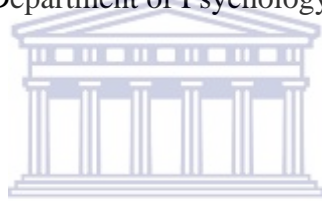


**DEVELOPING DEMOCRATIC VIRTUES: PRIORITIES AND
PRACTICES OF SELECTED SECONDARY EDUCATORS IN THE CAPE
TOWN METROPOLITAN AREA.**

NTHABISENG AFRIKA

Mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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UNIVERSITY of the

WESTERN CAPE

SUPERVISOR: Lena Green

KEYWORDS: Citizenship education, moral education, values education,
character education, cognitive education, education for democracy, democratic
virtues, teachers' values, thinking skills, moral development

DECLARATION

“I declare that, DEVELOPING DEMOCRATIC VIRTUES: PRIORITIES AND PRACTICES OF SELECTED SECONDARY EDUCATORS IN THE CAPE TOWN METROPOLITAN AREA.; is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.”

Nthabiseng Afrika

10 November 2005

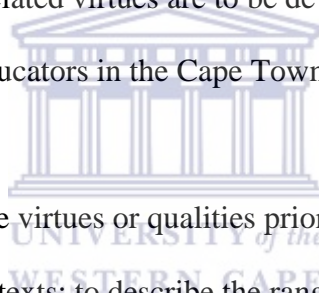
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DEVELOPING DEMOCRATIC VIRTUES: PRIORITIES AND PRACTICES
OF SELECTED SECONDARY EDUCATORS IN THE CAPE TOWN
METROPOLITAN AREA.

ABSTRACT

Recent political changes in South Africa emphasize democracy and the role of schools in promoting democratic virtues. The importance of schools' responsibility in developing democratic virtues is also internationally recognized, although different authors recommend different strategies. In studies of educators it appears that there is relative agreement about moral values. Less information is available about how the associated virtues are to be developed. This study will illustrate positions held by educators in the Cape Town metropolitan area.



This study aims to identify the virtues or qualities prioritized by educators from different orientations and contexts; to describe the range of practices employed to develop and promote such virtues; and to highlight the perceived tensions and constraints that affect practice. It expands on a previous quantitative study (Green, 2004a, 2004b) in order to generate in-depth information. Twenty secondary educators were interviewed individually using guidelines derived from the quantitative study. All educators were invited by letter to participate in the study and verbally informed of the voluntary nature of the study. Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns with the researcher prior to participation. The data were coded and categorized using thematic analysis.

The findings were that educators believe that it is their responsibility to encourage character education and there are a variety of ways one can do it. Their concern was that there is no set curriculum in place to help them and no formal assessment method to help them judge whether their efforts are working.



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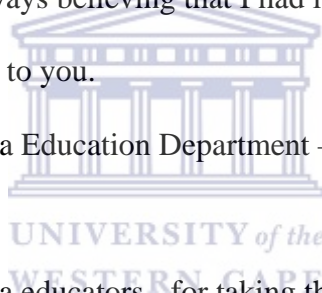


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. Introduction	
1.1 Context of the study	8
1.2 Aim of the study	11
1.3 Research Questions	11
1.4 Relevance of the study	11
1.5 Theoretical framework	12
1.6 Methodology	14
1.7 Definition of terms	15
1.8 Chapter overview	15
2. Literature Review	
2.1 Introduction	17
2.2 Citizenship education: Definition	17
2.3 Theoretical approaches to moral development	18
2.3.1 Behavioural view	19
• Indoctrination	
• Inculcation	
2.3.2 Social mediation view	20
• Commonsense	
• Religious authority	
2.3.3 Cognitive view	21
• Analysis approach	
• Values clarification	
• Cognitive structural: Kohlberg's theory	
2.4 Literature on developing citizenship values	26
2.5 Research in regards to the role of Schools and Educators	30
2.5.1 Educator's views	30
2.5.2 Tendency to agreement in regards to common values	31
2.5.3 Debates and Research regarding practices	31
2.5.4 Effectiveness of various interventions	33

3. Methodology	
3.1 Introduction	35
3.2 Purpose	35
3.3 Research Questions	35
3.4 Research Design	35
3.5 Participants	36
3.6 Data Collection	36
3.7 Data Analysis	37
3.8 Validity	37
3.9 Ethical Considerations	38
4. Results	
4.1 Introduction	39
4.2 Research Question One	39
4.3 Research Question Two	42
4.4 Research Question Three	48
5. Conclusions and Recommendations	
5.1 Introduction	50
5.2 Summary and Discussions	50
5.3 Limitations	54
5.4 Personal learning	54
5.5 Recommendations	55
References	57
Appendix A Letter of Permission	
Appendix B Cover Letter	
Appendix C Research Questions	
Appendix D Results of Green (2004a)'s study	



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the study

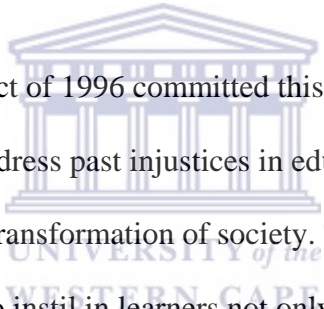
Discussions of citizenship in South Africa centre on the changing nature of the concept in a country that has been faced with the end of colonialism; apartheid and the beginning of democracy. Preuss (2003) and his colleagues highlight that it is difficult to grasp the concept of citizenship as the concept is used and understood differently in other countries. The reason is that the concept of citizenship is not a purely legal one and it is rooted in the political culture of respective countries (Preuss, 2003).

Exploration of citizenship in the South African context is further complicated by the challenges of national diversity, but it is not surprising that citizenship is very much on the agenda of education systems in South Africa. Recent political changes in South Africa have resulted in a new constitution grounded in the principles of democracy, equity and non-discrimination and a respect for the rights and dignity of all. One of the major tasks which education must perform in a democratic society is the proper preparation of the young citizens for the roles and responsibilities they must be ready to take on when they reach maturity (Preuss, 2003). Our government believes that in a democracy, education is one of the major vehicles by which the values of a people are acquired by the children and young adults who make up our schools' population (James, 2001).

In a document that discusses character education, James (2001, p. 10) proposed that young adults should have the following virtues: "desirable qualities of character such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, diligence, responsibility, compassion, altruism, justice and respect". The virtues of a democratic citizen are

to be acquired through character education. James argues that the schooling system should promote the above-mentioned values. Contributors to James (2001) believe that the promotion of values is important not only for the sake of personal development, but also for the evolution of a national South African character.

The National Education Policy Act of 1996, which set the stage for transformation in the sector, committed the state to “enabling the education system to contribute to the full development of each student and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of rights” (James, 2001, p.12).



The South African Schools Act of 1996 committed this country to an educational system that would not only redress past injustices in educational provision but also advance the democratic transformation of society. The new outcomes-based curriculum requires schools to instil in learners not only knowledge and skills but also values, and the Curriculum 2005 Review Committee emphasized that at the very heart of the curriculum lie the values of a society striving towards social justice, equity and development through the development of creative, critical and problem solving individuals (James, 2001). Not only is society changing but also violence in youth is increasing worldwide. In a recent survey of learners, educators and law enforcement officials, researchers found that violence involving adolescents seems to be more prevalent than it was five years ago in the United States (Binns & Markow, 1999). According to Hayes and Hagedorn, with the recent rash of school suicides, “the American nation has focused its attention

on violence in the schools, therefore focusing directly on the character development of learners” (2000, p.2).

All of these issues, changes in governance and increased violent behaviours in learners and schools, tremendously affect South African society. Developing virtues of democratic citizenship is therefore crucial, whether influenced primarily by fears of the young people’s disengagement with political processes, by concerns about young people’s violent behaviour, or by political change in a former apartheid country, character education has emerged, either as a discrete curriculum subject or as a dimension of the wider school curriculum (Palundan and Prinds 1999).

Although some research demonstrates that character education is effective (AgBio Communications Unit, 2001; Decair & Walsh-Vetter, 2001), it is still a highly debated topic. Some researchers view it as religious values being taught (Singer, 2000), others as a waste of time (Elkind, 1998); and others as something that must be “caught but not taught” (Brooks & Goble, 1997, p.73).

Schools have a responsibility to provide character education. The curriculum does not, however, make clear how these values and associated virtues are to be encouraged. It is also not clear whether educators in South African schools presently share the same perceptions and priorities. It is not clear whether educators have taken ownership of the Department of Education’s orientation regarding character and values education and how they initiate it in practice. Although there is much research on character education, not many studies have focused on educators’ practices and priorities.

This study makes the following assumptions:

- All participants are educators and have a vested interest in the current movements of educational reform.
- All participants will answer openly and honestly.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify educator priorities and practices in developing democratic virtues in selected secondary schools in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area.

1.3 Research Questions

There are three questions this research addresses. They are as follows:

- What virtues and values do educators prioritise;
- What are the range of practices employed to develop and promote the above;
- What are the perceived tensions and constraints that affect practice?

1.4 Relevance of the Study

It is anticipated that this study will provide additional knowledge on issues relating to the teaching of values in schools. The research will help contribute to the building of democracy by bringing to light the strengths, problems and debates that currently exist in this area in the South African context.

1.5 Theoretical framework

This study conceptualizes character education from the perspective of the civic dispositions and skills to be encouraged in learners. According to John (2000) the concept of civic skills encompasses the development of intellectual skills and participatory skills, which enable citizens to think and act on behalf of their individual rights and their common good. Civic dispositions he considers to be traits of character necessary for the preservation and improvement of a democracy. Like civic skills, civic dispositions develop slowly over time and as a result of what one learns and experiences in the home, community and school.

Civic dispositions are clearly related to moral qualities or character because they are traits of public and private character essential to the maintenance and improvement of democracy. This study reviews firstly the concept of character education and its relevance to the South African curriculum. The relation is made in this study between citizenship education and character education, the latter also conceptualized. A review of theorists who believe that character education is imperative within the South African context is discussed and the researcher also proposes various approaches to encouraging moral development. Three major positions were discussed namely: the behavioural view, the social mediation view and the cognitive view. The researcher focused mainly on the cognitive view since it encompasses Kohlberg's theory of moral development which is a stage theory. A review of Kohlberg's theory is discussed looking at how he researched that everyone goes through stages of moral reasoning sequentially and that one cannot skip any stage. Kohlberg (1981) also made a point that movements through these stages are not natural, meaning people do not automatically move from one stage to the next as they mature. In stage development movement is

affected when cognitive dissonance occurs. The importance of Kohlberg's theory is that it stresses that 'higher' levels of moral reasoning emerge in human beings, given sufficient and appropriate environmental challenges to invoke the necessary assimilation and accommodation processes (Kohlberg, 1981).

The researcher then focused on the literature on developing citizenship values, looking at the writings of Dewey, the authors of the Crick report, Lickona and Lipman. Dewey (1959) maintains that since democracy is not just a form of governance but a way of living, the development of individuals' social perspective and moral commitments is necessary. The authors of the Crick report concluded that citizenship education is necessary (although not the only thing) for a healthy democracy (McLaughlin, 2000). Lickona (1997) identifies the values most Americans agreed upon as central to moral lives in a democracy.

The researcher then looked at the research done in regard to character education and the perceptions of educators. There is research done on the views of educators about how they perceive character education, mostly their perceptions are positive, they believe it is necessary for a democratic country to ask schools to encourage character education. There is also a tendency to agreement in regard to common values but the researcher found debates regarding practice and the effectiveness of various interventions methods.

1.6 Methodology

The study employs a qualitative methodology to investigate educators' priorities and practices in developing democratic virtues in selected secondary schools in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area.

The study employs a qualitative methodology to investigate educators' priorities and practices in developing democratic virtues in selected secondary schools in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area.

Twenty educators were selected from four different schools. Eight of the participants were male and twelve were females. The participants were educators whose schools participated in the survey conducted by Green (2004a, b). Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually in a secluded room. The sessions were audio taped and where possible the participant's mother tongue was used. The content of the data was analysed by coding and categorising. The researcher looked out for particular themes, which were then grouped systematically. Memos were kept as a reminder and as a log of the developing line of thinking. Findings were later fed back to informants to get their opinion on the explanation being proposed, so that informants could identify with the researcher's account and accord with their feelings and views. Permission to conduct the research was requested from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and from schools and educators concerned. The participants were ensured that interviews would remain strictly confidential and anonymous. They were also informed that participation was voluntary. Copies of the mini-thesis will be made available to the WCED and the participating schools.

Our society is changing, since we have been a democratic country, in particular the education system which has introduced Curriculum 2005. On the other hand people are saying that since young people are aware of their rights they have

become less respectful and violence is increasing. Schools are looked to be having a solution; which is character education, which undoubtedly has merits and educators are mandated to teach values and develop virtues. The educators' priorities and practices of character education can have a huge impact on the outcome of character education and our society as a whole.

1.7 Definition of Terms

For this study, the following terms are defined as follows:

Character education: Deliberate instruction in basic values and morals, ideally woven into lessons throughout the curriculum (Lickona, 1991).

Citizenship education: The preparation or capacity building of young people for active and informed participation; a focus on inclusion or integration into the society. Citizenship education also includes an understanding and practice of rights, responsibilities, tolerance, respect, and equality as well as lifelong character traits (Kerr, 1999).

Virtues: Moral excellence (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001).

Values: The worth, desirability, or utility of a thing, or the qualities on which these depend (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001).

Morals: Concerned with goodness of human character or behaviour (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001).

1.8 Chapter Overview

Chapter 1: Information is given on the context of the study and the relevance of character education within the South African context.

Chapter 2: The approaches that can be used to encourage character education are discussed. Research done on character education is reviewed.

Chapter 3: This chapter explains the qualitative methodology employed. The purpose of the study, participants' selection, data collection and data analyses are outlined.

Chapter 4: Research results are analysed in terms of themes.

Chapter 5: This chapter summarizes and discusses results to draw up a conclusion and make some recommendations.



CHAPTER 2: MORAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to look at the connection between character and moral education. What is important in this chapter is the way different theorists view character education and why they believe that schools play a major role in promoting character education. This chapter will also focus on different theoretical approaches to moral development. The researcher has used the APA method of referencing, the reader will find the following abbreviations: n.d., meaning no date was found; in some books there were no page numbers and the researcher used paragraph numbers to indicate the location of the text.

2.2 Citizenship education is construed broadly to encompass the preparation of young people for their roles and responsibilities as citizens (Lickona, 1991). The term 'character education' is used deliberately throughout this study, one should keep in mind however that in many literatures the terms character education, citizenship education and values education are used interchangeably. Why the research uses the term character education is because Kerr (1999) distinguishes between education about citizenship, education through citizenship and education for citizenship. Education about citizenship involves developing knowledge and understanding of national history and the structures and processes of government and political life (Kerr, 1999). Education through citizenship requires a more active approach on the part of learners, where they participate in school and community life (Kerr, 1999). Education for citizenship includes the two approaches already described, but also equips pupils with skills, aptitudes and values which will enable them to take an active and responsible role in the adult

life. In other words character education is involved in education for citizenship.

The researcher is basing this paper on education for citizenship.

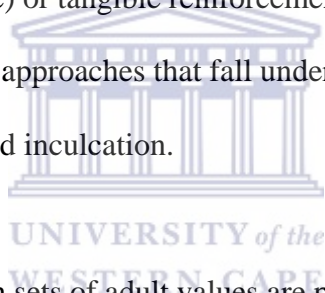
According to Kymlicka “citizenship education is not simply a matter of knowledge of political institutions and constitutional institutions. It is also a matter of how we think about and behave towards others”, (1999, p.88). Therefore this kind of education is about character building for the betterment of our democratic country. Character education has been described and defined in many ways. According to Lickona, Schaps, and Lewis, character education is about promoting core ethical values as the basis of good character (2002). According to Rusnak and Ribich, “the definition of character education to which one subscribes will make a critical difference” (1997, para.2). Zarra (2000, p. 23) defines the purpose of character education by stating that “it is to develop good lifelong character traits”. Being a person of character means living by core values, understanding them, caring about them and acting upon them (Hayes & Hagedorn, 2000). Lickona addresses character education by saying “ character education will serve the nation well if it succeeds in convincing children and adults to practice virtues in the everyday applications of honesty, responsibility, kindness and courtesy – that constitute good character and basic human decency” (1997, p.79). Character education is linked to moral development.

- 2.3 Various theoretical approaches to moral development have been proposed and the study briefly reviews three major positions, namely: the behavioural view which can be understood by looking at two approaches, indoctrination and inculcation; the social mediation view, which is explained by focusing on the common-sense approach and religious authority approach and the cognitive view which

comprises the following: the analysis approach, values clarification approach and the cognitive structural approach, based on Kohlberg's theory of moral development.

2.3.1 Behavioural view

This view focuses on overt behaviour rather than thinking. Educators look at whether the learner achieves stated learning objectives at the end of the lesson. The principles of learning are clearly stipulated and integrated in this view, behaviour expected is clearly defined; feedback and reinforcement are important and learners are rewarded for correct responses. The behavioural classroom requires that the behaviours which are desired will be reinforced, through recognition or rewards (praise) or tangible reinforcement such as grades, awards and privileges. There are two approaches that fall under the behavioural perspective; indoctrination and inculcation.



In the indoctrination approach sets of adult values are prescribed without giving the learner any choice or a chance to ask questions. It is a "do as I tell you" approach. Indoctrination does provide the necessary social boundaries and conditions for education to take place but does not help the learners to develop their own set of personal values, nor a care, concern or respect for others (Fisher, 1998).

The purpose of the inculcation approach is to transmit to learners a pre-determined set of values. This can be done via the process of modelling, positive and negative reinforcement; manipulating alternatives; games and role playing. It may be accomplished simply by having the learners read a book with characters

possessing worthy values or character traits that can be noted by the learners alone or with the educator's help. The educator can stress the values and their importance either through reflection or class discussion.

The implications of this view are that many educators will advocate rewarding ethical behaviour and punishing unethical behaviour. The problem with this view is that rewards motivate learners to get rewarded, therefore, learners do not develop a commitment to doing what is right, and their only interest is in getting rewarded. Similarly punishment only produces compliance in the short run and most often teaches learners what not to do instead of what to do. Learners who are frequently rewarded are likely to only behave pro-socially when they believe external pressures are present (Grusec & Dix, 1986; Kohn, 1991).

2.3.2 Social mediation view

This view deals with the fact that a fundamental means of learning is through observing and imitating of models. Educators serve as models that shape and influence their learners' behaviour. Books, pictures, television and movies also present models. There are two approaches connected to this view: common sense approach and the religious authority approach.

Commonsense approach: personal morality is seen as a utilitarian matter of deciding what is sensible in any situation, or following social conventions such as school rules (Fisher, 1998). Learners just need to know what is expected of them in social situations. In the religious authority approach learners will be expected to derive their moral and social values from religious authority, and from being members of a religious community (Fisher, 1998).

A problem with the social mediation view is that it is difficult for learners, just to be told to, for example, 'Just say no' to drugs or sex; they need to understand why so that they can be able to judge for themselves what warrants a good decision or a bad decision (Wainryb & Turiel, 1993). As Fisher (1998) said they also need to understand the concepts and criteria involved in making moral judgments and to develop moral principles that will be resilient in the face of external threats and pressures. This view is thought by many theorists to be ineffective because it does not include learners in the learning process (Matthews & Riley, 1995).

2.3.3 Cognitive view

This view has been defined by cognitive psychologists as comprising the mental processes, strategies and representations people use to solve problems, make decisions and learn new concepts. In essence, the cognitive view is reflective thought and reasoning that is focused on making decisions, often ones that involve important value dimensions. It consists of the thinking skills that promote thoughtful, considered judgments based on available evidence and the will to act on them. There are three approaches within this view namely: the analysis approach; values clarification approach and cognitive- structural approach (Kohlberg's understanding of moral development).

The analysis approach emphasizes rational thinking and reasoning. Its purpose is to help learners use logical thinking in dealing with values issues. Learners are urged to provide verifiable facts about the correctness or value of the topics or issues under investigation. This approach concentrates on social values rather than on the personal moral dilemmas presented in the moral development approach. The learners examine the alternatives and the potential consequences that may

stem from them. When faced with making a values decision, they use reasoning and decision-making skills not only to make their decisions but also to justify them. The emphasis is on correct critical thinking.

In the values clarification approach the central focus is on helping learners use both rational thinking and emotional awareness to examine personal behaviour patterns and to clarify and actualize their values (Fisher, 1998). It is believed that valuing is a process of self-actualization, involving the sub processes of choosing freely from among alternatives, reflecting carefully on the consequences of those alternatives, prizing, affirming and acting upon one's choices (Fisher, 1998). The values clarification approach relies on an internal cognitive and affective decision-making process to decide which values are positive and which are negative. It is therefore an individualistic rather than a social process of character education. In contrast to the values inculcation method, the educator makes no effort to determine whether the preferences are correct. Instead, the learners articulate their preferences and reflect on their choices.

The cognitive structural approach focuses on the construction of moral reasoning capacities, which are understood to be a product of the interaction of one's genetic, developmental and biological endowments with one's experience with the physical and social worlds. Content is largely ignored as the focus is on reasoning structures and decision-making processes. Proposed curricula do not endorse specific content; rather they provide the opportunity to apply one's reasoning to a variety of contents. Content is used as a catalyst for producing development. The basis is Kohlberg's theory of moral development.

Kohlberg (1969) links his work to a Piagetian understanding of cognitive development; he proposes that there is a necessary sequence of stages of moral development. This implies that, although activities can be initiated to enhance the progress of each stage, expectations of moral thought and behaviour must be matched to developmental stages. The theory stresses that 'higher' levels of moral reasoning emerge in human beings as species, given sufficient and appropriate environmental challenges to invoke the necessary assimilation and accommodation processes (Kohlberg, 1969). Kohlberg (1981) maintains that sophisticated moral judgments cannot be expected before adolescence because the prerequisite level of reasoning has not yet developed.

Kohlberg's stage one is similar to Piaget's first stage of moral thought. He (Kohlberg, 1981) proposes three levels: Pre-conventional morality; Conventional morality and Post-conventional morality and each level has two stages. At the first level there is an obedience and punishment orientation; at level two there is concern for good interpersonal relations and maintaining social order; level three involves ideas of social contract and individual rights as well as universal principles (Kohlberg as cited in Crain, 1985). According to him (Kohlberg, 1981) the child assumes at first that powerful authorities hand down a fixed set of rules which he must unquestioningly obey. He (Kohlberg, 1981) calls this stage, "pre-conventional" because children do not yet speak as members of society. Instead, they see morality as something external to themselves, as that which the big people say they must do. In level one, stage two is known as individualism and exchange, at this stage children recognize that there is not just one right view that is handed down by the authorities (Kohlberg, 1981). Different individuals have

different viewpoints. “Since everything is relative, each person is free to pursue his or her individual interests” (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 24).

Kohlberg’s level two is known as conventional morality. Stage three in this level is labelled: good interpersonal relationships (1981). At this stage Kohlberg (1981) believes that children, who are by now usually entering their teens, see morality as more than simple deals. They believe that people should live up to the expectations of the family and community and behave in “good ways”.

(Kohlberg, 1969, p.25). In both Kohlberg’s first three stages and Piaget’s two stages, there is a shift from unquestioning obedience to a relativistic outlook and to a concern for good motives. For Kohlberg, however, these shifts occur in three stages rather than two (cited in Crain, 1985). Kohlberg’s fourth stage is maintaining the social order. In this stage the respondent becomes more broadly concerned with society as a whole (1981). Now the emphasis is on obeying laws, respecting authority, and performing one’s duties so that the social order is maintained. In stage four, subjects make moral decisions from the perspective of society as a whole. “They think from a full-fledged member-of-society perspective” (Colby and Kohlberg, 1987, p. 27).

Level three is labelled by Kohlberg (cited in Crain, 1985) as post conventional morality. Stage five in this level is social contract and individual rights. At this stage people begin to ask. “What makes a good society?” they begin to think about society in a very theoretical way, stepping back from their own society and considering the rights and values that a society ought to uphold. They then evaluate existing societies in terms of these prior considerations. They are said to take a “prior-to-society” perspective (Colby and Kohlberg, 1987, p.22). Stage 5

respondents basically believe that a good society is best conceived as a social contract into which people freely enter to work toward the benefit of all. They recognize that different social groups within a society will have different values, but they believe that all rational people would agree on two points. In this stage people are making more of an independent effort to think out what any society ought to value.

Stage six according to Kohlberg (Colby and Kohlberg, 1987) is based on universal principles. People in stage six are working toward a conception of the good society. They suggest that we need to protect certain individual rights and settle disputes through democratic processes. However, democratic processes alone do not always result in outcomes that we intuitively sense are just. A majority, for example, may vote for a law that hinders a minority. Thus, Kohlberg (Colby and Kohlberg, 1987) believes that there must be a higher stage – stage six which defines the principles by which we achieve justice. Kohlberg’s conception of justice follows that of the philosophers Kant and Rawls, as well as great moral leaders such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King. According to these people, the principles of justice require us to treat the claims of all parties in an impartial manner, respecting the basic dignity of all people as individuals.

Kohlberg (as cited in Crain, 1985) suggests that moral thinking can be advanced educationally, using social interaction, cognitive conflict, a positive moral atmosphere and democratic participation. According to Harding & Snyder, (1991) Kohlberg advocates a community which includes equality of the participants, “ownership” of decisions by all group members, and a teacher that advocates

mature moral reasoning but who does not present morality in an authoritarian way.

Kohlberg's theory has provoked a lot of criticism. Not everyone, first of all, is enthusiastic about the concept of a post-conventional morality. Hogan (1973), for example, feels that it is dangerous for people to place their own principles above society and the law. Others have argued that Kohlberg's stages are culturally biased. Simpson (as cited in Crain, 1985), for example, says that Kohlberg has developed a stage model based on western cultures without considering the extent to which others have different moral outlooks.

Another criticism is that Kohlberg's theory is sex-biased (Gilligan, 1982). Gilligan observes that Kohlberg's stages were derived exclusively from interviews with males, and she suggests that the stages reflect a decidedly male orientation (1982). For males, advanced moral thought revolves around rules, right and abstract principles. The ideal is formal justice, in which all parties evaluate one another's claims in an impartial manner (Gilligan, 1982). This conception of morality, Gilligan (1982) argues, fails to capture the distinctly female voice on moral matters. For women, morality centres not on rights and rules but on interpersonal relationships and the ethics of compassion and care.

2.4 Literature on developing citizenship values

Dewey (1959) argues that democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a way of living together in a democratic community. For Dewey, the growth of the individual and society are inextricable (1959). The process of the individual's development involves an enlargement of both his or her social

perspective and social – moral commitments. According to Dewey, virtues are positively enabling (1988). While Dewey does suggest ways in which moral education might be addressed in contemporary classrooms, he also says that schools alone cannot foster virtue. Dewey (1988) urges people in his book to consider the educational potential of all institutions. Virtue, he believes, develops and is sustained in interaction with the whole of one’s physical and social environment; it cannot be merely willed into existence if certain conditions are lacking (1988). The school constitutes only part of children’s environment, and the other environments in which they participate will also bear on the development of character.

Authors (e.g. Dewey, 1959; Mannheim & Durkheim, 1980), have written of the conditions under which democracy can be expected to function effectively and some of these conditions relate to qualities of the mind and character that are supposed to be necessary to democratic citizens. For example, Marcus and Fritzer (1999) assert that citizens should value such qualities as fairness, tolerance and respect, which are concepts of democracy. Lipman (1991) maintains that the quality of judgment is important for citizens of a democracy. Inman and Buck (1995) point out that the core democratic values include respect for reasoning and truth, fairness, justice, freedom, equality and concern for the welfare of others. These virtues, it appears have to be acquired and the school is one important place to learn them. Barber (1992, p. 5) believes that democracy is not a natural form of association but “an extra-ordinarily rare device of cultivated imagination”. This means that people have to learn how to be citizens of a democracy. Schools are assumed to be the social institutions through which the principal identity of a nation is conveyed to successive generations of learners. Gutmann (1995) argues

that public schooling is one important means of helping to develop the values, attitudes and skills associated with caring and responsible behaviour and reflective judgment. It is believed that schools have a responsibility to produce people who are able to live as responsible individuals and who are able to make reasoned commitments. John Dewey (1959) writes, “The moral responsibility of the school and those who conduct it is to the society” (p.71). According to Fisher (1998, p.5), “All which the schools can or need to do for pupils, so far as their minds are concerned is to develop their ability to think”.

Benninga (1998) suggest that the ongoing debate about how to teach morals in the school really comes down to a competition between the product desired and the process by which that product is to be achieved. The question becomes who is responsible for reinforcing qualities of citizenship? The ideal situation would be families, schools and communities working in harmony to teach young people positive character traits, but consistency within this collaborative effort is difficult. The classroom could be one arena to reinforce, model and practice positive character traits on a daily basis; therefore the educator is central to character education.

Dobson (1970, p. 4) stated that “respectful and responsible children result from families where proper combination of love and discipline is present. Both these ingredients must be applied in the necessary quantities. An absence of either is often disastrous.” An effective educational environment exists when staff, learners and families work together in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Respect must permeate the home and the classroom.

Lickona believes schools are redefining their roles “schools, for their part, are rediscovering that there is much they can do to build good character. They can begin by making character development their highest educational priority – the goal that underlies everything else they do. They can challenge all other formative social institutions, especially the family, to do their part in teaching the young the virtues they need – respect, responsibility, prudence, self-discipline, courage, kindness and chastity – to make a good life and build a good society” (1997, p.64).

Goodman has argued that developing values and skills of “community” is the centrepiece of education for a critical and actively engaged democracy. To accomplish these ends, schools should foster perspectives that place “one’s connection to the lives of all human beings and other living things on our planet at the centre of the educational process” (1992, p.28). Schools should create classrooms that are societies of intimates in which collective identities, shared responsibilities and interrelated destinies among ethnically, racially, socially and culturally different individuals and groups are normalized, honoured and advocated (Goodman, 1992).

The authors of the Crick Report, cited in McLaughlin (2000) believe that character education is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of active citizenship in a healthy democracy. They also argue that character education is not just a matter of learning the basic facts about the institutions and procedures of political life; it also involves acquiring a range of dispositions and virtues needed to become a democratic citizen. These include the ability to think independently and critically as well as qualities of tolerance and moral

responsibility. Doyle (1997) argues that schools which ignore the character education of learners fail to serve society as a whole, particularly when other elements of society have abdicated responsibility for such instruction: character education meshes with the goals of a democratic society.

2.5 Research in regards to the role of schools and educators.

Research on character education, values education and moral reasoning has tended to focus on formal school setting (Matthews & Riley, 1995). The following appear to be the major findings.

2.5.1 Educators' views

Studies which were conducted internationally by Milson & Mehling (2002); Zuzovsky, Yakir & Gottlieb (1995); Sizer (1992), on educators' perceptions of character education showed that educators were positive about values education. Their study indicated that educators are supportive of values education; they feel it is needed in the schools and it results in improved behaviour, fewer discipline problems, less violence and even less sexual harassment in school. Their perceptions are that learners are better citizens because of character education. Mathison (1998) studied educators from four large metropolitan areas in the United States to determine educators' opinions/attitudes toward character education. Her survey results showed that almost 75% of educators responding supported character education, and felt it should be implemented across the curriculum. Nevertheless, 85% of the educators responding felt it was the primary responsibility of the home. She found that in general, educators view character education as an important and necessary component of public schools. She also learned that while most believe in the importance of character education,

educators have differing ideas of what character education is and how it should be taught (Mathison, 1998). Green (2004a) found that educators in South Africa also accept their role as moral educators although they do not necessarily engage in doing so.

2.5.2 Tendency to agreement in regards to common values

Stephenson, Ling, Burman and Cooper (1995) describe research conducted with educators in Australia. It appeared that there were five elements which Australian educators thought should be addressed; tolerance, respect for self and others, equal opportunity and gender inclusiveness, independence and social survival skills. In the study done by Killeavy (1995), Irish educators placed emphasis on care for others, tolerance, honesty, fairness, co-operation and self-respect. In a study done by Stephenson (1995), educators thought that respect, social structure and caring are important. Green (2004a) investigated Western Cape educators' values priorities by means of a questionnaire; some of the results that came out of this research were that the four most highly rated dispositions in regard to character education were goal-setting and planning, reliability, punctuality and persistence.

2.5.3 Debates and research regarding practices.

There seems to be agreement that schools are now sites for the education of democratic citizens but it is not clear how the virtues associated with this are to be developed. What is clear is that educators cannot remain neutral with regard to expressing certain values in their teaching. They do not appear, however, to be able to articulate clearly exactly how they promote values, and are hesitant to make public commitments to values (Ling, Burman and Cooper, 1995).

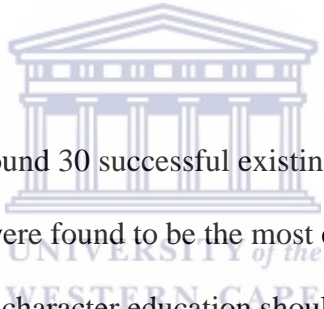
In a study conducted by Veugelers (1995) in which 415 high school educators were asked what values they thought were important for their learners, many educators maintained that they could not answer this question. There is little consensus about curriculum and methods to accomplish this task. Furthermore, there is evidence that educator education programmes are not engaged in the task (Centre for the Advancement of Ethics and Character & Character education Partnership, 1999; Jones, Ryan, & Bohlin, 1998). However in her study Green (2004b) reports that the percentage of educators who claimed to practice developing virtues was not more than 31%. This suggests a discrepancy between the high expectations placed on educators to serve as values educators and the amount of training they receive for this role. In a nationwide survey in the United States, Jones, Ryan, and Bohlin (1998, p. 17) found that “despite widespread support for citizenship education... it is not currently a high priority in the curriculum of teacher education”. Notable exceptions to these findings were those institutions that reported character goals as part of their mission. These institutions, which tended to have a religious affiliation, reported specific programme features that emphasize character, including admission policies, honour codes, rituals and ceremonies, community service projects and learner governance programmes.

Schools in the United States have introduced programmes such as: The Word of the Week program (What’s the word on character education?, 1997); the Star programme (Brooks and Freedman, 2002) and the T.E.A.M. programme (Tips for schools and youth activities, n.d.). There is little documented empirical evidence of the success of the above mentioned programmes although their supporters believe them to be effective.

2.5.4 Effectiveness of various interventions.

After reviewing character education literature, Matthews and Riley (1995, p. 17) determined that effective character education is grounded in community. “We ensure failure if we teach ethics without using a community context to illustrate, nurture and support ethical development. Without grounding ethics within the particular community and cultural context of the learner, ethics remain abstract, outside the scope of experiences of the learner, and ultimately irrelevant”.

Without an environment that is conducive to being a person of character, education can not be effective (Matthews and Riley, 1995). Also in order to be successful, character education programmes must focus on enhancing and creating a positive environment that, in turn, reinforces positive behaviours (Matthews and Riley, 1995).



Matthews and Riley (1995) found 30 successful existing programmes that met their criteria. The following were found to be the most effective strategies, giving educators solid evidence why character education should be integrated into the school culture and curriculum. These findings indicate the most common and effective implementation strategies for successful character education programmes. These strategies include: role playing/perspective-taking; problem-solving/decision-making and Professional Development; peer Discussions; Social Skills Training and Awareness and Worksheets/Homework; Conflict Resolution/Anger Management; Cooperative Learning; Homework; Self-Management Skills Training Awareness; Parent Involvement and Training and Shared Reading/Story telling.

There are other significant outcomes as a result of character education. In the third year of a five years study, researchers surveyed more than 7000 youth that participated in a character education programme. The learners surveyed were “less likely to lie, cheat, tease others and break into property” (AgBio Communications Unit, 2001, Para. 2).

Green (2004a) found in her research with South African educators that there are discrepancies between what they believe and what they practice. Despite the educators claiming to believe in the crucial importance of fostering dispositions in schools, only 31% of educators admitted to working actively to promote the disposition to set goals and make plans, 27% to promote reliability and trustworthiness, 26% to promote punctuality and 22% to promote persistence. It was encouraging however in her study that 25% of educators claimed to invest effort in encouraging learners to set and live by certain values. According to Green (2004a) the low level of reported engagement may indicate that educators are uncertain about how to mediate values and develop virtues and unclear about the boundaries of their role. It is also possible that educators do mediate values but fail to recognize their own practices in these terms.

This study aims to extend and clarify Green’s (2004a) findings with regard to high school educators’ priorities and practices.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will explain the choice of research approach and explain the participants and selection process. It will also clarify how the data were collected and analysed. Lastly, verification procedures and ethical considerations will be discussed.

3.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify educator priorities and practices in developing democratic virtues in selected secondary schools in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area.

3.3 Research Questions

There are three questions this research addresses. They are as follows:

- What virtues and values do educators prioritise;
- What are the range of practices employed to develop and promote the above;
- What are the perceived tensions and constraints that affect practice?

3.4 Research design

A qualitative approach was considered the most suitable because this study aims to elicit in-depth personal information (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In depth insider perspectives are generally best accessed by means of a qualitative research design. Silverman (1997, p. 1) points out that in qualitative research there is “commitment to a dialogue between social science and the community based on a recognition of their different starting points”. It also offers the possibilities of being open to the unexpected, which is important in this situation.

3.5 Participants

Participants were staff members at secondary schools in the Cape Town metropolitan area. A total of twenty educators from four different schools was individually interviewed. There were 8 male educators and 12 female educators ranging in experience from 3 to 15 years. Initially the Western Cape education department gave the researcher permission to interview five schools (Appendix A), but it was difficult for the researcher and one school to negotiate convenient time for both. The selection of schools was based on participation in a study by Green (2004a). Participants were educators at those schools who agreed to be interviewed. It was thus in part a convenient sample. The schools did however represent a range of contexts. They were from different socio-economic backgrounds, two of the schools could be classified as disadvantaged schools and one a middle class school and the fourth an upper class school.



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3.6 Data collection

Semi - structured interviews using guidelines determined in advance to investigate the above mentioned research questions were conducted to explore educators' interpretations (Appendix C). Individual interviews appeared the most appropriate means of providing space for each educator to explore and articulate his or her thoughts and each interview lasted for an hour. The discussions took place in a secluded room. Where possible sessions were conducted in the participants' mother-tongue to facilitate participation, the researcher interviewed in Xhosa and some schools in Tswana. The sessions were audio taped and later transcribed. Some interviews had to be translated after being transcribed. The researcher attempted to facilitate disclosure. Open-ended questions were used following guidelines developed out of the findings of the quantitative survey referred to above.

3.7 Data Analysis

The content of the data was analyzed using the following procedures for analyzing qualitative data: coding and categorizing (Denscombe, 2000). The researcher was on the look out for the occurrence in the data of particular ideas. The purpose was to discover, name and categorize phenomena, also to develop categories in terms of their properties and dimensions (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Ideas related to sub question were grouped systematically. As new insights came to the researcher, they were recorded with the data. Keeping memos to self at all stages of the research was advisable, since it served two purposes (Miles & Heberman, 1994). First they acted as a reminder about new thinking by the researcher on facets of the investigation. Second, they acted as a log of the developing line of thinking and this helped with audit trail (Denscombe, 2000).

3.8 Validity



According to Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 208) “reality is a multiple set of mental constructions...made by humans. And since humans are the primary instrument in data collection and analysis in qualitative research, interpretations of reality are accessed directly through their observations and interviews”. Strategies that were used in this research were the following: Firstly one on one interviews were conducted; in interviews direct contact at the point of the interview means that data can be checked for accuracy and relevance, as they are collected. Secondly the research findings were also fed back to informants to get their opinion on the explanation being proposed. The informants were able to identify with the research account and felt that it accorded with their feelings and views. In other words the researcher returned to the field to check out emerging explanations and their validity against ‘reality’.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the research was requested from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and from the schools and educators concerned. The participants were explained the significance and aims of the study. Great care was taken to ensure each participant that all information given in the interviews would remain strictly confidential and anonymous. Participants were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and should they wish to withdraw at any time during the process, it would be possible. In writing up the data care was exercised not to identify schools or individuals. Copies of the mini-thesis will be made available to the WCED and the participating schools. Plans will also be made to present the results orally to the participants and the principals at schools if required.



CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I outlined the results as themes using the framework of the research questions. Five themes emerged for research question one, nine themes emerged for research question two (grouped according to contextual factors, role modelling and active interventions), and three themes emerged for research question three. Selected quotations illustrate each theme. Implications of themes are discussed after each research question.

4.2 Research question one: Which virtues and values would you say are your priorities as an educator?

4.2.1 Theme: Setting goals and making plans.

“What I think is most important for my learners, is to know how to set themselves goals and to make plans in order to achieve those goals”.

“Learners can never make it in life if they cannot set goals for themselves”.

“Setting goals is important because learners must know why they are here and how they can make their dreams come true”.

“If we are in this profession to create future leaders then it is our duties to teach our learners how to set goals for themselves so that they would be people who have direction”.

4.2.2 Theme: Reliability and trustworthiness.

“Whenever we give tests and exams the learners know how important it is not to copy, this is a lesson that they will use later in life that one is more respected if one is reliable and trustworthy”.

“I think it is important for our learners to be taught not to take things that do not belong to them and when asked to do something they must do it whole heartedly”.

4.2.3 Theme: Perseverance.

“Even if our learners repeat the grade year after year we do not discourage them as educators, we sit with them and encourage them to try harder or we look at what might cause the problem. Sometimes it is just difficulties from home which can be easily resolved by cooperation”.

“The reason why we would encourage our learners to engage in extra-mural activities, is that we want them to learn to never give up, because there they enter competitions with other schools and they know they have to work hard as teams to achieve desired results”.

4.2.4 Theme: Punctuality.

“It is not that we are being hard on our learners, we are just training them to become good people in the future, ‘great leaders’, so things such as being punctual are very important”.

“Keeping time is something that is important for our learners to learn because it is not just about being there on time; it is also a reflection of ones attitude towards life”.

“Punctuality should be emphasized not because we want to finish the curriculum in time but as a sign of good character”.

4.2.5 Theme: Generosity.

“Being charitable begins at a very young age that is why it is important to instil in our learners, a sense of generosity. They can do things such as helping the community or running projects that will not only benefit themselves but other people as well”.

“Our learners should be taught how to give, I think it all starts there, and if one is willing to lend a helping hand one can go a long way”.

The implications that can be derived from themes of research question one are that educators were telling me what they are already practicing because they knew that the next question would be how they are encouraging the dispositions they just mentioned. Another point that came forth was that educators see some dispositions as what the learners should not do, rather than do. For example when talking about reliability and trustworthiness educators could not over emphasise the importance of learners not cheating in tests and exams. I think educators

believe that perseverance is important, especially in underprivileged schools, because learners from such background come from discouraging situations, in terms of adequate shelter, food and clothing. Some learners end up quitting school to go find work. There are also female learners who end up having children so that they can get the government grant or maintenance money from the fathers of their babies. Encouraging perseverance also will decrease the school drop out rate in males who end up being involved in crime. In middle class and upper class schools this disposition was not a major concern because learners there receive adequate support from their parents and mostly do not have to worry about basic needs. In underprivileged schools they lose more hope when they see their brothers and sisters who have finished schools, even tertiary education not getting jobs. Not everyone would agree that punctuality is a sign of good character but for educators it is important because to them punctuality is all about respect and obedience. To educators telling the learner that class starts at such a time means that learners must respect that and be there at that particular time. To educators this disposition implies respecting the fact that one has been given an order which must be obeyed. Later on in life this order will become an agreement between persons, which must be respected. What influenced educators to add generosity as a priority is what is happening around the world nowadays. This can be understood as an era of giving, the television also mentions environmental disasters and terrorism and all this encourages people to be more generous.

4.3 Research question two: What practices do you think can be employed in order to develop and promote the virtues and values you just mentioned?

4.3.1 Contextual Factors; in this category I placed references to the relationships between educators and learners, learners to educators and learner to learner.

4.3.1.1 Theme: Caring school community

This approach is when the whole school integrates character development into every aspect of its school life.

“Effective way of encouraging values is not adding a program or set of programs to a school. Rather it is a transformation of the culture and life of the school”.

“Everything in the school should be organized around the development of relationships between and among learners, educators and the community”.

“Social and emotional learning is emphasized as much as academic learning”.

“Discipline and classroom management concentrate on problem-solving rather than rewards and punishments”.

“Hold class meetings, in which learners establish group goals, decide on rules of conduct, plan activities, and solve problems”.

“Have learners collaborate on academic tasks by working in cooperative learning groups. Give them regular opportunities to plan and reflect on the ways they work”.

“Teach conflict resolution and other social skills so that learners become skilled at resolving conflicts fairly and peacefully”.

4.3.1.2 Theme: Classroom Climate.

The educator should create a classroom environment, where learners are involved in decision-making and shared responsibility for making the classroom a good place to be and to learn. He or she should teach conflict resolution and other social skills so that learners become skilled at resolving conflicts fairly and peacefully.

“The old way of the teacher-centred classroom is abandoned in favour of a system where we and learners hold class meetings to build unity, establish norms, and solve problems”.

“We should do away with the notion that teachers are always right and learners are always wrong, this does not encourage respect, all it does is to make learners afraid of us”.

“Cooperation and collaboration among learners should be emphasized over competition. Learners learn a lot faster when they learn from each other, and they learn to respect and cooperate with each other when they are paired or put in groups”.

“.. I believe the learners whilst discussing issues in groups learn to set goals, role assignment, progress critiques, problem solving and engage in reflection. While doing all this they learn from each other and this is also a good practice of having tolerance for each other’s opinions”.

4.3.1.3 Theme: Parent involvement

Schools are recognizing that they need to be proactive about incorporating parents into the life of the school and into their children’s learning in general. Parents, educators and community representatives should jointly identify and define the character traits their schools will emphasize.

“The parents need to be involved so that we do not work in a vacuum”.

“.. When the learners go back home they should be aware that what they learned in class should also be practiced at home...”

“There is lack of commitment from the parents, who sometimes lie for their children to get them out of trouble”

“...Does teaching values override parental influences?”

“It is not only the responsibility of the teachers but also of the community”

“Parents now want us to do everything even their job!”

4.3.2 Theme: Educator as role model.

The educator can be a model by his or her own behaviour. It is in the way the educators talk, the behaviours they model, the conduct they tolerate, the deeds they encourage and the expectations they transmit.

“I think that it is important to practice what you preach, that’s the best way that children learn, they look at what we are doing and they will do the same. It is no use telling our children to do this and we do different”.

“I treat learners with the same respect I would another adult. If I make a mistake, I admit it; I apologize, and move on”.

“The learners mimic what they observe”.

“..I have noticed that if I want the learners to clean up. I just have to start collecting dirt myself and it’s amazing how learners will start picking up papers as well”.

“If teachers want to teach values it must be evident in everything the teachers do...”

“...even in disciplining the learners the teachers must discipline in love showing that they care”.

“When they are here we are their parents, sometimes we even spend more time with them than they do with their parents. Therefore as parents we should care like we would with our own children”.

“ We should leave time aside where we can listen to our learners’ problems and advice them if we are able to on the issues they might have, sometimes learners might be afraid to approach us but if we feel that there might be a problem, we should go to them and help them open up”.

4.3.3 Active Interventions

4.3.3.1 Theme: Teaching values across the curriculum

According to the educators in the study the curriculum is filled with opportunities to engage learners in thinking about character and values.

“When my learners are reading novels, I give them an opportunity to scrutinize the character of characters. For example, in the novel Macbeth, Macbeth’s dilemma was whether it was right or wrong to do what his wife suggested. I will therefore ask my learners: What kind of a person was Macbeth? What were his weaknesses and strengths? How did Macbeth process his dilemma? What do you think of his choices? What things do you admire about Macbeth and why? What do you think you would have done if you were in his shoes? What do your responses say about you”?

“In my history classes my learners do not only learn past events because I give them an opportunity to make ethical judgments about history. To me and my learners history is not just a timeline of events; it’s about people making choices that affected other people. Those choices had ethical and moral dimensions and often produce consequences. For example when we did the part on Apartheid South Africa we looked at a couple of questions which were if I remember correctly: Who were the people making those choices and what do you think about their actions? Did they do right, or did they do wrong? What kinds of values did these societies demonstrate? What do you think of these values? What would you do as a citizen of such a society?”

“We explore ethical issues like genetic testing or the use of animals in research in my science class. We also learn about scientists who have refused to conduct research to be used for purposes they did not approve of, like biological weapons. Sometimes we even go further to look at what happens when scientific findings conflict with religious beliefs or lead to politically dangerous conclusions”.

“I think teachers try to incorporate it into every-day activities. However, I don’t think it is actually in our curriculum”

“We used to cover it somewhat. We have so many demands for standards to cover.”

“It is important that we put values in everything we do, it does not matter whether one is teaching history or maths one should always emphasize values in the subject being taught.”

“All literature explores universal themes that involve such ethical dilemmas as truth versus loyalty, the individual versus community, short-term versus long term and justice versus mercy.”

“I’m a soccer coach and I usually try my best in developing good traits in my learners, encouraging them to think about issues such as; how they want the community to view them as a team, What kind of reputation they want for their team with regard to following rules on the playing surface, following rules at school, following rules in the community, following the rules of athletic code of conduct, respecting authority on the playing surface and respecting authority at school”.

“Not in curriculum, but used.”

“I add it”

“Not formally.”

“Informally, not directed curriculum”

“I don’t specifically teach these things, but indirectly they are all in my classroom through things I say, things I demand, having due dates and penalties for not meeting.”

“It’s not written curriculum, but I teach and demand those traits from my learners and my staff.”

“I use from time to time some community building activities in my classes. At the beginning of the year, I have all the learners go through a three-day core values activity to set our class values...”

4.3.3.2 Theme: Engagement in discussions.

“Good classroom discussions lay the groundwork for democratic participation throughout life, giving learners a sense of power within a community and conveying to them the importance of their future role as participants in society”.

“Classroom discussions are important because they help the learners to critically think. Talking in groups helps them to learn to organize their thoughts and present them coherently”.

“Through discussions learners learn to be active listeners, holding other people’s ideas up to critical analysis”.

“I think by holding discussions learners will come to see that there are always alternative ways of looking at a difficulty problem or situation”.

4.3.3.3 Theme: Service learning.

This theme covers any reference to community service and helping others.

“When the learners are put in control of their own community, they have a sense of togetherness”.

“Cleaning up projects and having a sport team brings them closer together and they develop respect for each other”.

“In community work learners go past merely performing the service, they also select it, plan it, and then reflect on their entire experience. In addition to academic content, learners practice valuable practical skills like organizing, collaborating, and problem solving. And they exercise such important character virtues as showing respect, taking responsibility, empathy, cooperation, citizenship, and persistence.”

“ .. Since the learners have been involved in community projects like helping street children and cleaning up at hospice they have I can say high regard for life”.

4.3.3.4 Theme: Link to experiences

The educators should help their learners to see that learning is connected to the outside world and the school does not operate in a vacuum.

“The teachers must provide relevant experiential contexts from the subject matter as seen from the viewpoint of the learners we must meet them where they are in their lives in present-time context”.

“Let the learners share their experiences when you are talking about issues in class, this makes learning more interesting”.

4.3.3.5 Theme: Evaluation

Educators agree that it is difficult to evaluate progress but they have some ideas.

“There will be reduction of violence, vandalism and improved attendance.”

“Improvement in academic performance”.

“... We can see through a system of checklist and discussions with other teachers.”

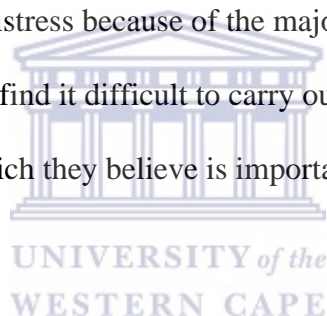
“Changes in the school climate could also be an indication of changes in the behaviour of learners”.

One implication of themes from research question two are that educators believe that the school, learners, staff and the administration should treat each other with respect. If everyone feels cared for and respected it becomes easy to work and therefore character education will be encouraged. The other implication is that if new things are introduced and learners are not part of the process they would become difficult. Learners need to play an active role in shaping the culture and environment of the classroom. Parent involvement is important to educators because they believe if parents have a positive attitude about their children's learning, educators' role would be easier. With many teenage pregnancies in schools one does not have to wonder why educators thought that being a role model is important.

Active interventions such as teaching values across the curriculum were important to educators because they felt that even though the curriculum is not helpful on how to teach for character, they do take initiatives in their learning areas. Other educators simply stated that they do encourage values informally, which implies that learners could also be learning some other things, good or bad, informally. Some educators mentioned service learning, links to experiences and group discussions. This implies that they have been trained or got some readings on outcomes based education.

4.4 Research question three: What do you think are the tensions and constraints that affect practice?

Educators are experiencing distress because of the major changes happening in South Africa. They therefore find it difficult to carry out their duties properly, including teaching values which they believe is important. Themes identified were:



4.4.1 Theme: Increase in number of learners.

Learners having to live rural places and coming to cities for better quality education has led to a large number of learners in classrooms.

“Our classes are too big for us to teach properly, we cannot divide our learners in groups nor encourage any cooperative learning”.

4.4.2 Theme: Multicultural educational system: education policy

“Besides having difficulty with the language, learners are from different backgrounds that practice different religions which sometimes makes it difficult for the teachers to teach values”.

4.4.3 Theme: Demands of the new curriculum

Curriculum 2005 has been very difficult to implement more resources and training is crucial.

“Instead of concentrating on little things the government likes coming with big ideas that we were not even trained for. This new curriculum is not practical.”

“It is difficult to teach knowledge so we reckon we must not waste time in teaching extra things that can be taught at home”.

“The demands of Curriculum 2005 are too many and we are not trained for any of them”.

The themes of research question three are based on what is happening in South Africa today and there have been major changes happening at once. Educators mentioned increase in the number of learners because many people have freedom of movement, they can go to any school they want to go to; this is the reason why the educators were complaining about the increase in the number of learners, not only freedom of movement but the demands of the new curriculum because of outcomes based education, which is learner-centred, looks at group discussions and discourages rote learning. Many educators are not even trained for this.

Developing the virtues of democratic citizenship is essential to many educators. This study shows that the respondents all felt strongly that certain character dispositions were important. The results of this study also showed that educators believe that there are a variety of ways one can encourage character education in learners. They also felt it was a responsibility of the educator since there was no set curriculum in place to help them encourage character education and there is no formal assessment method in place to help them judge whether their efforts are working.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

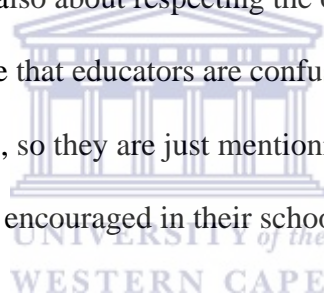
5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher is going to summarise the findings and discuss the research results. The researcher will also discuss why the educators said what they said. Thereafter the limitations, personal learning and recommendations will be discussed.

5.2 Summary and discussions

The research findings which were in response to research question one: What are the virtues and values prioritized by educators? Educators, as in other studies, agreed that developing character traits in schools is their role and it is important. They identified the following dispositions as important for character education: setting goals and making plans, reliability and trustworthiness, perseverance, punctuality, and generosity. There are some differences between this study and other studies done on educators' priorities in other countries. The difference is brought by what different educators and communities value and by how a particular country conceptualizes democracy. Ling, Burman and Cooper (1995) found that educators in Australia prioritise tolerance, respect for the self and others, equality and social survival skills; and educators in Ireland believe that honesty, truth, equity, care, respect and religious values are important (Killeavy, 1995).

In South African an influence of cultural diversity cannot be ignored. In the past people were regarded in terms of race, ethnicity and class. Democracy means to South Africans doing away with this division, therefore citizenship would mean having to trust each other disregarding race nor does class, to be a democratic citizen mean to be able to persevere because things are not changing as quickly or as expected. Generosity is important to South African citizens because it is evident that we cannot rely on the government to do everything for people and this disposition is also necessary in our quest to become 'one as a nation', under the banner of 'Ubuntu'. Educators also mentioned punctuality as an important disposition, there are two factors that might explain why they mentioned this disposition, firstly punctuality to educators can be an evidence of respect, it is not only about keeping time it is also about respecting the orders given. Secondly punctuality might be evidence that educators are confused about their role in respect to encouraging values, so they are just mentioning practices they believe are important and are already encouraged in their schools.



The finding of the study relating to research question two: What are the range of practices employed to develop and promote the virtues and values prioritized by educators? There is some debate about how to best address character education curriculum. Should there be a set curriculum, or should educators be asked to address certain issues in class? In this study it is clear that educators do promote character education through formal and informal curriculum. They mentioned practices such as creating a caring school community, classroom climate, parental involvement, educator as role model, incorporation within the curriculum, engagement in discussions, service learning and linking what learners learn in classroom to real life experiences.

The informal approaches are consistent with Fisher (1998)'s suggestions that moral development can be encouraged through the process of modelling; giving the learners an opportunity to decide for themselves what will be right or wrong in any situation (common-sense), and by helping learners use both rational thinking and emotional awareness to examine personal behaviour patterns and to clarify their values. It seems that most educators are influenced by the analysis approach which emphasizes rational thinking and reasoning. From the examples that educators gave one can see that learners are urged to provide verifiable facts about the correctness or value of the topics or issues they discuss in class. The learners also examine alternatives and the potential consequences that may stem from discussions. Educators seem to emphasize critical thinking. This is also in line with what Kohlberg suggests in his theory of moral development (Kohlberg, 1978). Since educators engage their learners in group discussions, one may conclude that educators want to encourage their learners to reason on a post-conventional level of morality, because while learners interact with one another in groups they begin to think about others and think about their society as a whole; the rights and values members of their societies holds. This level is evident from adolescence to adulthood, but most people according to Kohlberg never reach this last level unless enough and appropriate environmental challenges are given (Kohlberg, 1981).

There is little consensus about curriculum and methods to accomplish character education in research (Ling, Burman and Cooper, 1995; Veugelers, 2000; Green, 2004b). It was a convenience to do this research since it was a follow-up from Green's study, I believe that since the participants had already answered questionnaires about dispositions from Green's study they had time to reflect and

to implementing consciously the dispositions they mentioned in Green's study. During the interviews they were more confident and they were willing to give me examples of how they try to encourage character traits in their learners. I believe that after Green's study most of them realized that they do mediate values they just failed to recognize their own practices in these terms, but they did come to a realization after being given time to think.

The following conclusions can be made on the data from the research, in relation to the third research question: What are the perceived tensions and constraints that affect practice? There is a discrepancy between the high expectations placed on educators to serve as character educators and the amount of training they receive for this role. Educators feel that there are three major things that make their work difficult in developing values of character education which are the following: increase in number of learners; multicultural educational system; and the demands of the new curriculum.

There are theorists, for example, Dewey (1988) who believe that people should consider the educational potential of all institutions since schools alone cannot foster virtues, he says that virtue is developed and is sustained in interaction with the whole of one's physical and social environment; it cannot exist if certain conditions are lacking. Benninga (1998) suggests that the ideal situation would be families, school and communities working in harmony to teach young people positive character traits. Since consistency within this collaborative effort is difficult, educators are having a hard time. If the community was involved the large number of learners in classroom could not be a major problem, because learners would already know from home or the community what is expected of

them. It should be noted that these constraints are connected because if educators were trained and were confident on what to do they would enjoy their work more.

5.3 Limitations of the study.

There may have been unknown factors specific to this Metropolitan Area (unknown to the researcher) that influenced this study. Language became an issue in some schools because the educators preferred to speak in Afrikaans (the language the researcher is not fluent in). Female educators were more comfortable than male educators to participate. Many educators thought that the researcher was there to 'investigate' whether they are doing their jobs properly. In some schools it was difficult to find a 'quiet place' to do the interviews, and most interviews were conducted in the educators' classroom during break or when they had free periods.

5.4 Personal learning

I learned a lot from this study, the hard work that educators are engaged in within the education system is overwhelming. Educators are trying hard to catch up, especially the ones in the previously under-privileged schools. I sympathised a lot with educators within these schools, because they were saying there is a lack of resources such as not having enough textbooks and computers. I ended up having to agree with the educators on why they should be bothered with character education while there are bigger things to be concerned about. By bigger things they mean things such as the government building more schools, getting more qualified educators and encouraging more training or providing resources.



5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are provided to assist in developing the virtues of character education.

The first recommendation that emerges is encouragement: If educators are expected to take the responsibility of character education, the government should make sure that there is a system put in place to encourage educators and its communities to be involved in discussions together about what virtues they want to develop for their particular school. Educators should also be provided with resources on how they can help their schools meet the aims and purposes underpinning citizenship. Secondly, educators must receive training on how they can encourage virtues in their learners. Educators already have an idea on how they can do this; they just need to attend workshops where they can share with educators from different schools what is working and what is not so that they can become more confident in their work. Meeting educators who teach the same learning area can help them to brainstorm about practices which work. Thirdly, schools have to implement a programme which will evaluate whether their efforts are working. If there is a programme in place where educators can see the changes then they will be encouraged to persist, if they work in a vacuum there will be lesser effort to carry on.

These recommendations are not trying to make educators' work harder by having to incorporate more material. These efforts try to unify and standardize what is already happening, but further development work should be taken into consideration for example, teacher training, dissemination of good practice

examples for schools, development of interactive school-community partnership and encouragement of the whole-school approach to character education.

This study examined educators' priorities and practices in developing the virtues of democratic citizenship. From the results of the study, four main recommendations are made for the schools. These recommendations advocate the schools formalizing character education and involving all parties that are connected to the learners. Educators already have some ideas that they have put in place, they just need the administrative guidance to effectively put the whole process of character education together in the best interest of all learners and the future of our democratic country.



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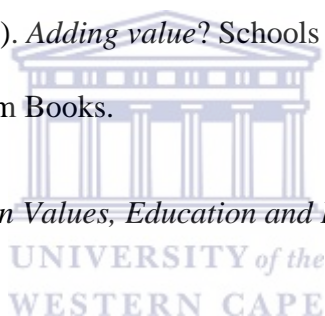
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APPENDIX A

Letter of permission



APPENDIX B

Cover Letter



APPENDIX C

Research Questions

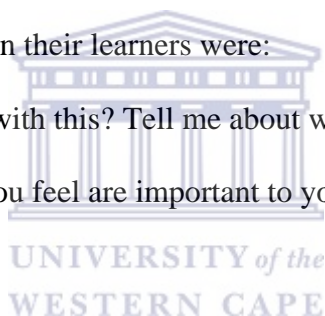
Introduction: Last year some educators at your school, and at other schools in the province, completed a questionnaire about priorities. My study is an attempt to inquire more deeply into this with educators. I will tell you briefly about the research findings to date and then I would like to know what you think.

I will be recording the session so that I do not miss anything but your name and your school's name will not appear anywhere. Your comments will be integrated into a report of the issues raised by all the educators that I interview.

1. Most educators believe that the most important qualities for a democratic citizenship that educators needed to develop in their learners were:

Would you personally agree with this? Tell me about why you think this?

What virtues and values do you feel are important to you or should be encouraged in schools?



2. There are many different ways of developing the qualities that we believe are important in citizens of a democracy, for example:

What kind of things happens in this school with this aim in mind?

Does everyone agree about what should be done?

Are the dispositions you mentioned part of your classroom curriculum? Please give some examples of how you try to encourage the development of character traits in your classroom.

3. Although educators mentioned that encouraging dispositions is important most of them did not practically do it, what are the things that you think may or does make it difficult to encourage dispositions?

What do you think that would be?

Would that be the case in this school?



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APPENDIX D

Results of Greens' study

Table 1: Dispositions in rank order as rated by educators.

		Minimum rating assigned	Maximum rating assigned	Mean	Std. Deviation
Disposition to set goals and make plans		2	6	5,61	.70
Disposition to be reliable/trustworthy		1	6	5,55	.82
Disposition to be punctual		1	6	5,43	.90
Disposition to persist rather than give up		1	6	5,23	1.00
Disposition to set and live by certain values		1	6	5,23	.95
Disposition to reason things out using logic		1	6	5,20	.94
Disposition to strive to be a 'good person'		1	6	5,19	1.04
Disposition to respect legitimate authority		2	6	5,18	.95
Disposition to express own thoughts clearly		1	6	5,16	.95
Disposition to be tolerant		1	6	5,14	.96
Disposition to be polite to all other persons		1	6	5,14	.99
Disposition to generate creative ideas		1	6	5,12	1.03
Disposition to manage own thinking/learning		2	6	5,12	.98
Disposition to organize/connect thoughts/ideas		1	6	5,12	.94
Disposition to listen with empathy to others		1	6	5,11	1.01
Disposition to collaborate well		3	6	5,10	.89

with others					
Disposition to be compassionate/kind		1	6	5,05	1.01
Disposition to make own judgements		1	6	4,99	1.03
Disposition to care about accuracy		2	6	4,94	.96
Disposition to evaluate own/others' reasons		1	6	4,92	1.02
Disposition to be curious and ask questions		1	6	4,91	1.01
Disposition to reflect/consider		2	6	4,88	1.00
Disposition to be generous		1	6	4,65	1.16
Disposition to enjoy contention and debate		1	6	4,0	1.05
Disposition to take citizenship seriously		1	6	4,52	1.27

Table 2: Dispositions rated by educators as most and least important

Disposition	Percentage of educators who rated this as very important to work on in schools
To set goals and make plans	92%
To be reliable/trustworthy	90%
To be punctual	87%
To persist rather than give up	81%
To be generous	57%
To enjoy contestation and debate	54%
To take citizenship seriously	53%

Table 3: Educators' practices

Disposition	Educators who claim to put effort into encouraging this disposition
Set goals and make plans	31%
Be reliable/trustworthy	27%
Be punctual	26%
Set and live by certain values	25%
Persist rather than give up	22%
Be tolerant	21%
Be curious and ask questions	19%
Manage own thinking and learning	19%
Respect legitimate authority	18%
Listen with empathy to others	17%
Generate creative ideas	17%
Strive to be a 'good person'	15%
Express own thoughts clearly	14%
Reason things out using logic	14%
Organize/connect thoughts/ideas	13%
Collaborate well with others	13%
Be compassionate/kind	10%
Be polite to all other persons	10%
Care about accuracy	9%
Make own judgements	7%
Enjoy contention and debate	5%
Take citizenship seriously	4%
Evaluate own/others' reasons	3%
Be generous	2%
Reflect/consider	2%

