

# **Spiritual State of the World's Children**

## **Namibia**





## **Spiritual State of the World's Children A Quantitative Study**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MINISTRY**

#### **Namibia**

October 2008

Prepared by:



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### ONEHOPE

OneHope is a non-profit organization with a mission to *affect destiny by providing God's eternal Word to all the children and youth of the world.* With programs in over 125 nations OneHope has reached over 500 million children and young people with a special presentation of the life of Jesus. Committed to presenting God's Word in a format that is relevant and dynamic, research is a critical step in the development of country and age specific products and programs.



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## Section I: Key Issues Analysis

### **Key Issues**

- Family composition
  - 44% - two parent family
  - 20% - one parent has died
  - 15% - parents are divorced or separated
  - 7% - both of their parents have died
  - 23% - live with a grandparent
  - 2% - do not live with an adult
  
- Perception of Family
  - Definition of family
    - 36% define family as those related by birth, adoption or marriage
    - 28% define family as any group of people who live together
    - 15% define family as any group of people who shares the same set of values and goals in the life
    - 21% define family as any person or group whom you love or care about deeply
  - Function of family
    - Place for children –
      - 74% consider an unmarried man and woman with children a family
      - 65% consider a single woman with children a family
    - Relationship –
      - 25% consider an unmarried man and woman a family
      - 25% consider cohabiting divorced women a family
      - 16% consider homosexual men a family
      - 20% consider homosexual women a family
  
- Relationship with parents
  - 51% spend less than 15 minutes a week talking with their father about things that really matter
  - 29% spend more than 60 minutes a week talking with their father about things that really matter
  - 32% spend less than 15 minutes a week talking with their mother about things that really matter
  - 45% spend more than 60 minutes a week talking with their mothers about things that really matter
  
- Safety and Security of home
  - 49% feel their home is a place where they feel safe and loved
  - 11% are uncomfortable and rather be elsewhere
  
- Marriage
  - 88% feel that they will be happy in their marriage
  - 81% believe God intended marriage to last a life time

- 54% feel the traditional family does not play a significant role in the stability of society
- 40% report there is too much pressure to get married, would rather live together
- 44% admire single life
- 43% approve of divorce even when children are involved
- 41% indicate that anyone who gets married should anticipate divorce
  
- Sexuality
  - 27% have had sexual intercourse
  - Most likely to learn about sex from television/movies and sex-related magazines/books
  - They are least likely to learn about sex from parents followed by the internet
  
- Satisfaction with life
  - 46% of respondents indicate they are very satisfied and 26% somewhat satisfied with their lives
  - 28% are somewhat or very dissatisfied with their lives
  - Over the past three months –
    - 71% admit having lied to their peers and 62% indicate they have lied to an adult
    - 68% report watching MTV
    - 45 % admit to reading a pornographic magazine or watching a pornographic movie
    - 17% have had suicidal thoughts and 13% attempted suicide
  
- Influences (cited as having a lot of influence over thoughts and actions)
  - 51% Bible
  - 50% Parents
  - 38% Teachers
  - 34% Friends
  
- Moral behavior
  - 67% feel bending the rules is okay
  - 65% feel lying is sometimes a necessity
  - 64% are pragmatic indicating in several ways that moral behavior is relative and justified by whether or not it “works”
  - 48% feel that breaking the law is okay if it does not hurt anyone
  
- Factors providing future satisfaction (cited as having a lot of importance)
  - 75% relationship with God
  - 74% having a degree
  - 70% good physical health
  - 63% having one marriage partner for life
  
- Religious Practice
  - 91% religion is somewhat or very important to them
  - 54% report weekly or daily prayer
  - 30% report weekly or daily scripture reading, including the Bible or Koran
  - 31% participate in weekly or daily religious services
  - 26% participate in weekly or daily youth or scripture study group

### ***Strengths & Opportunities***

- Two-thirds indicate that they are in a loving relationship with their father
- 80% indicate that their mothers show love for them
- 88% expect to be happy in their own marriages
- 64% would like a marriage like their parents
- 71% report that if they could regain their virginity, they would wait until marriage to have sex
- 72% indicate that they are satisfied with their lives
- Church membership, faith, and the Bible are significant influences in the lives of over 80% of students
- 78% believe the Bible provides us with absolute moral truths
- 75% believe that God is an omnipotent Creator
- 91% indicate that their religious practice is somewhat or very important
- About 70% indicate that they have made a commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important

### ***Weaknesses & Threats***

- About one-third of youth indicate that their fathers and 44% of their mothers are “other” employed, which means that they may not be gainfully employed
- Only 39% report that their parents are married and 19% report living with their grand-mother
- About 40% believe that marriage will end in divorce, that divorce is permissible even when there are children in the family, and about the same number that they would rather live together without marriage
- 25% of their fathers and 14% of their mothers are no longer living
- 55% are uncertain of whether or not their fathers love them
- 25% consider unmarried childless couples and 20% homosexual couples to be family
- Parents are the least likely source about sex
- 27% report having engaged in sexual intercourse
- Two-thirds have pragmatic moral values and accept rule-bending and lying as sometimes necessary
- 71% lie to friends or peers and 62% lie to adults
- 45% have watched or read pornographic materials in the past three months
- 17% have had suicidal thoughts and 13% attempted suicide in the past three months
- About 20% are certain of God’s existence and 10% are certain that He does not exist
- Only 31% attend weekly or daily religious services

## **Section II: Project Description**

### ***Acknowledgments***

This project was made possible in part by funding from the Maclellan Foundation and Global Ministries - OneHope International.

We acknowledge the cooperation of the Namibian Ministry of Education, the headmasters and staff of the schools included in the sample, the cooperation of students, volunteers and the Book of Hope Namibia Staff.

The instrument administered in this study was made available by Josh McDowell Ministries.

### ***Overview***

OneHope seeks to understand what children and youth deal with in their day-to-day realities. We know that children and youth face a variety of social challenges and experience psycho-social needs to which they are often left without effective responses. We do know that the needs of children vary from country to country and even regionally within countries. However, without reliable information we are unable to tailor our products and distribution programs to address needs specific to particular contexts.

While the issues and challenges facing children and youth in developed countries are researched and documented, those in developing countries are not. Without an accurate analysis of their contexts these populations are treated as though they share a common reality. An awareness of the immediate reality of children is often discovered only after ministry has begun and resources have been committed to a project.

As part of OneHope's *Spiritual State of the World's Children* study, the Attitudes and Behaviors of the Youth (ABY) project will capture the following information about children in Namibia:

- Typical family situations, relationships and parental contact
- Behaviors and moral values guiding relationships with peers of the opposite sex
- Daily occupations and pastimes
- Worldviews, influences, beliefs, future goals, and religious affiliation
- Theological perspectives and commitment

### ***Research Methodology***

The ABY survey is a stratified random survey of secondary school children. The survey was stratified by degree of urbanization and gender for Namibia. Additional strata that permit analysis are: family composition, ethnicity, and religious affiliation.

The core survey was constructed using the Survey of Juveniles designed by Chris Sleath of Josh McDowell Ministries. The survey was administered in secondary schools in English. Surveys were administered in randomly selected accessible<sup>1</sup> schools segregated by population density (proportional to national population distribution of urban-rural residents) to students in the schools randomized by gender (proportional to the national ratio of male-female).

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<sup>1</sup> Schools considered inaccessible are those that are in conflict zones, areas of extremely low population or that cannot be reached by public transportation.



## ***Project Overview***

The time frame for data collection was January 2008 through June 2008. Lerina Bamm served as the local Research Coordinator for the Namibia research project. Oversight was provided by Kimberly Morrison and Dr. Allen Reesor of Pompano Beach, Florida. The research followed project design instructions (see below under Logistics).

Data was entered into a web-based database which was hosted by Philip Issa of Elite Survey and assessed by Rene Paulson, Ph.D. The final report employs Dr. Paulson's analysis of the data and is supplemented with secondary data when applicable and primary qualitative data.

The final report will be made available to ministry partners who promote ministry to children and youth through collaborative research.

## ***Logistics***

### Review

National leaders reviewed the survey and recommended minor edits.

### Randomization

Reliability of the survey results depends upon consistent randomization of the participants. Two strata of randomization that govern participant selection employed in this project were gender and population density distributions.

The Namibian Ministry of Education provided a list of schools segregated by population density.

Population density was interpreted as either urban or rural. Additionally, the study population was further segregated into one of two classes: less than one hundred thousand or between one hundred thousand and one million. This list was used to select randomly identified schools at Book of Hope Headquarters. The list of randomized schools was returned to the local Research Coordinator for review. Schools that were inaccessible (see footnote on inaccessibility above) were replaced by following randomization procedures.

To ensure that gender participation reflects the male/female ratio of the national population, randomization by gender was finalized when students were selected for participation.

### Verifying Access

Contact was made with the Heads of Schools, or their associates, prior to dates of interviews in order to prepare them to discuss the administration of survey instruments. Research Assistants then met with the administration of each school to explain the survey and obtain school consent for participation.

### Survey Printing

A master copy of the survey response form was forwarded electronically to the local Research Coordinator who received bids for the printing of 5,000 collated and stapled copies.

### Quality Control

Hard copies of the survey response form were randomly assessed to evaluate survey validity. Hard copy survey response forms will be retained by the local coordinator in South Africa for one year to verify the accuracy of data entry if needed and as a back up to electronic data files. The surveys are kept confidential and will be turned over to a designated OneHope headquarters representative on or about

12 months following the close of data collection. After 12 months, a OneHope representative will oversee the destruction of all hard copy surveys.

### ***Implementation & Survey Administration***

#### Data Collection

The survey was administered in the schools identified by randomization and previously contacted. The research agent will identify the number of classes in session on the day of the survey.

- If the average class size at a school was less than 30 students, 15 classes were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. 15 students from each class were randomly selected proportional to the male/female ratio for Namibia.
- If the average class size at a school was than 30 students, 10 classes were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. 22 students from each class were randomly selected proportional to the male/female ratio for Namibia.

Students were asked to voluntarily participate. Participants were administered the survey in groups that could be accommodated in a classroom. Approximately 200 students were surveyed at each school.

The surveys were conducted by two people. A brief scripted introduction was read aloud and students were given the opportunity to ask questions. Administrators took turns reading each question aloud to students.

The following assistants participated in data collection: OneHope Nomad Team Members, Edna Bamm, Bobsie Tjiroze, Nigel Mkwaira, and Agnes Yeboah.

#### Data Entry

The local Research Coordinator and OneHope Nomad Team Members, Edna Bamm, Bobsie Tjiroze, Nigel Mkwaira, Agnes Yeboah, Natahn Thituti, Kedrick Mapalo, Magret Wetterling, Pauline Kheimses, and Victoria Turney were responsible for accurate input of the data into the web-based survey database.

### **Section III: Profile of Youth in Namibia**

#### ***Data Qualifications***

The survey included 3256 valid survey responses, 57% of these were female and 43% male. After the data was cleaned there were not enough urban responses to be certain that the data genuinely reflects the attitudes and behaviors of this population.

Sixty-one percent of those responding who are under 16 years of age were female and 39% male. While this number is at slight variance with the overall percentages, it falls within the range of certainty.

#### ***Demographic Profile***

Thirty-one percent of students surveyed were under the age of 16, and 56% were between the ages of 16-18 years; 13% indicated that they were over the age of eighteen.

Eighty percent of students report that they are in secondary levels F1-F4. About one-fifth of older students indicate that they are in primary level Std. 7 or the first year of secondary school, which may indicate late admission, advancement failure, or that students dropped out and later returned to school. "Good," rather than "average" or "excellent," school performance is reported by 55% of students while roughly one-fifth of students report "excellent" or "average" performances.

Over one-third of Namibian youth categorize their fathers' and 44% of their mothers' profession status as "other," which may indicate self-employed, working from home, or unemployment. Roughly equal percentages indicate their fathers' profession as one in the agricultural sector (19%) and public sector (17%). Seventeen percent of youth report that their mothers are employed in the agricultural sector; 14% selected professional as their mothers' profession.

Thirty-nine percent of subjects report that their parents are married, 20% that one parent has died, and 15% that their parents are either divorced or separated. Younger students are far more likely to indicate that their parents are married. One-third of youth live with their natural parents; 19% report living with their grandmother, 17% with their mother or stepmother only, and 14% with two parents of which one is step-parent.

#### ***Family Relationships***

Students feel the adults in their family set good examples (83%), spend time with them (77%), demonstrate love towards other adults in the family (77%), and express interest in who they are (76%). Youth also feel the adults in their family expect more of them than is fair, are too strict, and do not allow them the things they want to do. Almost half of students feel their home is a place where they feel safe and loved, but 11% feel that it is an uncomfortable place. Females and younger students are more likely to feel safe and loved, and urban students are more likely to feel uncomfortable at home.

Approximately one-quarter reported that their father is not alive. A similar percentage of respondents indicate that the relationship with their fathers is very close. Sixteen percent indicate a fairly close relationship, and almost as many indicate a not too close or not close at all relationship with their fathers. Although 55% question whether their fathers love them and 51% spend less than 15 minutes in meaningful conversation each week with their fathers, the data also indicates that there is a fairly high level of paternal interaction. About two out of three feel their father shows love for them, they show love for their fathers, and are proud of their fathers. Males are more likely to talk with their fathers about personal concerns and spend one-on-one time with them than female subjects. Eleven percent of subjects spend four or more hours each week in conversation with their fathers, this is more likely for younger.

With 14% of subjects reporting that their mothers are deceased, another two-thirds report a fairly or very close relationship with their mother. Maternal interaction is high amongst Namibian youth; more than 80% indicate that their mothers show love for them, show love for their mothers, and feel proud of their mothers. Three-quarters feel that they can talk with their mothers about personal concerns and seek advice from them; however, almost as many (72%) wonder whether or not their mothers love them. One of five students spend four or more hours a week talking with their mothers, though 32% spend less than fifteen minutes a week conversing with their mothers.

Reflecting on their attitudes to toward marriage, 88% believe that they will be happy in their own marriages, 81% that God intended marriage to last a lifetime, and 57% that marriage problems have been exaggerated. Overall, 68% feel their family experience has been positive, and 64% would like a marriage like their parents. Roughly the same percentages of students admire single life (44%), feel that even if children are present divorce is permissible (43%), that people should anticipate their marriage ending in divorce (41%), and there is too much pressure to get married thus they would rather live together (40%).

Females are less confident in the institution of marriage. They are less likely to feel that society would collapse if the traditional family fell apart and more likely to accept divorce if children are involved. Older youth are more likely to expect marriages to end in divorce, prefer cohabitation to marriage, and more likely to believe it difficult to have a successful marriage.

Approximately one-quarter report that their fathers are not alive and an equal percentage report that the relationship with their fathers is very close. Namibian youth seem quite open to alternate definitions of family. Seventy-four percent of respondents consider cohabiting couples with children as family, 65% an unmarried woman and her children as family, 25% cohabiting couples without children and two divorced heterosexual women as family, and 20% homosexual couples as family. Females are far more likely to consider an unmarried woman and her children as family, while younger students are more likely to accept homosexual couples as a family.

### ***Relationships with People of the Opposite Sex***

Overall, youth are more likely to learn about sex through TV and movies, followed by sex-related magazines/books and textbooks. Parents are the least likely source of information about sex. Males are far more likely to learn about sex through the internet or from classmates and friends. Older youth are more likely to have learned through sex-related magazines/books.

About half (46%) of those surveyed indicate that they would like to be virgins at marriage, though 71% report that if they could regain their virginity until after marriage they would. Females are far more likely to admire single life. Males and older youth are less likely to want to be virgins at marriage. Twenty-seven percent report having engaged in sexual intercourse, with male and older youth significantly more likely to engage in all sexual activities. Generally, sexual activity decreases as it becomes more intense and intimate.

When asked about sexual activity with someone you feel you love, approximately 14% feel that more intense and intimate activities are always acceptable and roughly 32% feel these are sometimes acceptable. Females are more likely to find hand-holding always acceptable and males are far more likely to find genital fondling and sexual intercourse always acceptable. The most likely reasons to justify sexual intercourse would be when a couple intends to marry, are in love, there is parental consent, or they knew their parents would not find out. Males are more likely to engage in sexual intercourse for any of the listed reasons. Older youth would be more inclined to engage in sex if there was no risk of pregnancy.

### ***Beliefs and Perspectives on Daily Life***

Overall, 72% of subjects indicate that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their lives. The subjects report they are most likely to listen to music and study, followed closely by reading a book and chatting on the internet. Females are more likely to listen to music. Sixty-eight percent watches MTV.

Church membership (87%), personal faith (85%), and the Bible (84%) are significant influences in the lives of Namibian youth, as well as their parents, music, teachers, and friends. Siblings, textbooks, television, the Christian faith, and movies are somewhat less important influences. Male students are slightly more likely to be influenced by New Age religions and information from the internet than females. Media influence is highest in the category of electronic media (MP3, cell phones, laptop computers); blogging is not common, though more likely to be practiced by male subjects. Females are significantly more likely to be influenced by fashion magazines.

Despite 78% indicating that the Bible provides absolute moral truths, 64% hold a pragmatic morality; 67% believe in rule-bending and 65% that lying is sometimes necessary. When reporting on their behaviors over the past three months, subjects report that 71% lie to friends or peers and 62% to an adult. About half (45%) watched a pornographic movie or read a pornographic magazine. Seventeen percent report having had suicidal thoughts in the last three months with 13% attempting suicide. This behavior is indicative of their moral values.

Namibian students indicate their future aspirations and measures of success are foremost to have a close relationship with God, earn an academic degree, and maintain good physical health in the future. The least important aspirations were having a fulfilled sex life within marriage, or having influence in other people's lives. Females are more likely to want good physical health, church activity, and a single marriage partner; males are more likely to want children and sexual fulfillment in marriage.

### ***Religious Background and Practice***

Forty-one percent of subjects are Protestant, 27% Catholic, and 13% have no religious affiliation. In this sample set, rural youth are significantly more likely to be represented by Protestants and urban by no religious affiliation. When questioned as to the sources of information about Christianity, 92% received information from the church, 84% from family/relatives, followed by 67% “other” (which may include television, radio, or school), 63% friends, and 60% missionaries.

Although 75% believe God to be the omnipotent creator of the universe, only one in five are certain of God’s existence and 10% that indicate they believe God does not exist. Over eighty percent of youth believe that the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings, that Jesus Christ was a real person, and that forgiveness is made possible only by faith in Jesus Christ. Approximately three-quarters of students believe that Jesus was virgin born, that the miracles in the Bible took place, that prayer changes things, and that all people will be judged by God. Similar percentages of those responding feel that their Christian faith is relevant to the way they live and that they have a personal responsibility to tell others about their beliefs. Forty-six percent believe that other popular (indigenous) religious practices are helpful and 41% that Heaven and Hell are real places.

Older students are also more likely to be pluralistic, while still adhering to a personal faith.

Generally, Namibian youth do not seem to have a clear idea of the afterlife indicated by the following: approximately one-fifth indicated religious rites as gaining access to Heaven, one-quarter of students indicated a belief that accepting Christ as their Savior would gain access to Heaven, and one-third of students cited not knowing what will happen to them after death.

With little difference in any category, 91% indicate that their religious practice is somewhat or very important to them; only 3% indicate that it is not at all important. However, only 31% of youth indicated that they attend weekly or daily religious services. More likely to attend are their mothers (40%) and siblings in the home (35%) than students themselves. Urban youth and their mothers are more likely to attend services than their rural counterparts.

Prayer is the most frequently practiced spiritual discipline, followed by reading religious texts and attending a religious youth group. Females are more likely to indicate scripture reading and prayer; urban youth are more likely to report prayer and religious youth group attendance. Younger youth are more likely to report youth group attendance, religious training class attendance, and leading a small religious discussion group. For those attending religious youth group meetings, they are most likely to attend groups consisting of 1-9 people (30%). Rural youth are far more likely to attend a smaller youth group of 1-9 people and urban youth a group of 20-29 people. Eighty-six percent of youth report that they would be somewhat or very likely to attend regular religious services after graduation.

Of the 90% of students answering whether they have made a commitment to Christ that is still important, 72% indicated making such a commitment with very little difference by gender. Urban and older students are more likely to have made this decision. Of these approximately one-third made this commitment between the ages of 13-15 and another one-third ages 16-18 years.

**Section IV: Namibia Secondary Data**

**Secondary Research Profile  
NAMIBIA**



DEMOGRAPHICS & POPULATION	
Population	2,128,560
Population (under 15 yrs)	38.7%
Population % of children in child labor (10-14)	9.49%
Life Expectancy	43.11 yrs
Birth Rate (per 1,000 people)	23.52
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	47.23
Estimated Urban / Rural Population %	32%/68%
Largest City / Population	Windhoek—296,366
Personal computers (per capita)	109 per 1 million people
Mobile Phone subscribers (per capita)	244 per 1 million people
Radios per capita	114 per 1,000 people
Televisions per capita	30 per 1,000 people
EDUCATION & LITERACY	
Literacy Rate (over 15 yrs)	85%
Primary Enrollment	72%
Literacy Rate – Males	86.8%
Literacy Rate – Females	83.5%
ECONOMICS	
GDP (2006, Billions USD)	\$5,148.00
GNI Per Capita (USD), 2006	\$3,230
Poverty Rate (% below poverty line)	34.9%

SOCIAL			
Human Development Index <sup>2</sup> (out of 177)	0.627	Prisoners (per capita, per 100,000)	267
Divorce Rate as percent of Marriages	Not Available	Adult prevalence rate 15-49 with HIV/AIDS (per 1,000)	108.812
Unemployment Rate	5.3%	Orphans, Children (aged 0–17) orphaned due to all causes, 2007, estimate (thousands)	Not Available
Murder (per capita, per 1,000 people)	Not Available	All registered NGOs	Not Available

This data is drawn from CountryWatch.com, World Health Organization, and public domain data. Statistics are generally from 2005 but may be earlier if none more recent are available.

<sup>2</sup> Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the level of well-being in 177 nations in the world. It uses factors such as poverty, literacy, life expectancy, education, gross domestic product, and purchasing power parity to assess the average achievements in each nation. It has been used in the UN's Human Development Report since 1993.

Homelessness	Not Available	Teen Pregnancy (15-19 yrs)	53
Male Alcoholism	Not Available	Suicide Rate per 100,000 (2003)	22
Child/Teen Soldiers	Not Available	Child Prostitution	Not Available
<b>ETHNIC GROUPS &amp; RELIGIONS</b>			
Ovambo	50%	Christian	85%
Kavango	9%	Indigenous Beliefs	5%
Mixed	7%		
Herero	7%		
Damara	7%		
European	6%		
Nama	5%		
Caprivian	4%		
Bushmen	3%		
Baster	2%		
<b>LANGUAGES</b>			
English (Official)			7%
Afrikaans			60%
German			32%
Oshivambo			>1%
Herero			
Nama			