal religious diversity refers to diversity within Christianity or—for some participants—within orthodox Protestantism. External religious diversity refers to orthodox Protestantism or Christianity in relation to other religious denominations and worldviews in society (Markus et al., 2020; cf. De Wolff et al., 2003).

Teacher education on religious diversity

We examined literature since 2011 about teacher education on religious diversity. We used OCLC WorldCat and Google Scholar[69] with the following key words: "teacher education OR preservice teacher" and "religious diversity OR cultural diversity". Studies dealing with cultural diversity were added, because cultural diversity includes religious diversity (cf. Anderson et al., 2015; Aronson et al., 2016; Jackson & Everington, 2017; Yemini et al., 2019). Additionally we did a search with "teacher education OR preservice teacher; AND global citizenship education", and consulted some other articles that closely matched our issue and were tracked down by previously found literature. We found that in teacher education, attention to religious diversity has two distinctive, but related perspectives. First, it is about how trainee teachers are prepared to effectively deal with pupils of different backgrounds themselves (cf. Akiba, 2011; Bell, 2002; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al., 2018; Haworth, 2015; Obidah & Howard, 2005; Subedi, 2006). Second, it is about how trainee teachers are prepared to train their pupils to interact well with others (cf. Anderson et al., 2015; Aronson et al., 2016; Estellés and Fischman, 2020; Yemini et al., 2019). It appears that for both perspectives similar factors are significant in teacher education (cf. Akiba, 2011; Yemini et al., 2019).

Initially, it is important to consider trainee teachers' backgrounds (such as gender, age or being part of a minority group) and their prior experiences of diversity, because these have a major impact on what they learn about diversity and how they learn it (Akiba, 2011; Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017). For example, trainee teachers with more prior experience of interacting with cultural others, are more likely to have a greater

---

[69] https://www.oclc.org/en/worldcat.html; https://scholar.google.com/

awareness of and an open attitude toward diversity (Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017). Furthermore, we recognize six different competencies for dealing with religious diversity, namely awareness of differences, an open attitude, proper knowledge about others, critical consciousness, balancing personal beliefs and professional responsibilities, and pedagogies for diversity. Also, we can distinguish five regularly mentioned ways of how those can be acquired in teacher education, namely the classroom as a learning community, teacher educators as role models, experiential learning, critical reflection, and transfer of knowledge. We will elaborate on these in the following paragraphs.

Awareness of differences is the first competency, which is about being cognizant that there are differences within the classroom and being aware of one's own cultural determinacy and stereotypes (Anderson et al., 2015; Aown, 2011; Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Obidah & Howard, 2005; Yemini et al., 2019). This is often mentioned in relation to equitable education and pupils' academic success (Cherng & Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al., 2018), but it could also be extended to awareness of diversity and inequality in society (cf. An, 2014; Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Obidah & Howard, 2005). Jackson & Everington (2017) pointed out awareness of diversity within religions. Second, an open attitude is about being open, sensitive, or respectful and demonstrating a genuine interest in the other (Castro, 2010; Jackson & Everington, 2017). Others must experience that they are seen as unique individuals and that their ideas are allowed to differ (Jackson & Everington, 2017). This assumes that trainee teacher are open to diversity and perceive it as a strength (Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al., 2018). Third, proper knowledge about the cultural or religious beliefs of others is needed to check stereotypes (Bell, 2002; Jackson & Everington, 2017; Subedi, 2006), so as to become aware of discrimination, disenfranchisement, and inequity (Obidah & Howard, 2005), and to correct and inform pupils (Aown, 2011; Anderson et al., 2015; Subedi, 2006). Fourth, the notion of critical consciousness acknowledges that dealing with diversity in education regularly has a social justice orientation, which is about wanting to ensure greater equity in society (Aronson et al., 2016; Castro, 2010; Cheng and Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al. 2018; Estellés and Fischman, 2020; Yemini et al., 2019). Fifth, trainee teachers need to find a balance between their personal beliefs and professional responsibilities. They can use their own beliefs, knowledge, and experiences as a resource to draw from, and sharing these can be an invitation for pupils to share theirs. However, as teachers, they need to place what they share in a broader context and create space for other beliefs (Anderson et al., 2015; Aronson et al., 2016; Jackson & Everington, 2017). Finally, trainee teachers need to develop pedagogies for dealing with diversity (Haworth, 2015; cf. Aown, 2011; Obidah & Howard, 2005). In these pedagogies, sharing experiences is often central and conversations are seen as valuable (Haworth, 2015; Jackson & Everington,

2017). It is relevant that teachers can create a safe classroom atmosphere (Jackson & Everington, 2017). Several studies show correlations between trainee teachers' general skills in creating a strong classroom environment and multicultural awareness (Cherng & Davis, 2017; Obidah & Howard, 2005).

The first way of how teacher education can contribute, is the classroom as a learning community (Akiba, 2011; Castro, 2010). This relates to the fact that, in most teacher education programs, learning for diversity is limited to only one course that addresses this issue, although it might be better when teacher educators integrate diversity into a comprehensive curriculum of teacher education (An, 2014; Civitillo et al., 2018). Second, teacher educators serve as role models (Akiba, 2011; Castro, 2010; Obidah & Howard, 2005). Several studies have shown that the teacher educators' practices sometimes might be more important than course content. For example, they can promote mutual respect and teach their students to listen to others (Castro, 2010). Third, experiential learning means that there is exposure to diversity, for example, in the form of field-based experiences or internships (Akiba, 2011; Aown, 2011; Aronson et al., 2016; Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al., 2018). It is important that experiential learning is properly supervised. For example, there should be a strong connection to the coursework (Cherng & Davis, 2017), there should be caring support as trainee teachers get out of their comfort zone (Haworth, 2015; cf. Obidah, 2004), and there should be opportunities for reflection (Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al., 2018; also see the next competence). It appears that awareness is especially stimulated by feeling marginalized or identifying with nondominant (ethnic) groups (Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017). Fourth, explicit and critical self-reflection by students needs to be stimulated (An, 2014; Aronson et al., 2016; Castro, 2010; Cherng & Davis, 2017; Civitillo et al., 2018). Fifth, teacher educators have to transfer knowledge about, for example, their pupils' backgrounds (Aronson et al., 2016; Jackson & Everington, 2017), world religions (Anderson et al., 2015), and global issues (An, 2014).[70]

7.2 Methods

To empirically examine what is significant in OPPSs teacher education programs with regard to learning how to deal with religious diversity, we conducted an exploratory study among alumni and teacher educators of Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education (DCU). There are two other universities for teacher education that train OPPS teachers, namely Viaa and Christelijke Hogeschool Ede. Of these three universities, DCU

---

[70] It is valuable to see the parallel between what trainee teachers need to learn about dealing with religious diversity themselves and what they need to teach their pupils.

has the most conservative student population. At DCU, the curriculum for the primary school teacher education programme consists of a track for personal development, a pedagogical-didactical track, and a track for primary school subjects (Driestar educatief, n.d.). The institute aims to shape the teaching profession inspired by the Bible (Driestar educatief, n.d., para 2). Four focus groups were conducted, two with alumni and two with teacher educators. We chose focus groups because they lend themselves to exploring topics (cf. Smithson, 2012) and the interactions between participants can provide in-depth insights into consensus and disagreement (cf. Evers and De Boer, 2012; Morgan and Hoffman, 2018). We took into account the ethical guidelines and the guidelines of data management for scientific research at Dutch universities (DANS, 2015; VSNU, 2005, 2012).

7.3 Participants

In 2020, 969 students were enrolled in the primary school teacher education programme at DCU (Driestar educatief, 2021). Students and staff had a predominantly orthodox Protestant background. Table 1 and Table 2 show the compositions of the focus groups. The focus groups with alumni involved teachers working at OPPSs to which there is a steady outflow from DCU. The first two schools that were approached responded positively. The contact persons at these schools assembled focus groups by inviting all his/her colleagues that were DCU alumni and graduated less than six years ago. For the focus groups with teacher educators, an invitation was posted twice on the online staff platform and teacher educators were alerted by email. Eight teacher educators responded positively (positive response of 11%; ultimately one was unable to participate). Most of them had identifiable affinities with the topic, for example, because of responsibility for internationalization or experience with multicultural education. The teacher educators were divided into two groups with as many different departments represented per group as possible. All participants signed an informed consent form.

Table 1 Composition of the alumni focus groups

	Focus group 1	Focus group 2
Number of teachers	3 female, 2 male	4 female
Current grades of teachers' pupils[71]	1, 5, 6, 6, 8	4, 6, 6, 6
Years of work experience	4, 5, 6, 7, 8	0, 0, 2, 2

---

[71] Grade 1 (4-years-old pupils) and grade 8 (12-years-old pupils) are the first and last year of primary school in the Netherlands.

Table 2 Composition of the teacher educators focus groups

	Focus group 3	Focus group 4
Number of teacher educators	2 female, 1 male	2 female, 2 male
Disciplines of teacher educators	Dutch, history, religious education	arts, Dutch, geography, religious education

7.4 Instruments

Interview guides were prepared for the focus groups with open-ended questions about religious diversity in OPPSs and about the contributions of the OPPSs teacher education for equipping (trainee) teachers on religious diversity (see Appendix [XI]). With the alumni, the questions addressed what was significant for them regarding their own development, and what topics could be reinforced in teacher education. The teacher educators discussed what students should learn in teacher education, and what should require more attention. For the alumni, elaborating on a real-life case was included as a catalyst for the conversation. This case was chosen because it could be related to both internal and external religious diversity. For the teacher educators, we made distinctions between the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that should be developed because this is central to DCU as an expression of a holistic view of people and education (phrased as: 'head, heart, and hands') (De Muynck, 2018). Moreover, in the teacher educators' focus groups, we worked with a visualization of the estimated entry levels and the desired exit levels of the trainee teachers. The interview guides were tested in a pilot with five people, after which one case was chosen instead of several real-life cases, as was initially planned.

7.5 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The focus groups involved a moderator and an assistant. Each focus group was held at the participants' workplaces. The ones with alumni lasted 75 and 90 minutes, the ones with teacher educators both lasted over 100 minutes. The focus groups were audio-recorded and the assistant created a report on the spot. Afterwards, the assistant further developed the report based on the audio recordings, and the researcher checked it. Then, in close consultation, they distinguished the various meaningful units in the data and coded them thematically (cf. Braun and Clarke, 2006; Elliott and Timulak, 2005). Coding was done in Dutch (cf. Van Nes et al., 2010). The codes were then jointly categorized (cf. Elliott and Timulak, 2005), after which the results were described. To stay close to the

experiences of participants, the data were open coded and we only compared the results with the literature afterwards. The methodological details of this study are fully described in Markus et al. (2020).

7.6 Results

Alumni' views about teacher education on religious diversity

Encountering fellow students and teacher educators

The alumni mentioned several factors of the teacher education programme that were significant for how they learned to deal with religious diversity: encounters with students or teacher educators from other churches, the role model of teacher educators, multiple-day excursions, real-life assignments and knowledge about social cultural formation and church history. The alumni also described these factors in relation to each other: excursions encourage conversations and other encounters between students, which they can then contextualise with further knowledge of church history. We will explain each of the mentioned factors.

Regarding the first, by encountering fellow students and teacher educators from different Reformed church denominations, the alumni became more aware of religious differences. They learned to compare their own views with those of others, and they came to understand that they can have respect for each other without having to abandon their own views. Second, in terms of the teacher educators serving as role models, the alumni saw love for God in their lives. Moreover, they saw how most teacher educators treated mutual differences with respect, how they had conversations about differences, and how they expressed their own opinions. Third, in terms of multi-day excursions, in the first year of study, there was an excursion focused on interculturalism. Visits to an Islamic school and a mosque gave the alumni insights into what is important in Islam. In the final year, the alumni went abroad and the encounters with Christians from other cultures and contexts were enriching. Fourth, through real-life assignments, such as designing prayer schedules and comparing children's Bibles, the alumni had to form an opinion. According to the alumni, actually having to work on this had a greater impact on them rather than discussing cases, because, as one participant (focus group 1) noted, in discussions you can simply "all talk nicely". Finally, the alumni mentioned the knowledge they gained in the social-cultural formation course. This course enabled them to develop a broader view; they saw what a worldview means and they discovered how to position themselves in the world.

By gaining knowledge about the genesis of the various orthodox Protestant churches, the alumni developed more respect for other denominations and they discovered that "the Lord has His children everywhere" (participant in focus group 1).

Swimming outside the water

Regarding whether their teacher education sufficiently equipped them to deal with religious diversity, the alumni on the one hand said that they manage well in practice and thus did not miss anything. However, on the other hand, one participant (focus group 1) said: "It was like learning to swim outside the water during the teacher education. I learned mainly by just doing it in practice and by making mistakes." Furthermore, the alumni found it especially difficult in their work practices how to act when there are different views among pupils, among themselves and parents, or among themselves and the school board or colleagues. These different views were, for example, about the acceptability of specific Christian songs, getting vaccinations, wearing earrings, and praying for sick pets. The alumni found it hard when they did not know (yet) what was accepted at their school or by parents. Over the years, they were better able to assess this and more inclined to engage in conversations and express their own convictions, but they continue to sometimes experience tensions. They want pupils to feel valued and do not want to intervene between pupils and their parents or between different families; but at the same time, they want to express their own or the school's convictions. The alumni indicated that they would have valued receiving more tools from teacher education about how to have conversations in situations as these. Moreover, they suggested that it might be significant for teacher education to pay more attention to experiences from outside the trainee teachers' own context. Those experiences can help trainee teachers deal with differences, because without these experiences "it remains to be seen to what extent you respond well to that" (participant in focus group 2). One participant (focus group 1) noted that teacher education is particularly relevant because, at the age when a student is attending university "you are still very much stuck in how you grew up ór you are still searching."

During the interviews, the researchers raised the possibility of an internship at schools with different ideological backgrounds. The alumni indicated that this would be good because one's values and habits would be questioned. However, according to some of the alumni, it is also difficult to make it mandatory because it can be an intense experience if, for example, there is cursing at the school or little acceptance of the Christian faith. The alumni suggested organizing exchanges with students from other teacher education

colleges to increase encounters with religious others. In addition, they stressed the importance of the real-life assignments mentioned earlier. Additionally, they indicated that the social-cultural formation course means a lot to some students, while others cannot do anything with its content. It was recommended to search for ways in which this course can appeal to all students; as one participant (focus group 1) said: "Differentiation should then not only be done in primary or secondary education, but also in the teacher education."

Students' backgrounds and parents' influences

The alumni indicated that teacher education is not the only environment in which they learned to deal with religious diversity. Moreover, they highlighted that the students' backgrounds and the parents' influences play a major role. Some students are used to more openness than others. One alumnus (focus group 1) mentioned the example that his parents were not happy that a minister from another church denomination was joining the excursion to Israel, while he was happy about it. Particularly in focus group 1, some of the alumni indicated that they realized that they are living in a social bubble and that they sometimes are less aware of what they stand for. They thought it valuable when teachers first have other jobs in non-Christian environments or experiences abroad.

Teacher educators' views about teacher education on religious diversity

Less right-and-wrong thinking

What teacher educators believe to be significant for trainee teachers to develop during their undergraduate studies in order to be competent in dealing with religious diversity, could be categorized as follows: engaging in encounters, open attitudes, conversational skills, growth of personal convictions, deepening knowledge, and carefully considering. These could be stimulated in teacher education in four ways, namely: increasing knowledge and reflection, the university as a training ground, real-life assignments and practical experiences, and tailored guidance. We explain each of those factors below.

First, engaging in encounters means that students get to know religious others. They are sometimes not used to that, and they need to be courageous. It is about students getting out of their comfort zone and daring to confront it. When it comes to internal religious diversity, this also means that students allow themselves to be vulnerable by talking about their own religious experiences instead of "leaving themselves out of harm's way" (participant focus group 4) and just talking about 'the pastor' or 'the sermon'. If some

religious differences appear among their (future) pupils, trainee teachers should not shy away from addressing this; rather, they should dare to initiate conversations. Second, it is important that students have an open attitude towards others. They should show genuine interest and display loving, respectful manners. It is important that trainee teachers learn to listen carefully instead of imposing their own story or frames. Third, trainee teachers need to develop conversational skills, such as summarizing, asking follow-up questions, tuning into the other person, and finding the right tone. Fourth, trainee teachers' own convictions must grow. This entails getting to know themselves, committing to the Bible and the Christian faith, discerning what is really important, being able to articulate what they stand for, and understanding their calling as a teacher. This is often mentioned in relation to getting to know other worldviews. Fifth, trainee teachers need to acquire and deepen their knowledge about diversity in a Biblical light, about differences within Christianity and how these have developed in church history, and about the Christian faith in relation to other worldviews. Finally, trainee teachers must learn to be reflective and make careful deliberations. While this overlaps what is already mentioned, the teacher educators explicitly highlighted this. It means that trainee teachers should be aware of the differences within Christianity and the Reformed tradition, they should not immediately pass judgment, they should be able to distinguish between major and minor issues, they should empathize with others, they should be able to weigh what is important, and they should be humble. To emphasize the importance of this, the teacher educators several times used the phrase that students must learn to think beyond "right and wrong" or "black and white", and that they must learn that there are also many gray areas. For example, one teacher educator (focus group 4) recounted a visit to a monastery where trainee teachers listened poorly to what was being said. They mainly focused on "what's different" in order to superimpose their frame on it. The teacher educator said: "(…) what a pity, because then you're back in that black-and-white, like 'with us it's good and we should try to pass that on to them [monastics]', while respectful, calm listening was very difficult for them."

Concerning the ways in which is worked on religious diversity in teacher education, increasing knowledge and reflection by the trainee teachers was mentioned first. The teacher educators want to break through what is obvious for them. Reflection can occur while acquiring knowledge, but it can also come from gaining real-life experiences. Second, within college, trainee teachers encounter differences among fellow students and among teacher educators. This may create an open environment in which those differences are properly dealt with, in which differences can even be regularly appreciated, and in which trainee teachers can experience how they can later ensure a good environment in their own classrooms. This means, for example, that all trainee teachers must feel

safe, regardless of their church background. It also means for teacher educators that trainee teachers are motivated to participate to the weekly devotions at the college. Third, it is important that students learn through realistic and concrete assignments and practical experiences. The assignments provide space to practice and discover things. The (multiple-day) excursions are important because they enable teachers to actually exchange ideas and interact with people who think differently. Fourth, precisely because students differ so much in how they deal with diversity and what they are used to, it is also important to emphasize that individual guidance should be tailored to the needs of each individual. The importance of this may increase as there are more moments in the programme when trainee teachers come into contact with religious others.

Ensure coherence in the programme

We asked the teacher educators which factors primarily require more effort in the teacher education programme. In particular, they mentioned fostering an open and respectful attitude, developing strong conversation skills, and enhancing the ability to distinguish between major and minor issues (careful deliberation). The teacher educators also mentioned several concerns. They indicated that it is important to ensure coherence in the teacher education programme when it comes to religious diversity. The topic recurs at various places, but there is no cross-curricular approach and the theme is not always made explicit. Moreover, while excursions and fieldwork days are good and valuable moments, they take place in relative isolation. Some teacher educators are also concerned about how learning to deal with religious diversity will happen for trainee teachers who follow a program variant in which more emphasis is placed on workplace learning at a primary school in their own region. These trainee teachers spend less time in college and so are likely to come into even less contact with (internal) religious diversity. Furthermore, it was mentioned that it is important that personal development receives sufficient attention in the curriculum review that focuses primarily on skills.

Several times the teacher educators mentioned the importance of a compulsory internship at a school with a (slightly) different denominational background or different population. Such an internship is seen as valuable because trainee teachers will discover in practice that many things are not self-evident; they must find a way to deal with them, which can help them reflect on what is entailed in their calling as a teacher. However, such an internship is not easy to realize. For example, it requires extra organization in the allocation of internships, it is not immediately clear at what point in the program such an internship would be most suitable, and individual guidance of students is necessary.

Rarely contact outside their own circle

The teacher educators also mentioned that teacher education is not solely responsible for developing the teachers' ability on religious diversity; that development is also influenced by the media, friends, and the church. According to the teacher educators, there are many, striking differences between the students in terms of how competent they are and the existential questions they have. Some students rarely come into contact with people or themes from outside their own circle. There are also differences in the extent to which students are open to learning. One teacher educator (focus group 3) stated: "If I were a male minister in a strict church, some [students] would be more likely to accept what [I teach], than they now do from me as a working mum." Teacher educators feel driven to teach trainee teachers to look more broadly. However, sometimes this is challenging, especially in relation to the expectations of parents and other supporters of DCU, because the latter criticize that students become less orthodox at DCU.

7.7 Discussion and Conclusion

Our central question was: What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education? The focus groups with alumni revealed the significance of encountering students or teacher educators from other Reformed church denominations, the role model of teacher educators in treating mutual differences, (multiple-day) excursions on interculturalism, real-life assignments instead of only discussing things, and knowledge about social cultural formation and church history. For the teacher educators, significant competencies to be developed were: engaging in encounters with religious others, open attitudes and showing genuine interest, conversational skills, growth of personal convictions about Christian faith, deepening knowledge about diversity, and– especially highlighted–making careful deliberations. According to the teacher educators, these are ways to stimulate the forementioned: increasing knowledge and reflection in order to break through the obvious, the college as an open environment and training ground, real-life assignments and practical experiences, and tailored guidance to meet individual students' needs.

First, it is important to note that, to a large extent, these elements correspond to what we found in the literature on teacher education in relation to religious diversity. In contrast to the main concern in the literature, however, alumni and teacher educators are mainly concerned with internal religious diversity rather than with external religious diversity. In

doing so, the aspect of 'critical consciousness' in the sense of focusing on social change is not reflected. Moreover, what has been said is more from the perspective of how the teachers deal with diversity among students, rather than how they can prepare pupils to effectively deal with religious others—so this might be an area for improvement in the orthodox Protestant teacher education programme. Furthermore we found that there is significant overlap between what the alumni mentioned and what the teacher educators mentioned. According to the alumni, the development needed in teacher education focuses on relating one's own convictions to those of others and how to act on them as a professional. Teacher educators interpreted this as focusing on less right-and-wrong thinking and they highlighted the need for conversational skills. The alumni would like to obtain more tools for how to deal with diversity they meet in their teaching practice— which seems to be echoed by what teacher educators would reinforce. Furthermore, both the alumni and teacher educators noted that real-life assignments are important in teacher education and that encounters with religious others should be encouraged, perhaps by doing an internship at a school with a (slightly) different denominational identity or by exchanges with other teacher education institutes. The alumni and teacher educators both indicated that the differences between trainee teachers are significant and that their family backgrounds have a significant influence. Both groups also emphasized that trainee teachers not only learn to deal with religious diversity during their teacher education program, but also develop this next to and after completing their teacher education.

The uniqueness of the orthodox Protestant teacher education programme is particularly evident in the fact that deepening one's own faith is mentioned as a significant aspect of learning to deal with religious diversity. However, this aspect did not emerge so strongly from the literature. We thus recommend further research that explores the relationship between deepening one's own faith tradition and being able to deal with diversity in teacher education. In addition, our study showed that the participants experienced the internal or mutual religious differences as real differences, which they have to learn to deal with. The fact that the participants were less concerned with external religious diversity might be influenced by our initial interview questions about how religious diversity comes to the fore in primary schools. In follow-up research, more attention could be paid to cultural diversity because, as previously mentioned, this is related to religious diversity. This opens the possibility for more insights into how external religious diversity is thought about and for the topic of critical consciousness and social change. Given the overlap of significant factors in our empirical study and the factors mentioned

in the literature, the teacher educators could extend the ways they are accustomed to addressing internal religious diversity, to addressing external religious diversity. Further research on what is actually taught and learned in teacher education programs could add value to our study because we explored the issues among a relatively small number of participants and focused on the participants' beliefs instead of practices. Furthermore, it would be interesting to check whether the patterns we found are recognizable in other teacher education institutes with homogeneous populations in a religious sense or another sense. As seen in the focus group responses, there is reflection at the teacher education institute on how to be more attentive to external religious diversity and diversity in society; this does not seem to be unique. Current study aimed to reach more understanding into (preparation for) teaching in contexts of diversity, with a particular eye on OPPSs.

7

CHAPTER 8

General Conclusion and Discussion

My study exposes the beliefs of teachers working in orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs). OPPSs are characterized by an emphasis on their own convictions and communities. And yet these schools are part of a religiously diverse society. Teaching to deal with diversity should therefore be an important focus for teachers, as expressed for example in the statutory duty of citizenship education. Based on various societal developments, related issues for orthodox Protestant education and previous research, this central research question was formulated in the General Introduction (Chapter 1): *How do teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what are the implications for preservice teacher education?* Based on the outcomes of the different sub-studies[72], I will in current chapter answer this question and reflect on the relevance of the findings for both theory and practice. In the last section, I share some methodological reflections and considerations for the benefit of future research.

8.1 Conclusion

The joint sub-studies show various perspectives on how teachers in OPPSs professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools. These perspectives contain the specific role teachers believe to have within the religious socialisation of children, their perceptions of religious others, and tensions or contradictions in their beliefs regarding religious diversity and mono-religious characteristics.

With regard to the first perspective, I found that religious socialisation is for OPPS teachers an important aspect of their profession. Within religious socialisation, they distinguish a specific role for themselves which focuses on the understanding of the Christian faith and dealing well with particularly denominational differences within orthodox Protestantism or the Christian tradition. The second perspective shows that teachers express remarkably unequivocal notions about the distinctiveness of Christian faith, but when it is about religious others they are more reluctant in their statements. Their definitions of the non-religious or of religious others vary greatly, and they speak about their relation towards religious others in terms of distinction from, identification with, or recognition of the religious other. The third perspective is about tensions or contradictions that emerge at various moments in the beliefs OPPS teachers express, especially in relation to religious

---

[72] The sub-studies are described in Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. See following footnotes for the relations between the perspectives that are described in the General Conclusion, and the different sub-studies.

socialisation. However, these tensions are hardly thematised or problematised by them.

In the following sub-sections I elaborate on each of the three perspectives, culminating in attention for the second part of the research question, namely the implications of these aspects for preservice teacher education. These implications mainly contain the importance to get future teachers to think more about the tension issues related to the mono-religious characteristics of OPPSs and religious diversity, and to teach them how to reflect on these issues. Also, more encounters with religious others are recommended, as well as relating religious diversity to citizenship education.

Specific role in religious socialisation[73]

First of all, according to the teachers the Christian faith plays a central role in their lives and thus also in their work. This is self-evident to the teachers interviewed, which is why they consider it important to work at an OPPS as it meets their desire for cohesion. Cohesion in this sense means that orthodox Protestant beliefs and practices could be shared and expressed within the school and within the different pedagogical environments pupils are immersed in. Teachers value this cohesion for the sake of pupils' well-being as well as their own, since they feel comfortable in the school's religious climate and experience education as inseparable from Christian socialisation. The latter is also expressed in the conviction that the religious ideal of children being fully committed Christians stands out above and beyond anything and/or permeates their professional practices. Teachers experience that this ideal is shared with the other pedagogical agents involved, such as parents or pedagogical agents in the church, and that together they provide children with a good foundation to be socialised in the Christian faith.

It turned out that teachers also distinguish between different roles of the pedagogical agents. The role of parents is primarily associated with upbringing (or socialisation) in general, and the church is about liturgical and pastoral activities and doctrinal stances. Teachers' roles in religious socialisation focus on the understanding of the Christian faith and dealing well with religious differences. In this regard it is exemplary that teachers want to encourage inquisitiveness (Dutch: *doorvragen*) among their pupils because it reaches toward understanding and it shows teachers taking a different role than that of others. Teachers see this inquisitiveness as essential towards developing one's own opinions,

---

[73] Mainly based on sub-study 2 ("Is the mono-religious school characteristic important for teachers working at Dutch OPPSs, and what are the reasons for this?"; see Chapter 4) and sub-study 3 ("What do teachers in OPPSs perceive as their role in religious socialization, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents?"; see Chapter 5).

knowing why one has these opinions, and being aware of other opinions. In this way people can overcome narrowmindedness, be more deeply rooted in their faith, and have more respect for those with other opinions. The teachers mention three strategies for stimulating inquisitiveness: (1) have or create awareness of other perspectives, (2) seek more information and thus formulate questions, and (3) create space for pupils' questions or opinions and stimulate discussions on all kind of topics, while you as a teacher wait before giving your own opinion. When teachers talk about religious differences and how they want to prepare their pupils for dealing with these, they are particularly concerned with denominational differences within orthodox Protestantism or the Christian tradition. In this study I referred to these differences as 'internal religious diversity'. In relation to the potential didactical tensions that were described in the theoretical exploration, it became clear that the presumedly homogenous population does not hinder teachers from paying attention to dealing with diversity, as internal religious diversity regularly comes up in the classroom and teachers want to make use of it.

Perceptions of religious others[74]

When it comes to 'external religious diversity', namely the different religions and worldviews manifested within society, notions about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith are remarkably unequivocal among the interviewed teachers. The belief that Jesus is the Saviour and that people must acknowledge Him in order to enter the eternal afterlife is decisive for many teachers and makes the uniqueness of the Christian faith a very serious issue for them.

At the same time, there is reluctance about these decisive statements, especially triggered by encounters with religious others; this is discussed in more detail below. Teachers' definitions of the non-religious or of religious others (Dutch: *niet- of anders-gelovigen*) varied greatly.[75] For some teachers, religious others are non-Christians, while others also perceive Christians from other denominations as being religious others. When they speak about their relation towards religious others, it is in terms of distinction from (Dutch: *afstand nemen van*), identification with (Dutch: *herkenning in*), or recognition of (Dutch: *erkenning van*) the religious other. Often they also refer explicitly or implicitly to God and to society when discussing their perception of the religious other. Teachers then describe whether they experience connection or distance to God and/or the

---

[74] Mainly based on sub-study 4 ("What do OPPS teachers believe about religious others, and how might this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith?"; see Chapter 6).

[75] In sub-study 4 (see Section 6.1) religious others were defined *as anyone who, from the participants' perspective, has a different worldview from theirs.*

religious other, and whether there is a link between God and the religious other. Society was especially mentioned when teachers identified themselves with religious others, as based on having certain norms and values or being part of a religious minority they felt a shared distance from society.

Tensions and contradictions in teachers' beliefs[76]

As stated, the teachers make decisive statements about the uniqueness of the Christian faith and the urgency of acknowledging Jesus as Saviour. At the same time, especially when it comes to concrete encounters with religious others, they show more reluctance. This reluctance was sometimes generated by the belief that it is God's work to accomplish the religious other's acknowledgement of Him and that it is not proper Christian behaviour to judge someone's eternal destination. This reluctance also had to do with hesitation, which was expressed in vacillation, in searching for what to believe about religious others, or in dissenting voices. Since the three ways in which religious others are perceived (distinction, identification and recognition) contain contradictory elements, they are also a reflection of inconsistent views.

Tensions or contradictions in teachers' beliefs also emerged at other times in the interviews. The cohesion between the different pedagogical environments, for example, is valued partly because it would be good for children from a pedagogical angle if they experienced the same norms and values at home and at school. However, for pupils from non-Christian families to whom this cohesion does not apply—at least not to the same degree—it appeared that the desire to socialise children into the Christian faith prevails over the pedagogical appreciation of cohesion between pedagogical environments. I also noted inconsistent views of teachers regarding their roles. They describe their responsibility as enormous, albeit not the biggest. And while teachers sometimes oppose ideas of parents and suggest that parents lack nuanced positions, they do take a reserved position in favour of parents and churches, because they want to consolidate the religious identity pupils develop at home. Lastly, teachers mention the value of OPPSs but they also mention disadvantages, like limited contact with people from other religious backgrounds, and children in homogeneous settings criticising each other because of small differences. They also say they have fewer experiences with religious others themselves because they grew up within the religious community, and that they sometimes miss that. These examples show that the normative basis and pedagogical

8

[76] Mainly based on sub-studies 2 (see Chapter 4), 3 (see Chapter 5) and 4 (see Chapter 6), the central themes of which have already been mentioned previously in this Section.

aim of the school can indeed lead to ideological tensions, as assumed in the theoretical exploration. However, these tensions are hardly thematised or problematised by the teachers. Moreover, the tensions barely appeared in relation to citizenship education or tolerance as an educational goal (cf. Chapter 3), but more in relation to religious socialisation.

Implications for teacher education[77]

In the theoretical exploration it is noted that within teachers' general belief systems inconsistencies can coexist between different professional beliefs or different nests of professional beliefs, including professional ideals. However, since the quality of education increases when ideals are in line with each other and when teaching practices correspond with these ideals, it is preferable that teachers make an effort to align them. Alignment is possible by adjusting professional ideals and/or other beliefs, for example religious ones, within their general belief system. Most tensions or contradictions that I observed could be seen as elements of professional ideals since they are about what teachers want to accomplish with their work, influenced by what they perceive to be their role as teachers, and about the ways in which teachers want to work and the kind of teachers they aspire to be. Professional ideals are important because they provide teachers with orientation, motivation, inspiration and a transcendent anchor.

Since the identified tensions and contradictions are not or hardly thematised or problematised by the teachers, I conclude that it is important for teacher education institutes to stimulate future and current teachers within preservice or inservice training programmes, to think more about the tension issues related to mono-religious characteristics and religious diversity, and to teach them how to reflect on these issues in order to have more coherent professional ideals. This reflection is also necessary anyway when citizenship education is considered by future and current teachers in OPPSs. The theoretical exploration, for example, showed that when it comes to the concept of tolerance, which is an important value within Dutch citizenship education, it is necessary to think about how this concept is interpreted and on what grounds someone wants to realise it. Furthermore, next to ethical reasoning, also dialogical competence is identified as something pupils should learn in school with regard to the presence of religious others

---

[77] Mainly based on sub-study 1 ("What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean, and how can the tensions that might emerge in orthodox Protestant primary schools around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective?"; see Chapter 3) and sub-study 5 ("What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher training?"; see Chapter 7).

in society. Teachers need to master this themselves to some extent in order to teach citizenship education and make a connection with the religious identity of the school.

Also relevant here is that the results of this study show that the tensions or contradictions in teachers' beliefs arise precisely in the encounters with religious others. This relates to the finding that, when they imagine working at a mainline Protestant or public school, teachers do not always feel up to the task because they lack experience with meeting religious others and discussing their faiths (see Section 4.7). It thus seems like the encounters are a starting point for reflection and learning. It might therefore be valuable to give more attention to external religious diversity within the orthodox Protestant preservice teacher education programme. This fits with the statements of alumni who indicate that the teacher education programme could be improved by having more encounters with religious others. At the same time, alumni also indicated that they would have liked to learn even more about how to act when different views among pupils, among themselves and parents, or among themselves and the school board or colleagues come up; this relates to internal religious diversity. For the interviewed teacher educators this would primarily require more effort for teacher education to foster an open and respectful attitude among future teachers, to develop strong conversation skills, and to enhance the ability to distinguish between major and minor issues (careful deliberation) in order to deal with religious diversity.

These ideas for strengthening the preservice teacher education programme seem to be about deepening or expanding on what is already happening, because in the current situation both alumni and teacher educators also refer to competences and/or activities in which both facing each other and reflecting are important. When alumni look back at their teacher programme they namely identify that encountering fellow students or teacher educators from other Reformed church denominations, the role model of teacher educators in treating mutual differences, multiple-day excursions on interculturalism, real-life assignments instead of only discussions, and knowledge about social cultural formation and church history were significant for how they learned to deal with religious diversity. Alumni say that they have gained by comparing their own views with those of others, and came to understand that they can have respect for each other without having to abandon their own views. Teacher educators perceive that the following competences are significant to the development of trainee teachers during their undergraduate studies in order to deal with religious diversity: engaging in encounters with religious others, having open attitudes and showing genuine interest, conversational skills, growth of personal convictions about the Christian faith, deepening knowledge about religious diversity, and especially making

8

careful deliberations. The latest was explicitly highlighted and means that trainee teachers should be aware of the differences within Christianity and the Reformed tradition, not immediately pass judgment, be able to distinguish between major and minor issues, empathise with others, be able to weigh what is important, and be humble. This basically overlaps with the earlier conclusion that it would be valuable for teacher education to stimulate future and current teachers to think more about the tension issues related to mono-religious characteristics and religious diversity, and to teach them how to reflect on these issues so as to have more coherent professional ideals.

Finally, what alumni and teacher educators mentioned is largely consistent with what is described in the literature about developing diversity competences among trainee teachers, although the main difference is that alumni and teacher educators are mainly concerned with internal rather than external religious diversity. In doing so, the aspect of 'critical consciousness' in the sense of focusing on social change, as found in the literature, is not reflected. Also, deepening one's own faith is mentioned as a significant aspect by alumni and teacher educators, but did not emerge so strongly from the literature. Moreover, what has been said is more from the perspective of how the teachers deal with diversity among pupils, rather than how they can prepare pupils to effectively deal with religious others—so this might be an area for improvement in the orthodox Protestant teacher education programme.

This seems to indicate that the theme of religious diversity in teacher education is primarily linked to religious socialisation and less so to citizenship education. Because of the growing importance of citizenship education and its challenges (see Chapter 1), especially for teachers in OPPSs, it would be worthwhile to enrich the perspectives on religious diversity within teacher education programmes by paying more attention to the perspective of citizenship education.

8.2 Theoretical Relevance

I elaborate on two elements of the conclusion because they have important theoretical implications for the thus far limited body of knowledge around teachers positioned within mono-religious education, especially within OPPSs (see Section 1.4). These elements are teachers' own role in the religious socialisation of children and the significance of internal religious diversity within the professionalism of teachers in OPPSs—issues that are also interrelated.

Teachers' own role in religious socialisation

First, teachers' own role is broadly discussed (Grimmitt, 1981; MacMullen, 2004; Miedema, 2017; see Section 5.7). This also emerged to some degree in the empirical study of Bertram-Troost et al. (2015b) in which—mainly based on statements made by teachers who have exclusivistic opinions and/or work in orthodox Protestant secondary schools— it is argued that the school is primarily a formative rather than a faith community (see Section 1.4). However, teachers' own role has not previously been described explicitly on an empirical basis for OPPSs in the Netherlands, or more broadly for mono-religious education, as in the current dissertation. Especially in the context of orthodox Protestant education, this new insight that teachers clearly distinguish their role from that of other pedagogical agents is crucial because the similarity between school, church and family tends to be strongly emphasised (see Chapter 4 and Section 5.1).

It has already been explained in Chapter 5 that the role of the religious nurturer and the role of the religious educator can be distinguished. These roles are related to a religious commitment as primary concern or an educational and pedagogical commitment as primary concern. In Miedema's (2017) view, these roles and commitments are mutually exclusive. Whereas that might be true in a theoretical sense, it might instead be more helpful to refer to the difference between these two roles as a continuum rather than as competing roles.[78] This is because religious educators will also have their own philosophical sources and normative tenets that guide them and are reflected in their normative professionalism (see Section 1.5). At the same time, the teachers in my study show that, although they have a strong religious commitment, aspects of the religious educator are distinctive for them in their professionalism within religious socialisation (see Chapter 5). Denoting the distinction between roles as a continuum allows for a richer description of professional responsibilities and practices.

It might even be the case that the aforementioned dichotomy of religious nurturer versus religious educator unintentionally determines the theoretical discourse of education in general. The observation that teachers in my research consider either mono-religious characteristics or society's religious diversity but barely interrelate them could be mirroring this. Speaking about mono-religious characteristics is then seen as related to religious

8

---

[78] Here a comparison could also be made with the search for a balance by the believer in interreligious dialogue. Moyaert (2011) indicates that in this dialogue there will always be a tension between the believer's commitment to God on the one hand and openness to the religious other on the other. It is then not a matter of resolving that tension but of constantly seeking a balance. Openness to the religious other has similarities to openness to religious others in society, as suggested in citizenship education.

socialisation, whereas speaking about religious diversity is related to citizenship education (cf. Sections 3.4 and 8.1). If this were indeed the case, it would be valuable for theoretical discourse to pay more attention to the normative nature of citizenship education and education in general (cf. Sections 1.3 and1.5), as good citizenship is founded in one's religious or non-religious worldview (cf. Bakker & Heijstek-Hofman, 2019; Bertram-Troost, 2021; Miedema, 2006, 2010; Miedema et al., 2013; Van Waveren, 2020; Veugelers, 2003).

Impact of internal religious diversity

Second, this study shows that even in strong religious communities and in OPPSs there is ample diversity. It becomes clear at several points that this internal religious diversity has a significant impact for participants, both teachers and pupils. Teachers, for example, indicated that it can be difficult to deal with the religious differences within the school and that they considered it an important contribution of teacher education to prepare them for dealing with this (see Section 7.6). Pupils tend to regard each other and find small differences to criticize, as observed by teachers (see Section 4.7). Moreover, teachers consider it an important goal in religious socialisation that pupils learn to deal with mutual differences (see Chapter 5).

Whereas mono-religious education in the literature is described as being homogeneous (see Section 1.4), my findings suggest that diversity is indeed an issue with considerable impact within mono-religious education. The presence of internal diversity within OPPSs is not surprising if we take into account the observed increase of religious diversity within religious communities (see Section 1.2). However, my study also provides insights into the meaning of this diversity, namely that teaching how to deal with this diversity is in fact a core element of what teachers describe as their professional role in religious socialisation. An underlying principle here might be that although the religious differences are relatively small, OPPS teachers experience them as serious since these differences are unexpected—OPPSs are namely associated with cohesion of norms and values, and shared faith (see Section 4.7). In situations with bigger religious differences— representation of different religions and worldviews manifested within society, as in schools with multi-religious characteristics—the differences are foreseeable and may therefore not necessarily have a greater impact on those involved.

My research likewise shows that the impact of this internal religious diversity can be similar to that of external religious diversity in other situations, namely if the competences listed for learning to deal with internal religious diversity within the preservice teacher education programme appear to correspond largely with those listed for dealing with external religious diversity (see Section 7.7). Dealing with internal religious diversity does not appear to come

naturally to either teachers or pupils, it is seen as something that must be learned. For Islamic education in the Netherlands, dealing with internal religious and cultural diversity is described as a central feature (see Section 1.4). It is stated that much attention is paid to this diversity, and that in this way those involved in the school grow closer to each other. In this regard, Islamic education might be a forerunner to other strong religious schools in terms of experiences around dealing with internal religious diversity, especially if the influences of the societal context for OPPSs also become more similar to those that play or have played a role in the development of Islamic education (see Section 1.4).

8.3 Practical Relevance

In line with the theoretical relevance described, there are also a number of issues to note when it comes to the practical relevance of this research for OPPSs and their position in society. The answer to the central research question has already indicated that it is important for teacher education programmes to get future and current teachers to think more about the tension issues related to the mono-religious characteristics of OPPSs and religious diversity, and to teach them how to reflect on these issues in order to have more coherent professional ideals. Also, more encounters with religious others are recommended, as well as relating religious diversity to citizenship education. The following suggestions for OPPSs are relevant in this respect and concern considering school characteristics from the perspective of citizenship education, and deliberately utilising internal religious diversity for learning to deal with external religious diversity.

School characteristics from the citizenship perspective

When it comes to teachers' professional ideals and beliefs, it was concluded that there might be a need to hold inconsistent beliefs up to the light and look for how certain beliefs can be adjusted to be brought more in line with each other. In OPPSs, the movement to look at citizenship education from religious beliefs seems familiar, as shown in vision documents (cf. Van Laar-Jochemsen, 2019; Vermeulen & Markus, 2019; VGS/KOC Diensten, 2021), and in various opinion columns in newspapers (cf. Bronkhorst & De Groot, 2020; De Muynck, 2019; Spoelstra, 2020). However, based on the findings of this study it is recommended to also explicitly look in reverse from the citizenship perspective to the mono-religious characteristics of the school. As illustrated by the theory about bonding and bridging social capital (see Section 5.1), mono-religious characteristics and mainly the emphasis on one's own community can have both a positive and a negative impact on social cohesion. Strong religious schools are overtly challenged to articulate

how they stand in relation to society's basic values (Dujardin, 2020; Inspectorate of Education, 2020; see Section 1.4), i.e. to show how basic democratic values are stimulated precisely in schools with mono-religious characteristics.[79]

The potentially negative effects of mono-religious characteristics get less explicit attention in OPPSs. The teachers in this study did mention some disadvantages of OPPSs— namely limited contact with people from other religious backgrounds and that children in homogeneous settings criticise each other because they do not learn to get used to dealing with differences (see Section 4.7)—but they barely showed how to account for these differences in specific professional thoughts or actions. The central question for teachers in OPPSs is then: 'What are the potential limiting factors of mono-religious school characteristics, and how do we account for them in our teaching?'[80] Looking at the components of citizenship education (see Section 1.3), the potential limiting effects seem to be especially apparent when it is about the social task 'dealing with differences'. Because it is self-evident for interviewed teachers to work at OPPSs and OPPSs are valued (see Chapter 4), this reflection might require extra effort. Moreover, the fact that religious beliefs have a powerful effect (see Chapter 3) means that it may require additional attention to ascertain the appeal that non-religious beliefs or professional practices have on mono-religious characteristics.[81] I think the teacher who showed a documentary on Buddhists living in extremely high mountains who offered the dead to vultures (see Section 5.5) did show a way to take this into account. She deliberately brought her pupils into contact with religious others in a fairly 'direct' way[82], i.e. she did

---

[79] In a recent report the Inspectorate of Education also pointed to explicit attention for the well-being and safety of pupils who do not share the views and behaviours that are widely shared within the community in and around the school (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2021).

[80] I should stress that all schools have to ask a similar question in relation to their specific characteristics. This is especially relevant for citizenship education, because the context and identity of the school have significant influence on what a school should strive for in citizenship education (cf. Dijkstra et al., 2018; Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2019).

[81] Interestingly, De Wolff (2006) showed the tendency of an OPPS to approach Christian school identity only from the religious dimension and to say that this also determines pedagogy and education, whereas actual practices in the school did not differ from practices of teachers in schools with a multidimensional view of identity (see Section 1.4).

[82] She said in the interview: "Look, you have a lot of Reformed methods. They all contain these very safe stories. In my opinion, many books contain stories that are far too safe. I think the idea of fear is a bit too prevalent among parents and also within the school setting. Okay, it's safe, okay, that's it. But I also think it's really quite limited. (...) I like to watch the BBC Human Planet series, (...). It is about different landscapes and climates in the world, and how people survive there. (...) I think it's a wonderful way of showing children how different and multicoloured the world simply is. (...) Well, it's quite an intense thing to show that documentary. I did it last year in the fourth grade. And at a time like that, I think it's great to talk about it with the children. Because a documentary like that presents it as it is. This is the practice. And then you can talk about it with each other. What do you see happening and where does it come from? And what do you think about that? I think that's a really wonderful way of [introducing other worldviews]."

not talk about Buddhists but showed how they live their lives and their faith, and let the pupils react to that—which is also a form of encountering religious others.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Korthagen (2004) indicates—within the context of teacher education—that in changing beliefs it is important for future teachers to be stimulated to reflect on concrete experiences while teaching, to become aware of the often-implicit beliefs that play a role in these experiences, and by reflecting on the disadvantages of these beliefs to arrive at an alternative theory through which different behaviour can ultimately be practiced. This is a helpful route that might also be used in OPPSs for current teachers. In Section 4.7 it emerged, for example, that teachers not only have religious motivations for valuing cohesive pedagogical environments for pupils, but also pedagogical considerations. However, as noted, this will not automatically be an argument in favour of pupils with other religious backgrounds. Classroom reflection on a case that is related to this topic can help refine teachers' belief systems.

Internal religious diversity as opportunity and starting point

Internal religious diversity sometimes proves to be a reality in OPPSs that is perceived by both teachers and pupils as difficult. Teachers find it difficult to take a position in the midst of other agents in the school (see Chapter 7), including how to view other religions (see Chapter 6), and according to teachers pupils are more likely to criticise each other (see Chapter 4). At the same time, it has been reported in this study that differences within religious communities are increasing (see Chapter 1), and it is assumed that developing competences to deal with internal religious diversity helps deal with external religious diversity (see Chapter 7). Recognition of teachers' own role and their professional ideals and goals (see Chapter 5), and thus also recognition of the school's own place, can create space to see internal religious differences not as a threat within the school but as an opportunity. However, this requires a specific approach to the internal religious differences in the school, which is not always visible today because often it is the common ground which is emphasised.

First, it is important to realise that the school is not primarily a faith community but a formative one (cf. Bertram-Troost et al., 2015b). As noted, the interviewed teachers seem to be aware of this when they define their own roles (see Chapter 5). However, this could be further translated into how they position themselves in relation to the differences between the members of the school community. Not only the teachers, but also the other agents in the school should be explicitly aware of this. The premise of the school is then not only 'we share the faith', but also 'we differ in some ways and that is possible precisely in the context of the school'. I have seen some pleas in this direction in recent years, as in the suggestion

8

to focus more on 'thinking from the heart' (Dutch: *kerndenken*) instead of 'thinking from the borders' (Dutch: *grensdenken*) (Rottier, 2014). It would not be easy to make this shift in thinking, because the differences between and within church denominations regularly cause much turmoil, and these differences relate to what is central for believers in their life and their perceived afterlife (cf. Section 3.4). Moreover, some within orthodox Protestant communities are also fighting against increasing heterogeneity (cf. Exalto, 2017). It therefore seems valuable to pay attention to teachers' roles in religious socialisation in both preservice and inservice teacher education (see Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.1). The aim is for teachers to have clear ideas about the uniqueness of their role and be able to approach challenges with regard to the school's internal diversity.

Second, if it is precisely in the school that those mutual differences can be used to teach pupils how to deal with religious and other diversity, then it is important to have an eye for the big picture, as can be clearly seen in scholarly work into global citizenship education. Banks (2004) describes in that context that cultural, national and global identifications are interrelated in a developmental way. He argues that pupils cannot develop thoughtful and clarified national identifications until they have reflective and clarified cultural identifications, and national identification is then needed for a global identification. This also relates to what MacMullen (2004) and Merry (2005) point out about the value of primary socialisation (see Section 6.5). However, these scholars perceive dealing with internal differences definitely not as the end but as a starting point. Based on my research, it is doubtful whether sufficient attention is given to the increasing range in which pupils learn to relate to religious differences in primary and secondary education. Primary school teachers assume that their pupils will face more religious differences after primary school (e.g. the quotation of Anna in Section 4.7). However, when it comes to the main contribution of teacher education, alumni and teacher educators still indicate that it is important for future teachers to learn to relate to internal religious diversity—apparently they didn't learn that enough in secondary education. It is likewise shown that teacher education would improve with more attention to external religious diversity (see Sections 7.7 and 8.1). I therefore believe it would be helpful if already in secondary education pupils discovered more about what they are now learning as future teachers, namely to compare their own views with those of others, and came to understand that they can have respect for each other without having to abandon their own views.[83] Teacher education programmes could then focus more on dealing external religious diversity.

---

[83] Interestingly, the recent study of De Bruin-Wassinkmaat (2021) on the religious identity development of emerging adults raised in strictly Reformed contexts in the Netherlands highlights the importance of allowing young people to make their *own* choices. They need to be stimulated by Reformed parents and others to explore and make choices, even if this means that they reject their upbringing's beliefs and practices.

8.4 Methodological Reflections and Future Research[84]

In concluding this study, I add some methodological reflections together with some directions for future research. The exploratory purpose of my research proved valuable. It provided the space to broaden the scope and not just focus on religious tolerance, but to be more attentive to a finer conception of religious diversity—as it plays out in the reality of the participants. Although tolerance was an important topic within the theoretical exploration (see Chapter 3) and within the interview guide (see Appendix IV), participants hardly elaborated on that concept or on potential tensions related to it. Other themes in the interviews appeared to provide more adequate insights into what the question was about, so these were highlighted in the different sub-studies (see Section 2.4).

I paid great attention to the drawing of the sample, which for the individual interviews was guided by the maximum variation strategy (see Section 2.2). It was not aimed to generalise the results of this study. There are remarks to be made about the representativeness of the results as in any event those interviewed in this study belong to that part of the population that wants to think and talk about this topic (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005). The individually interviewed teachers found it difficult to give an indication of whether their colleagues would say similar things (see Appendix IV, question II.5a). Nevertheless, the results of the focus groups with alumni were fairly consistent with findings based on the individual interviews with teachers, which can be an indication of wider recognition of the discussed topics by the population of teachers in OPPSs. For the participating teacher educators in the focus groups, we actually found that they have an affinity for the topic (see Section 7.3). Based on the results of the current study it is possible to conduct a larger-scale and more quantitatively oriented study that will provide more insight into the representativeness of the findings. Such a study could include background variables like school characteristics, age, work experience, church denomination and previous experiences with religious diversity. In Section 5.7, for example, it is suggested that the educational attainment of teachers might influence how they perceive their professional role in terms of religious diversity, and in Section 7.6 it is stated that the differences between trainee teachers are substantial and that their family backgrounds have a significant influence. Knowing more about the influence of such background variables is especially relevant for teacher education programmes, as knowing the starting point of prospective teachers can inform the strategies used by teacher educators.

---

[84] Note that for each empirical sub-study separately, some methodological reflections and some directions for future research are included in the various chapters (see Sections 4.8, 5.7, 6.5, and 7.7).

More insights in the background variables could also be gained with another qualitative study. Given that the aim of the current exploratory study was primarily to capture the range of beliefs that exist among teachers in OPPSs (see Section 2.1), the data were not distinguished by the participants' backgrounds. An alternative approach that focuses more on the 'portrait' of the individual teacher (cf. Patton, 2015) may offer additional insights into aspects like teacher professional development and differences among teachers, therefore also constituting a valuable follow-up to the current study. Such an approach could also provide a more detailed vista of the inconsistent views I encountered. Apart from a few recognisable examples of individual teachers, these now emerge particularly within the whole of the group of participants. It would be very interesting to examine how orthodox Protestant teachers who, in contrast to this study's participants, have not chosen an orthodox Protestant institute for their professional training and/or an orthodox Protestant work environment, view the central themes of this study (cf. Paul-Binyamin & Potchter, 2020). They seem to be the ones who have consciously or unconsciously looked for more external religious diversity. This provides an important mirror for those teachers who have remained in orthodox Protestant education, plus can inform teacher educators.

Current research focuses on the beliefs of teachers, since these are seen as a good starting point to gain more insights on what teachers will do in the classroom (see Section 3.4). For follow-up research, the challenge lies in examining the extent to which teachers' beliefs are expressed in educational practices and what effect that has on pupils: What are pupils actually learning? My research invites examination of practices of both citizenship education and religious socialisation, as well as their overlap. With regard to dealing with religious diversity, it is especially relevant to examine the extent to which the conditions mentioned by various authors (e.g., MacMullen, 2004; Merry, 2005) for religious socialisation within religious schools (see Section 3.3) are recognisable. That would provide insights to further operationalise the recommendations for teacher education programmes that equip teachers for their specific role in religious socialisation. In addition to what is noted in Section 8.3, it would be helpful to improve insights into the range of religious diversity that is given attention in primary schools, secondary schools and professional training. Based on current research, I expect internal religious diversity to obtain the most attention in all phases, although teachers indicate that in the next phase their pupils will encounter more religious diversity.

Lastly, the results and the involvement of the teacher education institute[85] in the current research project invites incorporating the conclusions of this study into an educational

---

[85] It is important to stress that the teacher training institute explicitly gave me all the space to conduct this research and share my conclusions, independently of what these findings would be.

design research (cf. McKenney & Reeves, 2019; Sandoval, 2013) within primary schools and/or at the teacher education institute. In this way, the complex challenges for improvement that exist around aspects like approaching mono-religious characteristics from a citizenship perspective or paying more attention to external religious diversity (see Section 8.3) can be systematically addressed in practice while simultaneously gaining theoretical understanding. In my role as research lecturer within the educational Master's programmes at the teacher education institute, I have come to greatly appreciate the value of practice-based research thanks to the learning effect of conducting research, the recognition of teachers' practical wisdom, and the immediate significance of the research in practice. Moreover, it proved fascinating for me to work on this dissertation in recent years because the topic deals with issues that touch the heart of individuals as well as the heart of society. I therefore hope to continue engaging with the central themes of this research as a researcher myself, together with colleagues in the field. But above all I hope that this study will stimulate teachers to be again and again aware of their precious position in the religious socialisation of children, as well as in the chances they have to stimulate children's contributions to living peacefully together in a diverse society.

8

SUMMARY

Chapter 1 General Introduction

This study's starting point is increased diversity as it is seen in the Netherlands and other Western countries and the concerns that are regularly expressed in Dutch society and politics about the polarisation and the lack of social cohesion experienced. For promoting social cohesion and learning to deal with diversity in society, schools are often looked at as one of the most important environments. This is reflected, for example, in the importance placed on citizenship education. As of August 1, 2021, the Dutch statutory duty on citizenship education has been tightened in order to make citizenship education less optional. Within this duty the so-called 'basic values of the Dutch constitutional state' are seen as essential elements of citizenship education, because these values make it possible for people to to live together in peace despite differing standards and values. The basic values are: freedom of expression, equality, understanding of other people, tolerance, rejection of intolerance, rejection of discrimination, autonomy and sense of responsibility. It is notable that both promoting tolerance and rejecting intolerance are mentioned. This particular emphasis on tolerance is also apparent elsewhere since, in a diverse society, mutual tolerance between different groups is seen as a prerequisite for social cohesion. Tolerance is, however, also an essentially contested concept and it is interpreted very differently.

When it comes to religious schools and citizenship education, the public and political debate often revolves around whether such schools can prepare their pupils for life in a diverse society because of the schools' emphasis on particularity, both in terms of its ideological principles and community. In the Dutch context, these debates are mainly focused on orthodox Protestant (Reformed) and Islamic schools that advocate more or less mono-religious education. This study takes orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs) as its subject, also referred to here as 'strong religious schools'. These cover about 5% of all primary schools in the Netherlands. Questions about how citizenship education can take shape in OPPSs are raised not only outside but also within these schools, because there is sometimes hesitation about the interpretation of citizenship education as described by the legislator. Citizenship education could then, for example, clash with the school's own moral values or require too much openness to other religions or world views.

There is little explicit understanding of how OPPSs reconcile the religious diversity in society in relation to their mono-religious characteristics since the academic debate is mainly about secular education versus multi-religious or interreligious education in religious schools. Only a small number of Dutch empirical studies from the last 20 years are indirectly about religious

diversity in society and the contributions of mono-religious education. These studies at least show that not only does external religious diversity, (i.e., the different religions and world views manifested within society) play a role, but that religious differences also emerge within schools, for example, due to different church denominational positions. Furthermore, it is interesting that internal diversity—which has increased within OPPSs—is seen as a central feature of Islamic education in the Netherlands.

To gain a better understanding of how religious diversity is handled in schools with mono-religious characteristics, it is relevant to focus on teachers' thinking and acting since teachers are the ones who ultimately realise education and teachers are perceived to be potential agents of social change. Teachers are expected to make intentional choices and decisions at work. It is important for them to have or to build a normative framework upon which to base their choices. In this study, this issue is further focused on what this could mean for teacher education, as it is the responsibility of teacher education programmes to prepare teachers to carry out their profession. Furthermore, the design and quality of the curriculum in preservice teacher education programmes are, among other things, seen as important areas of focus for strengthening the quality of citizenship education in the Netherlands. When it is about future teachers in OPPSs, specific questions as to how they could best be educated in teacher programmes can arise, since these future teachers may have fewer or different experiences around religious diversity. There may also be tensions between their religious beliefs and values and how citizenship is conceived of in the mainstream. These aspects are very relevant since in teaching citizenship teachers' own beliefs, values and experiences play a larger role than in other subject areas.

In order to fill the current gap of knowledge about these issues, an explorative study has been conducted. The guiding central research question for this study is: *How do teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what are the implications for preservice teacher education?* Several sub-questions have been formulated, each contributing to mapping out an aspect contained in the central research question. The sub-questions are:

1. What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean, and how can the tensions that might emerge in orthodox Protestant primary schools around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective? (Chapter 3)
2. Is the mono-religious school characteristic important for teachers working at Dutch orthodox Protestant primary schools, and what are the reasons for this? (Chapter 4)

3. What do teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools perceive as their role in religious socialisation, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents? (Chapter 5)
4. What do orthodox Protestant primary school teachers believe about religious others, and how might this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith? (Chapter 6)
5. What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education? (Chapter 7)

This study aims to fill the gap of scholarly, empirical understanding of strong religious schools in plural societies, and the findings can hopefully inform the debate about the position of strong religious schools in a diverse society. Furthermore, the results may provide potential starting points to further promote social cohesion in OPPSs. Because in other national contexts similar social issues surrounding religious schools are at play, it is expected that the findings will be transferable to other situations as well.

Chapter 2 Methods

The qualitative research design of the study suits its exploratory purpose. Because it is important to gain insights into how teachers themselves understand their social reality, an interpretative approach is chosen in conducting the research.

Individual interviews and focus groups

The main portion of the empirical study (sub-studies 2, 3 and 4) consists of individual interviews among 16 teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs). This is combined with a focus group study (sub-study 5) among alumni and teacher educators of Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education (DCU), which is the orthodox Protestant institute from which over half of the individually interviewed teachers graduated. In-depth interviews are used since these are especially appropriate to exploring personal and sensitive issues. Focus group interviews allow for covering the breadth of opinions around a possibly tense topic within an institution. Furthermore, focus groups fit the context of the study because encouraging participants to further think and reflect on their daily practices was desirable.

Participants of the individual interviews study

Because there is substantial variation among OPPSs, the sampling strategy used aimed for maximum variation. The participants are individual teachers, but the sampling is based on

school characteristics because the particular characteristics of mono-religious schools are the starting point of this study. Selection criteria were the school's denomination, the size of the town and the number of orthodox Protestants living in that town. Additionally, all schools are located in a radius of 50 kilometres around Utrecht, including only a maximum of one school in the same place. For each unique combination of selection criteria, a school has been randomly selected, and the teacher of grade 5 or grade 4 has been invited to participate. In total, 47 schools were approached, resulting in 15 participating schools. Three of the identified categories could not be represented in the sample.

Sixteen teachers of 15 different schools participated in this research: Adam, Anna, Danïel, Emma, Femke, Floris, Gijs, Hugo, Jan, Jasmijn, Lieke, Luuk, Nora, Ruben, Sanne and Teun (names have been changed). Lieke and Sanne are teachers at the same school and only wanted to participate if they could be interviewed together. The teachers came from seven Reformed schools, four Reformed Liberated schools and five Protestant schools, of which at least seven have an open admission policy for pupils. There were seven women and nine men, and they were, on average, 35 years old. Most teachers worked (almost) fulltime, and on average they had over 11 years of teaching experience. At the time of the interviews, half of the teachers worked at the school where they had started their teaching career. All teachers have been educated at Christian universities. The participants considered themselves representative of orthodox Protestant education. Almost all declared that the Christian faith is very important to them and most participants are very actively or actively involved in their churches. All participants were confessing church members, spread over five different church denominations. All participants indicated that they feel themselves at home in the orthodox Protestant climate.

Participants of the focus group study

There were two focus groups with alumni and two focus groups with teacher educators of DCU. For the focus groups with alumni, purposeful sampling was used to select two primary schools to which there is a steady outflow from DCU. For each school a separate focus group was formed. The contact persons at these schools were asked to invite those who had graduated less than five years ago. The first focus group consisted of five participants (three female, two male), who had on average six years' working experience. The second group consisted of four participants (all female), with an average of one year of teaching experience. For the focus groups with teacher educators, a convenience sample was used. An invitation to participate was posted twice on the online staff platform and all teacher educators were alerted by email. In the end, seven teacher educators participated and most of them had identifiable affinities with the topic. The

teacher educators were divided into two groups with as many different departments represented per group as possible. In total, four women and three men were involved.

Data collection in the individual interviews study

Each participant was interviewed twice. The interviews were semi-structured with open questions. The interview guide was mainly based upon the conclusions of the theoretical exploration (Chapter 3) and composed using questions other researchers had previously used. The draft of the interview guide was piloted and discussed several times. Almost all interviews were located at the participants' schools. Participants were interviewed for 173 minutes on average over both interviews. Several incidents related to radical Islam and the refugee crisis that occurred near the time of the interviews resonated in what was said. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Data collection in the focus group study

In conducting the focus groups, a second researcher was involved who primarily focused on facilitating the group and recording the data through notes and recordings. A less structured approach was deliberately chosen, but to ensure that similar themes were covered in the different focus groups, a conversation guide was used. The semi-structured conversation guides with open questions were designed based on the results and experiences from the individual interviews study. A key component in the conversation guide for alumni was a real-life case from the interview with Daniël, to which alumni were asked to react. For the teacher educators, a visualisation of the estimated entry levels and the desired exit levels of the trainee teachers was used. The focus groups with alumni lasted 75 and 90 minutes, while those with teacher educators both lasted over 100 minutes. All focus groups were audio-recorded and afterwards a report was created, based on both the audio recordings and the assistant's notes.

Data analysis

For the individual interviews study, the general framework for descriptive/interpretative qualitative research (Elliott & Timulak, 2005) was broadly followed to structure the analysis. After transcription and editing of the data, the data were uploaded to Atlas.ti[86], the software programme used for coding. The data were divided into distinctive units of meaning and, guided by the overall research question, it was decided which themes should be central in the various sub-studies. For each sub-study, the relevant meaning

---

[86] www.atlasti.com (initially version 7, later on version 8)

units were then thematically coded and further categorised in several rounds. The results contain those categories that were perceived to be required to communicate the essence of the phenomenon and the relations between them. For the data analysis in the focus group study a generally comparable procedure was followed but with detailed reports of the focus groups. Furthermore, the open coding was done in close consultation between the two involved researchers by using Microsoft Excel[87] instead of Atlas.ti. All coding was done in Dutch.

Validity, reliability and integrity

Some activities or considerations that were especially important and guided or supported methodological decisions taken must be mentioned. With regard to validity, this involves, among other aspects, that the central issues were explored theoretically before starting the empirical part of the study and that the instruments were extensively piloted and discussed with the research team. The validity is also demonstrated by the fact that the central theme of this research was approached from multiple perspectives, based on both the insights of the theoretical part and participants' contributions to the central topic. To enhance reliability, it was valuable that both structured and semi-structured instruments were used. Also, the reliability of the data collection and analysis benefited from my familiarity with the participants' religious backgrounds. Furthermore, although the primary researcher had a central role, the research team and other researchers were consistently involved, which contributed to the reliability as well. With regard to research integrity, the 'Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity for Scientific Research' at Dutch universities (VSNU, 2018) was followed and a data management plan was prepared before the empirical studies began, in accordance with the Dutch National Centre of Expertise and Repository for Research Data's guidelines for data management (2015).

Chapter 3 Religious Tolerance as Educational Goal in Orthodox Protestant Schools: Exploring the Concept and Tensions Teachers Potentially Experience[88]

The first sub-study was a theoretical exploration of tolerance as an educational goal in orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs). In Western societies, tolerance is frequently promoted as an educational goal because it is perceived to be essential for dealing with

---

[87] https://www.microsoft.com/nl-nl/microsoft-365/excel

[88] Since the orthodox Protestant primary schools and the research methods are already described in the summaries of Chapter 1 and 2, the sections that deal with those topics in this chapter are left out of the summary.

diversity in society. However, since there is no universal definition of tolerance, it is difficult to define what this educational goal means. Moreover, in strong religious communities, the value of tolerance is sometimes debated and public opinion sometimes holds that strong religious schools threaten the personal development of pupils and social cohesion through a lack of attention to individual autonomy and tolerance. For a better theoretical understanding of the potential tensions that teachers in strong religious schools might experience and what this means for teachers' professionalism, the following research question was formulated: *What does religious tolerance as an educational goal mean, and how can the tensions which might emerge in orthodox Protestant primary schools around that goal be understood from a theoretical perspective?* Religious tolerance was chosen as a central topic because the tensions between strong convictions (mono-religiosity) within a religiously diverse context arise in a particularly notable way, since the confrontation between these two poles is central to the concept of tolerance itself. It was expected that the insights gained with this concept as starting point will also be helpful more broadly in understanding other aspects related to citizenship education in strong religious schools.

In many reports on education, democracy and/or citizenship education worldwide, tolerance is mentioned as an educational goal since it is believed that without tolerance, social cohesion in a diverse society cannot exist. In the Netherlands, schools have been obliged by law to promote 'active citizenship and social cohesion' since 2006. Because of the Dutch emphasis on educational freedom, regulations on teaching tolerance do not prescribe in detail what teaching pupils about tolerance exactly consists of. Approximately 5% of all primary schools in the Netherlands are OPPSs that could best be characterised as schools with mono-religious characteristics. This means that the sociocultural context is dominated by orthodox Protestantism, the normative basis is the confession of the absolute truth and value of the (orthodox Protestant) Christian tradition and the pedagogic aim is the internalisation of that tradition. With regard to religious tolerance as an educational goal, the potential for both ideological and didactical tensions is recognised because of the strong emphasis of OPPSs on their own convictions and community.

With regard to potential didactical tensions, the concept of tolerance and how it is shaped as an educational goal in OPPSs was examined. The lack of consensus on the interpretation of tolerance primarily concerns what should be the minimal amount of objection and what should be the minimal degree of acceptance. However, three main characteristics of tolerance that are frequently mentioned in the literature and are relevant for how OPPS teachers could deal with this concept were found. First, tolerance is not a natural

inclination but is conditioned by self-control and based on a conscious, deliberate and voluntary choice. Second, tolerance is not an absolute value but is qualified by other values or principles, such as autonomy or democracy. Third, both the interpretation of the concept of tolerance and the decision as to whether to tolerate depends on the specific context and a person's specific normative justification. The latter makes tolerance a value with a wide consensus in society in the shared public or liberal-democratic moral language, but one that can have different grounds for different groups in their primary moral language. All three characteristics imply that a certain degree of reasoning is needed before tolerance can be practised; tolerance is not a given, but one must consider the reasons upon which one would base the decision to be tolerant in a certain situation.

Although classroom diversity—which is perceived to be limited within OPPSs—is often mentioned as a way of teaching children to live together with others who are culturally and religiously different, the characteristics of strong religious primary schools are not barriers to adequate citizenship education in liberal-democratic societies. Socialisation in a specific conception of 'the good' can be especially powerful in developing ethical reasoning, which includes reasoning about tolerance. This does, however, beg for the introduction of a limited form of ethical reasoning, as well as fostering 'dialogical competence'. For strong religious schools, specific didactical approaches to doing so could be identified. Furthermore, differences do exist even within religiously homogeneous populations. It was therefore noted that didactical tensions do not necessarily occur in strong religious schools when it is about tolerance as an educational goal.

To better understand the potential ideological tensions, theories concerning professional ideals and educational beliefs were examined. A belief is 'a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior' (Borg, 2001, p. 186). A person's general belief system is an integrated system with substructures of beliefs, e.g., educational or religious beliefs. Beliefs can strengthen each other, but it is also acknowledged that a teacher's belief system can contain incompatible beliefs that will remain until they are examined against one another. Professional ideals then can be understood as a specific nest of educational beliefs. Within professional ideals, De Ruyter (2007) distinguishes ideal aims, content ideals and ideal means. The ideal aim is teachers' overarching ideal, which for OPPS teachers can be interpreted to be the internalisation of the Christian faith by their pupils. The educational goal of religious tolerance can be regarded as a content ideal, since it is about something teachers want to transmit or not. This distinction shows that teachers might experience ideological tensions because they may perceive that

this content ideal conflicts with their ideal aim; i.e., promoting tolerance is not automatically in line with the internalisation of the Christian faith, as far as teachers are concerned. It is assumed that the ideal aim of teachers is mainly connected to their religious beliefs, while the content ideal is mostly linked to political (liberal-democratic) beliefs. Since inconsistencies in the general belief system of teachers can exist, it might be that teachers teach tolerance isolated to the context of citizenship education and do not link it to the nests of their own religious beliefs or beliefs about religious socialisation. But if teachers become aware of the inconsistencies, they can either ignore them or search for a resolution by adjusting their professional ideals and/or other beliefs in their general belief system. Since the quality of education increases when ideals are in line with each other and when teaching practices correspond to these, the latter is preferred. With regard to the potential ideological tension OPPS teachers could experience, the notion that tolerance should be interpreted based on people's own religious normative framework (which may be the orthodox Protestant perspective) provides a possible first opportunity to bring teachers' professional ideals in line with one another. Furthermore, next to adjusting their religious beliefs about the concept of tolerance, teachers might adjust their professional beliefs about tolerance as an educational goal. Meanwhile, with regard to the didactical tensions mentioned previously, the theory of professional ideals states that the ideal aims precede the ideal means and that they should also be congruent with the content ideals. The ideal means may thus change based on different ideal aims or content ideals in schools, as is illustrated above for the OPPSs.

This theoretical exploration thus shows the need for OPPS teachers to reflect on tolerance as an educational goal, and on professional ideals in general, in order to improve the quality of their teaching practices. Further empirical research on this topic is greatly needed. Therefore, the empirical part of this study particularly focused on teachers' professional beliefs and their reflection around possible tensions in relation to how they professionally reconcile a religiously diverse society and mono-religious school characteristics.

Chapter 4 How Cohesion Matters: Teachers and their Choice to Work at an Orthodox Protestant School[89]

The Dutch educational system is characterised by a large number of state-funded denominational schools, among which are the orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs). Parents can choose a school that they believe to be the best for their children

---

[89] Since the orthodox Protestant primary schools and the research methods are already described in the summaries of Chapters 1 and 2, the sections that deal with those topics in this chapter are left out of the summary. The current chapter is based on the individual interviews study.

and teachers are free to apply wherever they prefer. Knowledge about the motives of teachers who choose OPPSs could provide more insight into the specific characteristics and rationales of these schools. Examining what individual teachers think about religious schools has become even more important, as individualised religion is on the rise, while the formal ideas of school boards and church councils have become less influential, and thus provide less insight. Therefore, in this second sub-study the central question is the following: *Is the mono-religious school characteristic important for teachers working at Dutch OPPSs, and what are the reasons for this?*

Orthodox Protestants form a modest subculture within Dutch society, though this subculture is not as closed as it was in earlier times. In the mission statements of OPPSs, references to the Bible and the Reformed or Calvinist faith claims are central. OPPSs are often connected with local religious communities, although they can only be founded by associations of individual parents and not by ecclesiastical organisations. Teachers in OPPSs are practicing members of orthodox Protestant churches. Some OPPSs demand this of the pupils as well, while other OPPSs are open to children of all backgrounds. OPPS teachers are likely to make connections between their religious beliefs and the curriculum and pedagogy.

There has been very little research on why teachers choose to work at OPPSs instead of mainline Protestant or other schools, but there are some studies of Dutch OPPS teachers available that deal with teachers' perceptions of the religious dimension of schools and the religious dimension of their job. These studies indicate that the mono-religious characteristic is important in the opinion of teachers. Looking more broadly at studies about teachers' school choices in other countries, most are concerned with the normally espoused preferences of teachers, such as salary, principal support and student characteristics. However, in one study it was highlighted that teachers' feelings of comfort and familiarity play a decisive role in their actual decisions. Studies about the school choice of Dutch OPPS parents are performed regularly. These indicate that the school choice of OPPS parents stands out from that of the parents of other Christian schools, as OPPS parents place a stronger emphasis on the school's religious dimension. They also highlight the close connection between home and school. Empirical research in the international context has shown related reasons among parents who feel the need for separate schooling for their children, namely: education about religious and cultural traditions, protection from outside influence, offering a specific social and moral framework and insuring continued adherence to the faith.

Analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted showed that it was an obvious choice for teachers to opt for an OPPS and that they basically could not imagine working at a school that is not orthodox Protestant. The teachers showed both explicit and implicit motives for doing so, which all mostly had to do with the mono-religious character of OPPSs. Overall, three different interests could be distilled: (1) That teachers experience education as inseparable from Christian socialisation. They could not imagine teaching at a school without nurturing pupils' faith development, and in their opinion, Christian socialisation should be intertwined with all education. In relation to this, some of the participants experienced that God himself called them to educate children, especially into the Christian faith. Meanwhile, some of the teachers also wondered whether it might be a calling for them as Christians to work at a mainline Protestant or public school; (2) That teachers feel comfortable in the school's religious climate, in the sense that the school's religious climate more or less corresponds with their own religious identity. Teachers also express that it matters to them whether their school is a more conservative or more liberal OPPS. This makes it possible for them to share their opinions in the classroom. A few teachers considered the OPPS a safe place where they can develop both their professionalism and faith; (3) That of valuing cohesion in the religious climates of the children's various pedagogical environments. This is particularly about the cohesion among school, family and church and the cohesion between teachers from one year to the next. The preference for that cohesion has a religious basis, namely the importance of socialising in the Christian faith. More pedagogically orientated grounds for this cohesion were mentioned as well, namely that it enables teachers to know the backgrounds of the pupils, allowing them to anticipate and fit best with their pupils, and that children spend a large amount of time at schools. The three interests can be distinguished from one another, but they are still strongly related and all can be connected with the concept of cohesion. In this study, it is found that the teachers experience cohesion when their orthodox Protestant beliefs and practices could be shared and expressed within different environments and/or domains. Interests 1 and 2 show that teachers value cohesion for the sake of their own well-being. Interest 1 is also about cohesion between teachers' religious and professional ideals, and interest 2 is about cohesion of one's private and professional environment as well as cohesion within the school. Interest 3 indicates that teachers value cohesion for the children's sake.

In the interviews, convictions that underlie these interests were also found, which were called "influences". These influences explain something about why the interests have value for the teachers. Religious, pedagogical and formational influences were distinguished, which could mostly be applied to all three interests. However, the pedagogical influences do not seem to match with interest 2. The religious influences are about teachers willing

to give the Christian faith a central position within all aspects of their life, including their profession, which according to the teachers might be especially relevant for teachers' profession, since teaching is about the formation of young children and about norms and values. With regard to the pedagogical influences, in the eyes of teachers it would be better, at least, for young children to grow up in surroundings that are cohesive and safe. Furthermore, because children spend so much time in schools, it would improve their well-being if the school's norms and values are in accord with those of their parents. Additionally, school is an ideal setting for children to learn a lot about the Bible, Christian songs and other religious elements. The formational influences have to do with feeling incapable of working at a school that is not orthodox Protestant. Because teachers had limited learning about how to engage with religious others, they were hesitant to apply for jobs at non-OPPSs. The teachers also mentioned some disadvantages of the school's mono-religious nature. Most of them expressed regret at missing contact with people from other religious backgrounds from whom they could have learned more about how to defend and/or deepen their religious convictions. Furthermore, according to some teachers, children in OPPSs tend to look at each other and find small differences to criticise.

It is concluded that the teachers' ideas about choosing an OPPS are comparable with those of the parents: Both stress the school's religious dimension and highlight the connection between religious socialisation at home and at school. However, among the teachers, the mono-religious characteristic is valued not only because of the desire to raise children in a certain way, but also because of the teachers' concern for their own well-being. That outcome needs attention in further investigations because the factor of teachers' own well-being is hardly examined in research and debates on school choice. It is expected that this factor could be related to the strong link between the personal and professional identities in the teaching profession. Furthermore, sociocultural influences might be involved, because social identity theory suggests that religion is a strong force of psychological and social processes.

Chapter 5 Stimulating Inquisitiveness: Teachers at Orthodox Protestant Schools about their Roles in Religious Socialization[90]

Whereas the previous sub-study concluded that teachers at OPPSs perceive education and Christian socialisation as inseparable, the third sub-study aimed for more empirical insights into how the teachers then understand their role as pedagogical agents in

---

[90] Since the orthodox Protestant primary schools and the research methods are already described in the summaries of Chapters 1 and 2, the sections that deal with those topics in this chapter are left out in the summary. The current chapter is based on the individual interviews study.

religious socialisation and whether this differs from the roles of other pedagogical agents. These insights can contribute to the societal discussions about social cohesion and religious socialisation in strong religious schools. Our research question was: *What do teachers in OPPSs perceive as their role in religious socialisation, especially in relation to other pedagogical agents?* A connection is made with the theory of social capital (Putnam, 2007) as a necessary condition for social cohesion. Social capital consists of both bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Although both can contribute positively to social cohesion, bonding social capital can also have a negative effect when a group's members isolate themselves from others outside the group. Concerns about whether strong religious schools could contribute to social cohesion could be interpreted as concerns about too much emphasis on bonding rather than bridging social capital in these schools. Furthermore, it is relevant to examine the roles of teachers, since practices and discussions about the education of children should start with clarity on the roles of schools, families and communities.

Three different perspectives were used in the analysis of our interview data, namely teachers' professional ideals, teachers' perceptions of their roles in relation to other pedagogical agents and what teachers believe and say about "inquisitiveness". This last perspective can be seen as exemplary for how teachers view their distinct roles. The first perspective is about teachers' professional ideals. These ideals can be seen as the driving forces that give teachers direction, motivation and inspiration to be a teacher. In our study, teachers described professional ideals that originated from the religious, social-pedagogical and academic domains. The religious ideal that children will be fully committed Christians was predominantly mentioned. This was regularly described as an ideal that stands out above and beyond anything and/or is at work in everything, which is comparable with how teachers speak about the meaning of Christian faith for life and, as they say, for eternal life. The social-pedagogical ideals could be described as pupils feeling themselves safe and valued and teachers hoping to create a good atmosphere in the classroom. Academic ideals were mentioned less often. What was mentioned generally had to do with developing the talents of pupils, to ensure that everyone is at his/her own level.

The second perspective was about how teachers conceived of their own role in Christian upbringing, compared to parents, Sunday school teachers or other pedagogical agents. Generally, they perceived that all pedagogical agents strive for the same purpose and that together they provide children with a good foundation. However, teachers also talked about five differences between themselves and other pedagogical agents. First, teachers have other responsibilities: they feel themselves highly responsible, but they think

parents have the greatest responsibility for religious socialisation. Second, all pedagogical agents' tasks are different: teachers primarily focus on children's academic outcomes and qualification instead of upbringing (parents) or ecclesiastical activities (liturgy, pastoral care and doctrines). Third, teachers have other pedagogical opportunities: they see themselves as experts on how to connect with the level of children, whereas it is supposed that parents sometimes find this difficult and that the message in the church is regularly over the heads of children. Also, teachers say they have a lot of time and opportunities during lessons to pay attention to religious upbringing. Fourth, teachers have other relationships with children, which means that they have another degree of familiarity with the kids compared to their parents. Fifth, teachers operate in different settings than parents do; for example, on a more individual basis or in a group setting. However, the meaning of the differences in the last two categories is explained in different ways by the teachers. What is mentioned by one participant as being a strong point of the teacher's role is mentioned by another as being in favour of the parents' role. This might depend on specific situational characteristics, such as the pupils' backgrounds.

The third perspective is about inquisitiveness (Dutch: *doorvragen*), which can be seen as exemplary for teachers' perceptions of their role with regard to religious socialisation. On the basis of our findings, inquisitiveness could be described as not taking a statement, answer or situation for granted, but asking critical questions in order to deepen one's understanding of a phenomenon, as well as others' perspectives of it. According to the teachers, inquisitiveness is essential for people in order to develop their own opinions, to know why they have these opinions and to be aware of other opinions. They believe that, in this way, people can overcome narrow-mindedness, are more deeply rooted in their faith and can have more respect for people with other opinions. Most of the time, participants referred to inquisitiveness with regard to different opinions and practices among Christians, such as about Bible translations and how to properly spend Sundays. In these issues, participants regularly positioned themselves in opposition to the parents. According to the teachers, stimulating inquisitiveness consists of three strategies: becoming aware that there are other perspectives, seeking more information by formulating questions and engaging in stimulating conversations. The personal opinions of teachers seem to influence their efforts in the classroom, because, for example, if a teacher does not believe that wearing trousers is sin for women, it is easier for them to allow pupils to arrive at their own conclusion about such an issue and withdraw themself. Although teachers sometimes oppose the ideas of parents, they will also sometimes take a reserved position in favour of parents and churches.

In this sub-study it is concluded that although the similarity of school, family and church is often stressed within the orthodox Protestant community, it is now proven that for teachers the differences among these environments and the meaning of these differences are important as well. It seems that teachers perceive that they make a specific contribution to religious socialisation and to pupils' adequate understanding of their family's religion. When children grasp their primary religious culture and become competent in the ethical reasoning in their own context, it will be easier for them at a later stage to reflect on the religions of others and to be involved in religious dialogs (MacMullen, 2004). In this way, the bonding capital of the school can contribute to pupils' participation in broader society—the bridging capital. Furthermore, inconsistent views among teachers regarding their roles were regularly observed, which could be clarified by looking at the characteristics of the religious nurturer and the religious educator. The interviewed teachers seemed to consider the religious commitment of the religious nurturer as primary, but sometimes they mentioned the educational commitment of the religious nurturer first. Thus, the teacher in the role of religious nurturer fits in with the roles of other pedagogical agents, whereas they sometimes diverge from it in the role of religious educator.

Chapter 6 Distinction, Identification, and Recognition: Teachers in Orthodox Protestant Schools on their Faith and Religious Others[91]

Since the fourth sub-study (Chapter 5) showed that stimulating inquisitiveness was mainly applied to internal religious diversity, the fifth sub-study questions what teachers perceive about religious others and how that relates to their religious beliefs. Furthermore, in public debates on citizenship education, it is regularly heard that highly religious primary schools cannot sufficiently support tolerance and social cohesion because of their homogeneous populations. This raises the question of how religious others are actually thought of and taught in highly religious schools, which is thus far only little addressed in a few empirical studies. In identifying what teachers in OPPSs believe about religious others, it is overly simplistic to look exclusively at the denomination of the school, because teachers' beliefs do not automatically reflect the formal identity of their schools. The research question in this sub-study was thus: *What do OPPS teachers believe about religious others, and how might this be related to their beliefs about the Christian faith?* Religious others (Dutch: *niet-of andersgelovigen*) were defined as everyone who, from the participants' perspective, has a different worldview from theirs. Attention was paid to the teachers' religious beliefs

---

[91] Since orthodox Protestant primary schools and the research methods are already described in the summaries of Chapters 1 and 2, the sections that deal with those topics in this chapter are left out in the summary. The current chapter is based on the individual interviews study.

since these are assumed to influence professional beliefs and teaching practices at the educational, didactical and psychological levels. Because beliefs are activated by context demands, attention was also paid to the actual interactions of teachers with religious others.

Dutch law requires primary schools to pay attention to important religious movements in society and to teach children respect for people's differences of opinion. Religious schools often do so in line with their religious identity. The mono-religious characteristics of OPPSs are—when it comes to religious diversity and the soteriological categories— mostly related to exclusivism (only those who explicitly confess Christ as Saviour can be saved) and, occasionally, inclusivism (Christ is involved in the process of salvation, but a personal confession regarding Christ is not necessary). Exclusivism and inclusivism are regularly perceived as not taking the religious other seriously enough, while pluralism is often seen as the best starting point for interreligious dialogue or acknowledgment. However, pluralism denies the particularity of faith commitments, while the proposed alternative of the irreducible particularity of religions does not provide much room for interreligious dialogue. Instead, it is important to recognise that the religious will always experience a tension between particularity (faith commitment) and diversity (openness) and that it is not possible to find a precise balance between the two (Moyaert, 2011).

Based on the interviews, first, the concrete interactions of teachers with religious others were examined. The teachers described several kinds of interactions with religious others in daily life, for example, with neighbours or during sports matches. They did not deliberately create interactions with religious others, except during missionary activities. Some teachers explicitly stated that they had little to no contact with religious others because they did not believe that religious others were present in the area where they lived or because they themselves worked in an orthodox Protestant setting, which was regularly considered as a possible shortcoming. Other teachers highlighted that it was impossible to have no contact with religious others. Teachers applied the following types of evaluations to their concrete interactions: whether it was pleasant and/or difficult, whether they got more insights into the ideas of religious others or themselves, and whether they deliberately referred to God or faith.

Secondly, teachers' beliefs about the particularity and distinctiveness of the Christian faith in comparison with that of other religions were addressed. These beliefs were remarkably unequivocal and could be divided into three categories. The first concerned the view that Christians did not need to do good works in order to receive salvation. Second, it was mentioned that there was only one God according to the Bible and that the qualities of God described in the Bible (e.g., grace, love and the possibility of having

a relationship with Him) could not be attributed to other gods. Therefore, most of the teachers rejected the idea that Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists worshipped the same God as Christians. Within the third category of beliefs, the teachers referred to the doctrine of the Trinity (i.e., the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as three persons in one Godhead) and paid special attention to the divinity of Jesus and his role as Saviour. The belief that Jesus is the Saviour and that people must acknowledge this was decisive for many teachers, which makes the distinctiveness of Christian faith a very serious issue. However, at the same time, reluctance regarding decisive statements like this one was seen, especially triggered by encounters with religious others. Teachers expressed counter-voices and showed that their beliefs were part of a searching process. Their reluctance was also generated by the belief that it is God's work to realise that the religious other acknowledges Him and that it is not Biblical to judge someone's eternal destination. In these moments of reluctance, some ambivalence between what the teachers said from one moment to another was observed.

Thirdly, how teachers perceive religious others was examined. How the non-religious other was defined by the teachers was considerably varied. At various points in the interviews, the teachers demonstrated what they believed about religious others. Their beliefs could be distinguished into three categories with several subcategories: distinction (Dutch: *afstand nemen*), identification (Dutch: *herkenning*) and recognition (Dutch: *erkenning*). When distinction between themselves and religious others was highlighted, teachers expressed beliefs about anxiety for the religious other; about feeling sorry for the religious other who did not know God and, therefore, would not live with God in eternity; about the importance of clarity about the differences between the Christian faith and other religions; and about a duty to spread the Biblical message of salvation. When teachers spoke about identification, they referred to shared or desirable norms and values of the religious other, or to having a shared position in contemporary society, because the religious other is also part of a religious minority. Recognition is related to descriptions of the religious other as a human being who deserves their own position, such as about freedom of choice; about God seeing their hearts (which means that the relationship between the religious other and God cannot and should not be judged); about all humans being valuable and created by God; and beliefs about love and kindness toward religious others. Teachers often referred explicitly or implicitly to God and to society as a third party in their relationship with religious others. Teachers then described whether they experience connection to or distance from God and/or the religious other, and whether there is a link between God and the religious other. Society was especially mentioned when teachers identified themselves with religious others as, based on having certain norms and values or being part of a religious minority, they felt a shared distance from society.

In this sub-study it was concluded that the beliefs about the Christian faith and the beliefs about religious others were in line with each other, both in content (relationship with God is central) and nature (characterised by some ambivalence) of the different beliefs. Furthermore, it is important to note that ambivalence in teachers' beliefs surfaced when the religious other came into view: Beliefs about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith (i.e., salvation by Jesus' sacrifice) and its importance were remarkably unequivocal, but when applied to religious others, the teachers were more reluctant; they expressed counter-voices, searched for what they believed or vacillated. In terms of the "theology in four voices" approach (Cameron et al. 2010), the unequivocalness could be interpreted as the echo of a strong formal and/or normative theology, while the ambiguity in teachers' beliefs shows the specific identity of espoused theology and lived religion. Furthermore, these show the tensions that inevitably come with interreligious dialogue. It would be worth investigating in future research which beliefs are dominant and how they affect teachers' practices. It was also questioned what level of consistency in teachers' espoused theology should be pursued. It is considered important that there will be room for teachers to confront their espoused theology with formal and/or normative theology and that the variations among teachers receive the necessary attention, since beliefs about religious diversity within schools are not as homogenous as one might expect.

Chapter 7 Beyond Right-or-Wrong Thinking: Teacher Educators about Religious Diversity in Orthodox Protestant Teacher Education[92]

The earlier sub-studies showed that when it comes to religious diversity, teachers are primarily focused on differences among Christians (Chapter 6) and they barely think about what less contact with religious others means for their teaching (Chapters 4 and 5). Moreover, the teachers in this study had attended orthodox Protestant primary and secondary schools themselves and they received their professional education at orthodox Protestant institutions (Chapter 3). That (trainee) teachers have limited contact with religious others in their education, work and life contexts raises the question of what OPPS teacher education can do to equip teachers to teach on religious diversity. This fifth sub-study therefore focused on the following question: *What do alumni and teacher educators identify as being significant for primary school teachers' learning about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education?* It was aimed at indicating current practices, and from there providing an impetus for reflection on the contribution that orthodox Protestant teacher education programs can offer.

---

[92] Since the orthodox Protestant primary schools and the research methods are already described in the summaries of Chapters 1 and 2, the sections that deal with those topics in this chapter are left out in the summary. The current chapter is based on the focus group study.

The literature showed that in teacher education, attention to religious diversity has two distinct but related perspectives, namely how trainee teachers are prepared to effectively deal with pupils of different backgrounds themselves and how trainee teachers are prepared to train their pupils to interact well with others. It appears that for both perspectives similar factors are significant in teacher education. First, trainee teachers' backgrounds (such as gender, age or being part of a minority group) and their prior experiences of diversity should be considered, because these have a major impact on what the trainee teachers learn about diversity and how they learn it. Furthermore, six different competencies for dealing with religious diversity were recognised, namely awareness of differences, an open attitude, proper knowledge about others, critical consciousness, balancing personal beliefs with professional responsibilities and pedagogies for diversity. Also, five regularly mentioned ways of acquiring such in teacher education could be distinguished, namely the classroom as a learning community, teacher educators as role models, experiential learning, critical reflection and transfer of knowledge.

The alumni mentioned several factors of the teacher education programme that were significant for how they learned to deal with religious diversity: encounters with fellow students or teacher educators from other churches, role models among teacher educators, multiple-day excursions, real-life assignments and knowledge about sociocultural formation and church history. The alumni also described these factors in relation to each other: excursions encourage conversations and other encounters between students, which they can then contextualise with further knowledge of church history.

Regarding whether their teacher education sufficiently equipped them to deal with religious diversity, the alumni on the one hand said that they manage well in practice and thus did not miss anything. On the other hand, alumni found it especially difficult in their work practices to determine how to act when there are different views among pupils, among themselves and parents or among themselves and the school board or colleagues. The alumni indicated that they would have valued receiving more tools from teacher education about how to have conversations in situations such as these. Moreover, they suggested that it might be significant for teacher education to pay more attention to experiences from outside the trainee teachers' own context. The alumni suggested organising exchanges with students from other teacher education colleges to increase encounters with religious others. In addition, they stressed the importance of the real-life assignments mentioned earlier. Finally, the trainee teachers indicated that teacher education is not the only environment in which they learned to deal with religious diversity and they highlighted that the students' backgrounds and the parents' influences play a major role.

What teacher educators believe to be significant for trainee teachers to develop during their undergraduate studies in order to be competent in dealing with religious diversity could be categorised as follows: engaging in encounters, open attitudes, conversational skills, growth of personal convictions, deepening knowledge and careful consideration. The last one overlaps with what has already been mentioned, though it was explicitly highlighted that trainee teachers must learn to be reflective and make careful deliberations instead of immediately passing judgment. Several times, teacher educators used the phrase that students must learn to think beyond "right and wrong" or "black and white". According to the teacher educators, these competences could be stimulated in teacher education in four ways, namely: increasing knowledge and reflection, the university as a training ground, real-life assignments, practical experiences and tailored guidance.

The teacher educators were asked which factors require more effort in the teacher education programme. In particular, they mentioned fostering an open and respectful attitude, developing strong conversation skills and enhancing the ability to distinguish between major and minor issues (careful deliberation). The teacher educators also mentioned several concerns. They indicated that it is important to ensure coherence in the teacher education programme when it comes to religious diversity since there is currently no cross-curricular approach. Some teacher educators are also concerned with how learning to deal with religious diversity will happen for trainee teachers who follow a programme variant in which more emphasis is placed on workplace learning at a primary school in their own region. Furthermore, the teacher educators also mentioned that teacher education is not solely responsible for developing teachers' ability on religious diversity; development is also influenced by the media, friends and the church. According to the teacher educators, there are many striking differences between students in terms of how competent they are and where their (existential) questions lie.

In this sub-study it was concluded that to a large extent, the elements mentioned by both alumni and teacher educators correspond to what was found in the literature on teacher education in relation to religious diversity. In contrast to the main concern in the literature, however, alumni and teacher educators are mainly concerned with internal rather than external religious diversity. In doing so, the aspect of 'critical consciousness' in the sense of focusing on social change is not reflected. Moreover, what has been said is more from the perspective of how the teachers deal with diversity among students, rather than how they can prepare pupils to effectively deal with religious others. Lastly, the uniqueness of the orthodox Protestant teacher education programme is particularly evident in the fact that deepening one's own faith is mentioned as a significant aspect of

learning to deal with religious diversity though this aspect did not emerge so strongly from the literature. According to the alumni, the development needed in teacher education focuses on relating one's own convictions to those of others and how to act on them as a professional. Teacher educators interpreted this as focusing less on right-and-wrong thinking, and they highlighted the need for conversational skills. The alumni would like to obtain more tools for dealing with diversity they meet in their teaching practice, which seems to be echoed by what teacher educators would reinforce. Furthermore, both the alumni and teacher educators noted that real-life assignments are important in teacher education and that encounters with religious others should be encouraged, perhaps by doing an internship at a school with a (slightly) different denominational identity or by exchanges with other teacher education institutions.

Chapter 8 General Conclusion and Discussion

In Chapter 8 the central research question is answered. This question was: H*ow do teachers in orthodox Protestant primary schools (OPPSs) professionally reconcile the context of a religiously diverse society and the mono-religious characteristics of their schools, and what are the implications for preservice teacher education?* (see Chapter 1). Various perspectives on teachers' professional reconciliation showed up throughout the five sub-studies conducted. These perspectives include the specific role teachers are believed to have in the religious socialisation of children, their perceptions of religious others, and tensions or contradictions in their beliefs regarding mono-religious characteristics and religious diversity. The meaning of these perspectives provides insight for the second part of the research question, namely the implications of these aspects for preservice teacher education.

First of all, according to the teachers, the Christian faith plays a central role in their lives and thus also in their work as teachers. The religious ideal of children being fully committed Christians stands out above and beyond anything and/or is at work in all their professional practices. Teachers experience that this ideal is shared with the other pedagogical agents in religious socialisation, and that together they provide children with a good foundation to be socialised in the Christian faith. However, teachers have a unique role in this, focusing on understanding the Christian faith and dealing well with religious differences. In this regard it is exemplary that teachers want to encourage inquisitiveness (Dutch: *doorvragen*) among their pupils. When teachers talk about religious differences and how they want to prepare their pupils for dealing with these, they are particularly concerned with denominational differences within orthodox Protestantism or the Christian tradition.

Second, when it comes to 'external religious diversity', notions about the distinctiveness of the Christian faith are remarkably unequivocal among the interviewed teachers. The belief that Jesus is the Saviour and that people must acknowledge Him in order to enter the eternal afterlife is decisive for many teachers and makes the uniqueness of the Christian faith a very serious issue for them. At the same time, there is reluctance about these decisive statements, especially triggered by encounters with religious others. Teachers' definitions of the non-religious or of religious others (Dutch: *niet- of anders-gelovigen*) varied greatly and when they speak about their relation towards religious others, it is in terms of distinction from (Dutch: *afstand nemen van*), identification with (Dutch: *herkenning in*) or recognition of (Dutch: *erkenning van*) the religious other.

Third, at several points in the interviews, tensions or contradictions in teachers' beliefs emerged. For example, in how they speak about religious others, regarding the cohesion between the different pedagogical environments and regarding their roles. However, these tensions are hardly thematised or problematised by the teachers. Moreover, the tensions barely appeared in relation to citizenship education or tolerance as an educational goal but more in relation to religious socialisation. Most tensions or contradictions observed could be seen as elements of professional ideals since they are about what teachers want to accomplish with their work, influenced by what they perceive to be their role as teachers, the ways teachers want to work and the kind of teachers they aspire to be. For teacher education programmes this means it is important to stimulate future teachers to think more about the tense issues related to mono-religious characteristics and religious diversity and to teach them how to reflect on these issues in order to have more coherent professional ideals. The quality of education in particular increases when ideals are in line with each other and when teaching practices correspond with these ideals. For several reasons, this reflection is also necessary when citizenship education is considered by future and current teachers in OPPSs, as described in the theoretical exploration.

Encounters with religious others can be seen as starting points for reflection and learning since it is often in these encounters that the tensions or contradictions in teachers' beliefs arise. However, experiences with external religious diversity are rare for the future teachers. It might therefore be valuable to give more attention to encountering religious others within the orthodox Protestant teacher education programme. At the same time, both the alumni and teacher educators indicate that it is necessary to pay more attention to dealing with internal religious diversity that can show up within OPPSs. These ideas for strengthening the teacher education programme seem to be about deepening or expanding on what is already happening, namely that facing each other and reflecting are perceived to be important ways of learning to deal with religious diversity.

What alumni and teacher educators mentioned is largely consistent with what is described in the literature about developing diversity competences among future teachers, although the main difference is that alumni and teacher educators are mainly concerned with internal rather than external religious diversity. The aspect of 'critical consciousness' in the sense of focusing on social change as found in the literature is not reflected. Also, deepening one's own faith is mentioned as a significant aspect by alumni and teacher educators, but did not emerge so strongly from the literature. Moreover, what has been said is more from the perspective of how the teachers deal with diversity among pupils, rather than how they can prepare pupils to effectively deal with religious others. So this might be an area for improvement in the orthodox Protestant teacher education programme. It would be worthwhile to enrich the perspectives on religious diversity within teacher education programmes by paying more attention to the perspective of citizenship education.

Two elements of the conclusion have been elaborated on since these have important theoretical implications for the thus-far limited body of knowledge around teachers positioned within mono-religious education, especially within OPPSs (see Section 1.4). These elements are teachers' own role in the religious socialisation of children and the significance of internal religious diversity within the professionalism of teachers in OPPSs-issues that are also interrelated. The practical implications of current research are discussed below.

First, with regard to the teachers' own role, it is a new empirical insight that teachers clearly distinguish their role from that of other pedagogical agents in religious socialisation. This insight is crucial because the similarity between school, church and family tends to be strongly emphasised when it is about OPPSs. It is proposed to denote the distinction between the roles of the religious nurturer and the religious educators on a continuum, because this allows for a richer description of professional responsibilities and practices instead of highlighting the mutual exclusiveness of these roles. Second, the current study shows that even in strong religious communities and in OPPSs there is ample diversity. The impact of this internal religious diversity for teachers and pupils can be similar to that of external religious diversity in other situations. Dealing with internal religious diversity does not appear to come naturally to either teachers or students: it is seen as something that must be learned. In this regard, Islamic education might be a forerunner to other strong religious schools in terms of experiences around dealing with internal religious diversity.

In line with the theoretical relevance, there are also a number of issues to note when it comes to the practical relevance of this research for OPPSs and their position in society. The answer to the central research question has already indicated the practical relevance for teacher education programmes. First, it is recommended to explicitly look from the

citizenship perspective to the mono-religious characteristics of the school since the potentially negative effects of these characteristics get less explicit attention in OPPSs. Second, recognition of teachers' own role in religious socialisation (and thus also recognition of the school's own place) can create space to see internal religious differences not as a threat within the school but as an opportunity. However, this requires that the members of the school community realise that the school is not primarily a faith community but a formative community. The premise of the school is then not only 'we share the faith', but also 'we differ in some ways and that is possible precisely in the context of the school'. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that teaching to deal with religious and other diversity can start with learning to deal with mutual difference (internal religious diversity), but continues in dealing with external religious diversity. Based on current research, it is doubtful whether sufficient attention is given to the increasing range in which pupils learn to relate to religious differences in primary and secondary education.

At the end of this study, some methodological reflections together with some directions for future research are added. The exploratory purpose of the current research proved valuable because it provided the space to be more attentive to a finer conception of religious diversity. Furthermore, the results of the focus groups with alumni were fairly consistent with findings from the individual interviews with teachers, which can be an indication of wider recognition of the topics discussed by the population of teachers in OPPSs. Based on the results of the current study it is possible to conduct a larger-scale and more quantitatively oriented study that will provide more insight into the representativeness of the findings. Also, some suggestions are given for future research in order to generate more insights into the relevant background variables, into educational practices of OPPS teachers and into the range of religious diversity that is given attention in primary schools, secondary schools and professional training. Special attention is given to opportunities for educational design research within primary schools and/or at the teacher education institute because of the specific value of practice-based research. Lastly it is expressed that the current study hopefully stimulates teachers to be continually aware of their precious position in the religious socialisation of children, as well as in the chances they have to stimulate children's contributions to living peacefully together in a diverse society.
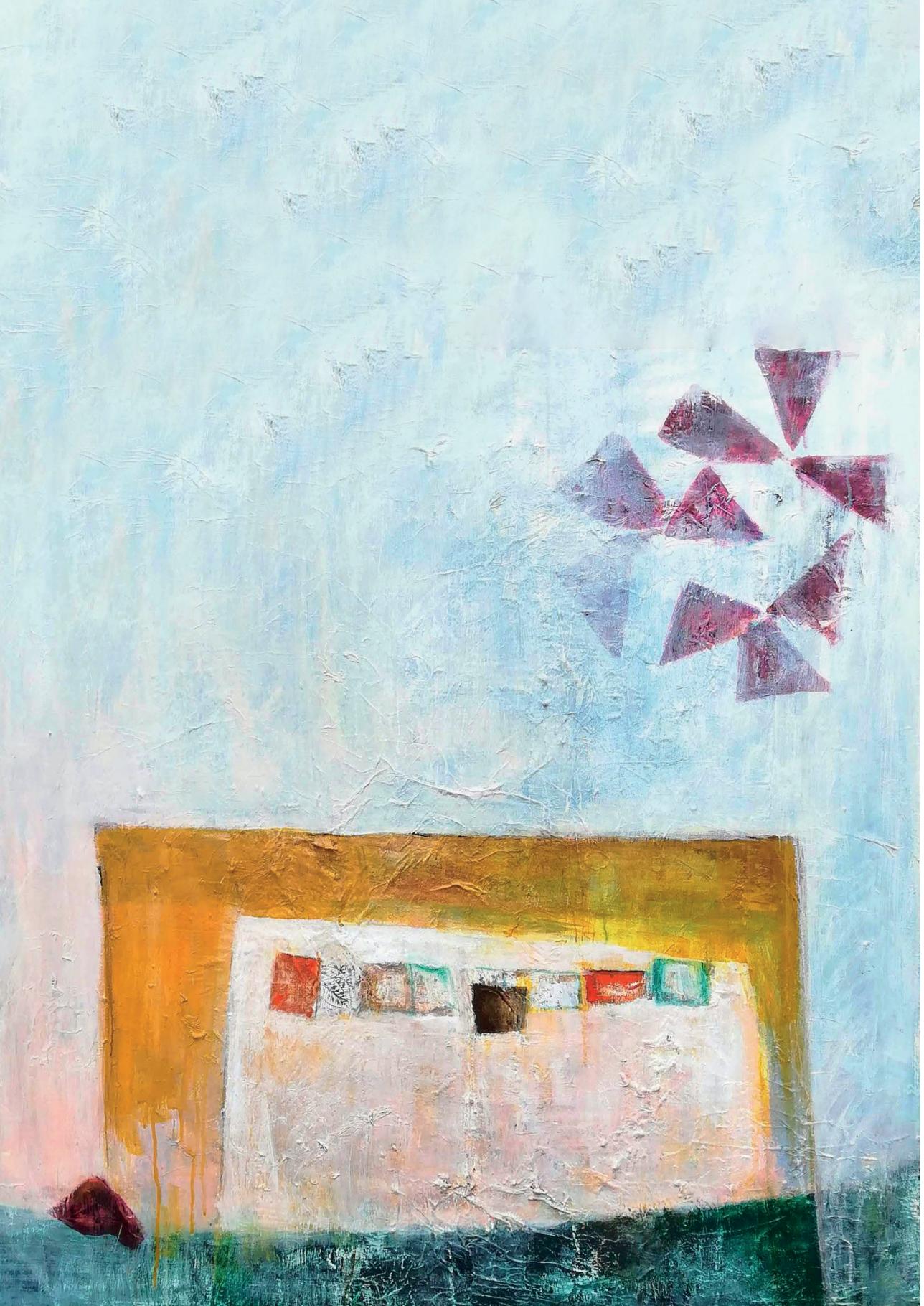
SAMENVATTING

Hoofdstuk 1 Inleiding

Het startpunt van dit onderzoek ligt bij de toegenomen diversiteit in Nederland en andere westerse landen. Daarover worden in het publieke en politieke domein regelmatig zorgen geuit omdat men een groeiende polarisatie en een gebrek aan sociale cohesie ervaart. De school wordt vervolgens vaak gezien als een van de belangrijkste omgevingen voor het leren omgaan met de verschillen in de samenleving en voor het bevorderen van sociale cohesie, zoals onder andere blijkt uit de nadruk die op burgerschapsonderwijs wordt gelegd.

Sinds 1 augustus 2021 is in Nederland de wettelijke opdracht voor burgerschapsonderwijs verder aangescherpt zodat deze minder vrijblijvend is. In deze opdracht worden de zogenaamde 'basiswaarden van de democratische rechtsstaat' benadrukt. Deze basiswaarden maken het mogelijk dat mensen ondanks verschillende normen en waarden in vrede met elkaar kunnen (leren) samenleven. De basiswaarden zijn: vrijheid van meningsuiting, gelijkwaardigheid, begrip voor anderen, tolerantie (verdraagzaamheid), afwijzen van intolerantie (onverdraagzaamheid), afwijzen van discriminatie, autonomie en verantwoordelijkheidsbesef. Het is opvallend dat zowel het bevorderen van tolerantie als het afwijzen van intolerantie in dit rijtje worden genoemd. Deze nadruk op tolerantie is ook elders zichtbaar, want wederzijdse tolerantie tussen verschillende groepen wordt in het algemeen gezien als een voorwaarde voor sociale cohesie in de samenleving. Tolerantie is echter ook een *essentially contested concept* en wordt heel verschillend geïnterpreteerd.

Als het gaat om burgerschapsonderwijs op scholen met een religieuze grondslag, wordt vaak de vraag gesteld of deze scholen, die hun eigen religieuze overtuigingen en eigen gemeenschap benadrukken, hun leerlingen wel kunnen voorbereiden op het leven in een diverse samenleving. In Nederland wordt daarbij dan met name op orthodox-christelijke (reformatorische) en islamitische scholen gewezen die min of meer monoreligieus onderwijs voorstaan. In dit onderzoek wordt gefocust op orthodox-christelijke basisscholen, ongeveer 5% van alle basisscholen in Nederland. Vanuit een religieus en pedagogisch perspectief worden vragen over het vormgeven van burgerschapsonderwijs ook in deze scholen zelf regelmatig gesteld. En er leven soms aarzelingen in deze scholen bij de invulling van burgerschapsonderwijs zoals de wetgever die omschrijft, omdat men daarbij een botsing met de eigen morele waarden of een te grote openheid naar andere religies of levensbeschouwingen ervaart.

Het academische debat over deze thema's gaat vooral over openbaar onderwijs versus interreligieus of multireligieus onderwijs. Er is daarom weinig bekend over hoe juist

in orthodox-christelijke scholen wordt omgegaan met enerzijds de religieus diverse samenleving en anderzijds de religieuze eigenheid. In de afgelopen twintig jaar zijn in de Nederlandse context enkele empirische onderzoeken uitgevoerd die hier indirect over gaan. Deze studies laten zien dat niet alleen externe religieuze diversiteit (de verschillende religies en levensbeschouwingen zoals die in de samenleving zichtbaar worden) een rol speelt, maar dat ook binnen orthodox-christelijke scholen religieuze verschillen bestaan, bijvoorbeeld op basis van verschillende kerkelijke denominaties. Het is opvallend dat beide aspecten die als kenmerkend worden gezien voor de ontwikkeling van het islamitisch onderwijs in Nederland recent ook meer voor orthodox-christelijke scholen lijken te gelden: de interne diversiteit is toegenomen en de scholen ervaren een bepaalde argwaan vanuit de samenleving.

Om beter te begrijpen hoe in scholen met monoreligieuze kenmerken wordt omgegaan met de religieus diverse context van de samenleving is het zinvol om te letten op het denken en handelen van leraren, want zij zijn degenen die uiteindelijk het onderwijs realiseren. Bovendien wordt de leraar beschouwd als een *social change agent*. Omdat leraren bewuste keuzes moeten maken in hun werk, is het voor hen belangrijk om daarvoor een normatief kader te hebben of zo'n kader op te bouwen. Lerarenopleidingen moeten ervoor zorgen dat leraren in staat zijn om hun beroep uit teoefenen. Daarom spitst dit onderzoek zich verder toe op wat het inzicht in het denken en handelen van leraren met betrekking tot de genoemde thema's kan betekenen voor de lerarenopleiding. Dat sluit bovendien aan bij het feit dat de aard en kwaliteit van het curriculum in de initiële lerarenopleidingen belangrijke aandachtspunt zijn bij het versterken van de kwaliteit van het burgerschapsonderwijs in Nederland. Als het gaat om aanstaande leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen kunnen specifieke vragen naar voren komen, omdat zij mogelijk minder en/of andere ervaringen hebben rond religieuze diversiteit. Daarnaast kunnen zij spanning ervaren tussen hun religieuze waarden en overtuigingen, en de manier waarop mainstream over burgerschap wordt gedacht. Aangezien bij het burgerschapsonderwijs de eigen waarden, overtuigingen en ervaringen van leraren een grotere rol spelen dan bij andere vakken, zijn deze aspecten zeer relevant.

Om meer kennis te krijgen over bovenstaand vraagstuk, is een exploratief onderzoek uitgevoerd met als centrale onderzoeksvraag: *Hoe verhouden leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen zich als professional tot de levensbeschouwelijke diversiteit van de samenleving en de monoreligieuze kenmerken van hun school, en wat zijn de implicaties daarvan voor de initiële lerarenopleiding?*

Er is een aantal deelvragen geformuleerd die zich richten op verschillende aspecten van de centrale onderzoeksvraag. Deze deelvragen zijn:

1. Wat betekent religieuze tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel, en hoe kunnen de spanningen die rond dat doel in orthodox-protestantse basisscholen kunnen bestaan vanuit een theoretisch perspectief worden begrepen? (Hoofdstuk 3)

2. In hoeverre is de monoreligiositeit van de school belangrijk voor leraren die op orthodox-christelijke basisscholen in Nederland werken, en wat zijn de redenen daarvoor? (Hoofdstuk 4)

3. Wat zien leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen als hun rol in de geloofsopvoeding, in het bijzonder in relatie tot andere geloofsopvoeders? (Hoofdstuk 5)

4. Hoe kijken leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen aan tegen andersdenkenden, en hoe kan dit worden gerelateerd aan hun opvattingen ten aanzien van het christelijk geloof? (Hoofdstuk 6)

5. Wat is volgens alumni en lerarenopleiders belangrijk in orthodox-christelijke lerarenopleidingen voor het leren over religieuze diversiteit? (Hoofdstuk 7)

Dit onderzoek kan een bijdrage leveren aan het wetenschappelijke empirisch inzicht in orthodox-religieuze scholen in plurale samenlevingen. De resultaten kunnen ook het debat over de positie van orthodox-religieuze scholen in een diverse samenleving voeden. Bovendien kunnen de uitkomsten mogelijk aanknopingspunten bieden om in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen aandacht voor sociale cohesie verder te bevorderen. Omdat vergelijkbare maatschappelijke vraagstukken rond scholen op een religieuze grondslag ook in andere landen spelen, is de verwachting dat de conclusies van dit onderzoek ook overdraagbaar zijn naar andere situaties.

Hoofdstuk 2 Methode

Het onderzoek heeft een kwalitatieve opzet, wat aansluit bij het exploratieve doel. Daarnaast is bij het uitvoeren van het onderzoek gekozen voor een interpretatieve benadering, omdat het belangrijk is dat er inzicht wordt verkregen in hoe leraren zelf over hun sociale werkelijkheid denken.

Individuele interviews en focusgroepen

Een belangrijk deel van het empirische onderzoek (deelonderzoeken 2, 3 en 4) bestaat uit individuele interviews met zestien leraren van orthodox-christelijke basisscholen. Daarnaast is een focusgroepstudie (deelonderzoek 5) uitgevoerd onder alumni en lerarenopleiders van Driestar hogeschool, de orthodox-christelijke lerarenopleiding

waar meer dan de helft van de individueel geïnterviewde leraren is afgestudeerd. Er wordt gebruikgemaakt van diepte-interviews omdat deze passen bij het onderzoeken van persoonlijke en gevoelige kwesties. Met focusgroepinterviews kan de breedte van opvattingen over een (mogelijk) spannend onderwerp binnen een organisatie in kaart worden gebracht. Daarnaast pasten focusgroepinterviews in de context van het huidige onderzoek, omdat de deelnemers daardoor gestimuleerd konden worden om verder na te denken over en te reflecteren op hun dagelijkse praktijk.

Deelnemers aan de individuele interviews

Omdat orthodox-christelijke basisscholen onderling sterk verschillen, wordt bij het trekken van de steekproef een strategie gebruikt die gericht is op maximale variatie. De deelnemers zijn individuele leraren, maar de steekproeftrekking is gebaseerd op schoolkenmerken omdat juist de monoreligieuze kenmerken van de school het uitgangspunt van dit onderzoek vormen. De selectiecriteria zijn: de denominatie van de school, de grootte van de vestigingsplaats en het aantal orthodox-protestanten in de vestigingsplaats. Daarnaast liggen alle scholen in een straal van 50 kilometer rond Utrecht en is er maximaal één school uit dezelfde plaats betrokken. Voor elke unieke combinatie van selectiecriteria is willekeurig een school geselecteerd en is de leraar van groep 7 of groep 6 uitgenodigd om deel te nemen. In totaal werden 47 scholen benaderd, wat resulteerde in 15 deelnemende scholen. 3 van de mogelijke categorieën konden niet in de steekproef worden vertegenwoordigd.

16 leraren van 15 verschillende scholen hebben aan dit onderzoek deelgenomen: Adam, Anna, Daniël, Emma, Femke, Floris, Gijs, Hugo, Jan, Jasmijn, Lieke, Luuk, Nora, Ruben, Sanne en Teun (fictieve namen). Lieke en Sanne werken op dezelfde school en wilden alleen meedoen als ze samen geïnterviewd konden worden. De leraren waren afkomstig van 7 reformatorische, 4 gereformeerd vrijgemaakte en 5 protestants-christelijke scholen, waarvan er minstens 7 een open toelatingsbeleid voor leerlingen hebben. Er waren 7 vrouwen en 9 mannen, en zij waren gemiddeld 35 jaar oud. De meeste leraren werkten (bijna) fulltime en gemiddeld hadden ze ruim 11 jaar werkervaring in het onderwijs. De helft van de leraren werkte op het moment van de interviews op de school waar ze hun carrière als leraar begonnen waren. Alle leraren zijn opgeleid aan christelijke hogescholen. De deelnemers beschouwden zichzelf als representatief voor het orthodox-christelijke onderwijs. Bijna allemaal gaven ze aan dat het christelijk geloof zeer belangrijk voor hen is, en de meeste deelnemers zijn (zeer) actief betrokken bij hun kerk. De deelnemers kwamen uit 5 verschillende kerkgenootschappen en waren allemaal belijdend lid. Iedereen gaf aan zich thuis te voelen in het orthodox-christelijke klimaat.

Deelnemers aan de focusgroepen

Er waren 2 focusgroepen met alumni en 2 focusgroepen met lerarenopleiders van Driestar hogeschool. Voor de focusgroepen met alumni werd gebruikgemaakt van een doelgerichte steekproef, zodat 2 basisscholen geselecteerd konden worden waarnaar een gestage uitstroom is vanuit de hogeschool. Voor elke school werd een aparte focusgroep gevormd. Aan de contactpersonen van deze scholen werd gevraagd om alumni uit te nodigen die minder dan 5 jaar geleden waren afgestudeerd. De eerste focusgroep bestond uit 5 deelnemers (3 vrouwen, 2 mannen), die gemiddeld 6 jaar werkervaring hadden. De tweede groep bestond uit 4 deelnemers (4 vrouwen), met gemiddeld 1 jaar werkervaring. Voor de focusgroepen met lerarenopleiders werd een gemakssteekproef gebruikt. Een uitnodiging tot deelname werd tweemaal op het online personeelsplatform geplaatst en alle lerarenopleiders werden daar per e-mail op geattendeerd. Uiteindelijk namen 7 lerarenopleiders deel, van wie de meesten duidelijk affiniteit hadden met het onderwerp. De lerarenopleiders werden verdeeld in 2 groepen, waarbij steeds zoveel mogelijk verschillende vakgroepen vertegenwoordigd waren. In totaal namen vier vrouwen en drie mannen deel aan de focusgroepinterviews.

Dataverzameling met individuele interviews

Elke participant is twee keer geïnterviewd. De interviews waren semigestructureerd met open vragen. De interviewleidraad was voornamelijk gebaseerd op de conclusies van de theoretische verkenning (hoofdstuk 3) en werd samengesteld op basis van vragen die andere onderzoekers eerder hebben gebruikt. Het concept van de leidraad is meerdere keren besproken en getest in pilots. Bijna alle interviews vonden plaats op de scholen van de participanten. De twee interviews samen duurden gemiddeld 173 minuten per participant. Ten tijde van de interviews, was er een vluchtelingencrisis en waren er verschillende incidenten die gerelateerd waren aan de radicale islam. Dit kwam terug in wat er in de interviews werd gezegd. Er werden audio-opnames van de interviews gemaakt, en ze werden *verbatim* getranscribeerd.

Dataverzameling met focusgroepen

Bij de focusgroepen was een tweede onderzoeker betrokken die zich met name richtte op het faciliteren van de groep en de verslaglegging. Er werd daarbij bewust gekozen voor een semi-gestructureerde aanpak. Met behulp van een gespreksleidraden werd ervoor gezorgd dat in de verschillende focusgroepen vergelijkbare thema's aan bod zouden komen. De semigestructureerde gespreksleidraden met open vragen werden ontworpen op basis van de ervaringen en resultaten uit de eerder gehouden individuele

interviews. Een belangrijk onderdeel in de gespreksleidraad voor alumni was een casus uit het interview met Daniël, waarop de alumni konden reageren. Voor de lerarenopleiders werd gebruikgemaakt van een visualisatie van de geschatte instroomniveaus en de gewenste uitstroomniveaus van studenten in de lerarenopleiding. De focusgroepen met alumni duurden 75 en 90 minuten, die met lerarenopleiders duurden allebei meer dan 100 minuten. Van alle focusgroepen werden geluidsopnames gemaakt. Na afloop werd een verslag gemaakt op basis van zowel de geluidsopnames als de aantekeningen van de tweede onderzoeker.

Data-analyse

Voor de analyse van de individuele interviews werd in grote lijnen gebruikgemaakt van het 'general framework for descriptive/interpretative qualitative research' (Elliott & Timulak, 2005). Na het transcriberen en redigeren van de data werden de gegevens geüpload naar ATLAS.ti, het softwareprogramma dat voor het coderen werd gebruikt. De data werden onderverdeeld in betekenisvolle fragmenten, en op basis van de centrale onderzoeksvraag werd besloten welke thema's in de verschillende deelonderzoeken belicht moesten worden. Voor elk deelonderzoek werden de betekenisvolle fragmenten vervolgens thematisch gecodeerd en in verschillende rondes gecategoriseerd. In de resultaten worden de categorieën en relaties beschreven die relevant bleken voor het begrijpen van het onderwerp. Voor het analyseren van de data uit de focusgroepen werd grotendeels dezelfde procedure gevolgd, maar dan op basis van de gedetailleerde verslagen in plaats van transcripten. Bovendien werd het coderen in overleg tussen de beide betrokken onderzoekers gedaan, en werd gebruikgemaakt van Microsoft Excel in plaats van ATLAS.ti. Het coderen is in het Nederlands gedaan.

Validiteit, betrouwbaarheid en integriteit

Als het gaat om de methodologische beslissingen die zijn genomen, zijn enkele werkwijzen en overwegingen met name opvallend. Wat betreft de validiteit gaat het er onder meer om dat de centrale thema's theoretisch verkend werden voordat het empirische onderzoek startte; en dat de instrumenten uitvoerig werden getest en besproken met het onderzoeksteam. De validiteit blijkt ook uit het feit dat het centrale onderzoeksthema vanuit meerdere perspectieven werd benaderd met behulp van de verschillende onderzoeksvragen, die zowel op inzichten uit de theoretische verkenning als op de bijdragen van de participanten waren gebaseerd. Voor het vergroten van de betrouwbaarheid was het onder meer belangrijk dat er (semi-)gestructureerde instrumenten werden gebruikt. De betrouwbaarheid van de dataverzameling en -analyse

werd ook vergroot doordat de religieuze achtergrond van de participanten voor de onderzoeker bekend was. Bovendien werden in alle fases van het onderzoek steeds het onderzoeksteam en andere onderzoekers betrokken en droeg hun expertise zo ook bij aan de betrouwbaarheid. Wat betreft de onderzoeksintegriteit is de 'Nederlandse gedragscode wetenschappelijke integriteit' (VSNU, 2018) gevolgd en is voor aanvang van de empirische studies een datamanagementplan opgesteld, conform de richtlijnen voor datamanagement van DANS, het nationale expertisecentrum en repository voor onderzoeksdata (2015).

Hoofdstuk 3 Religieuze tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel in orthodox-christelijke scholen: Verkenning van het concept en de spanningen die leraren mogelijk ervaren

De eerste deelstudie is een theoretische verkenning naar tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen. In westerse samenlevingen wordt tolerantie vaak gepromoot als een opvoedingsdoel, omdat dit als een essentiële waarde wordt gezien voor het omgaan met diversiteit in de samenleving. Er bestaat echter geen universele definitie van tolerantie en daarom is het moeilijk om te bepalen wat dit opvoedingsdoel inhoudt. Bovendien wordt tolerantie in orthodox-religieuze gemeenschappen niet altijd gewaardeerd. Daarnaast wordt in de publieke opinie soms ook gesteld dat orthodox-religieuze scholen een bedreiging vormen voor de persoonlijke ontwikkeling van leerlingen en voor het bevorderen van sociale cohesie, omdat deze scholen te weinig aandacht zouden hebben voor individuele autonomie en tolerantie.

Voor een beter theoretisch begrip van de mogelijke spanningen die leraren in orthodox-religieuze scholen kunnen ervaren en om te weten wat dit betekent voor hun professionaliteit, is de volgende onderzoeksvraag geformuleerd: *Wat betekent religieuze tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel, en hoe kunnen de spanningen die rond dat doel in orthodox-protestantse basisscholen kunnen bestaan vanuit een theoretisch perspectief worden begrepen?* Religieuze tolerantie is als centraal thema gekozen omdat in dit begrip de spanning tussen monoreligiositeit en religieuze diversiteit op het scherpst van de snede naar voren komt: in het tolerantieconcept gaat het juist om de confrontatie tussen de twee polen van acceptatie en afwijzing. De verwachting is dat inzichten die worden opgedaan aan de hand van het tolerantieconcept ook inzicht kunnen geven in andere aspecten van burgerschapsonderwijs in orthodox-religieuze scholen.

Omdat men ervan uitgaat dat er zonder tolerantie geen sprake kan zijn van sociale cohesie in een diverse samenleving, wordt tolerantie wereldwijd in rapporten over

onderwijs, democratie en/of burgerschapsvorming als opvoedingsdoel aangewezen. In Nederland zijn scholen sinds 2006 wettelijk verplicht om 'actief burgerschap en sociale cohesie' te bevorderen, waarbij ook het bevorderen van tolerantie naar voren komt. Ongeveer 5% van alle basisscholen in Nederland zijn orthodox-christelijke basisscholen. Deze basisscholen hebben een monoreligieus karakter; wat betekent dat het orthodox-protestantisme dominant is in de sociaal-culturele context van de school, dat de absolute waarheid en waarde van de (orthodox-)christelijke of protestantse traditie het normatieve uitgangspunt vormt, en dat het overdragen van de religieuze traditie het opvoedingsdoel is. Religieuze tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel kan in deze scholen leiden tot ideologische en pedagogisch-didactische spanningen vanwege de sterke nadruk die er in de school ligt op de eigen overtuigingen en de eigen gemeenschap.

Met betrekking tot mogelijke pedagogisch-didactische spanningen is gekeken naar het begrip tolerantie en hoe dit als opvoedingsdoel in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen wordt opgevat. Het algemene gebrek aan consensus over de betekenis van tolerantie betreft vooral de vraag hoe groot de mate van afwijzing en hoe groot de mate van acceptatie zouden moeten zijn. In de literatuur worden echter drie belangrijke kenmerken van tolerantie vaak genoemd. Deze kenmerken blijken relevant te zijn voor hoe leraren op orthodox-christelijke basisscholen met dit begrip zouden kunnen omgaan. Allereerst is tolerantie geen natuurlijke neiging, maar komt het voort uit zelfbeheersing en is het gebaseerd op een bewuste, weloverwogen en vrijwillige keuze. Ten tweede is tolerantie geen absolute waarde, maar wordt deze waarde gekwalificeerd door andere waarden of principes, zoals autonomie of democratie. Ten derde hangen zowel de interpretatie van het concept als de beslissing om al dan niet te tolereren, af van de specifieke situatie op dat moment en van specifieke normatieve redenen waarom iemand dat zou doen. Dit laatste maakt tolerantie tot een waarde die een brede consensus heeft in de samenleving en in de gedeelde publieke of liberaal-democratische moraal, maar waarbij verschillende groepen verschillende redenen daarvoor hebben in hun eigen primaire morele taal. Alle drie de genoemde kenmerken laten zien dat tolerantie geen gegeven is, maar dat iemand steeds in een bepaalde mate moet reflecteren op waarom hij of zij beslist om in een gegeven situatie tolerant te zijn.

Hoewel diversiteit in de klas vaak wordt genoemd als een manier om kinderen te leren samenleven met anderen die cultureel en religieus anders zijn, vormen de kenmerken van orthodox-religieuze basisscholen – met onder andere een grotere homogeniteit in de klas – in beginsel geen belemmering voor adequaat burgerschapsonderwijs in liberaal-democratische samenlevingen. Socialisatie in een specifieke opvatting van 'het goede' kan

juist bijdragen aan de ontwikkeling van ethisch redeneren, waaronder het reflecteren op tolerantie. Het is dan echter wel van belang dat er in de school aandacht is voor ethisch redeneren en dat de 'dialogische competentie' wordt gestimuleerd. Orthodox-religieuze scholen kunnen daarvoor specifieke pedagogisch-didactische benaderingen kiezen en bovendien geldt dat er ook binnen een religieus homogene populatie verschillen bestaan. Wanneer het gaat om tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel hoeven pedagogisch-didactische spanningen zich daarom niet noodzakelijkerwijs voor te doen in orthodox-religieuze scholen.

Om de mogelijke ideologische spanningen beter te begrijpen, is gekeken naar theorieën over professionele idealen en opvattingen (Engels: *beliefs*) over onderwijs. Een opvatting is "een vooronderstelling waaraan (on)bewust wordt vastgehouden, die evaluatief is omdat ze door het individu als waar wordt beschouwd en waaraan daarom ook een emotioneel commitment is verbonden; ze dient bovendien als leidraad voor het denken en gedrag" (Borg, 2001, p. 186; vertaling JJdJ-M). Het geheel van opvattingen van een persoon kan worden gezien als een geïntegreerd netwerk met substructuren van bijvoorbeeld pedagogisch-didactische of religieuze opvattingen. De verschillende opvattingen kunnen elkaar versterken, maar er wordt ook erkend dat het geheel van opvattingen tegenstrijdigheden kan bevatten die zullen blijven bestaan totdat de verschillende opvattingen tegen elkaar worden afgewogen. Professionele idealen kunnen worden begrepen als een specifieke substructuur van opvattingen over het onderwijs. Binnen de professionele idealen onderscheidt De Ruyter (2007) doelidealen, inhoudsidealen en werkidealen. Het doelideaal is het overkoepelende ideaal van leraren, wat voor leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen kan worden ingevuld als de toewijding aan het christelijk geloof van hun leerlingen. Religieuze tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel kan worden beschouwd als een inhoudsideaal, want het gaat om iets wat leraren al dan niet willen overdragen. Dit onderscheid laat zien dat de ideologische spanningen die leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen kunnen ervaren, kunnen worden opgevat als een botsing van het inhoudsideaal met het doelideaal. Dat wil zeggen dat het bevorderen van tolerantie in de ogen van leraren niet automatisch aansluit bij het overdragen van het christelijk geloof. Er wordt daarbij verondersteld dat het doelideaal van de leraren met name samenhangt met hun religieuze opvattingen, terwijl het inhoudsideaal vooral samenhangt met politieke (liberaal-democratische) opvattingen. Aangezien er tegenstrijdigheden in het geheel van opvattingen van leraren kunnen bestaan, kan het zijn dat leraren tolerantie geïsoleerd in de context van burgerschapsonderwijs aan de orde stellen en het niet verbinden aan de substructuren van hun religieuze opvattingen of opvattingen over geloofsopvoeding. Als leraren zich

bewust worden van de tegenstrijdigheden, dan geldt dat ze die vervolgens kunnen negeren of dat ze er een oplossing voor moeten zoeken door hun professionele idealen en/of andere opvattingen bij te stellen. Omdat het de kwaliteit van het onderwijs ten goede komt als idealen met elkaar en met de onderwijspraktijk in overeenstemming zijn, verdient het laatste de voorkeur.

Wat betreft de mogelijk ideologische spanning die leraren van orthodox-christelijke basisscholen kunnen ervaren, kunnen de professionele idealen allereerst met elkaar in lijn worden gebracht door het tolerantieconcept vanuit het eigen religieuze normatieve, het orthodox-protestantse, kader te interpreteren. Naast het bijstellen van hun religieuze opvattingen over het tolerantieconcept, zouden leraren ook hun professionele opvattingen over tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel of andere opvattingen over het onderwijs kunnen bijstellen. Wat de eerder genoemde pedagogisch-didactische spanningen betreft, stelt de theorie van de professionele idealen dat de doelidealen voorafgaan aan de werkidealen, en dat deze ook congruent moeten zijn met de inhoudsidealen. De werkidealen kunnen dus veranderen afhankelijk van de verschillende doelidealen of inhoudsidealen in scholen - zoals reeds is benoemd voor de orthodox-christelijke basisscholen waar het ging om ethisch redeneren en dialogische competentie.

Deze theoretische verkenning laat zien dat leraren van orthodox-christelijke basisscholen ten behoeve van de kwaliteit van hun onderwijspraktijken moeten reflecteren op tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel en op professionele idealen in het algemeen. Meer empirisch onderzoek daarnaar is gewenst, en daarom wordt in de empirische deelonderzoeken van dit onderzoeksproject vooral gekeken naar de professionele opvattingen van leraren en hun reflectie op de mogelijke spanningen die zij ervaren in hoe zij zich als professional verhouden tot de levensbeschouwelijk diverse samenleving en de monoreligieuze kenmerken van hun school.

Hoofdstuk 4 Het belang van cohesie: Leraren en hun keuze om op een orthodox-christelijke school te werken

Nederland heeft veel scholen met een specifieke denominatie die door de overheid worden bekostigd. Dit maakt het voor ouders mogelijk om een school te kiezen die volgens hen het beste is voor hun kind(eren), terwijl leraren ook kunnen solliciteren op een school van hun voorkeur. Kennis over de motieven van leraren die voor orthodox-christelijke basisscholen kiezen zou daarom meer inzicht kunnen bieden in de specifieke kenmerken en uitgangspunten van deze scholen. Onderzoek naar de opvattingen van individuele leraren over confessionele scholen is bovendien belangrijker geworden,

omdat geïndividualiseerde religie toeneemt en de formele ideeën van schoolbesturen en kerkenraden daarmee minder bepalend zijn geworden. De centrale vraag in dit tweede deelonderzoek luidt daarom als volgt: *In hoeverre is de monoreligiositeit van de school belangrijk voor leraren die op orthodox-christelijke basisscholen in Nederland werken, en wat zijn de redenen daarvoor?*

Het orthodox-protestantisme vormt een bescheiden subcultuur in de Nederlandse samenleving, maar ze is niet meer zo gesloten als in vroeger tijden. Orthodox-christelijke scholen verwijzen in hun statuten naar de Bijbel en de gereformeerde geloofsbelijdenis. Hoewel scholen alleen door ouders en niet door kerkelijke organisaties kunnen worden opgericht, bestaan er vaak wel nauwe relaties tussen de orthodox-christelijke basisscholen en de plaatselijke kerken. De leraren in de orthodox-christelijke basisscholen zijn praktiserend lid van orthodox-protestantse kerken. Sommige orthodox-christelijke basisscholen verwachten dat ook van hun leerlingen, terwijl andere scholen kinderen ongeacht hun levensbeschouwelijke achtergrond toelaten. Leraren van orthodox-christelijke basisscholen zijn geneigd om hun geloofsopvattingen te verbinden aan het curriculum en de pedagogiek.

Er is zeer weinig onderzoek gedaan naar de beweegredenen van leraren om voor een orthodox-christelijke basisschool in plaats van een algemeen-christelijke of andere school te kiezen. Er zijn echter wel enkele onderzoeken beschikbaar over de opvattingen van leraren in het Nederlandse orthodox-christelijke onderwijs ten aanzien van de religieuze dimensie van de school en van hun beroep. Deze studies laten zien dat het monoreligieuze kenmerk volgens leraren belangrijk is. Het meeste internationale onderzoek naar de schoolkeuze van leraren gaat over zaken als salarisvoorkeuren, de steun van schoolleiders en de kenmerken van leerlingen in een school. Er is daarentegen één onderzoek waarin wordt benadrukt dat de schoolkeuze van leraren uiteindelijk bepaald wordt door de vraag of zij zich op hun gemak voelen in de school. In Nederland wordt wel regelmatig onderzoek gedaan naar de schoolkeuze van ouders die kiezen voor orthodox-christelijk onderwijs. Daaruit blijkt dat de schoolkeuze van deze ouders zich onderscheidt van die van ouders van andere christelijke scholen, omdat ze een sterkere nadruk leggen op de religieuze dimensie van de school en een nauwe relatie tussen gezin en school onderstrepen. Empirisch onderzoek in de internationale context laat vergelijkbare redenen zien waarom ouders een school met een specifieke confessionele identiteit kiezen voor hun kind(eren), namelijk: de aandacht voor religieuze en culturele tradities, de bescherming tegen invloeden van buitenaf, het bieden van een specifiek sociaal en moreel kader, en de gerichtheid op het vasthouden van het geloof.

Uit analyses van de diepte-interviews in het huidige onderzoeksproject blijkt dat het voor de leraren een vanzelfsprekende keuze is om voor een orthodox-christelijke basisschool te kiezen en dat zij zich in principe niet kunnen voorstellen om op een niet-orthodox-christelijke school te werken. Daarvoor gaven de leraren zowel expliciete als impliciete redenen aan, die vooral te maken hadden met het monoreligieuze karakter van de school. Daarbij kunnen globaal drie verschillende belangen van leraren worden onderscheiden. (1) Het eerste belang is dat het onderwijs voor de leraren onlosmakelijk verbonden is met christelijke socialisatie. Zij kunnen zich niet voorstellen dat ze lesgeven zonder aandacht te besteden aan geloofsopvoeding, en ze vinden dat de christelijke geloofsopvoeding verweven moet zijn in het hele onderwijs. Sommige leraren ervaren daarbij dat God zelf hen heeft geroepen om kinderen te onderwijzen, in het bijzonder in het christelijk geloof. Tegelijkertijd vragen sommige leraren zich ook af of het voor hen als christen een roeping zou kunnen zijn om op een algemeen-christelijke of openbare school te werken. (2) Het tweede belang is dat de leraren zich thuis voelen in het religieuze klimaat van de school omdat dit min of meer overeenkomt met hun eigen religieuze identiteit. Het doet er dan voor de leraren ook toe of hun school meer of minder conservatief is. De overeenkomst tussen het religieuze klimaat van de school en hun eigen religieuze identiteit geeft hen de mogelijkheid om hun eigen opvattingen in de klas te delen. Sommige leraren geven aan dat de orthodox-christelijke basisschool een veilige plek is waar zij verder kunnen groeien in zowel hun professionaliteit als in hun geloof. (3) Het derde belang is dat het religieuze klimaat in de verschillende opvoedingsomgevingen van kinderen met elkaar overeenkomt. Dat betreft met name de samenhang tussen school, gezin en kerk, en de overeenkomsten tussen verschillende leerjaren in de school. Dat is belangrijk voor de leraren vanwege religieuze redenen, namelijk vanwege de nadruk op socialisatie in het christelijk geloof. Er worden ook meer pedagogisch georiënteerde redenen genoemd: leraren kunnen zo de achtergrond van leerlingen goed kennen en daarmee rekening houden; en kinderen brengen veel tijd op school door.

Deze drie belangen kunnen van elkaar worden onderscheiden, maar hangen ook nauw met elkaar samen en kunnen allemaal gerelateerd worden aan het begrip cohesie. Leraren in dit onderzoek ervaren cohesie als hun orthodox-protestantse geloofsopvattingen en -praktijken in verschillende omgevingen en/of domeinen geuit kunnen worden en gedeeld zijn. Het eerste en tweede belang laten zien dat leraren cohesie waarderen met het oog op hun eigen welzijn. Bovendien gaat het eerste belang over samenhang tussen de religieuze idealen en professionele idealen van leraren, terwijl het tweede belang betrekking heeft op de samenhang van de eigen privé- en werkomgeving, en de samenhang binnen een school. Het derde belang laat zien dat de leraren cohesie waarderen vanwege het welzijn van kinderen.

In de interviews kwamen ook onderliggende opvattingen naar voren die laten zien waarom de leraren waarde hechten aan de verschillende belangen. Deze opvattingen worden 'invloeden' genoemd en er wordt onderscheidt gemaakt tussen religieuze, pedagogische en vormende invloeden. De verschillende invloeden waren meestal van toepassing op alle drie de belangen; maar de pedagogische invloeden lijken niet aan te sluiten bij het tweede belang. De religieuze invloeden gaan over leraren die het christelijk geloof een centrale plaats willen geven binnen alle aspecten van hun leven, inclusief hun werk. Volgens de leraren is dat des te belangrijker als het gaat om het lerarenberoep, omdat het in het onderwijs gaat om de vorming van jonge kinderen en om normen en waarden. Wat de pedagogische invloeden betreft is het in de ogen van leraren belangrijk dat kinderen in ieder geval als ze jong zijn, opgroeien in een omgeving die coherent en veilig is. Bovendien is het voor hen belangrijk als de normen en waarden op school overeenkomen met wat ze thuis meekrijgen, omdat kinderen zo veel tijd op school doorbrengen. Daarnaast wordt de school beschouwd als een omgeving bij uitstek waarin kinderen veel kunnen leren over het christelijk geloof, zoals over de Bijbel of christelijke liederen. De vormende invloeden hebben ermee te maken dat sommige leraren aangeven zich onvoldoende competent te voelen om op een niet-orthodox-christelijke school te werken. Omdat de leraren slechts beperkt hebben geleerd om te gaan met andersdenkenden, ervaren zij terughoudendheid om te solliciteren op een niet-orthodox-christelijke school.

De leraren noemen ook enkele nadelen van het monoreligieuze karakter van de school. De meesten van hen zeggen dat ze zelf het contact met andersdenkenden gemist hebben, omdat ze daardoor minder geleerd hebben over het verdedigen en/of verdiepen van hun eigen overtuiging. Daarnaast hebben leerlingen in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen volgens de leraren de neiging om meer op elkaar te letten en kritiek te hebben op kleine verschillen.

Er wordt in deze deelstudie geconcludeerd dat de opvattingen van leraren over de keuze voor een orthodox-christelijke basisschool vergelijkbaar zijn met die van ouders: beiden benadrukken de religieuze dimensie van de school en leggen de nadruk op de samenhang van de geloofsopvoeding thuis en op school. Echter, bij leraren wordt het monoreligieuze kenmerk niet alleen gewaardeerd vanwege het verlangen om kinderen op een bepaalde manier op te voeden, maar ook met oog op het eigen welbevinden van de leraar. Deze uitkomst verdient aandacht in verder onderzoek omdat het eigen welbevinden van leraren nauwelijks naar voren komt in onderzoek naar of discussies over schoolkeuze. Dat het eigen welbevinden voor leraren belangrijk is, houdt mogelijk verband met de nauwe relatie tussen de persoonlijke en de professionele identiteit in het lerarenberoep. Bovendien kunnen sociaal-culturele invloeden een rol kunnen spelen,

want volgens de sociale identiteitstheorie kunnen juist geloofsopvattingen een sterke invloed hebben op psychologische en sociale processen.

Hoofdstuk 5 Stimuleren van 'doorvragen': Leraren op orthodox-christelijke scholen over hun rol in de geloofsopvoeding

Omdat in het vorige deelonderzoek werd geconcludeerd dat onderwijs en christelijke geloofsopvoeding voor leraren van orthodox-christelijke basisscholen onlosmakelijk met elkaar verbonden zijn, is in dit derde deelonderzoek empirisch onderzocht hoe de leraren hun rol als geloofsopvoeder dan opvatten en in hoeverre hun rol verschilt met die van andere geloofsopvoeders. De onderzoeksvraag luidt: *Wat zien leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen als hun rol in de geloofsopvoeding, in het bijzonder in relatie tot andere geloofsopvoeders?* Er is een relatie gelegd met theorie van Putnam (2007) waarin sociaal kapitaal wordt beschreven als een noodzakelijke voorwaarde voor sociale cohesie. Sociaal kapitaal bestaat uit zowel bindend sociaal kapitaal als overbruggend sociaal kapitaal. Hoewel beide positief kunnen bijdragen aan sociale cohesie, kan bindend sociaal kapitaal ook een negatief effect hebben, namelijk wanneer de leden van een groep zich isoleren van anderen buiten de groep. De vraag of orthodox-religieuze scholen kunnen bijdragen aan sociale cohesie, kan worden opgevat als vraag die voortkomt uit de gedachte dat er in orthodox-religieuze scholen een te grote nadruk op bindend in plaats van overbruggend sociaal kapitaal wordt gelegd.

De uitkomsten van het deelonderzoek kunnen input bieden aan het maatschappelijke debat over de bijdrage die orthodox-religieuze scholen al dan niet leveren aan het bevorderen van sociale cohesie. Bovendien is onderzoek naar de rol van leraren belangrijk omdat opvoedingspraktijken en gesprek daarover gebaat zijn bij duidelijkheid over de rol van scholen, gezinnen en anderen.

Bij de analyse van de interviews zijn drie verschillende perspectieven gebruikt, namelijk de professionele idealen van leraren, de opvattingen van leraren over hun eigen rol in relatie tot de rol van andere geloofsopvoeders, en de opvattingen van leraren over 'doorvragen'. 'Doorvragen' kan als exemplarisch worden gezien voor de rolopvatting van leraren.

Het eerste perspectief gaat over de professionele idealen van leraren. Deze idealen zijn sturende krachten die leraren richting, motivatie en inspiratie geven in hun werk. In dit onderzoek hebben leraren verschillende professionele idealen beschreven in het religieuze, sociaal-pedagogische of cognitieve domein. Het religieuze ideaal dat kinderen als toegewijde christenen zullen leven, werd het meeste genoemd. Dit ideaal

is allesoverstijgend volgens de leraren, en/of het werkt overal in door. Dezelfde typering komt ook naar voren als leraren spreken over de betekenis van het christelijk geloof voor hun leven en voor, zoals zij het zeggen, het eeuwige leven. De sociaal-pedagogische idealen gaan over situaties dat leerlingen zich veilig en gewaardeerd voelen en over de goede sfeer die leraren in de klas willen creëren. Cognitieve idealen zijn minder vaak genoemd, maar als ze genoemd werden, dan had dat meestal te maken met het ontwikkelen van de talenten van leerlingen en met het ervoor zorgen dat alle leerlingen op hun eigen niveau kunnen functioneren.

Het tweede perspectief gaat over hoe leraren hun eigen rol in de christelijke opvoeding zagen, in vergelijking met ouders, zondagsschoolleraren of andere geloofsopvoeders. De leraren geven aan dat alle geloofsopvoeders hetzelfde doel nastreven en dat ze zo samen een goede basis aan kinderen meegeven. De leraren noemen echter ook vijf manieren waarop hun rol zich onderscheidt van de rol van andere geloofsopvoeders. Allereerst hebben leraren een andere verantwoordelijkheid: hoewel zij zich zeer verantwoordelijk voelen, geven leraren aan dat ouders de grootste verantwoordelijkheid voor de geloofsopvoeding hebben. Ten tweede heeft elke geloofsopvoeder een andere taak: leraren richten zich vooral op cognitieve aspecten en de kwalificatie van de kinderen; in plaats van op de opvoeding van kinderen (ouders) of kerkelijke activiteiten (liturgie, pastorale zorg en doctrines). Ten derde hebben leraren andere pedagogisch-didactische mogelijkheden. Volgens de leraren zijn zij zelf experts als het gaat om de aansluiting bij het niveau van kinderen, terwijl ouders dat soms moeilijk vinden en de boodschap in de kerk regelmatig over de hoofden van kinderen heengaat. Ook zeggen de leraren dat ze tijdens de lessen veel tijd en mogelijkheden te hebben om aandacht te besteden aan geloofsopvoeding. Ten vierde hebben leraren een andere relatie met kinderen dan de andere geloofsopvoeders. Daardoor hebben leraren een andere mate van vertrouwdheid met de kinderen dan ouders. Tot slot, ten vijfde, is de setting waarin leraren met kinderen optrekken vaak anders dan die van ouders, bijvoorbeeld meer een-op-een of juist meer in groepsverband. De verschillen in de laatste twee categorieën worden door leraren op verschillende manieren uitgelegd: Wat door de ene leraar wordt genoemd als een sterk punt van de rol van de leraar (bijvoorbeeld een-op-eencontact met de leerling), wordt door een andere leraar juist als voordeel van de rol van ouders aangewezen. Mogelijk komt dit doordat de geïnterviewde leraren in verschillende contexten werken en hun leerlingen andere achtergronden hebben.

Het derde perspectief gaat over doorvragen, wat exemplarisch lijkt voor hoe leraren hun rol in de geloofsopvoeding opvatten. Op basis van de uitkomsten van het onderzoek kan doorvragen worden omschreven als "het niet vanzelfsprekend nemen van verklaringen,

antwoorden of situaties, maar deze kritisch bevragen om zo het fenomeen zelf beter te begrijpen en het perspectief van anderen daarop ook beter te begrijpen." Volgens de leraren is doorvragen essentieel om zo een eigen mening te ontwikkelen, te weten waarom je die mening hebt, en je bewust te zijn van andere meningen. Doorvragen voorkomt bekrompenheid, en maakt dat je dieper geworteld kunt raken in je geloof, en meer respect kunt opbrengen voor andersdenkenden. De geïnterviewde leraren spraken meestal over doorvragen als het ging om verschillende meningen en praktijken onder christenen, bijvoorbeeld met betrekkingen tot Bijbelvertaling of zondagsbesteding. Daarbij positioneerden de leraren zich regelmatig tegenover ouders. Het stimuleren van doorvragen kan volgens leraren door het toepassen van de volgende drie strategieën: bewustwording dat er andere perspectieven zijn, zoeken van meer informatie door vragen te stellen, en stimuleren van onderlinge gesprekken. De persoonlijke opvattingen van de leraren lijken hun handelen in de klas te beïnvloeden, want als een leraar bijvoorbeeld niet gelooft dat het dragen van een broek zondig is voor vrouwen, is het voor hem/haar gemakkelijker om leerlingen de ruimte te geven om daarover eigen conclusies te trekken. Hoewel leraren soms ideeën van ouders ter discussie stellen, nemen zij tegelijkertijd ook weleens gereserveerde standpunten in omwille van ouders of de kerk.

In dit deelonderzoek wordt geconcludeerd dat, hoewel de samenhang van school, gezin en kerk binnen de orthodox-protestantse gemeenschap vaak wordt benadrukt, de verschillen tussen deze opvoedingsomgevingen voor leraren belangrijk zijn. Leraren ervaren dat ze een specifieke bijdrage leveren aan de geloofsopvoeding van leerlingen, die met name samenhangt met het begrijpen van het geloof dat kinderen van huis uit meekrijgen. Wanneer kinderen hun primaire religieuze cultuur begrijpen en de competentie van ethisch redeneren in hun eigen context leren, zal het voor hen in een later stadium makkelijker zijn om na te denken over de religies van anderen en om betrokken te zijn bij interreligieuze dialogen (MacMullen, 2004). Op deze manier kan het bindend sociaal kapitaal van de school bijdragen aan de participatie van leerlingen in de bredere samenleving, het overbruggend sociaal kapitaal. Verder wordt geconcludeerd dat de leraren regelmatig opvattingen over hun rol uiten die met elkaar schuren. Dat schuren van opvattingen kan verhelderd worden met behulp van het onderscheid tussen de geloofsopvoeder (Engels: *religious nurturer*) en de godsdienstleraar (Engels: *religious educator*). De geïnterviewde leraren lijken het religieuze commitment van de geloofsopvoeder als belangrijkste te beschouwen, maar soms noemen ze aspecten van het educatief commitment van de godsdienstleraar als eerste. De leraar in de rol van geloofsopvoeder sluit dus aan bij de rollen van andere geloofsopvoeders, terwijl hij of zij er soms van afwijkt in de rol van godsdienstleraar.

Hoofdstuk 6 Afstand nemen, identificeren en erkennen: Leraren van orthodox-christelijke scholen over hun geloof en niet-/anders-gelovigen

Omdat uit het vierde deelonderzoek (hoofdstuk 5) blijkt dat het stimuleren van 'doorvragen' vooral wordt toegepast bij interne religieuze diversiteit, wordt in het vijfde deelonderzoek de vraag gesteld hoe leraren aankijken tegen niet- of andersgelovigen en hoe dat zich verhoudt tot hun geloofsovertuiging. Daarnaast wordt in het publieke debat over burgerschapsvorming regelmatig gesteld dat tolerantie en sociale cohesie onvoldoende bevorderd kunnen worden op orthodox-religieuze scholen vanwege de homogene populatie op die scholen. Dat roept de vraag op wat er in orthodox-religieuze scholen over andersdenkenden wordt gedacht en onderwezen; een vraag die tot nu toe slechts in een paar empirische studies aan de orde is gekomen. Het is te eenzijdig om uitsluitend te kijken naar de denominatie van de school als je wilt vaststellen hoe er door leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen wordt gedacht over niet-/andersgelovigen, want de opvattingen van leraren komen niet automatisch overeen met de formele identiteit van hun school. De onderzoeksvraag in deze deelstudie is daarom als volgt:
Hoe kijken leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen aan tegen andersdenkenden, en hoe kan dit worden gerelateerd worden aan hun opvattingen ten aanzien van het christelijk geloof?
Niet- of andersgelovigen zijn daarbij gedefinieerd als iedereen die, vanuit het perspectief van de geïnterviewde leraren, een ander wereldbeeld heeft dan zijzelf. Er wordt ook gekeken naar de geloofsopvattingen van de leraren, omdat verondersteld wordt dat deze de professionele opvattingen en de onderwijspraktijk op een pedagogisch, didactisch en psychologisch niveau beïnvloeden. Omdat opvattingen worden geactiveerd door de context, wordt ook aandacht besteed aan de concrete ontmoetingen van leraren met niet- of andersgelovigen.

De Nederlandse wet verplicht basisscholen om aandacht te besteden aan belangrijke religieuze stromingen in de samenleving en om kinderen respect bij te brengen voor verschillen in opvattingen van mensen. Confessionele scholen doen dat vaak in het verlengde van hun eigen levensbeschouwelijke identiteit. Als het gaat om religieuze diversiteit en de soteriologische categorieën, betekent het monoreligieuze karakter van orthodox-christelijke basisscholen meestal dat er sprake is van exclusivisme (alleen wie expliciet Christus als Redder belijdt, kan gered worden) en incidenteel van inclusivisme (Christus is betrokken bij het proces van verlossing, maar persoonlijke erkenning van Christus is niet nodig). Er wordt regelmatig gesteld dat niet- of anders-gelovigen in het exclusivisme en inclusivisme onvoldoende serieus worden genomen, terwijl het pluralisme dan als het beste uitgangspunt voor de interreligieuze dialoog of erkenning wordt gezien. Pluralisme

ontkent echter de particulariteit van het geloofscommitment, terwijl het voorgestelde alternatief van particularisme niet veel ruimte biedt voor interreligieuze dialoog. In plaats daarvan is het belangrijk om te erkennen dat gelovigen altijd een spanning zullen ervaren tussen geloofscommitment (eigenheid) en openheid (diversiteit) en dat het niet mogelijk is om een precies evenwicht tussen die twee te vinden (Moyaert, 2011).

In dit deelonderzoek is allereerst gekeken naar wat leraren in de interviews hebben gezegd over concrete ontmoetingen met niet- of andersgelovigen. Zij beschrijven verschillende soorten ontmoetingen in het dagelijkse leven, bijvoorbeeld met buren of tijdens sportwedstrijden. De leraren gaan niet bewust op zoek naar contact met niet-/andersgelovigen, behalve als het gaat om missionaire activiteiten. Sommige leraren zeggen expliciet dat ze weinig tot geen contact hebben met niet-/andersgelovigen omdat die weinig te vinden zijn in de omgeving waarin ze wonen of omdat ze zelf in een orthodox-christelijke omgeving werken. Dat wordt door hen dan regelmatig ook als een gemis beschouwd. Andere leraren benadrukken juist dat het onmogelijk is om geen contact met niet-/andersgelovigen te hebben. De leraren evalueerden hun ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen aan de hand van of het fijn en/of moeilijk was, of ze meer inzicht kregen in de ideeën van de ander of van zichzelf, en of ze in de ontmoeting wel of niet bewust verwezen naar God of het geloof.

Vervolgens is er gekeken naar de opvattingen van leraren ten aanzien van de uniciteit van het christelijk geloof in vergelijking met andere religies. De opvattingen die werden geuit, waren opvallend eenduidig en gingen over de volgende drie thema's. Ten eerste, christenen hoeven geen goede werken te doen om verlossing te ontvangen. Ten tweede, volgens de Bijbel is er maar één God en de eigenschappen van God die in de Bijbel worden beschreven (bijvoorbeeld genade, liefde en de mogelijkheid om een relatie met Hem te hebben) kunnen niet aan andere goden worden toegeschreven. Daarom verwerpen de meeste leraren ook het idee dat moslims, hindoes of boeddhisten dezelfde God aanbidden als christenen. Ten derde verwijzen de leraren naar de leer van de Drie-eenheid (d.w.z. de eenheid van de Vader, de Zoon en de Heilige Geest als drie personen in één godheid), en in het bijzonder de goddelijkheid van Jezus en zijn rol als Redder. De overtuiging dat Jezus de Redder is en dat de mensen dit moeten erkennen, is voor veel leraren van doorslaggevend belang. Daarom is de uniciteit van het christelijk geloof voor hen ook een ernstige zaak. Tegelijkertijd zijn de leraren echter ook terughoudend in het doen van beslissende uitspraken hierover, vooral vanwege ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen. De leraren verwoorden tegenstemmen en laten zien dat hun geloof ook deel is van een zoekproces. Daarnaast komt hun terughoudendheid ook voort uit

de opvatting dat het niet hun werk, maar Gods werk is dat de ander Hem zal erkennen, en dat het niet Bijbels is om te oordelen over iemands eeuwige bestemming. Op deze momenten van terughoudendheid wordt enige ambivalentie zichtbaar tussen wat de leraren op het ene moment en op het andere moment zeggen.

Tot slot is onderzocht hoe de leraren tegen niet-/andersgelovigen aankijken. Daarbij geldt dat er grote verschillen zitten in hoe de geïnterviewde leraren 'een niet-/andersgelovige' definiëren. Daarnaast blijken verschillende opvattingen over hoe zij zich verhouden tot 'andersgelovigen'. Die opvattingen kunnen worden beschreven met behulp van de volgende drie categorieën: afstand nemen (Engels: *distinction*), herkenning (Engels: *identification*) en erkenning (Engels: *recognition*). Wanneer de leraren de afstand tussen henzelf en andersgelovigen benadrukken, spreken zij over hun bezorgdheid om de andersgelovige; over medelijden met de andersgelovige die God niet kent en daarom in eeuwigheid niet met God zal leven; over het belang van duidelijkheid over de verschillen tussen het christelijk geloof en andere religies; en over een plicht om de Bijbelse boodschap van verzoening te delen. Wanneer de leraren het over herkenning hebben, verwijzen zij naar normen en waarden van andersgelovigen die ze met hen delen of voor zichzelf zouden wensen; of naar de gedeelde positie in de hedendaagse samenleving omdat de andersgelovige ook deel uitmaakt van een religieuze minderheid. Wanneer het gaat om erkenning, dan gaat het om opvattingen waarin de andersgelovige wordt beschreven als een mens die zijn of haar eigen positie verdient, bijvoorbeeld wanneer het gaat om keuzevrijheid; over God die de harten van mensen aanziet (wat betekent dat de gelovige geen oordeel kan en hoeft te vormen over de verhouding tussen de andersgelovige en God); over dat alle mensen waardevol zijn omdat ze door God geschapen zijn; en over liefde en vriendelijkheid voor andersgelovigen. Als de leraren hun relatie met niet-/andersgelovigen beschrijven, verwijzen zij vaak expliciet of impliciet ook naar God of de maatschappij. Ze geven dan aan of ze verbondenheid of juist afstand ervaren met God en/of de niet-/andersgelovige, en of er een relatie is tussen God en de ander. De maatschappij wordt vooral genoemd als leraren zich herkennen in de niet-/andersgelovige.

In dit deelonderzoek wordt geconcludeerd dat de opvattingen die leraren hebben over het christelijk geloof en over niet-/andersgelovigen op elkaar lijken, zowel qua inhoud (de relatie met God staat centraal) als qua aard (gekenmerkt door enige ambivalentie). De ambivalentie in de opvattingen van leraren komt naar voren op het moment dat wordt gesproken over niet-/andersgelovigen. De opvattingen over de uniciteit van het christelijk geloof (verlossing door het offer van Jezus) en over het belang daarvan waren opvallend eenduidig, maar leraren zijn terughoudender als het gaat om de toepassing daarvan op

niet-/andersgelovigen. De leraren uiten dan tegenstemmen, zoeken naar wat ze geloven of ze aarzelen. In termen van het model van de *theology in four voices* (Cameron et al., 2010), kan de eenduidigheid worden geïnterpreteerd als de echo van een sterke formele en/of normatieve theologie; terwijl de ambivalentie in de opvattingen van de leraren juist de aangehangen en operante theologie laat zien. De ambivalentie laat ook iets zien van de spanning die onvermijdelijk is bij de interreligieuze dialoog. Het zou de moeite waard zijn om in toekomstig onderzoek na te gaan welke opvattingen dominant zijn en hoe die de praktijken van de leraren beïnvloeden. Het is ook de vraag in hoeverre consistentie in de aangehangen theologie van leraren moet worden nagestreefd. Het is in ieder geval belangrijk dat er ruimte is voor leraren om de door hun aangehangen theologie te confronteren met de formele en/of normatieve theologie. Daarnaast is er aandacht nodig voor de verschillen tussen leraren, want de opvattingen over religieuze diversiteit blijken niet zo eenduidig als in de scholen wordt verwacht.

Hoofdstuk 7 Voorbij het zwart-witdenken: Alumni en lerarenopleiders over religieuze diversiteit in orthodox-christelijke lerarenopleidingen

Uit de eerdere deelstudies is gebleken dat als het gaat over religieuze diversiteit, leraren vooral gericht zijn op onderlinge verschillen tussen christenen (hoofdstuk 6) en dat ze nauwelijks nadenken over wat minder contact met niet-/andersgelovigen betekent voor het onderwijs (hoofdstuk 4 en 5). Bovendien hebben de leraren zelf veelal op orthodox-christelijke basisscholen en middelbare scholen gezeten en was ook hun lerarenopleiding orthodox-christelijk (hoofdstuk 3). (Aanstaande) leraren komen in hun opleidings-, werk- en levenscontext dus beperkt in aanraking met niet-/andersgelovigen en dat roept de vraag op wat de orthodox-christelijke lerarenopleiding kan doen om aanstaande leraren toe te rusten voor het lesgeven over religieuze diversiteit. Daarom richt deze vijfde deelstudie zich op de volgende onderzoeksvraag: *Wat is volgens alumni en lerarenopleiders belangrijk in orthodox-christelijke lerarenpleidingen voor het leren over religieuze diversiteit?* Met deze vraag wordt de huidige praktijk in kaart gebracht en kan van daaruit een aanzet worden gegeven tot reflectie op wat orthodox-protestantse lerarenopleidingen zouden kunnen bijdragen.

Uit de literatuur blijkt dat er in de aandacht voor religieuze diversiteit in de lerarenopleiding twee verschillende, maar verwante perspectieven zijn; namelijk hoe aanstaande leraren erop worden voorbereid om zelf goed om te gaan met leerlingen van verschillende achtergronden en hoe aanstaande leraren erop worden voorbereid dat zij hun leerlingen kunnen stimuleren om goed met anderen om te gaan. Voor beide perspectieven blijken

vergelijkbare factoren van belang in de lerarenopleiding. Allereerst moet rekening worden gehouden met de achtergrond van de aanstaande leraren (bijvoorbeeld hun geslacht, leeftijd of dat ze behoren tot een minderheidsgroep) en hun eerdere ervaringen met diversiteit, want die hebben grote impact op wat de aanstaande leraren in de opleiding leren en hoe ze dat leren. Verder komen er in de literatuur zes verschillende competenties naar voren voor het omgaan met religieuze diversiteit, namelijk bewustwording van verschillen, een open houding, juiste kennis over anderen, kritisch besef, in evenwicht brengen van persoonlijke opvattingen en professionele verantwoordelijkheden, en pedagogisch-didactische benaderingen voor diversiteit. Daarnaast zijn er manieren die regelmatig genoemd worden waarmee deze competenties verworven kunnen worden in de lerarenopleiding, namelijk de klas als leergemeenschap, lerarenopleiders als rolmodellen, ervaringsleren, kritische reflectie, en overdracht van kennis.

In de focusgroepinterviews zijn door alumni verschillende factoren aangewezen die volgens hen van belang waren voor hoe ze leerden omgaan met religieuze diversiteit in de lerarenopleiding, namelijk ontmoetingen met studenten of lerarenopleiders uit andere kerken, rolmodellen van lerarenopleiders, meerdaagse excursies, realistische opdrachten en kennis van cultureel-maatschappelijke vorming en kerkgeschiedenis. De alumni laten zien dat deze factoren ook aan elkaar gerelateerd zijn: persoonlijke gesprekken tussen studenten (ontmoetingen) ontstaan bijvoorbeeld vooral tijdens de excursies en kennis van kerkgeschiedenis helpt hen dan om de onderlinge verschillen beter te begrijpen.

Ten aanzien van de vraag of hun lerarenopleiding hen voldoende heeft toegerust om met religieuze diversiteit om te gaan, geven de alumni enerzijds aan dat zij zich in de praktijk goed redden en dus niets gemist hebben. Anderzijds vinden alumni het in hun werkpraktijk echter vooral lastig hoe ze moeten handelen als er verschillende opvattingen zijn onder leerlingen, tussen henzelf en ouders, of tussen henzelf en de schoolleider(s) of collega's. De alumni geven aan dat ze graag meer handvatten hadden gekregen in de lerarenopleiding over hoe je in dergelijke situaties gesprekken kunt voeren. Bovendien doen ze de suggestie dat het voor de lerarenopleiding van belang kan zijn om meer aandacht te besteden aan ervaringen van buiten de eigen context van aanstaande leraren. De alumni stellen voor om uitwisselingen te organiseren met studenten van andere lerarenopleidingen om zo meer ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen te creëren. Daarnaast onderstrepen de alumni het belang van de eerder genoemde realistische opdrachten. De alumni onderstrepen ook dat de lerarenopleiding niet de enige omgeving is waarin aanstaande leraren leren omgaan met religieuze diversiteit en

dat de achtergrond van de aanstaande leraren en de invloed van hun ouders een grote rol spelen.

Volgens lerarenopleiders is het voor de ontwikkeling van competentie in het omgaan met religieuze diversiteit belangrijk dat aanstaande leraren in hun bacheloropleiding het volgende leren: ontmoetingen aangaan, open houding, gespreksvaardigheden, groei van persoonlijke opvattingen, verdieping van kennis, en zorgvuldig afwegen. De laatste overlapt met de eerdere aspecten, maar het wordt expliciet benadrukt dat aanstaande leraren moeten leren om reflectief te zijn en zorgvuldige afwegingen te maken in plaats van onmiddellijk te oordelen. De lerarenopleiders gebruiken daarbij meermaals de uitdrukking dat studenten moeten leren verder te denken dan 'goed en fout' of 'zwart en wit'. Volgens de lerarenopleiders kunnen de genoemde competenties op vier manieren gestimuleerd worden in de lerarenopleiding, namelijk door het vergroten van kennis en reflectie, door de hogeschool als oefenplaats, met realistische opdrachten en praktijkervaringen, en met begeleiding op maat.

Aan de lerarenopleiders is gevraagd waaraan meer aandacht besteed zou moeten worden in de lerarenopleiding. Daarbij noemden zij dat vooral het stimuleren van een open en respectvolle houding belangrijk is, net als het ontwikkelen van gespreksvaardigheden en het vermogen om onderscheid te maken tussen kleine en grote issues (zorgvuldige afweging). De lerarenopleiders noemden ook dat het belangrijk is om te zorgen voor samenhang in de lerarenopleiding als het gaat over religieuze diversiteit omdat er nu geen vakoverstijgende aanpak is. Bovendien maken sommige lerarenopleiders zich zorgen over hoe het leren omgaan met religieuze diversiteit gebeurt in een nieuwe opleidingsvariant waarin meer nadruk ligt op het werkplekleren op een basisschool in de eigen regio van de aanstaande leraar. Daarnaast geven de lerarenopleiders aan dat de lerarenopleiding niet alleen verantwoordelijk is voor hoe aanstaande leraren leren om te gaan met religieuze diversiteit omdat dit ook wordt beïnvloed door de media, vrienden en de kerk. De lerarenopleiders zien opvallend grote verschillen tussen aanstaande leraren als het gaat om hoe competent ze zijn en waar hun (existentiële) vragen liggen.

In deze deelstudie wordt geconcludeerd dat de zaken die zowel door de alumni als door de lerarenopleiders genoemd worden, grotendeels overeenkomen met wat uit de literatuur naar voren komt. In tegenstelling tot de literatuur richten de alumni en lerarenopleiders zich echter vooral op interne religieuze diversiteit en niet zozeer op externe religieuze diversiteit. 'Kritisch besef' – een van de factoren uit de literatuur – in de zin van gerichtheid op sociale verandering, komt daarbij ook niet naar voren. Bovendien gaat het bij de alumni en lerarenopleiders meer over hoe de leraren omgaan met

diversiteit onder leerlingen, dan over hoe zij leerlingen kunnen voorbereiden op het goed omgaan met niet-/andersgelovigen. Tot slot blijkt het unieke karakter van de orthodox-protestantse lerarenopleiding vooral uit het feit dat verdieping van het eigen geloof ook wordt genoemd als een belangrijk aspect van het leren omgaan met religieuze diversiteit, terwijl dit aspect niet zo sterk naar voren komt in de literatuur. De alumni zouden graag meer handvatten willen krijgen voor hoe om te gaan met de diversiteit die ze in hun onderwijspraktijk tegenkomen en dat lijkt overeen te komen met wat lerarenopleiders zouden willen versterken. Volgens de alumni moet de lerarenopleiding zich vooral meer richten op hoe de eigen opvattingen van (aanstaande) leraren zich verhouden tot die van anderen, en hoe je daar als professional dan mee omgaat. De lerarenopleiders lijken dit te interpreteren als het verminderen van zwart-witdenken en het stimuleren van gespreksvaardigheden. Verder wijzen zowel de alumni als de lerarenopleiders erop dat realistische opdrachten belangrijk zijn in de lerarenopleiding en dat ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen gestimuleerd moeten worden, bijvoorbeeld door stage te lopen op een school met een (enigszins) andere religieuze identiteit of door uitwisselingen met studenten van andere lerarenopleidingen.

Hoofdstuk 8 Conclusie en discussie

In hoofdstuk 8 wordt de centrale onderzoeksvraag beantwoord. Deze vraag luidde: *Hoe verhouden leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen zich als professional tot de levensbeschouwelijke diversiteit van de samenleving en de monoreligieuze kenmerken van hun school, en wat zijn de implicaties daarvan voor de initiële lerarenopleiding?* (hoofdstuk 1). In de vijf deelstudies die zijn uitgevoerd, komen allereerst drie verschillende perspectieven naar voren die samen iets zeggen over hoe leraren zich als professional verhouden tot de genoemde thema's. Het gaat om de eigen rol die leraren menen te hebben binnen de geloofsopvoeding van kinderen, hun perceptie van niet-/andersgelovigen, en spanningen of tegenstrijdigheden die in hun opvattingen over monoreligiositeit en religieuze diversiteit naar voren komen. Deze perspectieven bieden vervolgens ook aangrijpingspunten voor het beantwoorden van het tweede deel van de onderzoeksvraag, namelijk naar implicaties voor de initiële opleiding van leraren.

Allereerst speelt volgens de leraren het christelijk geloof een centrale rol in hun leven en dus ook in hun werk als leraar. Het religieuze ideaal dat kinderen als toegewijde christenen zullen leven, is voor de leraren allesoverstijgend en/of werkt volgens hen in alles door. De leraren ervaren dat dit een gezamenlijk ideaal van de verschillende geloofsopvoeders is en dat de geloofsopvoeders zo samen een goede basis bieden aan de kinderen. Leraren

hebben daarin echter ook een unieke rol, die met name gaat over het begrijpen van het christelijk geloof en het goed omgaan met religieuze verschillen. Dat leraren 'doorvragen' willen stimuleren bij hun leerlingen is in dit verband exemplarisch voor de eigen rol van de leraar. Als leraren spreken over religieuze verschillen en hoe zij hun leerlingen willen toerusten om daarmee om te gaan, dan gaat het vooral om verschillen binnen het orthodox-protestantisme of de christelijke traditie.

Ten tweede, als het gaat om 'externe religieuze diversiteit', hebben de geïnterviewde leraren opvallend eenduidige opvattingen over de uniciteit van het christelijk geloof. Het geloof dat Jezus de Redder is en dat mensen Hem moeten erkennen om eeuwig leven te hebben, is voor veel leraren doorslaggevend en dat maakt de uniciteit van het christelijk geloof voor hen ook tot een ernstige zaak. Tegelijkertijd is er terughoudendheid over deze stellige uitspraken, wat vooral getriggerd wordt door ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen. De definities die leraren geven van een niet-/andersgelovige lopen sterk uiteen. Wanneer de leraren spreken over hun relatie tot niet-/andersgelovigen, is dat in termen van afstand nemen van, herkenning in of erkenning van de religieuze ander.

Ten derde kwamen op verschillende momenten in de interviews spanningen of tegenstrijdigheden in de opvattingen van leraren naar voren. Bijvoorbeeld in hoe ze spreken over niet-/andersgelovigen, over de samenhang tussen de verschillende opvoedingsmilieus en over hun eigen rol in de geloofsopvoeding. Deze spanningen worden echter nauwelijks gethematiseerd of geproblematiseerd door de leraren. Bovendien kwamen ze vooral naar voren in relatie tot de geloofsopvoeding en nauwelijks in relatie tot burgerschapsvorming of tolerantie als opvoedingsdoel. De meeste spanningen of tegenstrijdigheden die werden waargenomen, kunnen worden gezien als onderdeel van professionele idealen omdat ze gaan over wat leraren willen bereiken met hun werk, wat wordt beïnvloed door hoe zij hun rol als leraar zien en hoe ze hun beroep willen uitoefenen. Voor lerarenopleidingen betekent dit dat het van belang is om aanstaande leraren te stimuleren tot meer reflectie op de spanningsvelden die naar voren komen tussen de monoreligieuze kenmerken van de orthodox-christelijke school en de religieuze diversiteit van de samenleving. Daarbij kunnen de lerarenopleiding de aanstaande leraren ook leren hoe zij hierop kunnen reflecteren om zo meer samenhang in de professionele idealen te bereiken. Dat is belangrijk omdat de kwaliteit van het onderwijs toeneemt als professionele idealen met elkaar in lijn liggen, en wanneer de onderwijspraktijk daarmee overeenstemt.

Ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen kunnen worden gezien worden als startpunt voor reflectie en leren omdat juist in deze ontmoetingen de spanningen of

tegenstrijdigheden in de opvattingen van de leraren naar voren komen. Aanstaande leraren hebben echter weinig ervaringen met externe religieuze diversiteit. Daarom zou het waardevol kunnen zijn om binnen de orthodox-protestantse lerarenopleiding meer aandacht te besteden aan ontmoetingen met niet-/andersgelovigen. Tegelijkertijd geven zowel de alumni als de lerarenopleiders aan dat het nodig is om meer aandacht te besteden aan het omgaan met interne religieuze diversiteit zoals die in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen naar voren kan komen. Deze ideeën voor het versterken van de lerarenopleiding lijken vooral te gaan over verdieping of uitbreiding van wat al belangrijk wordt gevonden, namelijk via ontmoetingen en reflectie te leren omgaan met religieuze diversiteit.

Wat alumni en lerarenopleiders noemen, komt grotendeels overeen met wat in de literatuur wordt beschreven over het ontwikkelen van diversiteitscompetenties bij aanstaande leraren; hoewel het belangrijkste verschil is dat alumni en lerarenopleiders zich vooral bezighouden met interne in plaats van externe religieuze diversiteit. Een ander verschil is dat 'kritisch besef' in de zin van gerichtheid op sociale verandering, zoals dat in de literatuur wordt benoemd, niet door de alumni en leraropleiders wordt genoemd. De verdieping van het eigen geloof wordt door hen juist wel als een belangrijk aspect genoemd, maar komt niet zo naar voren in de literatuur. Tot slot wordt er door alumni en lerarenopleiders meer gesproken over hoe de leraren omgaan met diversiteit onder hun leerlingen, en minder over hoe ze hun leerlingen kunnen voorbereiden om goed om te gaan met niet-/andersgelovigen. Meer aandacht voor dat laatste zou dus ook een verbeterpunt kunnen zijn voor de orthodox-christelijke lerarenopleiding. Het zou de moeite waard zijn om binnen de lerarenopleidingen meer aandacht te besteden aan het perspectief van burgerschap in relatie tot religieuze diversiteit.

Twee elementen uit de conclusie zijn met name van belang als het gaat om de theoretische implicaties van dit onderzoek omdat ze nieuwe inzichten geven in hoe leraren zichzelf positioneren in het monoreligieuze onderwijs (vergelijk paragraaf 1.4). Deze elementen zijn de eigen rol van leraren binnen de geloofsopvoeding van kinderen en de betekenis van interne religieuze diversiteit binnen de professionaliteit van leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen. Dit zijn kwesties die ook met elkaar samenhangen. Ten eerste, wat de eigen rol van de leraren betreft, is het een nieuw empirisch inzicht dat leraren hun eigen rol duidelijk onderscheiden van die van andere geloofsopvoeders. Dit inzicht is cruciaal omdat meestal juist de samenhang tussen school, kerk en gezin sterk wordt benadrukt wanneer het over orthodox-christelijke basisscholen gaat. Het lijkt waardevol om het onderscheid tussen de rollen van de geloofsopvoeder en godsdienstleraar te

benaderen als een continuüm in plaats van dat deze rollen elkaar wederzijds uitsluiten, omdat dit een rijkere beschrijving van professionele verantwoordelijkheden en praktijken mogelijk maakt. Ten tweede toont dit onderzoek aan dat er in orthodox-religieuze gemeenschappen en in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen grote diversiteit bestaat. De impact van deze interne religieuze diversiteit voor leraren en leerlingen, kan vergelijkbaar zijn met die van externe religieuze diversiteit in andere situaties. Het omgaan met interne religieuze diversiteit lijkt niet vanzelfsprekend voor zowel de leraren als de leerlingen, en het wordt gezien als iets wat geleerd moet worden. In dit opzicht zou het islamitisch onderwijs als een voorloper beschouwd kunnen worden voor andere orthodox-religieuze scholen, omdat er in deze scholen meer ervaringen zijn rond het omgaan met interne religieuze diversiteit.

In het antwoord op de centrale onderzoeksvraag is de praktische relevantie voor lerarenopleidingen reeds aangegeven. In het verlengde van de theoretische relevantie is echter ook een aantal zaken met betrekking tot de praktische relevantie van het onderzoek voor orthodox-christelijke basisscholen en hun positie in de samenleving aan te wijzen. Ten eerste is het aan te bevelen om expliciet vanuit het burgerschapsperspectief te kijken naar de monoreligieuze kenmerken van de school, omdat de mogelijke negatieve effecten van deze kenmerken minder aandacht lijken te krijgen in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen. Ten tweede kan erkenning van de eigen rol van leraren in de geloofsopvoeding en daarmee ook erkenning van de eigen plaats van de school, ruimte scheppen om interne religieuze verschillen niet als een bedreiging binnen de school te zien, maar als een kans. Daarvoor is wel nodig dat de betrokkenen bij de school beseffen dat de school niet in de eerste plaats een geloofsgemeenschap is, maar een vormingsgemeenschap. Het uitgangspunt van de school is dan niet alleen 'wij delen het geloof', maar ook 'wij verschillen op sommige punten en dat kan juist in de context van de school'. Verder moet erkend worden dat het onderwijs in het omgaan met religieuze diversiteit kan beginnen bij het leren omgaan met onderlinge verschillen (interne religieuze diversiteit), maar doorgetrokken moet worden naar het leren omgaan met externe religieuze diversiteit. Op basis van dit onderzoek is het de vraag of er in het basisonderwijs en voortgezet onderwijs voldoende aandacht is voor de groeiende reikwijdte waarmee leerlingen leren omgaan met religieuze verschillen.

Aan het eind van het onderzoek worden enkele methodologische reflecties en ideeën voor toekomstig onderzoek genoemd. Het explorerende doel van het onderzoek is waardevol gebleken omdat het ruimte bood voor een meer verfijnde opvatting van religieuze diversiteit. Bovendien waren de resultaten van de focusgroepinterviews met

alumni redelijk consistent met de resultaten uit de individuele interviews met leraren, wat kan betekenen dat de besproken onderwerpen breder worden herkend onder leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen. Op basis van de huidige resultaten is het mogelijk om een grootschaliger en meer kwantitatief georiënteerd onderzoek uit te voeren dat meer inzicht kan geven in de representativiteit van deze resultaten. Toekomstig onderzoek zou ook kunnen bijdragen aan meer inzicht in relevante achtergrondkenmerken, in de onderwijspraktijken van leraren in orthodox-christelijke basisscholen en in hoe religieuze diversiteit aandacht krijgt binnen basisscholen, middelbare scholen en beroepsopleidingen. Daarnaast wordt gewezen op de specifieke waarde van praktijkgericht onderzoek en wordt gewezen op mogelijkheden van *educational design research* in basisscholen en/of op de lerarenopleiding. Tot slot wordt de wens uitgesproken dat het uitgevoerde onderzoek voor leraren een stimulans is om zich voortdurend bewust te zijn van hun waardevolle positie in de geloofsopvoeding van kinderen, alsook van de kansen die zij hebben om kinderen te stimuleren tot het leveren van een bijdrage aan het in vrede met elkaar samenleven binnen een diverse samenleving.

REFERENCES

Afdal, G. (2006). *Tolerance and curriculum: Conceptions of tolerance in the multicultural unitary Norwegian compulsory school.* Waxmann.

Akiba, M. (2011). Identifying program characteristics for preparing pre-service teachers for diversity. *Teachers College Records 113*(3), 658–697.

Albert Shanker Institute (2003). *Education for democracy.* https://www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/education-democracy

Alii, E. T. (2009). *Godsdienstpedagogiek: Dimensies en spanningsvelden*. Meinema.

Amara, T. (2015, June 26). Gunman kills 39 at Tunisian beachside hotel, Islamic State claims attack. *Reuters News Agency.* https://www.reuters.com/article/us-tunisia-security/gunman-kills-39-at-tunisian-beachside-hotel-islamic-state-claims-attack-idUSKBN0P61F020150626

An, S. (2014). Preparing elementary teachers as global citizenship educators. *The Journal of Education 194*(3): 25–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/002205741419400304

Anderson, D., Mathys, H., & Lubig, J. (2015). Lessons learned from teaching teachers how to teach about world religions. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research 10*(3), 43–58.

ANP (2015, October 10). Bestorming noodopvang: 'Wat ik zag is te bizar voor woorden'. *NOS*. https://nos.nl/artikel/2062281-bestorming-noodopvang-wat-ik-zag-is-te-bizar-voor-woorden

Aown, N. M. (2011). A place for informal learning in teaching about religion: The story of an experienced non-Muslim teacher and her learning about Islam. *Teaching and Teacher Education 27*(8), 1255–1264. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.07.005

Aronson, B., Amatullah, T., & Laughter, J. (2016). Culturally relevant education: Extending the conversation to religious diversity. *Multicultural Perspectives 18*(3), 140–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2016.1185609

Bakker, C., & Rigg, E. (2004). *De persoon van de leerkracht. Tussen christelijke schoolidentiteit en leerlingendiversiteit*. Meinema.

Bakker, E., & Heijstek-Hofman, A. (2019). Levensbeschouwing: dé basis voor burgerschapsvorming! *Religie en Samenleving 14*(2), pp.115-126.

BBC News (2002, May 6). Dutch far-right leader shot dead. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1971423.stm

BBC News (2015, January 7). Charlie Hebdo: Gun attack on French magazine kills 12. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30710883

BBC News (2015, June 26). France attack: Man decapitated at factory near Lyon. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33284937

Beck, U., & Beck-Gersnheim, E. (2002). *Individualization.* SAGE.

Beckford, J. A. (1999). The politics of defining religion in secular society: From a taken-for-granted institution to a contested resource. In J. Platvoet & A. L. Molendijk (Eds.), *The pragmatics of defining religion: Contexts, concepts & contests* (pp. 23-40). Brill.

Beemsterboer, M. (2018). *Islamitisch basisonderwijs in Nederland* [Doctoral dissertation, Leiden University]. Parthenon.

Bell, L. A. (2002). Sincere fictions: The pedagogical challenges of preparing white teachers for multicultural classrooms. *Equity and Excellence in Education 35*(3), 234–244. https://doi.org/10.1080/713845317

Bernts, T. (2007). Nederlanders over de plaats van religie in de samenleving. In T. Bernts, G. Dekker, & J. de Hart (Eds.), *God in Nederland: 1996-2006* (pp. 76-117). Ten Have.

Bernts, T., & Berghuijs, J. (2016). *God in Nederland: 1966−2015*. Ten Have.

Bertram-Troost, G. D. (2006). *Geloven in bijzonder onderwijs: Levensbeschouwelijke identiteitsontwikkeling van adolescenten in het voortgezet onderwijs* [Doctoral dissertation, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. Boekencentrum.

Bertram-Troost, G. D. (2011). Investigating the impact of religious diversity in schools for secondary education: A challenging but necessary exercise. *British Journal of Religious Education 33*(2), pp. 271–283. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2011.543614

Bertram-Troost, G. D. (2017). Refoscholen op de balk: Balanceren tussen eigenheid en openheid. In: J. Exalto (Ed.), *De multiculturele refoschool en de uitdaging van het pluralisme* (pp. 23-56). Labarum.

Bertram-Troost, G. D. (2021). Zingevingsvragen zijn cruciaal in de burgerschapsles. *Narthex, Tijdschrijft voor levensbeschouwing en educatie 21*(1), 30-34.

Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Miedema, S. (2017). Fostering religious tolerance in education: The Dutch perspective. In R. R. Ganzevoort & S. Sremac (Eds.), *Lived religion and the politics of (in)tolerance* (pp. 237-257). Palgrave Macmillan.

Bertram-Troost, G. D., Miedema, S., Kom, C., & Ter Avest, I. (2015a). A catalogue of Dutch Protestant primary schools in the secular age: Empirical results. *Religion & Education 42*(2), 202–217. https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2013.873315

Bertram-Troost, G. D., Versteegt, I., Van der Kooij, J. C., Van Nes, I., & Miedema, S. (2015b). *Om eigenheid en openheid: Inspiratie, motivatie en levensbeschouwing van docenten in het christelijk voortgezet onderwijs.* Verus. https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/om-eigenheid-en-openheid-inspiratie-motivatie-en-levensbeschouwin

Bertram-Troost, G., Van der Kooij, J. C., Miedema, S., Versteegt, I., & Van Nes, I. (2017). Personal inspiration, motivation and worldview teachers in Dutch Christian secondary schools. In H. G. Heimbroch (Ed.), *Taking position: Empirical studies and theoretical reflections on religious education and worldview* (pp. 157–180). Waxmann.

Bertram-Troost, G., Versteegt, I., Van der Kooij, J., Van Nes, I., & Miedema, S. (2018). Beyond the split between formal school identity and teachers' personal worldviews: Towards an inclusive (Christian) school identity. *Education Sciences, 8*(4), 208. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci8040208

Beswick, K. (2008). Influencing teachers' beliefs about teaching mathematics for numeracy to students with mathematics learning difficulties. *Mathematics Teacher Education and Development*, 9, 3–20.

Bhattacherjee, A. (2012). *Social science research: Principles, methods, and practices.* Createspace Independent Publishing Platform.

Bijl, A. (2021). Wim de Kloe: leer jongeren in de maatschappij te staan. *VGS Connect 4,* 38-41.

Boele-de Bruin, H. L., & De Muynck, A. (2018). Exploring the professional ideals of Christian teachers from conservative Protestant schools in The Netherlands. *International Journal of Christianity & Education, 22*(1), 8–22. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056997117740367

Boeve, L. (2005). Religion after detraditionalization: Christian faith in a post-secular Europe. *Irish Theological Quarterly, 70(2)*, 99-122. https://doi.org/10.1177/002114000507000201

Borg, M. (2001). Key concepts in ELT: Teachers' beliefs. *ELT Journal, 55*(2), 186–188. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/55.2.186

Bourn, D. (2015). Teachers as agents of social change. *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning, 7*(3), 63-77. https://doi.org/10.18546/IJDEGL.07.3.05

Bovens, M., Dekker, P., & Tiemeijer, W. L. (2014). Sociaal-culturele tegenstellingen in Nederland: de stand van zaken. In M. Bovens, P. Dekker, & W. L. Tiemeijer (Eds.), *Gescheiden werelden?* (pp. 9-29). Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau / Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Breemer, F., & Lammers, M. (2014). "School!" In M. Lammers, H. Teegelbeckers, & F. Breemer (Eds.), *School!gids: een toekomstvisie op ons onderwijsbestel* (pp. 5–9). Vereniging Openbaar Onderwijs en VOS/ABB.

Bron, J. (2006). *Een basis voor burgerschap: Een inhoudelijke verkenning voor het funderend onderwijs.* SLO.

Bron, J. G. (n.d.). *Citizenship and social integration in the Netherlands: Educational development between autonomy and accountability.* www.slo.nl/downloads/documenten/Citizenship-and-social-integration.pdf/

Bron, J., & Thijs, A. (2011). Leaving it to the schools: Citizenship, diversity and human rights education in the Netherlands. *Educational Research, 53*(2), 123–136. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2011.572361

Bronkhorst, A., & De Groot, K. (2020, November 25). Vreze des Heeren bron voor burgerschap. *Reformatorisch Dagblad.* https://www.digibron.nl/viewer/collectie/Digibron/id/tag:RD.nl,20201125:newsml_pr16486631

Bryan, L. A. (2003). Nestedness of beliefs: Examining a prospective elementary teacher's belief system about science teaching and learning. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 40*(9), 835–868. https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.10113

Budak, B. (2021). *Waarom stichten jullie niet een eigen school? Religieuze identiteitsontwikkeling van islamitische basisscholen 1988-2013* [Doctoral dissertation, Leiden University]. Scholarly Publications Repository of Leiden University. https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3185763

Cameron, H., Bhatti, D., Duce, C., Sweeney, J., & Watkins, C. (2010). *Talking about God in practice: Theological action research and practical theology.* SCM Press.

Cannata, M. (2010). Understanding the teacher job search process: Espoused preferences and preferences in use. *Teachers College Record, 112*(12), 2889–2934.

Carothers, T., & O'Donohue, A. (2019). Introduction. In T. Carothers & A. O'Donohue (Eds.) *Democracies divided: The global challenge of political polarization* (pp. 1-13). Brookings Institution Press.

Castro, A. J. (2010). Themes in the research on preservice teachers' views of cultural diversity: Implications for researching millennial preservice teachers. *Educational Researcher, 39*(3), 198–210. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X10363819

CBS (Statistics Netherlands) (2015). *Sociale samenhang: Wat ons bindt en verdeelt.* https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/publicatie/2015/45/sociale-samenhang-2015-wat-ons-bindt-en-verdeelt

CBS (Statistics Netherlands) (2020). *Jaarrapport Integratie 2020.* https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/publicatie/2020/46/jaarrapport-integratie-2020

CBS (Statistics Netherlands) StatLine (2018). *Onderwijsinstellingen; Grootte, soort, levensbeschouwelijke grondslag* [Data set]. Accessed September 5, 2018, http://statline.cbs.nl/Statweb/publication/?DM1/4SLNL&PA1/403753&D11/40&D21/40%2c5&D31/40-2&D41/40&D51/40-19%2c26-27&HDR1/4G3%2cG1%2cG2&STB1/4T%2cG4&VW1/4D

Cherng, H. S., & Davis, L. A. (2017). Multicultural matters: An investigation of key assumptions of multicultural education reform in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 70*(3), 219–236. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487117742884

Civitillo, S., Juang, L. P., & Schachner, M. K. (2018). Challenging beliefs about cultural diversity in education: A synthesis and critical review of trainings with pre-service teachers. *Educational Research Review, 24*, 67–83. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2018.01.003

Cliteur, P. B. (2004). *De neutrale staat, het bijzonder onderwijs en de multiculturele samenleving* [academic speech, Leiden University]. Scholarly Publications Repository of Leiden University. https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4532

Cooling, T. (2012). What is a controversial issue? Implications for the treatment of religious belief in education. *Journal of Beliefs and Values, 33*(2), 169–182. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2012. 694060

Cooling, T., Green, B., Morris, A., & Revell, L. (2016). *Christian faith in English church schools.* Peter Lang.

Council of Europe (2014). *Signposts: Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education*.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.

Crouch, M., & McKenzie, H. (2006). The logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research. *Social Science Information*, *45*(4), 483-499. https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018406069584

DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services) (2015). *Data management plan for scientific research*. https://dans.knaw.nl/en/about/organisation-and-policy/information-material/DANSdatamanagementplanjanuari2015UK.pdf

Davie, G. (2000). *Religion in modern Europe: A memory mutates.* Oxford University Press.

Day, C., Kington, A., Stobart, G., & Sammons, P. (2006). The personal and professional selves of teachers: Stable and unstable identities. *British Educational Research Journal, 32*(4), 601–616. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920600775316

De Bruin-Wassinkmaat, A. R. (2021). *Finding one's own way: Exploring the religious identity development of emerging adults raised in strictly Reformed contexts in the Netherlands* [Doctoral dissertation, Protestantse Theologische Universiteit]. Ridderprint.

De Hart, J. (2021). *De pijlen van Apollo: Nederland en religie in tijden van corona.* PThU/Fonds Kerk en Wereld.

De Hart, J. J. M. (2007). Postmoderne spiritualiteit. In T. Bernts, G. Dekker & J. de Hart, *God in Nederland: 1996-2006* (pp. 118-195). Ten Have.

De Hart, J., & Van Houwelingen, P., (2018). *Christenen in Nederland: Kerkelijke deelname en christelijke gelovigheid.* Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

De Hart, J., Van Houwelingen, P., & Huijnk, W., (2022). *Religie in een pluriforme samenleving: Diversiteit en verandering in beeld. Deel 3: Buiten kerk en moskee.* Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

De Jong, J. (2018). *Handboek academisch schrijven.* Couthino.

De Jong-Markus, J. J. (2020). Bijzonder onderwijs in het publieke en politieke debat: Zes verschillende discussiepunten [Internal report, Research Centre, Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education]. Unpublished.

De Muynck, A. (2008). *Een goddelijk beroep: Spiritualiteit in de beroepspraktijk van leraren in het orthodox–protestant basisonderwijs*. Groen.

De Muynck, A. (2018). *Gids en pelgrim: Profiel van de christelijke Leraar.* De Banier.

De Muynck, A., & De Kock, A. (2009). Over godsdienstpedagogiek en monoreligieuze vorming. *Beweging, 75*(4), 44-45.

De Muynck, A., Miedema, S., & Ter Avest, I. (2014). Education and religion in the Netherlands. In C. Wolhuter & C. De Wet (Eds.), *International comparative perspectives on religion and education* (pp. 107–125). Sun.

De Muynck, B. (2009). Onderzoek bij leraren als spiegel voor de praktische theologie: Een reflectie vanuit de sociale wetenschappen. *Theologia Reformata, 52*(4), 369-378.

De Muynck, B. (2019, September 18). Leer jongeren "goed doen aan allen". *Reformatorisch Dagblad.* https://www.digibron.nl/viewer/collectie/Digibron/offset/9/zoekwoord/%22christelijk+burgerschap%22/id/tag:RD.nl,20190918:newsml_fa6d7ff6747fb5ada2f1f8112788bc64

De Ruyter, D. J. (2003). The importance of ideals in education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 37*(3), 467–482. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.00339

De Ruyter, D. J. (2006). Be ye perfect? Religious ideals in education. *Journal of Beliefs & Values, 27*(3), pp. 269–280. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617670601000977

De Ruyter, D. J. (2007). Mijn juf is de allerbeste van de hele wereld: Over professionele idealen van leraren. In J. J. Kole & D. J. de Ruyter (Eds.), *Werkzame idealen: Ethische reflecties op professionaliteit* (pp. 77–88). Van Gorcum.

De Ruyter, D. J., & Kole, J. J. (2001). Questionnaire 'Ideals in life and teaching'. (Questionnaire asked for by the researchers.)

De Ruyter, D. J., & Kole, J. J. (2010). Our teachers want to be the best: On the necessity of intra-professional reflection about moral ideals of teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 16*(2), 207-218. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600903478474

De Ruyter, D. J., & Merry, M. S. (2009). Why education in public schools should include religious ideals. *Studies in Philosophy and Education, 28*(4), 295–311. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-008-9120-4

De Ruyter, D. J., Conroy, J. C., Lappin, M., & McKinney, S. (2003). From heaven to earth: A comparison of ideals of ITE students. *British Journal of Religious Education, 25*(4), 292–307. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141620030250404

De Wolff, A. C. J. (2000). *Typisch Christelijk? Een onderzoek naar de identiteit van een christelijke school en haar vormgeving* [Doctoral dissertation, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. Kok.

De Wolff, A. C. J. (2006). Religie, fundamentalisme en burgerschap. In: S. Miedema & G. D. Bertram-Troost (Eds.), *Levensbeschouwelijk leren samenleven* (pp. 155–170). Meinema.

De Wolff, A. C. J., De Ruyter, D. J., & Miedema, S. (2003). Being a Christian school in the Netherlands: An analysis of a school and its practical implications. *Journal of Beliefs and Values 24*(2), 207–217. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617670305426

De Wolff, A. C. J., Miedema, S., & De Ruyter, D. J. (2002). Identity of a Christian school: Conceptions and practical significance. A reconstructive comparison. *Educational Review 54*(3), 239–247. https://doi.org/10.1080/0013191022000016301

Dekker, G. (2016). *Zie hoe alles hier verandert: Het verloop van de gereformeerden.* Kok.

Dekker, P., & Den Ridder, J. (2014). Polariseert Nederland? Ontwikkelingen in politiek-culturele tegenstellingen. In M. Bovens, P. Dekker, and W. Tiemeijer (Eds.), *Gescheiden werelden?* (pp. 103-129). Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau / Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid.

Dekker, W. H. (2021). Vertrouwen: De opgave van het sociaal werk in een gepolariseerde context [academic speech, Ede Christian University of Applied Sciences (CHE)]. https://www.che.nl/nieuws/nieuws/het-belang-van-vertrouwen-het-sociaal-domein

Denessen, E., Driessena, G., & Sleegers, P. (2005). Segregation by choice? A study of group-specific reasons for school choice. *Journal of Education Policy*, *20*(3), 347–368. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930500108981

Dijkstra, A. B., & Miedema, S. (2003). *Bijzonder gemotiveerd: Een onderzoek naar de ideale school volgens dragers en vragers van confessioneel basisonderwijs*. Van Gorcum.

Dijkstra, A. B., Kuiper, E., & Nieuwelink, H. (2018). *Schoolkenmerken voor bevordering van burgerschapscompetenties van leerlingen in het basisonderwijs.* UvA / Kohnstamm Instituut / HvA.

Dobbernack, J., Modood, T., & Triandafyllidou, A. (2013). *Advances in tolerance theory in Europe.* European University Institute Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Driestar educatief (n.d.). *Bachelor Leraar basisonderwijs (pabo): Voltijdroute.* https://www.driestar-hogeschool.nl/opleidingen/leraar-basisonderwijs-(pabo)-voltijd#while

Driestar educatief (2021). *Bestuursverslag 2020.* https://www.driestar-educatief.nl/medialibrary/Driestar/Over-ons/Bestanden/Bestuursverslag-2020-v-pub.pdf

Dronkers, J. (1995). The existence of parental choice in the Netherlands. *Educational Policy, 9*(3), 227–243. https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904895009003001

Dujardin, A. (2020, March 15). Het debat over burgerschap vliegt uit de bocht. *Trouw.* https://www.trouw.nl/onderwijs/het-debat-over-burgerschap-vliegt-uit-de-bocht~b0c1acf0/

DUO (2016). *Adressen van alle schoolvestigingen in het basisonderwijs* [Data set]. Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs. Accessed December 5, 2016, https://duo.nl/open_onderwijsdata/databestanden/po/adressen/adressen-po-3.jsp

DUO (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs) (2016). *Adressen van alle schoolvestigingen in het basisonderwijs* [Data set]. Accessed December 5, 2016, https://duo.nl/open_onderwijsdata/databestanden /po/adressen/adressen-po-3.jsp

Dutch Eurydice Unit (2007). *The education system in the Netherlands 2006.* Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. https://www.bvekennis.nl/Bibliotheek/08-0216_eurydice_2007_en.pdf

Duyvendak, J. W. (2004). *Een eensgezinde vooruitstrevende natie: Over de mythe van 'de' individualisering en de toekomst van de sociologie.* Vossiuspers UvA.

Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal (Senate of the Dutch Parliament) (2020). *Wijziging van een aantal onderwijswetten in verband met verduidelijking van de burgerschapsopdracht aan scholen in het funderend onderwijs: Gewijzigd voorstel van wet.* https://www.eerstekamer.nl/behandeling/20201117/gewijzigd_voorstel_van_wet/document3/f=/vldvec0yltza_opgemaakt.pdf

Elias, J. L. (2010). Philosophical reflections on dialogue. In: K. Engebretson, M. De Souza, G. Durka & L. Gearon (Eds.), *International handbook of inter-religious education. Part one* (pp. 57-72). Springer.

Elliott, R. (1999). Editor's introduction to special issue on qualitative psychotherapy research: Definitions, themes and discoveries. *Psychotherapy Research 9*(3), 251-257. https://doi.org/10.1080/10503309912331332741

Elliott, R., & Timulak, L. (2005). Descriptive and interpretive approaches to qualitative research. In J. Miles & P. Gilbert (Eds.), *A handbook of research methods for clinical and health psychology* (pp. 147–159). Oxford University Press.

Elshof, T. (2008). *Van huis uit katholiek: Een praktisch theologisch, semiotisch onderzoek naar de ontwikkeling van religiositeit in drie generaties van rooms-katholieke families.* Eburon.

Enthoven, M., & Oostdam, R. (2014). De functie en zin van praktijkgericht onderzoek door studenten van educatieve hbo-opleidingen. *VELON Tijdschrift voor Lerarenopleiders, 35*(5)*, 47-60.

Epstein, J. L. (2001). *School, family and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools.* Westview.

Estellés, M., & Fischman, G. E. (2020). Who needs global citizenship education? A review of the literature on teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 72*(2), 223-236. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487120920254

European Commission (2016). *The EU and the refugee crisis.* Publications Office of the European Union. https://doi.org/10.2775/1491

Evan Kaplan, D. (2001). The educational crisis in American Reform Judaism. *Journal of Beliefs and Values, 22*(2), 183–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/1361670120079488

Evans, S. (2016, September 9). Facilitating more religious segregation in faith schools can only harm social cohesion. *Huffington Post.* https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/stephen-evans/faith-schools_b_11929082.html

Everett, H. S. (2012). *Faith schools and tolerance: A comparative study of the influence of faith schools on students' attitudes of tolerance* [Doctoral dissertation, University of London]*. UCL Discovery. https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10020678

Evers, J. (2015). *Kwalitatieve analyse: Kunst én kunde.* Boom Lemma.

Evers, J., & De Boer, F. (2012). *The qualitative interview: Art and skill.* Boom.

Exalto, J. (2018). Kerk, school en partij: De SGP als politieke representatie van de bevindelijk gereformeerden. In H. Vollaard & G. Voerman (Eds.), *Mannen van Gods Woord: De Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij 1918–2018* (pp. 47–68). Verloren.

Exalto, J., & Bertram-Troost, G. (2019). Strong religion in a secular society: The case of orthodox Reformed schools in the Netherlands. *Education Sciences, 9*(1), 28. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9010028

Fives, H. & Buehl, M. M. (2012). Spring cleaning for the 'messy' construct of teachers' beliefs: What are they? Which have been examined? What can they tell us? In: K. R. Harris, S. Graham, & T. Urdan (Eds.), *APA Educational psychology handbook: Vol. 2. Individual differences and cultural and contextual factors* (pp. 471-499). American Psychological Association.

Forsey, M. G. (2010). Publicly minded, privately focused: Western Australian teachers and school choice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(1), 53–60. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.06.011

Forst, R. (2003). *Toleranz im Konflikt: Geschichte, Gehalt und Gegenwart eines umstrittenen Begrifss.* Suhrkamp.

Forst, R. (2004). The limits of toleration. *Constellations, 11*(3), 312–325. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1351-0487.2004.00379.x

Fullan, M. G. (1993). Why teachers must become change agents. *Educational Leadership 50*(6), 12-17.

Glenn, C. L., & De Groof, J. (2005). The Netherlands. In C. L. Glenn & J. De Groof (Eds.), *Balancing freedom, autonomy and accountability in education: Vol. 2* (pp. 291–318). Wolf.

Godwin, R. K., Godwin, J. W., & Martinez-Ebers, V. (2004). Civic socialization in public and fundamentalist schools. *Social Science Quarterly, 85*(5), 1097−1111. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0038-4941.2004.00265.x

Gommers, L., & Hermans, C. A. M. (2003). Beliefs in action: Teachers' identity influences school's identity? *International Journal of Education and Religion*, *4*(2), 186–198. https://doi.org/10.1163/157006203322848595

Greven, J., & Letschert, J. (2006). *Kerndoelenboekje basisonderwijs.* Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2006/04/28/kerndoelenboekje

Grimmitt, M. (1981). When is 'commitment' a problem in Religious Education? *British Journal of Educational Studies, 29*(1), 42–53. https://doi.org/10.2307/3120423

Guarino, C. M., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research, 76*(2), 173–208. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543076002173

Habermas, J. (2005). *Zwischen Naturalismus und Religion. Philosophische Aufsätze.* Suhrkamp.

Halsema, F. (2019, March 29). Veilige plek voor onveilige meningen [Lecture]. Kohnstammlezing, University of Amsterdam. https://webcolleges.uva.nl/Mediasite/Play/1afadfe027b14d27a8b4ec9c97f98f9d1d

Hamer, M. (2018, June 19). *Diversiteit: veel kansen voor mensen, bedrijven en samenleving* [Lecture]. https://www.ser.nl/nl/actueel/toespraken/diversiteit-kansen

't Hart, H., Boeije, H., & Hox, J. (Eds.) (2005). *Onderzoeksmethoden* (7th ed.). Boom.

Harteveld, E. (2021). Fragmented foes: Affective polarization in the multiparty context of the Netherlands. *Electoral Studies, 71*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102332

Hassi, A., & Sorti, G. (2012). Globalization and culture: The three H scenarios. In H. Cuadra-Montiel (Ed.), *Globalization: Approaches to diversity* (pp. 3-20). InTech. https://doi.org/10.5772/45655

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement.* Routledge.

Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers. Maximizing impact on learning.* Routledge.

Häusler, N., Pirner, M. L., Scheunpflug, A., & Kröner, S. (2019). Religious and professional beliefs of schoolteachers: A literature review of empirical research. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 18*(5), 24–41. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.18.5.3

Haworth, P. (2015). Pedagogies of working with diversity: Doing, knowing, being, belonging, becoming. In L. Orland-Barak & C. J. Craig (Eds.), *International teacher education: Promising pedagogies (Part B)* (pp. 115-135)*.* Emerald.

Herweijer, L., & Vogels, R. (2004). *Ouders over opvoeding en onderwijs.* Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

Holliday, A. (2007). *Doing and writing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Homan, R., & Youngman, J. (1982). School and church as agencies of religious socialization. *British Journal of Religious Education, 5*(1), 22–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141620820050106

Hurst, J. (2000). Religious requirements: The case for Roman Catholic schools in the 1940s and Muslim schools in the 1990s. *Journal of Beliefs and Values, 21*(1), 87–97. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617670050002354

Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Inspectorate of Education) (2006). *Toezichtkader Actief burgerschap en sociale integratie.* Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal (House of Representatives). https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-29666-13-b1

Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Inspectorate of Education) (2016). *Burgerschap op school: Een beschrijving van burgerschapsonderwijs en de maatschappelijke stage.* https://www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/documenten/rapporten/2017/02/07/burgerschap-op-school

Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Inspectorate of Education) (2020). B*urgerschapsonderwijs en het omgaan met verschil in morele opvattingen.* https://www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/documenten/themarapporten/2020/03/13/burgerschapsonderwijs-en-het-omgaan-met-verschil-in-morele-opvattingen

Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Inspectorate of Education) (2021a). *Onderzoekskader 2021 voorschoolse educatie en primair onderwijs.* https://www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/onderwerpen/onderzoekskaders/documenten/publicaties/2021/07/01/onderzoekskader-2021-primair-onderwijs

Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Inspectorate of Education) (2021b). *Specifiek (herstel)onderzoek I Bestuurlijk handelen.* https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2021/06/18/specifiek-onderzoek-bestuurlijk-handelen-gomarus

Inspectie ven het Onderwijs (Inspectorate of Education) (2018). *De staat van het onderwijs: Onderwijsverslag 2016/2017.* https://www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/onderwerpen/staat-van-het-onderwijs/documenten/rapporten/2018/04/11/rapport-de-staat-van-het-onderwijs

Ipgrave, J. (2004). Religious plurality: Including pupils' faith background in primary religious education. *Support for Learning, 19*(3), 114-118. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0268-2141.2004.00332.x

Ivey, J. (2016). Is descriptive research worth doing? *Pediatric Nursing, 42*(4), 189.

Jackson, R. (2003). *International perspectives on citizenship, education and religious diversity.* Routledge.

Jackson, R. (2004). *Rethinking religious education and plurality: Issues in diversity and pedagogy.* Routledge.

Jackson, R., & Everington, J. (2017). Teaching inclusive religious education impartially: An English perspective. *British Journal of Religious Education, 39*(1), 7-24. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141620 0.2016.1165184

Jennissen, R., Engbersen, G., Bokhorst, M., & Bovens, M. (2018). *De nieuwe verscheidenheid: Toenemende diversiteit naar herkomst in Nederland.* Wetenschappelijke Raad voor Regeringsbeleid.

Kantzara, V. (2011). The relation of education to social cohesion. *Social Cohesion and Development, 6*(1), 37-50. https://doi.org/10.12681/scad.8973

Kater, M. J. (2017). *Tolerantie in balans.* Labarum.

Kelchtermans, G. (2009). Who I am in how I teach is the message: Self-understanding, vulnerability and reflection. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 15*(2), 257–272. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600902875332

Kelchtermans, G. (2012). De leraar als (on)eigentijdse professional: Reflecties over de "moderne professionaliteit" van leraren. Onderwijsraad. https://www.onderwijsraad.nl/publicaties/rapporten/2013/03/11/studie-de-leraar-als-oneigentijdse-professional

Kleijwegt, M. (2016). 2 Werelden 2 werkelijkheden: Hoe ga je daar als docent mee om? Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap. https://www.socialestabiliteit.nl/documenten/publicaties/2017/09/01/twee-werelden-twee-werkelijkheden

Knauth, T., Jozsa, D.-P., Bertram-Troost, G. & Ipgrave, J. (Eds.) (2008). *Encoutering religious pluralism in school and society: A qualitative study of teenage perspectives in Europe.* Waxmann.

Kole, J. (2011). Teaching moral competence to pre-professionals: A blessing or a curse? In D. J. de Ruyter & S. Miedema (Eds.), *Moral Education and Development* (pp. 239-253). Sense Publishers.

Kole, J. J. (2005). De waarheid en niets dan de waarheid: Over fundamentalisme en tolerantie. In J. J. Kole & G. de Kruijf (Eds.), *Het ongemak van religie: Multiculturaliteit en ethiek* (pp. 174–196). Kok.

Kole, J. J. (2007a). Professionele idealen vanuit ethisch perspectief: Inleiding. In J. J. Kole & D. J. de Ruyter (Eds.), *Werkzame idealen: Ethische reflecties op professionaliteit* (pp. 1-10). Van Gorcum.

Kole, J. J. (2007b). Werkzaam idealisme voor professionals: Ter afsluiting. In J. J. Kole & D. J. de Ruyter (Eds.), *Werkzame idealen: Ethische reflecties op professionaliteit* (pp. 177-192). Van Gorcum.

Kole, J. J., & De Kruijf, G. (2005). Inleiding: Religie, multiculturaliteit en ethiek In J. J. Kole & G. de Kruijf (Eds.), *Het ongemak van religie: Multiculturaliteit en ethiek* (pp. 7-21). Kok.

Kole, J. J., & De Ruyter, D. J. (2011). Betrokken en bevlogen: Beroepsethiek en werkzame idealen van leraren. *HJK, 38*(5), 4-7.

Koonce, K. A. (2011). Social cohesion as the goal: Can social cohesion be directly pursued? *Peabody Journal of Education, 86*(2), 144–154. https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2011.561176

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, *24*(1), 120-124. https://doi.org/10.1080/13814 788.2017.1375092

Korthagen, F. A. J. (2004). In search of the essence of a good teacher: Towards a more holistic approach in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 20*(1), 77-97. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2003.10.002

Kunz, B., & Van Doleweerd, J. (2021). *Stapstenen: Godsdienstige vorming in het basisonderwijs.* De Banier.

Kuyk, E. (2007). Religious education in the Netherlands. In: E. Kuyk, R. Jensen, D. Lankshear, E. Löh Manna & P. Schreiner (Eds.), *Religious education in Europe: Situation and current trends in schools* (pp. 135-140). IKO.

Leijnse, F., Hulst, J., & Vroomans, L. (2006). Passie en precisie: Over de veranderde functie van de hogescholen. *TH&MA Hoger Onderwijs 5*(1), 47-54.

Leu, E. (2005). *The role of teachers, schools, and communities in quality education: A review of the literature.* Academy for Educational Development Global Education Center.

Lukacs, K. (2015). 'For me, change is not a choice': The lived experience of a teacher change agent. *American Secondary Education 44*(1), 38-49.

Mackay, R. (2015, September 2). Brutal images of Syrian boy drowned off Turkey must be seen, activists say. *The New York Times.* https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/03/world/middleeast/brutal-images-of-syrian-boy-drowned-off-turkey-must-be-seen-activists-say.html

MacMullen, I. (2004). Education for autonomy: The role of religious elementary schools. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 38*(4), 601–615. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0309-8249.2004.00407.x

MacMullen, I. (2018). religious schools, civic education, and public policy: A framework for evaluation and decision. *Theory and Research in Education, 16*(2), 141–161. https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878518769397

Magos, K. (2006). Teachers from the majority population—Pupils from the minority: Results of a research in the field of Greek minority education. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 29*(3), 357–369. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619760600795189

Malterud, K. (2001). Qualitative Research: Standards, challenges, and guidelines. *The Lancet, 358*(9280), 483-488. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(01)05627-6

Mansour, N. (2008). The experiences and personal religious beliefs of Egyptian science teachers as a framework for understanding the shaping and reshaping of their beliefs and practices about Science-Technology-Society (STS). *International Journal of Science Education, 30*(12), 1605–1634. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500690701463303

Mansour, N. (2011). Science teachers' views of science and religion vs. the Islamic perspective: Conflicting or compatible? *Science Education, 95*(2), 281–309. https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.20418

Markus, J. J., Bertram-Troost, G. D., De Kock, A., De Muynck, A., & Barnard, M. (2019). Stimulating inquisitiveness: Teachers at orthodox Protestant schools about their roles in religious socialization. *Religious Education, 114*(4), 513-527. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2019.1581874

Markus, J. J., Bertram-Troost, G. D., De Muynck, A., De Kock, A., & Barnard, M. (2021b). Distinction, identification, and recognition: Teachers in orthodox Protestant schools on their faith and religious others. *International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society, 11*(1), 137-154. https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8633/CGP/v11i01/137-154

Markus, J. J., Bos, P. J. D., & De Muynck, A. (2020). *Leraren, (religieuze) diversiteit en opleiding: Ideeën van en voor lerarenopleiders en alumni* [Internal report, Research Centre, Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education]. Unpublished.

Markus, J. J., De Kock, A., De Muynck, A., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Barnard, M. (2018). How cohesion matters: Teachers and their choice to work at an orthodox Protestant school. *Journal of School Choice*, *12*(4), 567-587. https://doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2018.1437313

Markus, J. J., De Kock, J., De Muynck, B., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Barnard, M. (2021a). *Religious tolerance as educational goal in orthodox Protestant schools: Exploring the concept and tensions teachers potentially experience* [Manuscript submitted for publication]. Practices, Protestantse Theologische Universiteit.

Markus, J. J., De Muynck, B., De Kock, J., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Barnard, M. (in press). Beyond right-or-wrong thinking: Alumni and teacher educators about religious diversity in orthodox Protestant teacher education. *International Journal of Christianity & Education.*

Martínez-Ariño, J., & Teinturier, S. (2019). Faith-based schools in contexts of religious diversity: An introduction, *Religion & Education*, *46*(2), 147-158. https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2019.1590941

Mason, A. (2018). Faith schools and the cultivation of tolerance. *Theory and Research in Education, 16*(2), 204–225. https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878518779881

Mason, A., & Wareham, R. (2018). Faith schools and civic virtue. *Theory and Research in Education, 16*(2), 137−140. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1477878518786573

Maussen, M., & Vermeulen, F. (2015). Liberal equality and toleration for conservative religious minorities: Decreasing opportunities for religious schools in the Netherlands? *Comparative Education, 51*(1), 87–104. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2014.935576

McCreery, E., Jones, L., & Holmes, R. (2007). Why do Muslim parents want Muslim schools? *Early Years, 27*(3), 203–219. https://doi.org/10.1080/09575140701594350

McKenney, S., & Reeves, T. C. (2019). *Conducting Educational Design Research* (2nd ed.)*.* Routledge

McKinney, S. (2004). Jewish education and formation in Glasgow: A case study. *Journal of Beliefs and Values, 25*(1), 31–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/1361767042000198988

Merry, M. S. (2005). Cultural coherence and the schooling for identity maintenance. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 39*(3), 477–497. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2005.00449.x

Merry, M. S. (2013). *Equality, citizenship, and segregation: a defense of separation.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Merry, M. S. (2020). Can schools teach citizenship? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *41*(1), 124-138. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2018.1488242

Merry, M. S., & Driessen, G. (2014). On the right track? Islamic schools in the Netherlands after an era of turmoil. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 19*(4), 856-879. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2014.985586

Merry, M. S., & Karsten, S. (2010). Restricted liberty, parental choice and homeschooling. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 44*(4), 497–514. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2010.00770.x

Miedema, S. (2003). *De onmogelijke mogelijkheid van levensbeschouwelijke opvoeding* [Academic speech, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. VU Research Portal. https://research.vu.nl/files/1285581/201506151100.pdf

Miedema, S. (2006). Educating for religious citizenship: Religious education as identity formation. In M. De Souza, K. Engebretson, G. Durka, R. Jackson & A. McGrady (Eds.), *International handbook of the religious, spiritual and moral dimensions of education: Vol. 1 and 2* (pp. 967-976). Springer.

Miedema, S. (2010). Levensbeschouwelijke burgerschapsvorming als pedagogisch-maatschappelijke bijdrage aan het publieke en sociale domein. In S. Raemakers, Th. Storme, P. Verstraete & J. Vlieghe (Eds.), *De publieke betekenis van pedagogisch denken en handelen* (pp. 66-73). SWP.

Miedema, S. (2017). Position, commitment and worldview from a pedagogical perspective. In H-G. Heimbrock (Ed.), *Taking position: Empirical studies and theoretical reflections on religious education and worldview* (pp. 127-138). Waxmann.

Miedema, S., & Bertram-Troost, G. D. (2008). Democratic citizenship and religious education: Challenges and perspectives for schools in the Netherlands. *British Journal of Religious Education, 30*(2), 123–132. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200701830970

Miedema, S., Bertram-Troost, G., & Veugelers, W. (2013). Onderwijs, levensbeschouwing en het publiek domein: Inleiding op het themanummer. *Pedagogiek*, 33(2), 73-89. https://doi.org/10.5117/PED2013.2.MIED

Miles, B. M., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Molenaar, M. (2019). Hoe maak ik van mijn leerlingen goede burgers? *DRS Magazine 48* (9), pp. 16-17.

Morgan, D. L., & Hoffman, K. (2018). Focus groups. In: U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection* (pp. 250-263). SAGE.

Moyaert, M. (2011). *Fragile identities: Towards a theology of interreligious hospitality.* Rodopi.

Munniksma, A., Dijkstra, A. B., Van der Veen, I., Ledoux, G., Van de Werfhorst, H., & Ten Dam, G. (2017). *Burgerschap in het voortgezet onderwijs: Nederland in vergelijkend perspectief.* Amsterdam University Press.

NIDI/CBS (Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute/Statistics Netherlands) (2020). *Bevolking 2050 in beeld: drukker, diverser en dubbelgrijs. Deelrapport Verkenning Bevolking 2050.* https://publ.nidi.nl/output/2020/nidi-cbs-2020-bevolking-2050-in-beeld.pdf

NIDI/CBS (Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute/Statistics Netherlands) (2021). *Bevolking 2050 in beeld: opleiding, arbeid, zorg en wonen. Eindrapport Verkenning Bevolking 2050.* https://publ.nidi.nl/output/2021/nidi-cbs-2021-bevolking-2050-in-beeld.pdf

Nieuwelink, H., Boogaard, M., Dijkstra, A. B., Kuiper, E., & Ledoux, G. (2016). *Onderwijs in burgerschap: Wat scholen kunnen doen. Lessen uit wetenschap en praktijk.* Kohnstamm Instituut.

O'Neill, J. (2017). Teacher educators' responsibility to prepare candidates for classroom realities. In: M. A. Peters, B. Cowie & I. Menter (Eds.). *A Companion to Research in Teacher Education* (pp. 495-505). Springer.

Obidah, J. E. & Howard, T. C. (2005). Preparing teachers for "Monday morning" in the urban school classroom: Reflecting on our pedagogies and practices as effective teacher educators. *Journal of Teacher Education, 56*(3), 248–255. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487105275920

Obidah, J. E. (2004, April). Learning about cultural identity (their own) in teacher education: Exploring novice teachers' literate currency about teaching urban school students [Paper presentation]. Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA, United States.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2014). *Education Policy Outlook Netherlands.* http://www.oecd.org/edu/EDUCATION%20POLICY%20OUTLOOK_NETHERLANDS_EN%20.pdf

Onderwijsraad (2012). *Verder met burgerschap in het onderwijs.* https://www.onderwijsraad.nl/publicaties/adviezen/2012/08/27/verder-met-burgerschap-in-het-onderwijs

Onderwijsraad (2021). *Set limits, allow freedom.* https://www.onderwijsraad.nl/publicaties/adviezen/2021/10/05/set-limits-allow-freedom

Oomen, B., & Rijke, N. (2013). The right to be different: Homosexuality, orthodoxy and the politics of global legal pluralism in orthodox−Protestant schools in the Netherlands. *Journal of Law and Religion*, *28*(2), 361–399. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0748081400000084

Orteza y Miranda, E. (2010). Religious pluralism and dialogue/interreligious dialogue. In: K. Engebretson, M. De Souza, G. Durka & L. Gearon (Eds.). *International handbook of inter-religious education. Part One* (pp. 265-280). Springer.

Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62*(3), 307–332. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543062003307

Pantić, N., & Florian, L. (2015). Developing teachers as agents of inclusion and social justice. *Education Inquiry, 6*(3), 333-351. https://doi.org/10.3402/edui.v6.27311

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.)*.* SAGE.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE.

Pike, M. (2010). A tale of two schools: Comparing and contrasting Jacobus Fruytier Scholengemeenschap in the Netherlands and Bradford Christian School in England. *Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education, 31*(2), 181-190. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2010.503631

Pike, M. A. (2005). Citizenship education and faith schools: What should children in Christian schools understand and appreciate about a liberal and secular society? *Journal of Education & Christian Belief, 9*(1), 35-45. https://doi.org/10.1177/205699710500900105

Pons-de Wit, A. (2017). Oprecht en toegankelijk: Bevindelijk gereformeerd geloven in pluraliteit. In J. Exalto (Ed.), *De multiculturele refoschool* (pp. 147–172). Labarum.

Prins, D., Wienke, D., & Van Rooijen, K. (2013). *Ouderbetrokkenheid in het onderwijs.* Nederlands Jeugdinstituut.

Reid, C., & Major, J. (Eds.) (2017). *Global teaching: Southern perspectives on teachers working with diversity.* Palgrave.

Rijke, N. A. (2019). *Een voortdurende schoolstrijd: Identiteitsgebonden benoemingsbeleid ten aanzien van personeel op orthodox-protestantse basis- en middelbare scholen in Nederland in relatie tot mensenrechten.* Boom juridisch.

Rissanen, I., & Sai, Y. (2018). A comparative study of how social cohesion is taught in Islamic religious education in Finland and Ireland. *British Journal of Religious Education, 40*(3), 337–347. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2017.1352487

Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research* (4th ed.). Wiley.

Rottier, R. (2014, December 13). Essay: Telkens terug naar de bron. *Reformatorisch Dagblad*. www.driestar-educatief.nl/over-ons/actueel/nieuws/essay-telkens-terug-naar-de-bron

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Sandoval, W. A. (2013). Educational Design Research in the 21st Century. In R. Luckin, S. Puntambekar, P. Goodyear, B. L. Grabowski, J. Underwood & N. Winters, *Handbook of Design in Educational Technology* (pp. 388-396). Routledge.

Schiefer, D., & Van der Noll, J. (2017). The essentials of social cohesion: A literature review. *Social Indicators Research, 132*, 579–603. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-016-1314-5

Schnabel, P. (2004). *Individualisering en sociale integratie.* Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

Scholefield, L. (2004). Bagels, schnitzel and McDonald's: The 'fuzzy frontiers' of Jewish identity in an English Jewish secondary school. *British Journal of Religious Education, 26*(3), 237–248. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141620042000232292

Schön, D. A. (1973). *The reflective practioner: How professionals think in action.* Taylor & Francis.

Schreuders, J. (2021). Neutraal Burgerschap is onmogelijk! *DRS Magazine, 49*(11), 23.

SCP (2022). *Ontkerkelijking leidt tot nieuwe verhoudingen in de samenleving.* https://www.scp.nl/actueel/nieuws/2022/03/24/ontkerkelijking-leidt-tot-nieuwe-verhoudingen-in-de-samenleving,

Short, G. (2002). Faith-based schools: A threat to social cohesion? *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 36*(4), 559–572. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.00295

Slagboom, E. (2021). Richard Toes: Na 45 jaar nog niet uitgekeken op het Wartburg College. *DRS Magazine 49*(11), p. 38-41.

SLO (2006). *Core objectives primary education.* http://www.slo.nl/primair/kerndoelen/Dutch_Core_objectives_Primary_Education__2006_.pdf/

Smaling, A. (1997). Argumentatie, coöperatie en caritas in kwalitatief onderzoek. In A. Smaling & E. Hijmans, *Kwalitatief onderzoek en levensbeschouwing* (pp. 132-170). Boom.

Smaling, A. (2009). Generaliseerbaarheid in kwalitatief onderzoek. *Kwalon, 14(3),* 5-12.

Smithson, J. (2012). Focus groups. In: P. Alasuutari, L. Bickman & J. Brannen (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of social research methods* (pp. 357-370)*.* SAGE. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446212165

Speelman, C. (2014). *Ontdekkend levensbeschouwelijk leren*. Boekencentrum.

Spoelstra, T. (2016). *Verbondsonderwijs: Geschiedenis van het gereformeerd-vrijgemaakte onderwijs in Nederland.* Vuurbaak.

Spoelstra, T. (2020, December 15). Burgerschapsvorming heeft tegendraadse visie nodig. *Reformatorisch Dagblad.* https://www.digibron.nl/viewer/collectie/Digibron/id/tag:RD.nl,20201215:newsml_pr16563750

Sremac, S., & Ganzevoort, R. R. (2017). Lived religion and lived (in)tolerance. In: R. R. Ganzevoort & S. Sremac (Eds.), *Lived religion and the politics of (in)tolerance* (pp. 1-15)*.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Staatsblad (2005, December 22). *Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden 2005, 678. https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2005-678.pdf*

Staatsblad (2021, July 2). *Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden 2021, 321.* https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2021-321

Sterkens, C. J. A. (2001). *Interreligious learning: The problem of interreligious dialogue in primary education.* Brill.

Stoffels, H. (1995). Als een briesende leeuw: Orthodox-protestanten in de slag met de tijdgeest. Kok.

Strike, K. A. (2000a). Liberalism, communitarism and the space between: In praise of kindness. *Journal of Moral Education, 29*(2), 133-147. https://doi.org/10.1080/713679340

Strike, K. A. (2000b). On the construction of public speech: Pluralism and public reason. *Educational Theory*, *44,* 1-26.

Subedi, B. (2006). Preservice teachers' beliefs and practices: Religion and religious diversity. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 39*(3), 227–238. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680600788495

Taylor, C. (2002). *Varieties of religion today: William James revisited.* Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (2007). *A secular age.* Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Ten Dam, G., Geijsel, F., Reumerman, R., & Ledoux, G. (2010). Burgerschapscompetenties: De ontwikkeling van een meetinstrument, *Pedagogische Studiën*, *87*(5), 313–333.

Ten Dam, G., Geijsel, F., Reumerman, R., & Ledoux, G. (2011). Measuring young people's citizenship competences. *European Journal of Education, 46*(3), 354-372. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2011.01485.x

Ter Avest, I., Bertram-Troost, G. D., & Miedema, S. (2015). "If it feels good …": Research on school selection process motives among parents of young children. *Religion & Education, 42*(3), 357–367. https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2015.1041357

Terry, S., Roberts, A., Lord Baker of Dorking CH, Francis, B., Lord Harries of Pentregarth DD, Dubs, A., Fry, S., Al-Khalili, J., et al. (2019, April 14). Letter to the editor: Single-faith schools will split society. *The Sunday Times*. https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/letter-to-the-editor-single-faith-schools-will-splitsociety-wvgvtg0np

Thiessen, E. J. (1993). *Teaching for commitment: Liberal education, indoctrination and christian nurture.* McGill-Queen's University Press.

Thiessen, E. J. (2001). *In defence of religious schools and colleges.* McGillQueen's University.

Tierolf, B., Drost, L., & Van Kapel, M. (2018). *Zevende rapportage racisme, antisemitisme en extreemrechts geweld in Nederland: incidenten, aangiftes, verdachten en afhandeling in 2017.* Verwey-Jonker Instituut.

TNS Nipo (2016, July 6). *Tevredenheid scholenaanbod primair en voortgezet onderwijs* [Unpublished presentation]. Verus/VGS.

Toes, R. (2015). *De toets der kritiek: Het reformatorisch voortgezet onderwijs en de onderwijsvernieuwingen (1970-2005).* Labarum Academic.

Trommels, F. (2021). *Gevoel van kansenongelijkheid voedt versplintering en polarisatie.* Tilburg University. https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/nl/koen-abts-duidt-verkiezingsuitslag

Tuastad, S. (2016). What is it like to be a student in a religious school? *Religion & Education, 43*(1), 60–76. https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2015.1046796

Turkenburg, M. (2005). *Grenzen aan de maatschappelijke opdracht van de school: Een verkenning*. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal (House of Representatives) (2019). Wijziging van een aantal onderwijswetten in verband met verduidelijking van de burgerschapsopdracht aan scholen in het funderend onderwijs: Memorie van toelichting. https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-35352-3.html

UNESCO (2015). *Rethinking education: Towards a global common good?* https://en.unesco.org/news/rethinking-education-towards-global-common-good-launched-4-november

Valk, P., Bertram-Troost, G., Friederici, M., & Béraud, C. (Eds.) (2009). *Teenagers' perspectives on the role of religion in their lives, schools and societies: A European quantitative study.* Waxmann.

Van de Koot-Dees, D. (2013). *Prille geloofsopvoeding: Een kwalitatief onderzoek naar geloven in protestants-christelijke gezinnen in Amsterdam* [Doctoral dissertation, Protestantse Theologische Universiteit]. Boekencentrum Academic.

Van den Brink, B. (2002). Tolerantie als veelzijdige praktijk en deugd. In: G. Extra & A. de Ruijter (Eds.), *De multiculturele samenleving als uitdaging* (pp. 35–54). Aksant.

Van den Brink, J. (2020). Burgerschapsopdracht en vrijheid voor Bijbels onderwijs. *Criterium*, *49*(5), 2-7.

Van der Heijden, H. R. M. A. (2017). Teachers who make a difference: An investigation into teachers as change agents in primary education [Doctoral dissertation, Technische Universiteit Eindhoven]. Eindhoven University of Technology Research Portal. https://research.tue.nl/en/publications/teachers-who-make-a-difference-an-investigation-into-teachers-as-

Van der Heijden, H. R. M. A., Beijaard, D., Geldens, J. J. M., & Popeijus, H. L. (2018). Understanding teachers as change agents: An investigation of primary school teachers' self-perception. *Journal of Educational Change 19,* 347-373. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-018-9320-9

Van der Straten Waillet, N., & Roskam, I. (2013). Are religious tolerance and pluralism reachable ideals? A psychological perspective. *Religious Education, 108*(1), 69-87. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2013.747873

Van der Want, A., Ter Avest, I., Bakker, C., Bertram-Troost, G., & Miedema, S. (2009). The power of personal commitment: Dutch teachers and religious diversity. In A. van der Want, C. Bakker, I. ter Avest & J. Everington (Eds.), *Teachers responding to religious diversity in Europe: Researching biography and pedagogy* (pp. 81-94)*.* Waxmann.

Van Driel, B., Darmody, M., & Kerzil, J. (2016). *Education policies and practices to foster tolerance, respect for diversity and civic responsibility in children and young people in the EU, NESET II report.* Publications Office of the European Union.

Van Hardeveld, G. (2003). *Bijzonder bekwaam: Keuzeprocessen van leraren voor identiteitsversterkende beroepsbekwaamheden in het protestants-christelijk basisonderwijs*. CPS.

Van Laar-Jochemsen, T. (2019). *Bijzonder gevormd: Over vorming in het christelijk onderwijs.* Expertisecentrum Onderwijs & Identiteit. https://www.e-oi.nl/bijzonder-gevormd

Van Leest-Borst, A. M. (2005). *Fundamentalistische opvoeding vanuit liberaal-democratisch perspectief: Grenzen van de onderwijsvrijheid* [Doctoral disseration, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. VU Research Portal. https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/fundamentalistische-opvoeding-vanuit-liberaal-democratisch-perspe

Van Lieburg, F. A. (Ed.) (2007). *Refogeschiedenis in perspectief: Opstellen over de bevindelijke traditie.* Groen.

Van Nes, F., Abma, T., Jonsson, H., & Deeg, D. (2010). Language differences in qualitative research: Meaning lost in translation? *European Journal of Ageing*, *7*(4), 313–316. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-010-0168-y

Van Waveren, J. (2020). *Burgerschapsonderwijs en de leerkracht binnen het speelveld van pedagogiek en politiek* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Humanistic Studies]. NARCIS. http://repository.uvh.nl/handle/11439/3607

Veerman, G. (2020). Samen divers: Versterken van sociale cohesie in het onderwijs [Academic speech, de Christian University of Applied Sciences (CHE)]. https://www.che.nl/lectoraten/opleiding-leraar-basisonderwijs-samen-divers

Vereniging Hogescholen (2019). *Professionals voor morgen: Strategische agenda Vereniging Hogescholen 2019-2023.* Den Haag: Vereniging Hogescholen. https://www.vereniginghogescholen.nl/kennisbank/strategische-agenda-s-vereniging-hogescholen/artikelen/professionals-voor-morgen-strategische-agenda-vereniging-hogescholen-2019-2023

Vermeer, P. (2010). Religious education and socialization. *Religious Education, 105*(1), 103–116. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344080903472774

Vermeulen, H., & Markus, J. J. (2019). *Uitgangspunten voor burgerschapsonderwijs.* Driestar onderwijsadvies. https://www.driestar-educatief.nl/medialibrary/Driestar/Advies-en-begeleiding/Documenten/Uitgangspunten-Burgerschapsonderwijs-Driestar-educatief_def.pdf

Verschuren, P. J. M. (2009). *Praktijkgericht onderzoek: Ontwerp van organisatie- en beleidsonderzoek.* Boom Lemma.

Versteegt, I. (2010). Diversiteit in de klas: Perspectieven van de leerkracht [Doctoral dissertation, Utrecht University]. Utrecht University Repository. http://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/188714

Versteegt, I., & Maussen, M. (2011). *The Netherlands: Challenging diversity in education and school life. ACCEPT PLURALISM Research Project.* European University Institute and Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Verus (2020, October 1). *Het nieuwe wetsvoorstel rondom burgerschapsonderwijs: Wat houdt het precies in?* https://www.verus.nl/actueel/nieuws/het-nieuwe-wetsvoorstel-rondom-burgerschapsonderwijs-wat-houdt-het-precies-in

Veugelers, W. (2003). *Waarden en normen in het onderwijs. Zingeving en humanisering: autonomie en sociale betrokkenheid* [Academic speech, University of Humanistic Studies]. University of Humanistic Studies.

VGS (2019, December 10). *Definitieve burgerschapswet evenwichtiger.* https://www.vgs.nl/definitieve-burgerschapswet-evenwichtiger/

VGS/KOC Diensten, 2021. Kaderdocument burgerschapsvorming. [Internal report]. Unpublished.

Visscher, W. (Ed.) (2014). *Dat voel ik toch anders: Individualisering in de gereformeerde gezindte*. De Banier.

Vogt, W. P. (1997). *Tolerance and education: Learning to live with diversity and difference.* SAGE.

Vollhardt, J., Migacheva, K., & Tropp, L. R. (2008). Social cohesion and tolerance for group differences. In J. De Rivera (Ed.), *Handbook on building cultures of peace* (pp. 139 – 152). Springer.

VSNU (Association of Universities in the Netherlands) (2005). *Gedragscode voor gebruik van persoonsgegevens in wetenschappelijk onderzoek.* http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Accountability/Codes/Gedragscode%20persoonsgegevens.pdf

VSNU (Association of Universities in the Netherlands) (2012). *The Netherlands code of conduct of scientific practice.* http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/The_Netherlands_Code_of_Conduct_for_Scientific_Practice_2012.pdf

Ward, P. (2017). Introducing practical theology: Mission, ministry, and the life of the church. Baker.

Wardekker, W. L., & Miedema, S. (2001). Denominational school identity and the formation of personal identity. *Religious Education, 96*(1), 36–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/00344080120950

Weisse, W. (2009). Analysis of the teachers' responsses to religious diversity in the course of the REDCo project: A foreword. In A. van der Want, C. Bakker, I. ter Avest, & J. Everington, J. (Eds.), *Teachers responding to religious diversity in Europe: Researching biography and pedagogy* (pp. 7-11). Waxmann.

Wetenschappelijke Raad voor Regeringsbeleid (The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy) (2003). *Waarden, normen en de last van het gedrag.* https://www.wrr.nl/publicaties/rapporten/2003/12/16/waarden-normen-en-de-last-van-het-gedrag

Willems, F. T. M. (2013). *Stimulating civic virtue in students: An exploratory study of teachers in Dutch Catholic primary education* [Doctoral dissertation, Radboud University Nijmegen]. Waxmann.

Willems, F., Denessen, E., Hermans, C., & Vermeer, P. (2010). Citizenship education in religious schools: An analysis of tolerance in Catholic schools from a virtue ethical point of view. *Journal of Beliefs & Values, 31*(2), 215–229. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2010.503634

Yemini, M., Tibbitts, F., & Goren, H. (2019). Trends and caveats: Review of literature on global citizenship education in teacher training. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 77*(1), 77–89. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.09.014

Ysseldyk, R., Matheson, K., & Anisman, H. (2010). Religiosity as identity: Toward an understanding of religion from a social identity perspective. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 14*(1), 60–71. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309349693

Zoontjens, P. J. J., & Glenn, C. (2012). The Netherlands. In C. L. Glenn & J. De Groof (Eds.), *Balancing freedom, autonomy and accountability in education*: *Vol. 2* (pp. 333–362). Wolf.

CURRICULUM Vitae

Hanna de Jong-Markus (Nieuwerkerk aan den IJssel, 1987) was raised in a family where education and theology were important. In 2005 she completed secondary education at 'Reggesteyn' in Nijverdal. In 2009 she obtained her Bachelor of Social Sciences degree in Educational Sciences from Utrecht University. In the same year, she also obtained her Bachelor of Education in teaching Dutch (teaching qualification for secondary and post-secondary vocational education) at Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education (Gouda).

Because she wanted to deepen her knowledge of the questions surrounding education and worldview, she chose to study a Master's programme in Religious Education at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. After an internship at the Dutch Education Council (Onderwijsraad) where she was mainly involved in advice on the Freedom of Education (*Artikel 23 Grondwet in maatschappelijk perspectief*, 2012), she obtained her Master of Arts degree in 2011.

Since 2011, Hanna has been working at Driestar Christian University for Teacher Education (DCU) in various positions in the fields of policy, teacher education, educational advice and research. She is currently involved as a lecturer in several educational Master's programmes. These Master's programmes are provided by DCU in cooperation with other teacher education institutes that share an interest in value-driven teaching (Radiant lerarenopleidingen). Furthermore, she is involved as senior researcher in an extensive research project on Religious Education in Dutch public primary schools (PC GVO) and she provides educational advice on strengthening citizenship education.

Since 2013, Hanna has conducted her PhD research at the Protestant Theological University Amsterdam (Practical Theology Department), the Research Centre of Youth, Church and Culture (OJKC, PThU) and DCU. In 2016, she was able to work on her research at the National Institute for Christian Education Research (Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom) thanks to a staff exchange project in the Erasmus+ programme of the European Commission.
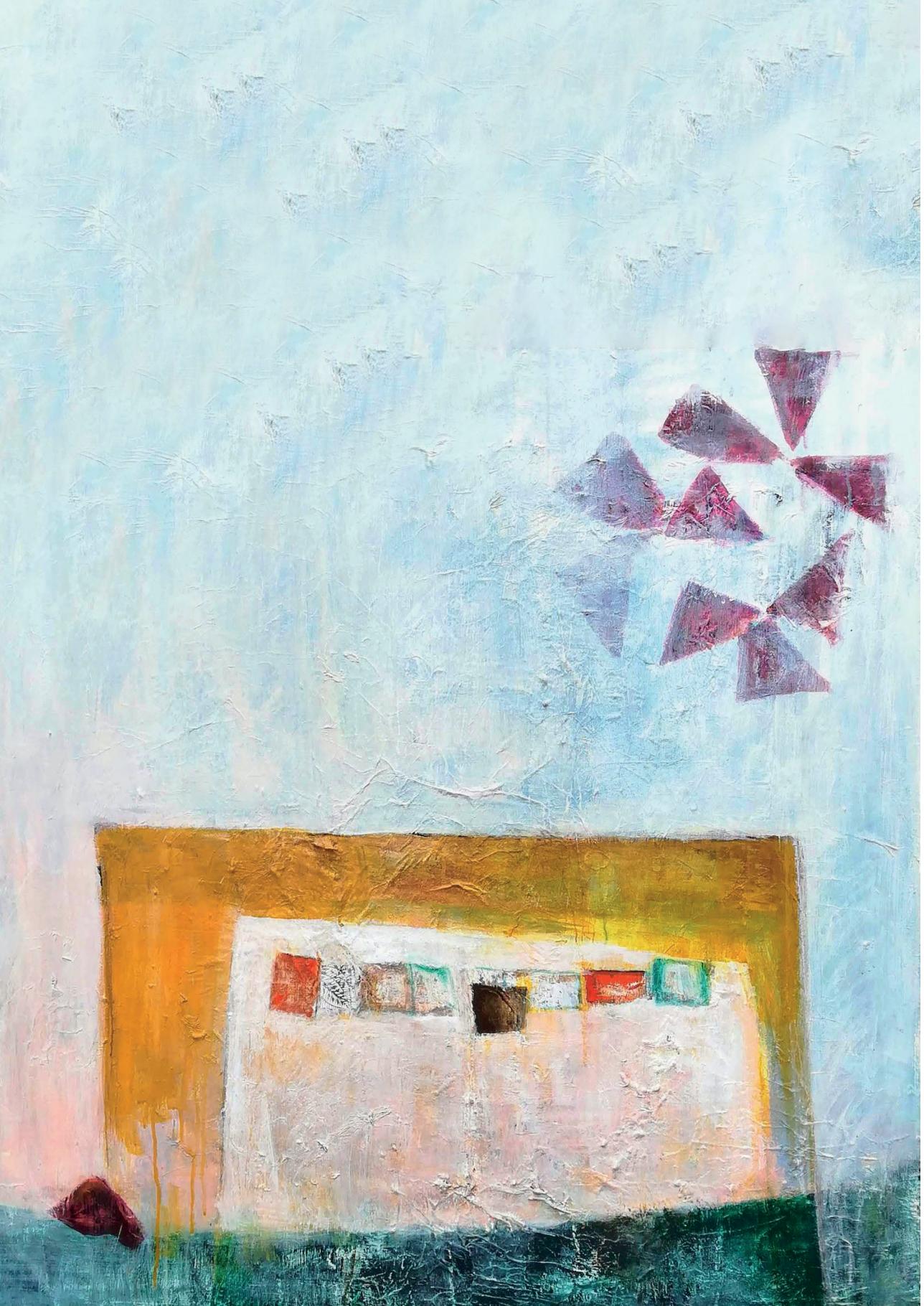
APPENDICES

Appendix I. Law Text on Citizenship Education[93]

In the Primary Education Acts (Article 8, third paragraph) the following is stated about citizenship education (in force since 1 August 2021):

"In education active citizenship and social cohesion are promoted in a purposeful and coherent manner, whereby the education system focusses at least clearly on:
  a. teaching respect for and knowledge of the basic values of the democratic constitutional state, as anchored in the Constitution, and the universally accepted fundamental human rights and freedoms, and acting in accordance with these basic values at school;
  b. developing the social and societal competencies that enable pupils to be part of and contribute to the multiform and democratic Dutch society; and
  c. teaching knowledge of and respect for differences in religion, worldview, political orientation, ethnicity, gender, disability or sexual orientation and the value of equal treatment.

The competent authority shall ensure a school culture that is in accordance with the values referred to in the third paragraph, under a, shall create an environment in which pupils are encouraged to actively practice dealing with and acting in accordance with these values, and shall also ensure an environment in which pupils and staff feel safe and accepted, irrespective of the differences referred to in the third paragraph, under c."

Staatsblad (2021, July 2). *Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden 2021, 321.* https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2021-321

From 1 February 2006 to 1 August 2021 the statutory duty for citizenship education was stated as follows:

"The education system:
  a. recognises that pupils grow up in a multiform society,
  b. is aimed at promoting active citizenship and social integration, and
  c. is aimed at ensuring that pupils have knowledge of and become acquainted with the different backgrounds and cultures of their peers."

Staatsblad (2005, December 22). *Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden 2005, 678.* https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2005-678.pdf

---

[93] Translation by the author.

Appendix II. Selection Criteria and School Categories

Selection Criteria

School's denomination

The denominations of schools are officially registered with the Ministery of Education, Culture and Science in the Basic Registration Institutions (BRIN; Basis Registratie Instellingen). We used a dataset of the Education Executive Agency of the Ministry that contained all addresses of school locations of primary schools in the Netherlands to select the orthodox Protestant schools (DUO/IB-groep, 2014[94]). There were 164 Reformed (Dutch: *reformatorisch*), 110 Reformed Liberated (Dutch: *gereformeerd vrijgemaakt*) and 1699 Protestant (Dutch: *protestants-christelijk*) primary schools out of 6687 primary school locations in the Netherlands. Not all Protestant schools are orthodox Protestant schools. Therefore we asked two experts in the field[95] to determine independently the schools what they thought to be orthodox Protestant schools in the list of all 200 Protestant schools within a radius of 50 kilometres around Utrecht (see next section). The schools that were mentioned by both of them were taken into our selection, which were 49 schools. Before these schools were contacted by the researcher, it was checked whether they indeed referred to the Reformed doctrines in their mission statements.

Travel distance

Because of practical reasons, namely the accessibility for the researcher, only schools with a maximum travel distance of 50 kilometres from Utrecht were included in our selection. Using the website Free Map Tools [96] we determined which of the orthodox Protestant primary schools were in this area. It seemed that this area covers a lot of variations that can be found in the Netherlands, like urban and rural areas, both inside and outside the Biblebelt. Using this selection criterion of travel distance, we had 85 Reformed and 32

---

[94] DUO/IB-groep (2014, October 1). *03 Alle vestigingen basisonderwijs.* Retrieved October 21, 2014, from the DUO/IB-groep website: http://www.duo.nl/organisatie/open_onderwijsdata/databestanden/po/adressen/Adressen/vest_bo.asp

[95] The first expert was the manager of Driestar Onderwijsadvies (educational advise centre for orthodox Protestant schools), who is responsible for all external relations with primary schools. The second expert was the director 'education and identity' of Verus, a national association for catholic en protestants schools.

[96] Free Map Tools (2014, October 20). *Radius around Point.* Retrieved from http://www.freemaptools.com/radius-around-point.htm?clat=52.091667&clng=5.117778000000044&r=50&lc=FFFFFF&lw=1&fc=0000FF&fs=true
Free Map Tools (2014, October 20). *Radius around Point.* Retrieved from http://www.freemaptools.com/radius-around-point.htm?clat=52.091667&clng=5.117778000000044&r=50&lc=FFFFFF&lw=1&fc=0000FF

Reformed Liberated primary schools left, besides the already mentioned 49 Protestant primary schools.

Town size

Because there is no fixed criterion of what is rural or urban, and because we wanted to refine the distinction between these two extremes; we choose to distinguish between biggest cities, big cities, cities and villages. The biggest cities (called 'G4') and the big cities (called 'G32') are distinguished by the government in the context of urban policy. For the remaining cities we used the criteria that a locality with a cinema and/or hospital is a city and is otherwise considered to be a village. To decide whether there was a cinema in the place, we used a list of the places with cinema's on the website of Bioscoopagenda Nederland (n.d.; Cinema Agenda of The Netherlands)[97]. To decide whether there was a hospital in a place, we used a dataset with all locations of general and academic hospitals[98] from the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu, 2014). We looked for both general hospitals and academic hospitals and not for satellite clinics. We decided for every school in our sample whether it was located in one of the biggest cities (5 times) or big cities (14 times), or in a city (30 times) or a village (117 times).

Presence of orthodox Protestants

There ar two orthodox Protestant political parties in the Netherlands, namely the Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (SGP; Reformed Political Party) and ChristenUnie (CU; ChristianUnion). We used a dataset[99] from J. Smits of the Stichting Politieke Academie (Political Academy Foundation) (personal communication, October 21, 2014) in which the results of the 2012 national governmental elections were connected to city names. For all places of schools in our selection we made a raking list of the amount of support for the orthodox Protestant political parties. Based on the overview of percentages, we decided to use for cities a percentage of less than 10% as an indication of little support and in the category of villages a percentage of less than 30%. This criteria was not used for the biggest cities and big cities, since none of them had a substantial amount of presence

---

[97] Bioscoopagenda Nederland (n.d.). *Kies je filmstad uit de lijs*t. Retrieved September 8, 2015, from www.biosagenda.nl/steden

[98] RIVM (2014, July 1). *Locaties algemene en academische ziekenhuizen 2014*. Retrieved November 25, 2015, from http://www.zorgatlas.nl/zorg/ziekenhuiszorg/algemene-en-academische-ziekenhuizen/aanbod/locaties-algemene-en-academische-ziekenhuizen/#breadcrumb

[99] *stembureaus2012v10 met plaats zonder adres*

of orthodox Protestants (17% max; 4,9% on average)[100]. In our overview of schools, the places within one school type were ordered in a ranking list of little or much presence of orthodox Protetant poltical parties. When there were more schools within the same place, these schools were ordered following the alphabetical order of the street name.

Categories

		School's denomination		
		REF	GKV	PC
School's environment	Biggest city (G4) Few orthodox Protestants	*School I*	*School II*	*School III*
	Big city (G32) Few orthodox Protestants	*School IV*	*School V*	*School VI*
	City Many orthodox Protestants	*School VII*	*School VIII*	*School IX*
	City Few orthodox Protestants	*School X*	*School XI*	*School XII*
	Village Many orthodox Protestants	*School XIII*	*School XIV*	*School XV*
	Village Few orthodox Protestants	*School XVI*	*School XVII*	*School XVIII*

---

[100] Biggest cities: Utrecht: 2,5%; Amsterdam: 0,9%; Rotterdam: 2,8%. Big cities: Almere: 2,1%; Amersfoort: 7,3%; Dordrecht: 7,7%; Ede: 17,2%; Gouda: 10,1%; Haarlem: 1,6%; 's-Hertogenbosch: 0,8%; Leiden: 2,2%; Zoetermeer: 3,5%.

Appendix III. Questionnaire Background Characteristics[101]

Questionnaire Background Characteristics of Participants[102] (Individual Interviews)

Participant	[code filled in by the researcher]
Year of birth	_____
Gender	M / F (cross out what does not apply)
Work experience in primary education (in years)	_____
Work experience in current school (in years)	_____
Work experience in the upper grades (in years)	_____
Current job size (in FTE)	_____
Training institute	_____
Faith is for me…	o Very important[103]
	o Important
	o Slightly important
	o Not important
Involvement with the church	o Very active
	o Active
	o Fairly active
	o Not
Church denomination	_____
Church membership	o No member
	o Birth member
	o Baptized member
	o Confessing member

_____

[101] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.

[102] This questionairre has been taken from De Muynck (2008). *Een goddelijk beroep. Spiritualiteit in de beroepspraktijk van leraren in het orthodox–protestant basisonderwijs*. Groen.

[103] Original in Dutch: *Zeer belangrijk, belangrijk, enigszins belangrijk, niet belangrijk*

I myself feel completely at home in the Reformed[104] climate	o to a large extent[105] o to a slightly large extent o to a fairly extent o not at all
I consider myself representative of Reformed education	o to a large extent o to a slightly large extent o to a fairly extent o not at all
I follow intensively what is happening in my church	o to a large extent o to a slightly large extent o to a fairly extent o not at all
I am critical of what is happening in Reformed education	o to a large extent o to a slightly large extent o to a fairly extent o not at all
Distance from home to school (in kilometers and travel time)	_____

---

[104] Original in Dutch: *reformatorisch/gereformeerd*

[105] Original in Dutch: *sterk, beetje sterk, matig, helemaal niet*

Appendix IV. Interview Guide (full version)[106]

INTERVIEW GUIDE 'Religious tolerance as an educational goal'

INTERVIEW I

0. Introduction[107]

a) *Introduction **interviewer** (short)*
- Name
- Working for Driestar Christian University and the Protestant Theological University (PThU)
- Conducting research of 4 years, recently I looked for what is already known, currently interviewing 18 teachers

b) ***Research:***
- Benefits: Relatively little research is being conducted with regard to schools operating from a certain religious conviction and therefore, as I included in the information I emailed you, we don't know much about it. This is why this research is interesting.
- At the moment, we are especially curious as to how teachers deal with the Christian character of the school, while society shows such a variation of religious beliefs and other world views.

c) *Structure **interview***
- We have about two hours to conduct this first interview.
- I hope it will be a discussion, mainly: I have a couple of theme's we could discuss, but we might end up talking about other important topics which we decide to explore more deeply. Please call out when you think something is important! So, it's a relatively open interview, and there are no right or wrong answers.
- I might keep pushing for more elaborate answers, even when you think: "But you get that, right?!" As a researcher, my task is, sometimes, to pretend I know nothing, to encourage you to explain everything extra carefully.
- There are a few topics we will discuss. You'll find that we will return to earlier topics, sometimes, or that I'll be scanning my questionnaire.

---

[106] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.
[107] Cf. Van de Koot-Dees (2013, pp. 368-369)

d) *Information concerning **confidentiality and anonymity***
- In [this] form, we summarized all important agreements guaranteeing your anonymity. Everything you say will be utterly confidential. We will use made-up names and will ensure that what is said will be completely intractable.
- These rules are also applicable to the audio-files. Would you mind if I record our conversation?
- Signing the form, but perhaps are there first questions?

e) *Is everything clear?*

1. Could you tell me something about your own school career, from primary education until now?

a) Upbringing/family background
b) Who/What inspired you and/or inspires you to work in education?
c) Could you describe the relationship between your worldview (faith) and your job?[108]
d) Characteristics of current job: FTE, which grade, specific tasks
e) Did your expectations about working at this school become true?

2. Could you tell me something about your ideals in education, what is most important in your eyes?

a) The interviewer is shown the definition[109] of 'ideals' and read this definition aloud [to the interviewee].
b) Mention three ideals[110]
c) Prioritize these ideals[111]
d) Why? Who/What influenced or inspired you?
e) How can I recognize these ideals in your daily practices?
f) Did your ideals change over time? Can you compare them with say, five or ten years ago?

---

[108] Cf. Bertram-Troost e.a. (2015b, p. 94)

[109] IDEAL: *) image of something in a perfect state: dream image *) Something one wishes to become a reality. Something to strive for and something imagined as the highest, the most perfect.

[110] De Ruyter & Kole (2001, cf. De Ruyter et al., 2003)

[111] De Ruyter & Kole (2001, cf. De Ruyter et al., 2003)

3. Motivation for Christian education

a) Why did you choose a Reformed school?

b) What could you say about the school when it comes to the Christian identity? (population, context, team, practices; what would an outsider see?)[112]

c) Do you think colleagues think the same about these things?[113]

d) Why is Christian education important? What are the differences in comparison to the functions of the church and family (in relation to Christian socialization)? What is the most important function of the school?

e) Do you experience dilemma's concerning the Christian school identity?

f) What provides, anno 2015, a clear chance when talking about 'the identity'? (abilities) And what do you experience as threatening?

g) Could you imagine working at a school of a different denomination?

4. Diversity within the school

a) How diverse is the population of pupils and teachers?

b) Are there tensions?

c) Examples?

d) What attitude would you like your pupils to display concerning this diversity?

5. Personal experiences with religious others or non-religious people

a) Religious diversity is a characteristic of contemporary society, and it increased in the past decennia. What is your opinion about that? Enrichment or threat?[114]

b) How often, when or where do you meet religious others or non-religious people?

c) How do you perceive that?

d) How would you define religious others or non-religious people?

e) Do you experience enough space for Christians in society?[115]

6. Pupils and religious others or non-religious people

a) Do your pupils meet religious others or non-religious people?

b) In the classroom, are religious others or non-religious people mentioned? When/how?

c) What is the most important message of the Christian faith you want to share with your pupils?

---

[112] Cf. De Muynck (2008, interview directeuren); De Wolff (2000, pp. 510-511)

[113] Cf. Afdal (2006)

[114] Cf. Bertram-Troost (2006, p. 341)

[115] Cf. Versteegt (2010, p. 258)

7. Religious education

a)   What does it look like?

b)   What is its goal? What do you want to teach children foremost?[116]

c)   Concerning religious others and non-religious: how is talked about them and/or is there encountering with them?

8. Religious tolerance (shortly/introduction)

a)   What does citizenship education at this school look like?

b)   The government states that pupils should be informed about basic values of the Dutch constitutional state, e.g. promoting tolerance and rejecting intolerance. Do you go along with that?

c)   How would you describe the concept of tolerance? (The interviewer mentions the aspect of 'giving space, although one would prefer to do something else'.)

d)   Could you imagine at what moments this issue appears in the class room?

INTERVIEW II

0. Introduction

a)   *Confidentiality*

• Just like last time, I would like to record the interview. You signed the informed consent form last time; it also applies to this interview.

• Everything you say will be anonymized and treated confidentially.

b)   *Structure* interview:

• We will explore some topics more profoundly

• I hope we can view this as a discussion, you are not 'on trial' or something like that. Therefore, there are no right or false answers.

• If possible, I'd like to finish at around … [time]

c)   Any questions?

1. Questions of clarification on account of interview 1 (differs per participant)

2. Religious tolerance

The government states that schools should foster some basic values of the Dutch constitutional state, such as tolerance and the rejection of intolerance.

---

[116] Cf. Versteegt (2010, p. 258)

a) How would you describe 'tolerance'?

b) Do you think it is important? Why?

c) Religious tolerance concerns tolerance towards people holding different worldviews.

d) What attitude would you like your pupils to have towards religious others? (compare with answer on question 4d in interview 1)

e) What cannot be tolerated?[117]

f) How does religious tolerance relate to the desire that the pupils will become Christians themselves?

g) Do you teach tolerance? Can you give an example of how you do so? Which convictions are important in your choice for a specific practice?

h) If you should define it as a learning goal for pupils, how would you do so? The pupil…

i) Does citizenship education have a place in school at all? Do you experience that the government promotes it? Why does the government promote it, do you think? Is the school acting on this issue?

j) What are, in your opinion, the most important challenges in relation to religious tolerance? How does that relate to education? Concerning this, how do you think that teachers in general act?[118]

3. Religious others and non-religious people

a) During childhood, what were the values and morals you were taught with regard to other religious convictions?
  - Has that changed?
  - How and why did that change?[119]
  - [NB: could also be about church denominations.]

b) Do you have friends or family with different religious convictions?[120]
  - What's that like?
  - What do you experience as valuable and what is difficult? (Dilemma's)

---

[117] Cf. Afdal (2006)
[118] Cf. Afdal (2006)
[119] Versteegt (2010, p. 256)
[120] Versteegt (2010, p. 258)

    c) Do you think that, in the end, Muslim's and Christians, or Hindu's and Buddhists worship the same God?

- Can you explain why?
- What do you think about that?
- Did you ever discuss this with others?
- Would your colleagues give the same answer?[121]

    d) Looking at your colleagues, do you think you mainly agree on religious issues, or do you feel differently?

- At school, how do people deal with colleagues who's visons divert from the general opinion?[122]

    e) Statement: "The Netherlands is so diverse that it would be best to provide only public education, accessible to all." What are your personal ideas in favour and against this statement?

    f) What would you like children to learn about different religious convictions?[123]

- Perhaps: Which method? What's your opinion about that method?

4 . Christian values

    a) Do you want to promote Christian values? Which ones? (Religiously motivated/ constituted)

    b) How do you practice that? Which convictions play a role in your choices to act in a certain way? [Relate to answers with regard to upbringing goals in interview 1.]

5. Last questions

    a) Do you think your answers in this conversation are representative for your colleagues? For other schools?

    b) Lastly, are there issues we haven't dealt with which you think are important with regard to Christian [Reformed] school identity or the religious diversity of society?[124]

6. Ending

    a) Thank you! (offer small present)

    b) How did you experience this conversation?

---

[121] Versteegt (2010, p. 256)

[122] Versteegt (2010, p. 256)

[123] Versteegt (2010, pp. 256-258)

[124] Cf. Van de Koot-Dees (2013, pp. 268-269)

References

Afdal, G. (2006). Tolerance and curriculum: Conceptions of tolerance in the multicultural unitary Norwegian compulsory school. Waxmann.

Bertram-Troost, G. D. (2006). Geloven in bijzonder onderwijs: Levensbeschouwelijke identiteitsontwikkeling van adolescenten in het voortgezet onderwijs [Doctoral dissertation, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. Boekencentrum.

Bertram-Troost, G. D., Versteegt, I., Van der Kooij, J. C., Van Nes, I., & Miedema, S. (2015b). Om eigenheid en openheid. Inspiratie, motivatie en levensbeschouwing van docenten in het christelijk voortgezet onderwijs. Verus.

De Muynck, A. (2008). Een goddelijk beroep. Spiritualiteit in de beroepspraktijk van leraren in het orthodox–protestant basisonderwijs. Groen.

De Ruyter, D. J., & Kole, J. J. (2001). Questionnaire 'Ideals in life and teaching'. (Questionnaire asked for by the researchers)

De Wolff, A. C. J. (2000). Typisch Christelijk? Een onderzoek naar de identiteit van een christelijke school en haar vormgeving [Doctoral dissertation, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. Kok.

Van de Koot-Dees, D. (2013). Prille geloofsopvoeding: Een kwalitatief onderzoek naar geloven in protestants-christelijke gezinnen in Amsterdam [Doctoral dissertation, Protestantse Theologische Universiteit]. Boekencentrum Academic.

Versteegt, I. (2010). Diversiteit in de klas: Perspectieven van de leerkracht [Doctoral dissertation, Utrecht University]. Utrecht University Repository. http://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/188714

De Ruyter, D. J., Conroy, J. C., Lappin, M., & McKinney, S. (2003). From heaven to earth: A comparison of ideals of ITE students. British Journal of Religious Education, 25(4), 292–307. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141620030250404

Appendix V. Conversation Guide Alumni (full version)[125]

Conversation guide Research Teachers, Religious Diversity and Teacher Education

Introduction	5 minutes

For Driestar Christian University (DCU), Christian education is very important. One of the themes we have worked on recently is how Christian education deals with differences. Differences in general, but also - and these are sometimes extra exciting - how Christian education deals with differences within the field of faith, or religious diversity.

We have previously researched what teachers think about religious diversity in society, but now we are particularly interested in your classroom experiences. We think there are many situations when differences come into play, such as:

- You use Nieuwsbegrip [a programmeto enhance reading comprehension, based on current news topics] and one of the texts is about celebrating Carnival.
- When discussing a Bible story, you notice that pupils come from different church backgrounds.
- Pupils are afraid of terrorist attacks and Islam.

As you note, we look at all the differences in terms of faith: both church differences and other religions. In previous research, we have found that when we talk about one, we are quick to talk about the other.

The college would now like to explore where and how you encounter situations in your teaching practice in which religious diversity plays a role, and especially whether you have the experience and feel adequately prepared to deal with it, or whether the college could do more in this area.

Explanation Focus group
- Welcome, thank you for coming.
- Introduction of the moderator + role, introduction of the assistant
- About focus groups:
  - o Topic: How teacher education can equip students to deal with religious diversity in a good way.

---

[125] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.

- o Goal: To know to what extent you encounter situations or religious diversity in your teaching practice, and especially what you think is important and where you see chances for the teacher education programme
- o Total time: maximum of 2 hours, with a short break halfway through (coffee/tea)
- o Rules of play:
  - Participants may have different opinions: interrupting is allowed, but not too much;
  - There are no right or wrong answers;
  - Let participants speak in their own words;
  - Participants may also ask each other questions;
  - We keep the conversation/discussion central;
  - The moderator leads the discussion and intervenes when necessary.

Introduction of participants 5 minutes

State your name, age, how many years you have been teaching and which year group you teach.

Opening question[126] 5 minutes (answer from each participant)

Today we are talking about religious diversity, and it is actually important to know first of all what you think of when you hear that concept. Therefore: What do you think of when you hear the term "religious diversity"?

Definition

"So, together, this is what we mean by it…"
Note: 'external' and 'internal' ("big differences" and "denominational differences")

Introductory question 10 minutes

Can you recall a situation in the classroom that had to do with church differences or other religions?

---

[126] Different types of questions based on Handleiding Focusgroepen (*Handbook Focusgroups;* Kwaliteitsinstituut voor de gezondheidszorg CBO, september 2004) that was distributed during the qualitative interviewing training on 16 November 2018 (Marion Matthijssen).

Transition question 20 minutes

I want to discuss with you a case study that I came across because one of the teachers talked about it in the interviews. Then, I want to ask you what you would do if you were the teacher.

This teacher, Peter (24), is a teacher at a small village school. Almost all children in the class attend the same Reformed church, as do the staff. Peter grew up in this village and still lives there. Immediately after completing his teacher training, he was able to start working at his former primary school and now he is working there for the second year.

Peter teaches fifth grade and I asked him if other faiths sometimes were brought up in class. Peter then said: "Yes, recently there was a kind of campaign by some sort of charismatic evangelical organisation. They distributed lots of leaflets and had meetings in the village hall during the week. They tried to get people to go there to tell them about what they believe. Then you noticed that there was unrest throughout the village. They rang doorbells everywhere and talked to everyone. You just couldn't get around it. There were posters everywhere about life and death, and the Judgement Day. I don't remember exactly what they said. But those posters made a big impression. The children took the posters that had been blown off with them, and things like that. It became a situation where we were truly confronted with another faith.

Then you noticed that the children thought: "Oh, so there is more than just our vision".

I can say something about the parents, they also reacted differently. Some just kept the door shut. And I did say: "If those people start talking to you, don't run away, just hold a conversation and try to listen. It was the same when we had PE [physical education] on Thursdays. Normally the children walk, but this time they ran back to the gym. And when the man from the campaign came they all ran away. They were actually afraid of the man. A few of them were acting a little crazy, so I said, "You can talk to him." And then the man came and talked with them and at least made it clear that he is just someone you can talk to and who thinks differently to you.

It was also discussed at the children's Sunday School. And at school we also talked about the difference between the doctrines of those people and the doctrines in our church. And that sometimes it can seem a small difference, but it is nevertheless big.

- What would you do if you were a teacher in this situation?
    - o What would you think/feel if this happened?
    - o What would you want to pass on to the children? Knowledge / skills / attitudes?

       o   What would you find difficult?

       o   What would help you?

       o   Teacher Peter says that he told pupils that they can talk to others. In what way would you like children to engage in conversation? (Here, I can repeat the above questions: passing on / difficult / helpful)

[Try to write answers to the above on the board, as it will help for the next questions].

[5-minute break]

Key questions 30 minutes

1.   (If that is not already clear from the above.) How does a teacher best respond?

2.   What do teachers need for this in their teacher education?

       o   To what extent are student teachers capable of doing this when they start their training?

           •   What does it depend on?

       o   What do students need to develop?

       o   How can students develop this?

3.   How can teacher education contribute to this?

       o Which parts of the teacher education programme do you think could help?

       o Should/could something in the teacher education programme be adjusted? If so, what?

Closing question 5 minutes

•   (Summary by the moderator)

•   Was there anything else you think we should have talked about in this discussion?

Appendix VI. Conversation Guide Teacher Educators (full version)[127]

Conversation guide Research Teachers, Religious Diversity and Teacher Education

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION: To what extent do newly qualified teachers feel/know they are competent to act in situations where internal or external religious diversity plays a role and how could the teacher education programme contribute to this according to newly qualified teachers and teacher educators, particularly in terms of stimulating inquisitiveness in pupils?

- Always be friendly;
- Thank you for your input;
- Identify what you want to know further.

Introduction 5 minutes

We are pleased to be able to hold this focus group discussion with you, because as you have read, we want to involve two groups in our research: beginning teachers who are alumni of our teacher education program, and you as teacher educators. We are very curious about your ideas.

If you can characterize society as religiously diverse and our own [orthodox Protestant] 'group' is a minority, the question arises as to how you train students in terms of philosophical diversity and how they, in turn, teach their pupils. It is precisely because of the particularity of Christian Reformed education that diversity is an issue. At Driestar we find the formation of students important. We are interested in your ideas about formation on this specific theme.

We heard beautiful stories of how experiences at the college have been important for the teachers, and some suggestions were made of how things could be done even better.

It is not only about what happens at the teacher education college in a subject such as Religious Education, but also for example in language lessons, or Maths, or History; because [essential] differences between people come into view everywhere. And what do you do then? And what do you do when it concerns an existential issue?

In the interviews I conducted for my doctoral research, it turned out that the dilemmas teachers face with those small [inner-Christian] or larger [different religions] differences are actually extensions of each other. And it surprised us how, when we talked about other religions, we often ended up back at inner-Christian differences as well.

---

[127] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.

Explanation Focus group

- Welcome, thank you for coming.
- Introduction of the moderator + role, introduction of the assistant
- About focus groups:
    - o Topic: How teacher training can equip students to deal with religious diversity in a good way.
    - o Goal: to know to what extent you value this, what you think is important and where you see possibilities
    - o Total time: maximum of 2 hours, with a short break halfway through (coffee/tea)
    - o Rules of play:
        - Participants may have different opinions: interrupting is allowed, but not too much;
        - There are no right or wrong answers;
        - Let participants speak in their own words;
        - Participants may also ask each other questions;
        - We keep the conversation/discussion central;
        - The moderator leads the discussion and intervenes when necessary.

Opening question[128] 5 minutes

(Ideas from all the participants)

- It is all about the situations teachers come up against in practice. In my e-mail I already mentioned a few, such as differences of opinion in the team, religions in other countries in Geography or different religious backgrounds of pupils. I would like to find out if you have any other ideas. So: briefly brainstorm with the person next to you about specific situations in which the theme of religious diversity or "faith differences" emerge in an average classroom at an orthodox Protestant primary school (perhaps related to your subject). I will then collect all the ideas together.

Introductory question 10 minutes

- One idea that was suggested by some teachers and rejected by others was a mandatory internship in a non-Christian school.
- As far as you are concerned, what would be the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

---

[128] Different types of questions based on Handleiding Focusgroepen (*Handbook Focusgroups;* Kwaliteitsinstituut voor de gezondheidszorg CBO, september 2004) that was distributed during the qualitative interviewing training on 16 November 2018 (Marion Matthijssen).

Transition question / key question 15 minutes

- Teachers need to be competent in dealing with situations involving internal or external religious diversity. What competencies do you think a teacher needs for this? (Organize: knowledge/character/competence; and possibly the difference between internal and external diversity.)
- Difference between internal and external diversity

[Write this out on the board > this is the starting point for the rest of the discussion].

If necessary, elaborate: Teachers regularly state that they want pupils to learn to ask further questions and to get to know the world outside their primary environment, which means: not taking things for granted, deepening their knowledge and being open to the views of others. What competences do teachers need to pass this on to their pupils?

Key questions 70 minutes

- What do students need to develop in the programmeto achieve this? (Knowledge/ Character/Competence)
- To what extent are students able to do such things when they start their training? [Illustrate on the board: draw a line behind competences from present - not present | Start = entrance level; E = desired final level; W = actual final level]
- What does it depend on?
- What are difficult aspects for students?
- What does the student need to develop? [automatically follows on from previous question]
- How can the student do that?
- How can the teacher education programme contribute to that?
- What in your lessons make students practice these things?
- What do you consider to be limiting factors? And what are stimulating factors?
- Would you like to, or would you be able to adjust something in your lessons?
- In general: To what extent are these competences present among orthodox protestants? What is the position of teachers in this?
- In my introduction, I said that we consider 'formation' of students important. How would you describe that formation and how do you see it in relation to this subject?

Closing question 5 minutes

- (Summary by the moderator)
- Was there anything else you think we should have talked about in this discussion?

Appendix VII. Code Book

Domeinen (in Dutch)	Meaning units (in English)	Description of the codes (in Dutch)	Description of the codes (in English)
BIJBEL	BIBLE	= de participant refereert aan de Bijbel (al dan niet met alternatieve benamingen zoals "Gods Woord", "het Woord van God", "het Woord van de Heere", of "Zijn Woord")	= The participant refers to the Bible (possibly using alternative phrasing such as 'God's Word', 'The Word of God', 'The Word of our Lord' od 'His Word')
BURGERSCHAP(SONDERWIJS)	CITIZENSHIP (EDUCATION)	= de participant doet uitspraken over burgerschapsonderwijs, hoe je burger zou moeten zijn en/of wat voor burgers de samenleving nodig heeft	= The participant discusses citizenship education, how citizens should behave and/or what kind of citizens our society needs
CHRISTELIJK ONDERWIJS	CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS	= de participant doet uitspraken over de eigenheid van christelijk onderwijs, de waarde van christelijk onderwijs en/of het bestaan van de vrijheid van onderwijs	= The participant discusses the individuality of Christian education, the value of Christian education and/or the existence of freedom of education
CONTEXT SCHOOL	SCHOOL CONTEXT	= de participant doet uitspraken over de specifieke context van de school (zoals buren, wijk of plaatselijke cultuur). Let op: uitspraken over OUDERS kunnen hier ook iets over zeggen.	= the participant discusses the specific local context of the school (neighbours, neighbourhood, local culture) Please note: statements about PARENTS can be meaningful here as well
DIDACTIEK	DIDACTICS	= de participant doet uitspraken over hoe hij/zij een lessensituatie vormgeeft en/of waarom hij/zij dat zo doet	= the participant discusses the manner in which he/she builds up lessons and/or why he/she chooses this form
DIRECTEUR	PRINCIPAL	= de participant doet uitspraken over (de rol van) de schooldirecteur	= the participant discusses (the role of) the school principal
DOORVRAGEN	QUESTIONING	= de participant doet uitspraken over het doorvragen en/of leren doorvragen van leerlingen (i.p.v. dat leerlingen zomaar aannemen wat bijvoorbeeld hun ouders zeggen) en/of het belang daarvan	= the participant discusses the (teaching of) 'critical questioning' (instead of uncritically accepting everything they are being told by e.g. their parents) and why this is useful.

Dutch term	English term	Dutch definition	English definition
GELOOF	FAITH	= de participant doet uitspraken over zijn/haar eigen geloof of dat van de religieuze groep waar hij/zij bij hoort	= the participant discusses his/her own religion or the religious group he/she belongs to.
HOMOGENITEIT	HOMOGENEOUS POPULATION	= de participant beschrijft (relatieve) homogeniteit van de leraren- en/of leerlingenpopulatie in de school of de religieuze groep, en/of doet uitspraken over de betekenis daarvan	= the participant discusses (relative) homogeneity of teacher and/or student population in school or religious group, and/or mentions the meaning thereof.
GODSDIENSTONDERWIJS	RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	= de participant doet uitspraken over onderwijs in de eigen godsdienst (bijvoorbeeld over vieringen of kennisoverdracht)	= the participant discusses education within own religion (e.g. celebrations or knowledge transfer)
IDEALEN	(PROFESSIONAL) IDEALS	= de participant doet expliciete of impliciete uitspraken over wat het meest perfect is m.b.t. (opvoeding/onderwijs van) kinderen	= the participant implicitly or explicitly mentions what would be the most perfect for (the raising/educating of) children
INTERVIEW	INTERVIEW	= de participant of interviewer maakt opmerkingen over het interview an sich; dus procesmatig en niet inhoudelijk over thema's	= the participant remarks on the interview itself; so about the process and not about theme's
KLAS/LEERLINGEN	CLASS/PUPILS	= de participant doet uitspraken over kenmerken van zijn/haar klas/leerlingen en/of beschrijft voorvallen in de klas	= the participant discusses characteristics of his/her class/pupils and/or describes event/incidents in his/her own classroom
LERAAR	TEACHER	= de participant doet uitspraken over zijn/haar eigen leven, loopbaan en/of persoonlijke mening* *als deze mening niet valt onder een van de andere categorieën zoals IDEALEN, FAITH of RELIGIOUS OTHERS.	= the participant discusses his/her own life, career and/or gives personal opinion* *if this opinion does not overlap with other categories such as IDEALS, FAITH or RELIGIOUS OTHERS
(SOCIAL) MEDIA	(SOCIAL) MEDIA	= de participant refereert aan (social) media en/of doet daar uitspraken over	= the participant refers to (social) media, and/or speaks his/her mind about it

Dutch		English	
NIET-ANDERSGELOVIGEN	RELIGIOUS OTHERS	= de participant doet uitspraken over niet-/anders-gelovigen (= niet-christenen) binnen en buiten de school	= the participant discusses non-religious or religious others (i.e. non-Christians) inside and outside of school
OUDERS	PARENTS	= de participant doet uitspraken over ouders van leerlingen en/of over de achtergrond/context waaruit leerlingen komen	= the participant mentions pupil's parents, and/or pupils' (social) backgrounds/contexts
OVERHEID	GOVERNMENT	= de participant doet uitspraken over de overheid, wetgeving en/of politici	= the participant discusses the government, legislation and/or politicians
SAMENLEVING	SOCIETY	= de participant doet uitspraken over de (huidige) samenleving	= the participant discusses (contemporary) society
SCHOOL	SCHOOL	= de participant doet uitspraken over karakteristieken van déze school	= the participant discusses the characteristics of his/her school
TEAM	TEACHER TEAM	= de participant doet uitspraken over zijn/haar (team van) collega's	= the participant discusses his/her (direct) colleagues
TOLERANTIE	TOLERANCE	= de participant doet uitspraken over (religieuze) tolerantie, respect, en/of acceptatie	= the participant discusses (religious) tolerance, respect, and/or acceptance
VLUCHTELINGEN	REFUGEES	= de participant doet uitspraken over het vluchtelingen(debat) en/of allochtonen in de samenleving (NB allochtonen zijn niet altijd vluchtelingen, maar uitspraken worden veelal gedaan in context van vluchtelingendebat)	= the participant discusses (the issue of) refugees, and/or immigrants in contemporary society (Please note: Not all immigrants are refugees, but most statements are posed in context of the refugee issue)

Appendix VIII. Informed Consent Form[129]

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Form for the research project "Religious tolerance as an educational objective"
Please tick the appropriate boxes

	YES	NO
Participation		
• I agree to participate in the study. Participation includes two interviews that will be recorded as an audio file and then transcribed (text).	☐	☐
• I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving any reason.	☐	☐
Use of the information in this study		
• I understand that the results of this study will be processed anonymously. My personal data will be replaced by codes. Only the research team will have access to the list by which codes can be linked to personal data. The audio recordings will not be accessible to people outside the research team.	☐	☐
• I agree that my statements may be quoted, anonymously, in publications, reports, books and other forms of research output.	☐	☐

Use of the information outside the scope of this study

The Protestant Theological University supports the publication of data on platforms that are accessible to other researchers. This research will be archived via 'restricted access': other researchers can access this data on request.

---

[129] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.

- I give permission for the anonymously saved, analysed interviews to be archived at DANS, an institute of KNAW and NWO.[130] ☐ ☐

- I understand that other scientific researchers may have access to these data, provided they have permission from the research team. ☐ ☐

- I agree that other scientific researchers may request these anonymously stored, analysed interviews for use in publications, reports and other forms of research output. ☐ ☐

- I agree that the sound recordings will be archived with DANS, but inaccessible to third parties (in a 'blind archive'). They cannot be retrieved by other researchers. ☐ ☐

Name of the participant:

Signature: Date:

Name of the researcher: J.J. Markus MA

Signature: Date:

Contact details: Hanna Markus MA BSc
                                  [phone number]
                                  [email address]

---

[130] DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services) is an institute of KNAW (Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van Wetenschappen; Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences) and NWO (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek; Dutch Research Council).

Appendix IX. Interview Guide (condensed version)[131]

INTERVIEW GUIDE: "Religious tolerance as an educational goal" (condensed version)

In the original interview guide every question was followed by remarks and follow-up questions to guarantee attention to important aspects, such as concrete classroom examples of what was discussed.

INTERVIEW I

1. Could you tell me something about your own education and your school career (fromprimary education until now)?
2. Could you tell something about your ideals in education, and what is most important inyour eyes?
3. Why did you choose to work at this [orthodox Protestant] school? What could you sayabout your school when it comes to the Christian identity of the school? Why is Christian education important?
4. How diverse is the population of pupils and teachers? What attitude would you like yourpupils to display concerning this diversity?
5. What is your opinion about religious diversity as a characteristic of contemporary society?How often, when, or where do you meet religious others or nonreligious people? How would you define religious others or nonreligious people?
6. Do your pupils meet religious others or nonreligious people? When and how are religiousothers or nonreligious people mentioned in your classroom?
7. What is the most important message of the Christian faith you want to share with yourpupils? What does religious education look like in practice?
8. What does citizenship education at this school look like in practice? How would youdescribe the concept of tolerance? Do you go along with the government statement that pupils should be informed about basic values of the Dutch constitutional state, e.g., promoting tolerance and rejecting intolerance? Can you imagine at what moments this issue comes up in the classroom?

INTERVIEW II

1. Questions of clarification to follow-up Interview I (depending on what was said in Interview I).
2. How would you describe "tolerance"? What attitude would you like your pupils to have toward religious others? Do you teach tolerance? Does citizenship

_____
[131] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.

education have a place in school at all? What are, in your opinion, the most important challenges in relation to religious tolerance?

3. During childhood, what were the values and morals you were taught with regard to otherreligious convictions? Has that changed? Do you have friends or family with different religious convictions? Do you think that, in the end, Muslims and Christians, or Hindus and Buddhists worship the same God? Looking at your colleagues, do you think you mainly agree on religious issues, or do you feel differently? What would you like children to learn about different religious convictions?

4. Statement: "The Netherlands is so diverse that it would be best to provide only public education, accessible to all." What are your personal ideas in favor of or against this statement? 5. Do you want to promote Christian values? Which ones?

5. Do you think your answers in this conversation are representative of your colleagues? Andof other schools? Why?

6. Are there issues we have not dealt with which you think are important with regard toChristian school identity or the religious diversity of society?

Appendix X. Overview of Relevant Codes

Table 1 Overview of Relevant Codes in Dutch[132]

Domain: Niet-/Anders-Gelovigen		
Categories	Subcategories[133]	
Interactions Teacher	• algemeen • buren • divers • familie/vrienden • geen/weinig • kennissen • kerkbezoek buitenland	• missionaire activiteit • ouders van leerlingen • schoonmaker • sport • straat • studie • werk
Evaluation Interactions	• geloof laten merken • geloof niet (altijd) ter sprake • meer inzicht in ideeën NAG / begrip krijgen / herkenning van vragen	• meer inzicht in eigen geloof • ontmoeting met NAG lastig / hoop dat NAG tot geloof komt • ontmoeting met NAG mooi/fijn • overige
Definition	• anders-gelovige_*life decisions* • anders-gelovige_*Jesus* • anders-gelovige_*biblical authority* • anders-gelovige • gelijk-gelovige • niemand zonder geloof • niet-/anders-gelovige niet onderscheiden	• niet-gelovige_*er is geen god* • niet-gelovige_*niet dezelfde god* • niet-gelovige_*geen keuze*
Principle	• distinction_*anxiety* • distinction_*clarity* • distinction_*duty to spread* • distinction_*feeling sorry* • recognition_*freedom of choice*	• recognition_*God seeing the hearts* • recognition_*human value* • recognition_*love* • overige • identification_*shared norms and values* • identificiation_*shared position*
Islam/moslims		
Jodendom/joden		
Rooms-katholicisme		
Domain: Faith		
Distinctiveness	• Drie-eenheid • Drie-eenheid_*Jezus* • Genade i.p.v. goede werken • Overige • Unieke God_*Bijbel is waar*	• Unieke God_*Eigenschappen van God* • Unieke God_*Liefde in het christelijk geloof* • God_e*r is één God*
Change	Juiste kerk	Holy wars

Source: Markus et al., 2020

---

[132] For English: see table below.

[133] It differed based on whether the categories had one (non-italic) or two (italic) levels of subcategories.

Table 2 Overview of Relevant Codes in English

Domain: Religious Others		
Categories	Subcategories[134]	
Interactions Teacher	• general • neighbors • diverse • family/friends • no/little • acquaintances • church services abroad	• missionary activities • pupils' parents • cleaner • sports • street • studies • work
Evaluation Interactions	• show faith • not (always) raise faith • more insight in religious other's ideas/ gain insight/recognition of questions	• more insight in own faith • interaction difficult/hope that religious other will get faith • interaction nice • other
Definition	• religious other_ *life decisions* • religious other_ *Jesus* • religious other_ *biblical authority* • religious other • equal other • no one without faith	• no difference between non-believer / religious other • non-believer_*no God* • non-believer_*not the same God* • non-believer_*no choice*
Principle	• distinction_*anxiety* • distinction_*clarity* • distinction_*duty to spread* • distinction_*feeling sorry* • recognition_*freedom of choice* • recognition_*God seeing the hearts*	• recognition_human value • recognition_*love* • other • identification_*shared norms and values* • identificiation_*shared position*
Islam/muslims		
Judaism/Jews		
Roman Catholicism		
Domain: Faith		
Distinctiveness	• Trinity • Trinity_*Jezus* • Grace instead of good works • Other • Unique God_*Bible is true*	• Unique God_*Characteristics of God* • Unique God_*Love in Christian faith* • God_*one God*
Change	Right church	Holy wars

Source: Markus et al., 2020

---

[134] It differed based on whether the categories had one (non-italic) or two (italic) levels of subcategories. Original codes were in Dutch.

Appendix XI. Conversation Guides (condensed versions)[135]

Conversation Guides for Research Teachers, (Religious) Diversity, and Education (condensed version)

Here, we summarize the central themes and questions from the focus group conversation guides.

Conversation Guide for Alumni

"(…) As you note, we look at all the differences in terms of faith: both church differences and other religions. Now the college would like to explore where and how you encounter situations in practice in which religious diversity plays a role, and especially whether you have the experience that you were adequately prepared for that during your education or whether the college could do different things."

- What do you think of when you hear the words "religious diversity"?
- Can you recall a situation in the classroom that had to do with church differences or other religions?

I want to discuss with you a case study that I came across because one of the teachers talked about it in the interviews. Then, I want to ask you what you would do if you were the teacher. The researcher reads an excerpt from the interview with a 24-year-old teacher of an orthodox Protestant village school[136], in which he tells about an evangelization campaign of another Christian movement in the village that stirred up a lot of emotions among the pupils. Among other things, he said: "It was really actually then that you were introduced to another religion."

- (If that is not already clear from the above.) How would a teacher best respond?
- What does a teacher need for this in teacher education?
- How can teacher education contribute to this?
- (Summary) Did you miss anything in our conversation?

Conversation Guide for Teacher Educators

"(…) If you can characterize society as religiously diverse and our own [orthodox Protestant] 'group' is a minority, the question arises as to how you train students in terms

---

[135] Original in Dutch; translation by the author.
[136] This interview was conducted as part of the earlier research study.

of philosophical diversity and how they, in turn, train their pupils. (…) It's not only about what happens at the teacher education college in the subject of religion, but also for example in Dutch, or math, or history; because [essential] differences between people show up everywhere. (…) In the interviews I conducted for my doctoral research, it turned out that the dilemmas teachers face with those small [inner-Christian] or larger [different religions] differences are actually extensions of each other. And it surprised us how, when we talked about other religions, we often ended up back at inner-Christian differences as well."

- (…) brainstorm about concrete situations in which the theme of religious diversity or "faith differences" emerges in an average classroom at an orthodox Protestant primary school
- One idea that was suggested by some teachers and rejected by others was a mandatory internship in a non-Christian school. As far as you are concerned, what would be the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?
- Teachers need to be competent in dealing with situations involving internal or external religious diversity. What competencies do you think a teacher needs for this? (Organize: knowledge/character/skill; and possibly difference between internal and external diversity.)
- What should the student develop in the programme for this purpose? How can the student do that? How can the teacher education programme contribute to that?
- (Summary) Did you miss anything in our conversation?

In addition, in the focus groups with teacher educators, we worked with visualization of what they said by having the teachers to collectively indicate the extent to which students mastered the competencies listed upon entry (ranging from 0% to 100%) and what the desired level is at the end of the program, based on the idea that some of the competency can be further developed even after teacher education.