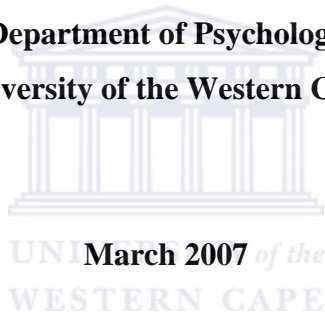


**Parents' perspectives on the role of the school in
citizenship and moral education.**

**A minithesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Magister Psychology (Education) in the
Department of Psychology
University of the Western Cape**



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PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN CITIZENSHIP AND MORAL EDUCATION

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

Parents' perspectives on the role of the school in citizenship and moral education.

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The purpose of the study was to explore what parents expect of schools regarding citizenship and moral education. I argue that it is important that parents' views are taken into account when exploring citizenship and moral education in the schools in order to enhance congruence between values and associated virtues promoted at school and at home. In the study I provide an overview of theories of moral development that highlight the link between the development of cognition and moral reasoning ability. Parents and schools have a dual responsibility in the development of young people who will possess the values associated with a democratic society. Research suggests however that parents and educators do not necessarily view the same values as important in the moral education of children. According to research there seems to be confusion over which values are desirable to instil in children and how these values ought to be promoted. In this small qualitative study fourteen parents or caregivers participated in two focus group discussions, one group from a rural setting and the other an urban setting. The constant comparative method of data analysis as used in the grounded theory approach was selected. In this study it was found that parents valued most being sensitive, appreciative, caring, respectful and accepting. In contrast with the more altruistic qualities, most fathers felt that it was also important to be competitive and goal-orientated in order to be successful. Parents' understanding of the roles of school and home respectively were that citizenship and moral education are a dual responsibility and that closer ties between parents and schools would promote the transfer of desirable values. The finding of the study contributes to an existing body of international and national research on citizenship and moral education, and adds to an ongoing conversation about how best to nurture children and young people to become the kind of citizens desirable in a democratic society. It also illuminates areas for future research in the field of parents' role and expectations of schools in the moral education of children.

March 2007

DECLARATION

I declare that *Parents' perspectives on the role of the school in citizenship and moral education* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Erika Coetzer

March 2007

Signed:.....



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1. CHAPTER 1 : GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter an explanation of the context and rationale of the study is given, which provides the reader with a background to the field of citizenship and moral education as well as the reason behind the aims identified for the study. Thereafter the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the research methodology utilised, are briefly reviewed. A brief description of the structure of the rest of the study, and some special terminology used within the context of this study, conclude the chapter.

1.2 Context and rationale of the study

In recent years, citizenship and moral education has been a priority in the political agenda of many democratic countries (Edwards, Munn & Fogelman, 1993). This has also become a debatable topic in South Africa's young democracy where ways are explored in which democratic citizenship can be promoted amongst the youth. Societies all over the world are exploring the ways in which to educate young people to develop moral values that are concretised in citizen behaviour (Veugelers & De Kat, 2003). The moral degeneration seen amongst the youth, has led to a move towards the inclusion of citizenship and moral education in the schooling system in many countries (Cummings, Tatto & Hawkins, 2001). Internationally, though, literature suggests that there is confusion about the best way in which citizenship and moral education should be implemented in the schools. In South Africa, the Department of Education has responded to international trends on moral education and the South African Constitution by launching a values-in-education initiative in 2000, one consequence of which was *The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* in 2001 (Department of Education, 2001). The Manifesto gives a framework to schools for the creation of an environment that nurtures "a sense of the democratic values of the Constitution in young South Africans" (Department of Education, 2000, p. 10). It also recognises the importance of congruence between parental values taught at home and the values instilled by schools and educators. Parents and schools are seen as central in the process of developing young people who possess the values desirable in citizens of a democratic nation (Green, 2004).

In developing societies, such as South Africa, the difficult part though is finding effective ways to restore social and moral consensus without a small group of people imposing a set of behaviour and values on schools and communities (Lacina, 2001). Since the family and school are seen as the two institutions that perform the primary socialisation functions in any society (Stofile, 2001; White & Matawie, 2004), it seems crucial that both these institutions are involved in the moral education of the youth and communicate openly to find effective ways in which moral development can be promoted. Some research also shows that the most effective ways of promoting moral development are through parent-teacher communication and partnership (Berkowitz and Bier, 2005; Lickona, 1988; Warren, Young & Hanifin, 2003). Therefore the study of parents' perspectives on citizenship and moral education is important to create a forum for conversation between schools and parents to attempt to clarify parents' expectations and increase congruence between the values promoted between schools and parents. The main research question I attempt to address in my study is what parents expect from schools in relation to citizenship and moral education. In order to make this a meaningful question for parents I had to explore first what values they hoped their children would acquire, thereafter what they expected from themselves, and only then their views on schools' role in citizenship and moral education.

As an intern-educational psychologist and educator in the field of mainstream and inclusive education, both in schools and the education management district centres, I am interested in finding effective ways in which to enhance moral development amongst the youth. My role currently as an intern-psychologist and learning support advisor, involves supporting and advising educators on how to implement inclusive practices effectively in supporting all learners. This includes those learners who experience social and behavioural barriers to their learning and development. I therefore have a specific interest in understanding moral development to increase my knowledge on how to support educators and parents in dealing with a variety of social and behavioural difficulties that they face, especially in the light of the increased reports of unacceptable learner behaviour in classrooms and at home. I have experienced a variety of educational contexts in which I have seen a need for a deeper understanding of moral development, especially amongst educators and parents who appear to have become increasingly despondent regarding their ability to positively influence the youth. Exploration of alternative approaches to citizenship and moral

education seems necessary due to the unsuccessful results of traditional behaviour modification programmes, as reported by psychologists and educators, in order to find more effective ways of positively influencing and instilling desirable values and virtues in children.

1.3 Aim of the study

Given the context above, the study was conducted in order to explore parents' expectations of the school in the moral education of their children. The study made use of the following research question with necessary sub-questions:

1. How do parents perceive the school's responsibility in the citizenship and moral education of their children?
2. What kind of person would parents like their children to become?
3. How do parents see their own responsibility or role in the citizenship and moral education of their children?
4. What should the school's role be in the citizenship and moral education of their children? (How should the school promote desirable values?)

The study adds to an ongoing conversation about how best to nurture children and young people to become the kind of citizens desirable in a democratic country. Furthermore, in order for the education authorities to find the best approaches to citizenship and moral education, both schools and parents need to be consulted and given a platform to voice their opinions. It seems crucial that parents be involved in the conversation about moral development to ensure the effective implementation of a strategy for citizenship and moral education within the schooling system. Parents' views can also contribute to a deeper understanding of the current concerns around the moral degeneration of the youth. A study that acknowledges parents' perspectives on the topic may also increase communication and closer partnerships between parents and schools. The education department also needs to be informed of parents' perspectives on the issue to ensure that their views are taken into account during the planning and decision-making process of a possible curriculum or suggestions on how to promote moral behaviour in schools.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

In this section I anticipate chapter 2 with a brief review of research findings and certain theories related to moral development in an effort to illustrate the correlation between developing thinking or reasoning ability and moral development, as well as the importance of schools' and parents' involvement in enhancing moral development. Chapter 2 reviews various perspectives regarding desirable values and proposals for moral education as a background against which to discuss what local parents found important.

The theoretical underpinnings of socio-moral knowledge are rooted in cognitive developmental theory. The two cognitive developmental approaches that mainly inform this study, are Jean Piaget's cognitive-structural theory (1965) and Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development (1969, 1981). A Kohlbergian theoretical framework is especially relevant to this study due to its emphasis on the relationship between moral understanding and cognitive reasoning ability. Kohlberg's theory draws heavily upon Piaget's cognitive-structural theory. It also recognises the cognitive dimensions involved in becoming a "good citizen" of a democracy (Green, 2004). Chapter 2 also includes a critique of Kohlberg's theory of moral development.

Reference is also made to other approaches that might influence moral education. These include Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1978, 1986) and the behaviourist approach to moral development. Vygotsky emphasises the relationship between thinking and learning and the role played by the adult or the educator as a mediator. The behaviourist approach to moral education includes Skinner's (1904-1990) operant conditioning theory and Bandura's (1977 & 1999) social learning theory. Social learning theorists accept and built on Skinnerian principles of modelling, conditioning and reinforcement.

I acknowledge that there are other approaches to moral development as expressed by various religions, but this study is confined to secular approaches and assumes that there is a link between the moral education of children and their moral reasoning abilities within a social context.

Research seems to support my main theoretical framework by proposing that moral discussions be carried out in schools in a critical, reflective manner, involving reasoning ability, to enhance moral development (Green, 2004; Wardekker, 2001).

Some research also suggests that the effects of parenting on the development of Kohlbergian moral reasoning and moral development are influenced by three principal parent variables: the parental stage of moral reasoning and explanation, parental discipline, and family communication patterns (Berkowitz, 1998b; Smetana, 1999). Many authors therefore make a strong link between effective parenting and moral development, suggesting that parenting behaviour is highly influential in the development of conscience and moral reasoning development (Kochanska, 1991; Kuczynski, 1984). Literature on moral development also suggests that children's democratic and social skills are mainly transferred through interactions with family (especially parents), friends (peers), and educators (Berk, 2003). This highlights the shared responsibility between parents and schools to teach children the principles of right and wrong. Most research (Delpit, 1995; Hauser-Cram, Sirin & Stipek, 2003) also proposes that an agreement between the school and its parents of what is expected of a democratic citizen increases the likelihood of instilling desirable values and virtues in the young. Some research also suggests that children are disadvantaged when their parents and teachers hold different values regarding desired classroom practices and behaviour.

1.5 Research Methodology

I used a qualitative research approach in my attempt to access and interpret the parent participants' perspectives and reality in-depth. The strength of qualitative research lies in the possibility of in-depth study of the parents' own feelings and perceptions. The approach was also useful in exploring the parents' perspectives within two specific parent communities. The two groups of parents, identified through purposive and convenience sampling, were selected to represent one urban and one rural setting. The parent groups, consisting of eight and seven participants respectively, took part in the semi-structured focus group discussions. The transcripts of the semi-structured focus group discussions, the field notes and the co-facilitator's observational comments, constituted the data. I decided upon the use of focus group discussions as the main method of data collection. This method supported self-disclosure and the group dynamics were a catalyst in bringing information to the fore. It also reduced the time that was needed to be spent at the school and the farm respectively. My previous involvement with the two schools as well as the title of the group discussions motivated participant involvement and principal support. Participant involvement was further enhanced by my willingness to conduct the focus groups at times that suited

the participants. The organisation of the settings were facilitated by the agreed times, which was after working hours. I used my diary and field notes to record thoughts and memories of the conversations that struck me as significant. This, as well as my co-facilitator's written observations, supported me in identifying overt themes and also those themes and concerns that were not communicated directly. Thereafter I selected the constant comparative method as used in the grounded theory approach (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Schaw, 1998) to help me organise the data and to identify relevant patterns and themes that emerged from the parents' discussions.

To increase the internal validity of the study and to try and verify the data, the following strategies were used: a method called "audit trail" (so that each quote can be verified by an external reader by giving each respondent a number with a page and line number in brackets next to it), reflection on own biases, and minimisation of subjectivity by evaluating interpretations against my observations and notes and the observations of the co-facilitator.

As part of my ethical responsibility my research was carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (A.P.A.) and the ethical requirements of the University of the Western Cape. Informed consent was also obtained from the Western Cape Education Department, the principals of both of the schools, the farm manager, and the individual participants involved in the focus groups. Participants were fully informed that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time, that action such as counselling would be taken if they were traumatised in any way, that confidentiality and privacy were assured, and that no harm was intended by the research.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1: In this chapter the context and rationale of the study are described, and an overview of the theoretical background and research methodology is given. It also provides a short orientation of what to expect in the following chapters. Definitions of any special terminology used within the context of the study, are also added.

Chapter 2: This chapter gives a review of the theory relevant to moral development and the moral dimension of citizenship education. It also provides some background to the development of citizenship and moral education internationally and locally, and presents appropriate research findings related to school and parent involvement in

moral education. Finally, it attempts to identify desirable values and virtues associated with a democratic citizen, and effective ways of instilling these in the youth.

Chapter 3: This chapter describes the research approach in detail and gives a justification for the use of the qualitative approach and selected data collection methods. It also provides an explanation of how the data were analysed and verified. Lastly it explains how the researcher acted in an ethical manner.

Chapter 4: In this chapter the research findings are presented. The findings are organised according to the research questions whereafter themes and sub-themes, are identified. Interpretive comments about the themes follow, linked to the facilitator's and co-facilitator's observations and relevant literature. Chapter 5: The conclusion is presented in chapter 5. In the final chapter various perspectives and speculations on the research findings are further explored. Suggestions are also given for further research in light of the research findings. The chapter adds to the ongoing conversation about citizenship and moral education and gives some recommendations that might prove beneficial to educators and parents in their efforts to instil desirable values in the youth.

1.7 Definitions

The following definitions were adopted for the purpose of the study.

- Moral: concerned with right and wrong conduct; based on a sense of right and wrong (Collins Gem English Dictionary, 1998).
- Values: moral principles, which are desirable qualities of character such as honesty and integrity (integrated from the Collins Gem English Dictionary, 1998; and Raidt, 2001).
- Virtues: moral goodness, understood as positive moral qualities or active manifestations of positive values (integrated from the Collins Gem English Dictionary, 1998; and Green, 2004).
- Citizenship education: a process that involves “civic knowledge” (a knowledge component), “civic skills” (intellectual and participatory skills), and “civic dispositions” (traits of character) which include moral responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for the worth and human dignity of every individual (Schoeman, 2000).

- Moral education: “...any form of intentional education aimed at promoting the growth of moral functioning, i.e., to increase an individual’s capacity to function as an effective moral agent” (Berkowitz, 1998a, p. 1).
- Education for democracy: “...any form of intentional education aimed at instilling the skills and knowledge necessary to function effectively in, and thereby contribute to, the democratic process” (Berkowitz, 1998a, p. 1).
- Parent: For the purpose of the study, the term “parent” will refer to biological mothers and fathers, as well as the non-biological main caregivers.



2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.
Theodore Roosevelt (Lickona, 1993, p1)

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a theoretical framework for the understanding of moral development and moral education for citizenship, and a review of relevant research findings that highlight the importance of school and parent involvement. I located my research in this theoretical framework and set of ideas due to the gap found regarding research related to what parents expect from schools in citizenship and moral education. I therefore focus on what schools' and parents' roles can be and infer from the literature what parents might want from schools.

2.2 Call for citizenship and moral education

Internationally and locally there has been a call for citizenship and moral education (Cummings, Tatto & Hawkins, 2001). Lickona (1993) also highlights that an increasing number of people are becoming more aware of the need for citizenship and moral education, "in light of a society in moral crisis" (p.1). Moral education, also referred to as character education and values education, and often linked to education for democracy and citizenship, is of particular interest in countries which are newly democratic or are attempting to increase their democratic nature (Berkowitz, 1998a). This is also true in South Africa's young democracy where the new government has realised that if it wants democracy to survive, Citizenship Education within a democratic society has to be taught to every future generation (Schoeman, 2000). The drive towards an education that promotes citizenship and morality has seemingly been influenced by society's perception that schools are important facilitators in the citizenship and moral development of children. A task group (2001) appointed by the former Minister of Education, Kadar Asmal, researched "Values in Education" and described values as "desirable qualities of character such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, diligence, responsibility, compassion, altruism, and respect," (Raidt, 2001, p12). The task group indicated that they would like young people to possess these values and the schooling system to actively promote them. This highlights the perceived role that schools are expected to perform in the moral development of the youth. The new Curriculum 2005 reflects the values and principles of South Africa's new democratic society. Its overall focus is to provide learners with the opportunity to

develop their full potential as active, responsible, and fulfilled citizens who can play a constructive role in a democratic and equitable society (Schoeman, 2000).

The former German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, also challenged the German society to have the "courage to be moral" (Schmidt, 2000, as cited in Raidt, 2001, p. 11) and to foster cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance) and civic virtues (e.g. solidarity and readiness to help, tolerance and respect, courtesy and punctuality), practicing these starting in the family, "the smallest cell of democracy" (Raidt, 2001, p. 11). Many authors, such as White & Matawie (2004) and Stofile (2001), agree that the family and school are the two institutions that perform the primary socialisation functions in any society. Harris (2001) points out that although the family is the social institution on which all others depend, its stability has been undermined in the past 50 years. Given the frequent lack of permanence in family relationships, Harris (2001) argues that it is too much to expect that correct values will be nurtured in the home. It appears as if parents are no longer the most obvious objects of identification, and as a result the traditional authority of parents over their children is negatively influenced (Wardekker, 2001). According to Harris (2001) the peer group has seemingly taken over as the most compelling force "creating something of a moral vacuum for the younger generation" (p 35). Lickona (1993) also highlights that the school's responsibility in the moral education of the youth has increased due to the decline of the core family structure as understood in the traditional sense of both parents being part of the same family. Schools have to teach the values children are not learning at home; and schools, in order to conduct teaching and learning, must become moral communities that support children from unhappy homes to become responsible students (Lickona, 1993). These views increase the expectation of schools to become moral agents whether or not they are equipped to take on the responsibility. There is also, seemingly, little clarity over the nature and content of values and norms to be taught in schools (MacLaughlin, 2000) as well as the manner in which these should be mediated.

South Africa's developing conception of citizenship draws mainly on two ingredients: the anti-apartheid struggle and the new Constitution, both promoting the values of democratic citizenship (Enslin, 2003). The vision of citizenship, reflected in the Constitution (RSA, 1996), expects citizens who are committed to the common good and who contribute to debates and decision-making at national and local level (Ministry of Education, 1997), suggesting that there is a moral and cognitive

dimension to citizenship. As early as the 1950's, Marshall (1950) for example connected the education system with the social effects of citizenship, stating that civil rights "are designed for use by reasonable and intelligent persons, who have learned to read and write" (p.174). Citizenship education in South Africa and elsewhere incorporates both moral and cognitive elements (Schoeman, 2000). Moral education often seems to be understood to be a dimension of citizenship education, with moral values seen as concretised in citizen behaviour (Veugelers & De Kat, 2003). Moral education is further emphasised in the various policy documents such as the revised National Curriculum Statement (2002) which indicates that children's moral development should manifest through their knowledge, attitudes and values; the outcomes-based national curriculum (Curriculum 2005) which emphasises common citizenship and the need to produce thinking, competent citizens; and the Draft Policy Document on Religion in Education (2003).

2.3 Role of schools and educators

The literature suggests that the school's role in the citizenship and moral education of the youth, together with society's expectation of schools, has dramatically increased during recent years (Edwards, Munn, & Fogelman, 1993; Nucci, 1989). The education system is expected to contribute to the development of values and of citizenship. Carbone and Peters (1991) claim that teachers cannot avoid imparting values in one way or another in the normal course of their activities; moral education in some sense is unavoidable. It seems therefore as if schools cannot ignore their role in the citizenship and moral education of the youth and their influence upon the moral development of children. These expectations have led to many countries putting emphasis on teacher professionalism and publishing formalised codes of ethics for teachers (Terhart, 1998). The Finnish codes for example define the values behind a teacher's ethics as: human worth, honesty, justice and freedom (Tirri & Kansanen, 2003). A study conducted by Joseph (1993) of teachers' perceptions of being "moral agents", found that despite their reluctance to directly teach values, they felt committed to share their personal ethos (moral beliefs) with the students. Veugelers (2000) suggests that more attention should be paid to the values educators themselves find important for their students and on the ways these socio-cultural values are expressed in their work. Veugelers (2000, p. 40) also notes that "teachers cannot directly transfer values to their students but they can try to influence their students' behaviour and beliefs". The consequence of direct transfer of teachers' values may be

that moral education can become indoctrination. This concern is recognized in the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (Department of Education, 2001) where it is stated that there is no intention to impose values, although discussion and debate are accepted and the education system is expected to actively promote equity, tolerance, multi-lingualism, openness, accountability and social honour (Department of Education, 2001). Bebeau, Rest, and Narvaez (1999) propose the Four Component Model that lists four basic processes upon which morality is built and which should be fostered in schools, namely: moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral character. This model appears to connect with what Schoeman (2000) proposes, which is the development of moral judgment as a skill, moral sensitivity as a skill or disposition, and moral motivation and moral character as a disposition.

In contrast, the Dutch educational psychologist Hofstee (as cited in Wardekker, 2001, p. 104) argues that schools should abstain from transmitting values and norms, except for those rules that are instrumental in making teaching and learning process possible. The reasons he proposes for this are that the relationship between teachers and pupils is not of the kind required for the transmission of values and norms since moral education calls for a personal and emotional tie; that attitudes and values cannot be tested adequately; and that teaching of values, norms and attitudes implies indoctrination which is contrary to the aim of attaining freedom of choice (Wardekker, 2001). In Hofstee's view, schools prepare pupils for real-life actions by giving them the cognitive instruments to act wisely; they cannot direct the actual course of action, since this is the individual's responsibility. Research conducted by Barone (2004), studying teachers' and students' perceptions of the teacher's role as moral agent, supports Hofstee's claim and found that the Moral Education class was perceived to be useful for teaching core values and reinforcing concepts of right and wrong conduct, but that knowing good values was different from behaving morally in life. This seems to connect with the 'character' dimension of a person.

2.3.1 Values and virtues to be promoted

MacLaughlin (2000) points out that the question of values is controversial. Literature on attributes desirable in citizens of a democracy suggest that no definitive listing can be made of these, but rather that broad personal characteristics such as a sense of responsibility, a concern for justice, and the capacity for critical judgment, can be identified (Green, 2004). Lickona (1991a) maintains that most Americans agree that "honesty, fairness, tolerance, prudence, self-discipline, helpfulness, compassion, co-

operation, courage and a host of democratic values” (p. 45) are central to moral lives in a democracy. Borba (2001) listed empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness as the seven essential virtues. Although literature appears to suggest that there is some consensus, there is a lot of confusion in the field of education about which values and associated virtues are essential to promote.

The majority of society seems to expect of teachers to share their values with students, but some literature suggest that schools and parents may not necessarily agree upon which values are desirable to instil (Noordin, 1995 as cited in Barone, 2004). This raises a possible concern of contradiction between what educators promote on the one hand and parents on the other, which may influence the success with which desirable values are instilled in children. This highlights the need for schools, educators and parents to reflect upon and engage in ongoing discussions about the values they wish to nurture. Wardekker (2001) claims that pupils will need moral rules and knowledge in order to live in society, but that it appears as if schools and the broader society are at a loss as to what the right or most useful rules and values would be for a future society. The South African schools however have a state mandate, the Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy (Department of Education, 2001) that guides schools in the moral education of students, but the question of which values or virtues schools should promote, still seems unclear to educators and parents. Various practices of moral education are recommended, drawing on the different theories of moral development. These are reviewed below.

2.4 Theories of moral development

An overview of a variety of approaches to moral development follows. As mentioned before, the two cognitive developmental approaches that mainly inform this study are Jean Piaget’s cognitive-structural theory (1965) and Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory of moral development (1969, 1981). Other approaches briefly discussed are the behaviourist approaches including Skinner (1904-1990) and Bandura (1977 & 1999), and Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory (1978, 1986).

2.4.1 Behaviourist approach

The behaviourist approach to moral education includes Skinner’s (1904-1990) operant conditioning theory and Bandura’s (1977 & 1999) social learning theory. Firstly, according to operant conditioning, the only scientifically supported alternative to moral degeneration is the shaping of behaviour along socially desirable lines by a

combination of systematic instruction in morals and modelling, backed by positive reinforcement (Peters, 1981). The social environment must be controlled and designed to encourage co-operative and socially useful forms of behaviour, while rules and practices that are essential to social survival must be singled out and instilled in the young by Skinnerian techniques. Secondly, several kinds of social learning have emerged, with the most influential devised by Bandura (1977) and his colleagues. Social learning theorists claim that values are learned through the principles of conditioning and reinforcement (Berk, 2003). According to this approach, children acquire certain attitudes and values through hearing or seeing such views and actions expressed by parents, friends, teachers, and others, and because they see others rewarded (with love, praise, and approval) for adopting these values and views (Baron & Byrne, 1997). The premise is that behaviours that are followed by positive outcomes are strengthened and tend to be repeated, while behaviours followed by negative outcomes are weakened, or at least suppressed (Baron & Byrne, 1997). In addition to direct observation of others, social norms – rules within a given group suggesting what actions or attitudes are appropriate – are also important (Pettigrew, 1969). Most persons choose to conform to most social norms of groups to which they belong. Parents and other adults play an active role in shaping the youth's attitudes and values (Baron & Byrne, 1997). Children learn to do as their parents do, not as they say. The importance of thinking or cognitions in social learning, in terms of interpretations rather than reasoned judgements, has also been stressed by Bandura (Berk, 2003).

2.4.2 Cognitive approaches

2.4.2.1 Kohlberg and Piaget: individual constructionists

The work of both Kohlberg and Piaget is embedded within the body of individual cognitive-structural developmental psychology (Kohlberg, 1987). Lawrence Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory of moral development illustrates the link between moral understanding and cognitive reasoning. Moral judgement research has also been driven by Kohlberg's stage theory which focuses on the level of cognitive sophistication, or form, of one's moral reasoning (White & Matawie, 2004). His stages of moral development assume that a student progresses developmentally in his/her thinking about moral issues, and he claims, like Piaget, that these invariant sequences in development are universal and hold in any culture (Peters, 1981). It is important to notice that it is not the content of the judgement that determines what

stage a subject is at, but the form of covert moral reasoning that had led him to the position he adopts (Rosen, 1980). Kohlberg identified an invariant sequence of six stages of reasoning about morality that he organised into three general levels, namely, the preconventional level, the conventional level, and the postconventional level (Berk, 2003). Kohlberg also introduced a seventh stage which assumes a cosmic perspective that goes beyond the humanistic one of the sixth stage (Rosen, 1980) and seemingly beyond what a psychologist can claim.

Kohlberg's theory is essentially Piagetian, as he himself claims that his work on morality started from Piaget's notions of stages and was further inspired by Piaget's pioneering effort to apply a structural approach to moral development (Kohlberg, 1981, p. 16). Both Piaget and Kohlberg argue that "moral education should be informed by an understanding of the psychological stages of moral development" (Fisher, 2000, p. 67). Piaget's concept of structurally defined cognitive stages refers to the transformations that take place as an individual moves from one structure or form of thinking to a qualitatively new structure of thinking (Kohlberg, 1987). According to Piaget the achievement of arriving at the final stage of cognitive development is not assured. All that can be accurately predicted from the theory is that anyone who has progressed to a certain point will have followed the same sequence of development as anyone else who has reached that same point (Rosen, 1980). There are four periods of cognitive development formulated in Piaget's work namely the sensorimotor period, the preoperational period, the concrete operational period, and the formal operational period (Berk, 2003), each one marking a major qualitative advance over the child's previous way of knowing and thinking about the world.

Piaget (1932) explored the field of socio-cognitive moral development in his fifth book, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, where he views the development of a child's moral judgment as a shift from a heteronomous to an autonomous mode of thinking. Heteronomy is characterised by egocentrism, unilateral respect, rigidity of rule, and objective responsibility, while the child becomes morally autonomous when he/she can establish relationships with others based on mutual respect and reciprocity, and when he/she realises that a rule is modifiable under certain circumstances provided that everybody agrees about the changes (Ruffy, 1981). An autonomous child will also place more importance on the intention leading to an action than on its consequences. Kohlberg and his collaborators refined and extended on Piaget's socio-

cognitive moral perspective. Children, Kohlberg claims, start by seeing rules as dependent upon power and external compulsion; they then see them as instrumental to rewards and to the satisfaction of their needs; then as ways of obtaining social approval and esteem; then as upholding some ideal order; and finally as articulations of social principles necessary to living together with others – especially, justice (Peters, 1981).

Kohlberg also states that the main factors which have been shown to correlate with the development of a principled, predictable morality are: “intelligence, moral knowledge (that is, knowledge of the rules of a society), the tendency to anticipate future events, the ability to maintain focused attention, the capacity to control unsocialised fantasies, and self-esteem” (Peters, 1981, p. 87). Moral judgment at any given stage, Kohlberg claims, has a structural quality parallel to and dependent upon the structure of cognition at corresponding periods of development. Cognitive development, therefore, places constraints upon the range of one’s moral judgment and is considered to be a necessary, but not sufficient condition for moral development (Rosen, 1980). There seem to be two critical points in the influence of cognitive transformations upon moral development. The first is the presence of concrete operations which promotes moral judgment at stage 2, and the second is the emergence of formal operations necessary for the social contract orientation of stage 5 (Rosen, 1980). Keasy (1975) in his studies on the implications of cognitive development for moral reasoning reached the conclusion that the evidence supports the notion that cognitive development is a necessary condition for moral development and that the former facilitates the emergence of the latter, although it is not sufficient to fully account for it.

Cognitive theorists also believe that a person is an active initiator and reactor within the context of his or her environment (Schonert-Reichl, 1999; Windmiller, Lambert & Turiel, 1980). Piaget regards cognitive development as the result of an individual's interaction with the environment (Louw, Van Ede & Louw, 1998). He claims that the external world does not impose meaning upon the person, but through assimilation to his/her developmental level and the process of autoregulation the person confers meaning upon the environment (Windmiller, et al., 1980). As a result, a child through actively interacting with the environment produces his or her intellectual and mental structures (Windmiller, et al., 1980). Kohlberg (1981) also embraces an active organism model, which holds that the growing person constructs and reconstructs his/her own moral knowledge out of exchanges with social beings in the environment

(Rosen, 1980). He therefore sees the role of the child in acquiring moral values as active; not passively accepting moral teachings (Windmiller, et al., 1980). Two central concepts which function throughout the developing process are the concept of equilibration and the concepts of differentiation and integration, which Kohlberg has borrowed from Piaget (Rosen, 1980).

Although Kohlberg claims that the family's participation "is not unique or critically necessary for moral development" (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 399), Piaget suggested, contrary to popular belief, that parental behaviour could to an extent accelerate a child's moral development through consistency of punishment and discussion or reasoning between parent and child (Berk, 2003). Piaget still saw peers (equals) as the primary facilitators of the child's moral development and that discussion on their own, without being influenced by authority relationships that exist between children and parents, are important (Berk, 2003). Kohlberg, as Piaget (1965) did, also recognises that there is a correlation between the development of a principled morality and peer-group participation, arguing that this is because of the stimulation which such a group provides for the individual to reflect upon situations (Kohlberg, 1968).

2.4.2.2 Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory

An alternative cognitive approach that integrates social dimensions is Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1978, 1986). Vygotsky recognises a developmental progression but rejects the idea of discrete stages of reasoning ultimately rooted in human biology. He agrees with Piaget that children are active, constructive beings, but unlike Piaget, who emphasises children's independent efforts to make sense of their world, Vygotsky views cognitive development as a socially mediated process promoted through interaction with competent others (Grieve, 1992). This approach, as applied to moral development, differs from that of Piaget and Kohlberg in two further ways: it does not assume that young children are incapable of moral reasoning, or that morality is either context free or in any way linked to human biology (Green, 2004). Fisher (2000) also highlights the contexts in which moral action occurs. Vygotsky further suggests that mediated learning encourages children to engage in "verbalized self-observation" and to reflect on, revise, and control their own thought processes (Berk, 2003). It seems to imply a more active approach to moral education than that suggested by Kohlberg's theory. According to Vygotsky, social interaction – in particular, cooperative dialogues between children and more knowledgeable members of society – is

necessary for children to acquire the ways of thinking and behaving that make up a community's culture (Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992). Vygotsky believed that as adults and more expert peers help children master culturally meaningful activities, the communication between them becomes part of children's thinking. Children then internalise the essential features of their dialogues and communication with adults and more expert peers. The internalised language is used to guide their own thought and actions and acquire new skills (Berk, 2003).

This is in contrast to the view of Piaget and Kohlberg, who, critics say, underestimated the competencies of young children, believing that there is an inherent logic to cognitive-structural development which does not permit deviation from the sequence with which structures are found to evolve (Rosen, 1980). It appears, according to Crawford (2001) and Green (2004), as if Vygotsky's theory of concept formation can be used as a generative model for understanding the development of moral ability in a way that challenges the notion of morality as rule-following behaviour. Though, for both Piaget and Vygotsky the individual's active engagement is crucial, Vygotsky places equal importance on the role of language and social mediation in the transformation of "lower mental functions" into "higher mental functions" (Green, 2004).

2.4.2.3 Questioning Kohlberg

Some of the critiques of Kohlberg's theory include concerns over its being too narrow, culture-bound, and unrelated to context. His conception of moral maturity, the appropriateness of his stages for characterising the moral reasoning of young children, and the limited role that parents and the family play in moral reasoning development, have been questioned in the literature (Berk, 2003). Kohlberg's stages mainly describe changes in moral reasoning during adolescence and adulthood, and little is told about moral understanding in early and middle childhood. There is a substantial amount of post-Piagetian research that demonstrates convincingly the young child's capacity for rationality and correct understanding of a variety of different phenomena (Peters, 1981; Petrovich, 1982 & 1983). Gilligan (1982) questions Kohlberg's description of moral development in terms of levels of moral reasoning, and suggests that this form of morality is gender specific to males. Kohlberg has been noted as viewing women's morality as lower on the developmental scale than that of men (Rosen, 1980). Gilligan claims that Kohlberg's scoring system is biased against women. Peters (1971),

although he agrees that Kohlberg is correct in maintaining that a form of cognitive stimulation or Socratic dialectic is necessary for generating principles in the learner, emphasises that there is a place for teaching in the area of content as well, and this would rely upon the direct showing and telling of the teacher, which Kohlberg seems to belittle.

Kohlberg's approach to morality has also come under critique for not explaining or discussing the concept of autonomy. According to critics the notion of autonomy epitomizes the fundamental weakness of the cognitive-developmental theory of morality (Petrovich, 1985). By introducing the seventh stage, Kohlberg also seemingly acknowledges that moral development cannot be explained exclusively by cognitive psychological mechanisms and that a value stance is necessary in moral discourse (Petrovich, 1985). The evaluation of particular principles as moral implies evaluative presuppositions, which seem to the critics to lie beyond the immediate range of a psychologist's concerns. The seventh stage also seems incomplete, as Kohlberg himself acknowledges, since he did not do any systematic research into Stage 7 (Petrovich, 1985). In spite of his recognition of the factor of religion in morality, Kohlberg nevertheless argues for the separation of religion from morality on the grounds that "religious education has no specifically important or unique role to play in moral development" (Kohlberg, 1981, p. 304). According to Petrovich (1985), there is no satisfying evidence to support this claim.

2.5 Implications of the theories reviewed

There are different opinions about the most effective manner in which values in education can be promoted. Two opposite models have been distinguished by Oser (1994), namely the transfer of values, which links to Character Education (Lickona, 1991b), and value communication, which links to Kohlberg's ideas (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989) and critical thinking (Ennis, 1994). Fisher (2000) also highlights various approaches to moral education. He includes indoctrination, an appeal to religious authority, an appeal to common sense, explicit value clarification, the discussion of moral dilemmas and philosophical/ethical inquiry.

The following practices of moral education, which link to behaviourist ideas, can be linked to Oser's transfer of values model:

2.5.1 Modelling

Bandura's social learning theory (1977 & 1999) suggests that values are learned mainly through modelling. Many of our views, according to social learning theorists, are acquired in situations where we interact with others or observe their behaviour, also known by Bandura as learning through modelling or imitation and observational learning. Social learning theorists claim that children acquire certain attitudes and values through hearing or seeing others, such as parents, teachers, and friends, express or act them. Therefore learning takes place through imitating a model who has been observed to be rewarded.

2.5.2 Other behaviourist approaches

Skinner's operant conditioning theory supports the shaping of behaviour through a combination of systematic instruction or conditioning in morals and modelling of desired behaviour, backed by either positive reinforcement (reward or approval) or negative reinforcement (punishment or disapproval). It therefore supports the systematic holding up of standards to young children, backed up by approval and rewards (Peters, 1981). This approach seems to support a more authoritarian approach from parents and teachers.

2.5.3 Character education

Character education seems to have developed as a reaction to the values-neutral stance of the value clarification movement, and appears to link more closely with traditional movements supported by behaviourist theorists (Lickona, 1993). The character education movement promotes the teaching of values that children are not learning at home by schools, and for schools, in order to conduct teaching and learning, to become moral communities (Lickona, 1993). Adults therefore must promote basic morality by teaching the young, directly and indirectly, values such as respect and responsibility, and civic virtues. According to Lickona (1996) character formation can be defined as: "The deliberate effort by schools, families and communities to help young people understand, care about and act upon core ethical values" (p. 93). Since the movement is based on habit formation, situations must be created in which students can practise good habits.

The following approaches to moral education, linked to cognitive-oriented theories, can be linked to Oser's value communication model:

2.5.4 Discussion of moral dilemmas

Kohlberg proposes a moral education programme centered on open ended discussions of real and hypothetical moral dilemmas amongst peers as a means of contributing to the unfolding of higher level of morality (Green, 2004). The expectation is that when students hear their peers discuss the issue from a higher level they will gravitate to that position (Huitt, 2004). Kohlberg insisted that the curriculum be made "explicit in intellectual and verbal discussions of justice and morality" (Pyszkowski, 2001, p. 43). He holds that the content of moral rules can be taught but that the attitude to them, characteristic of the various stages, cannot. The peer-group is therefore used as a source of "cognitive stimulation" supported by good moral reasoning ability.

2.5.5 Values clarification

The values clarification approach of authors Raths, Harmin and Simon in the 1960's (Baer, 1982) seems to assume that children have good reasoning ability and will therefore choose to follow socially acceptable values. The approach is interested in clarifying the student's own values, in contrast with earlier traditional attempts to teach values by filling students' minds with a predetermined set of "true" or "correct" values. The method claims to be values-neutral, and is based on the assumption that values cannot in any objective sense be known to be true or right, and therefore students are provided with opportunities to clarify and defend their own values without making recommendations or advocating a particular viewpoint (Simon, 1972). To achieve this the educators guide the students through strategies which include group discussions, resolutions of moral dilemmas, interviews, preference selections, game playing, role playing, reading, writing, and preparing art work (Pyszkowski, 2001). Critics argue, though, that since certain values are more likely to lead to socially desirable outcomes, these ought to be identified and taught as 'better' values. They also see the neutrality of the teacher as a problem, since if the teacher accepts every answer without indicating approval or disapproval the student may conclude that all values are relative and no values are true, right or wrong (Pyszkowski, 2001). If children's values are not questioned, students may also fail to develop a critical, questioning nature towards their own and others values and behaviour (Baer, 1982).

The following approach to moral education resonates with Vygotskian ideas:

2.5.6 Philosophical/moral inquiry

This promising direction for moral education is described by Fisher (2000) and Lipman (1993). This approach is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978; 1986) socio-cultural theory, which takes context into account and emphasises the importance of language and intentional mediation. The Vygotskian perspective, which has also been called mediation of learning in social contexts, was seen by Lipman (1993) as having a theoretical fit with the programme that he was developing in Philosophy for Children. Mediation differs from the provision of a facilitative environment or simple instructions in that it involves active and motivated engagement from both the mediator and the mediatee where the mediator actively interprets meanings for the learner rather than leaving him/her to discover them alone. It also involves the discussion of moral dilemmas within a mediational setting as described above. According to Lipman, children's moral sense is fostered in a 'Philosophy for Children' type of community of inquiry, as children grapple with issues of fairness, responsibility, choice and the value of human life, which should enhance their capacity for moral judgement. There is some evidence that participation in a community of inquiry helps in promoting moral consciousness in a setting of tolerance and understanding (Russell, 2002). The approach stimulates higher cognitive abilities, and assists children in "finding their own pathway to meaningful learning" (Russell, 2002, p. 152). This Vygotskian model seems useful for understanding morality in the context of a social learning process that recognises a universal interdependency, and a means of developing a competency to think and act reflectively in the present moment (Crawford, 2001).

2.6 Recommendations for schools

What can parents expect teachers and schools to be doing? The following ways of supporting moral development in schools can be seen to draw upon the theories reviewed above and are suggested in the literature: direct modelling by educators, suggesting that educators be adult models of good character and "attractive models of civic virtue" (NCSS Task Force, 1997, p. 226); educator openness about personal values (while recognising the existence of other value orientations) (Veugelers, 2000); the construction of imaginary models and scenarios (Coles, 1998); and opportunities for discussion of controversial and difficult issues, including morality itself (Lipman,

1998). These discussions are to be carried out in a critical and reflective manner, making reasoning ability necessary, since in the modern world the practice of virtues requires ongoing critical scrutiny (Green, 2004). Wardekker (2001) highlights child-centred moral education through the construction of co-ordinated maps of the moral world by the pupil. The development of such maps is dependent not only on the information available, but also on reasoning abilities that develop according to age-related stages as suggested by Kohlberg for the moral domain. The educational consequence is that information should not be forced on pupils. They should rather be allowed to discover the world and construct their cognitive maps stimulated by a “rich environment” as recommended by Piaget. According to Wardekker (2001) “construction” is then what education is all about. The above suggestions to schools appear to be either quite simplistic or extremely difficult to implement.

The type of teacher that can develop values according to Junell (1979) should possess the following key qualities: a spirit of reverence for children and an unbounded conviction that every child is capable of reaching his/her potential. A teacher who can create an atmosphere in which identification can take place, seems to be crucial. Junell (1979) claims that values can be taught best by involving children emotionally in the lives of individuals and groups locked in struggles of significant moral consequences, while Stengel (1982) suggests creating a moral atmosphere in the home or classroom as the first step to moral education. Stengel then claims that to try to impose values is immoral, but to fail to create frameworks within which people can choose their own values is just as bad i.e. Vygotskian view. Research carried out by Ruffy (1981) that studied the influence of social factors in the development of the young child’s moral judgment, found that promoting social interaction in groups in which children are encouraged to discuss ideas, exchange opinions and oppose each other, promoted cognitive growth and the understanding and acquisition of moral values. The study used Piaget’s sequences of moral judgment and Kohlberg’s moral stages as an approach to moral education, and came to the understanding that exposure to another person’s point of view provoked a disequilibrium, which was experienced as a conflict that they tried to solve, and in this way reaching a higher level of moral judgment through the process of equilibration (Ruffy, 1981). The idea of support through adult/teacher mediation and the creation of frameworks, is consistent with a Vygotskian view, while exposing children to the moral discussions of others in peer groups, is consistent with a Piagetian view.

Are these activities in schools sufficient without community support? Some research (Berkowitz and Bier, 2005; Lickona, 1988; Warren, Young & Hanifin, 2003) suggests that the most effective ways in which moral development can be promoted in schools, are through parent-teacher communication and partnership, which enhances value congruence between parent and teacher. Lickona (1988) illustrates four ways in which schools have successfully recruited parents as partners in moral education: developing a school-community about values, forming parent support groups, creating various opportunities for parents to participate in moral education, and writing parallel curricula for classroom and home. Warren, et al. (2003) also examined the values underpinning successful parent/school partnerships within the context of Catholic schools in Australia. They found that parents valued good communication with an open door policy, and an environment in which both parents and children felt valued and cared for as the most important aspects. Teachers felt that the key elements of good partnerships were mutual respect between parents and teachers, and an environment in which teachers and parents could work together towards shared goals. Literature also highlights some constraints to teacher/parent partnership and suggests that although parents indicate that they are willing to work with teachers in partnerships, they seldom actively become involved and act on their promises (Brummer, 1998). On the other hand teachers have little time left to work on teacher/parent relationships and to get to know parents and their circumstances. Some circumstances, according to Brummer (1998) that make true teacher/parent partnerships difficult in the South African context are teacher's work overload, confusion around curriculum changes, big classes, and lack of support. Teacher/parent partnerships seem to be an area that needs further debate and research to find the most suitable way in which to promote moral development through the involvement of the two most important socialisation agents of the youth.

2.7 Parents and moral development

Many authors make a strong link between effective parenting and moral development. Some literature suggests that parenting behaviour is highly influential in the development of conscience and moral reasoning development (Kochanska, 1991; Kuczynski, 1984). A discussion follows regarding parental involvement and aspects of parenting that may influence moral development.

2.7.1 Parental responsibility

Moral development of children has long been ascribed predominantly to the effects of parenting (Berkowitz, 1998a). The family is still viewed as the first important context for the socialisation of morality and remains one of the most important sources of influence in the moral development of children (Lollis, Ross & Leroux, 1996). According to White and Matawie (2004), the family provides an affective and supportive climate allowing members to feel safe enough to challenge one another's ideas on moral issues, in such a way uniquely contributing to the development of moral judgement. Powers (1988) adds that the family is also an important source of access to the outside world by allowing an individual's moral judgement to develop through generalisation and transference of moral issues to other social environments such as school. As mentioned above, though, families' stability has decreased in the past 50 years, resulting in the undermining of parents' authority and influence on the moral development of their children. As a result the peer group is seemingly having a growing influence on the socialisation of youths.

Much of what a parent does and believes stems from the values he/she has acquired from living in a particular culture. In a sense, a parent's values epitomize his identity, what he is, and what he strives for. Whiting and Child (1953) point out that these values become a regulating force that helps parents perform their roles according to the norms of society. Stolz (1967) found that parents in the United States seemed to take seriously their role of motivating and teaching their children, seeing it their responsibility 'to educate' their children. This may well be true in other contexts as well, but it should be noted that the study was carried out in 1967.

2.7.2 Parental priorities

Research suggests that parents value qualities such as being respectful, being responsible, internalising parental values, not fighting, and family solidarity, as important in order for children to develop their full potential (Arcia, Reyes-Blanes & Vazquez-Montilla, 2000; Stolz, 1967). Stolz (1967) also found that a large proportion of parents considered economic values important, especially fathers from lower social positions. A survey done by Muller (2004) found that parents gave the highest priority to the development of self-confidence and the imagination of their children at home and at school. The findings suggest that these parents do not expect from the school to

instil values that would enhance democratic citizenship. Their focus appears to be more individualistic.

2.7.3 Influences on outcomes

The effects of parenting on the development of Kohlbergian moral reasoning tended to be ignored due in part to Piaget's (1965) thesis that states that parents tend to be authoritarian and therefore suppress moral reasoning development, whereas peers are more egalitarian and therefore foster moral reasoning development. This point of view has changed and most research on the influence of parenting on moral development focuses on three principal parent variables, the parental stage of moral reasoning and explanation, parental discipline, and family communication patterns (Berkowitz, 1998b; Smetana, 1999). Other parenting factors that may have an influence on moral development according to literature are also highlighted below.

2.7.3.1 Parental stage of moral reasoning

More recent literature (Berkowitz, 1998b; Smetana, 1999) has found that parental stage of moral reasoning influences children's moral development. Boyes and Allen (1993) suggest that parents who facilitate moral understanding are verbal and rational. Research by Parikh (1980) also demonstrates that parents at higher stages of moral reasoning tend to use more induction and other authoritative rather than authoritarian parenting elements, which links to parental discipline and a parenting style that enhances moral development as mentioned below.

2.7.3.2 Parental discipline and styles

Kohlberg (1964), like other authors (Berkowitz, 1998b; Boyes & Allen, 1993; Smetana, 1999), argues that there is a correlation between induction or inductive discipline – meaning cognitive stimulation connected with the awareness of the consequences of actions – and moral development. Induction has been positively related to moral reasoning development of both the Piagetian and Kohlbergian varieties (Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967; Parikh, 1980), and to increased internalisation of moral standards and guilt in children (Hoffman and Saltzstein, 1967). Research (Berkowitz, 1998a; Powers, 1988; Speicher, 1994; Walker & Taylor, 1991) confirms that democratic family processes such as parental discussion and an inductive disciplinary style, are important in promoting the stage of moral judgement development in children. Parenting styles - authoritarian, permissive and authoritative

parenting styles - have been found to influence the moral development of children (Baumrind, 1989). The authoritative parenting style has been found to be the most conducive to the development of moral reasoning (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Walker, 1999), due to its focus on open supportive communication (Berkowitz, 1998b). Authoritative parents are described as loving, controlling, communicative, and set high maturity demands for their children (Baumrind, 1989). Eisenberg (1986) found that parents of altruistic children are nurturant and supportive, model altruism, highlight the effects of actions on others, use induction, establish clear expectations for mature behaviour, and create opportunities for their children to manifest responsibility for others. These characteristics correlate strongly with inductive discipline whereby parents explain their parenting behaviour to the child especially with the focus on consequences of one's actions for others (Hoffman, 1991). Research (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Pratt, Arnold, Pratt & Diessner, 1999) suggests that adolescent and college students' moral reasoning are predicted positively by authoritative parenting style and negatively by permissive and authoritarian parenting style. It therefore appears as if a pattern of authoritative parenting with the focus on open supportive communication, is nurturing of children's moral reasoning development.

2.7.3.3 Quality of family communication and relationship

In many ways the quality of family communication determines the quality of the relationship between parents and children. Literature (Berkowitz, 1998b; Boyes & Allen, 1993; Smetana, 1999; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988) suggests that the quality of parent-child interactions, family communication patterns, and participation of children in family decision-making play an important role in the transmission of values between parents and children. The more parents discuss their values with their children, the more the adolescents' values correlate with theirs, while indifferent parenting and autocratic parenting negatively influence value transmission (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Knafo & Schwartz, 2003). Studies on the relation of transactive discussion (Berkowitz & Gibbs, 1983), a form of discussion where the speaker or parent paraphrases or actively analyse or extends the reasoning of a co-discussant or child, also found that the greatest moral development was found in families that are supportive of their children in discussions, and in sharing perspectives. Walker and Taylor (1991) found that children's moral reasoning development was best predicted by three features of parent-child moral discussions: "Socratic" questioning, affective

support, and presentations of moral reasoning above the child's stage. Discussion of real family dilemmas was the richest developmentally.

Furthermore, literature supports the importance of communicating clear, realistic expectations to children to increase the likelihood of a positive self-concept and the achievement of life goals. Research found that children who develop a healthy sense of agency have parents whom provide emotional support and freedom to explore. When the family serves as a secure base from which children can confidently move out into the wider world, identity development is enhanced (Berk, 2003). According to Zahn-Waxler and Robinson (1995), if parents can build a positive, cooperative relationship with the child, serve as good examples, let children know ahead of time how to act, and praise children when they behave well, children misbehaving can be prevented. Positive relationships lead to positive discipline.

2.7.3.4 Family warmth

Parental warmth, especially maternal warmth, is said to influence the development of conscience and consequently moral development (Kohlberg, 1964). Warmth refers to expressions of affection toward the child, responsiveness to sensitivity and adaptation to the child's needs and desires (Knafo & Schwartz, 2003). Research (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Knafo and Schwartz, 2003; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988) confirms that high levels of warmth, responsiveness and affection between family members as well as cooperation within the family, are aspects that correlates positively with parent-child value similarity. Family cohesion was found by White & Matawie (2004) as one of the aspects that determined father-adolescent thought relationship, while conscience development was found by Kochanska (1997) to be related to a sustained pattern of mother-child reciprocity including mutual affectivity, low power assertion, and maternal empathy.

2.7.3.5 Children's' perceptions

Parents' values are seen to have an important influence on the development of children's values (Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988). White and Matawie (2004) also found that parents' morality significantly predicts adolescents' morality. Some literature suggests that the perceptions and attributions children make with regard to parental values influence the transmission of values between parents and children (Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988). Conflict reduces adolescents' motivation to pay attention to their

parents' values and undermines their ability to understand them, consequently reducing accuracy of perception (Knafo & Schwartz, 2003). Whitbeck and Gecas (1988) found considerable misperception between parents and children with regard to actual and perceived values, highlighting a possible incongruence between parental-held values and children-held values. This is especially true when values are not communicated effectively and parental expectations are not clear (Berkowitz, 1998a; Eisenberg, 1986).

2.7.3.7 Cultural context

The cultural environment, according to Kohlberg, has a significant impact upon the rate of development due to its provision of opportunities for role-taking, although this will have no effect on the universality and invariance of the sequence of stages (Rosen, 1980). Thom (2001) investigated the cultural diversity of the developmental stages of moral judgment in Kohlberg's theory by studying black and white South African adolescents cross-culturally. He found that the white adolescents showed a moral developmental pattern in line with Kohlberg's theory, while the black adolescents showed a different pattern. The study concluded that the influence of Western and traditional norms and values, parenting styles and the possible effect of historical factors, such as the previous apartheid government system and the current democratic system, had an impact on adolescents' moral developmental pattern. It therefore seems as if greater consideration should be given to the effect of the cultural, social and historical context on moral development. This seems to correlate with a more Vygotskian perspective that acknowledges the influence of social, cultural, historical and institutional forces (Tappan, 1997) on moral development. It appears to offer another possible dimension to the understanding of moral development.

A possible inference from the above literature on preferred parenting styles, is that teachers need to adopt similar styles and approaches to enhance moral development and moral reasoning ability in schools. An authoritative relationship between educator and learner that focuses on open supportive communication appears to be necessary within the schooling environment as well especially in the light of the increasing role of teachers becoming moral agents to learners. A correlation can also be seen between Vygotskian ideas that focus on communication between children and competent others in order to promote their thinking processes (Grieve, 1992) and an authoritative parenting style.

3. CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall explain the research approach in detail. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the aim of the study was to explore parents' perspectives on the role of the school in citizenship and moral education. In this chapter I illustrate and justify the method I used to try and access their perspectives as well as explain how I analysed and tried to verify my data and act ethically as a researcher.

3.2 Research approach

A constructivist interpretivist framework underpins this qualitative study. It recognises the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer (researcher) and the viewed (participants), and it aims to interpret the understanding of the participants' meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Kiraly (2000) states that human beings have no access to objective truth within a constructivist framework, and thus individuals have no choice but to create or construct meanings and knowledge through participation in interpersonal, inter-subjective interaction. As the research design chosen was focus group research, it lends itself to an interpretivist paradigm within a constructivist framework. The researcher therefore constructs meaning from the participants' experiences and interpretations of the topic, and identifies patterns and themes that emerge from the meanings he or she has created.

"The goal of qualitative research is to tell someone else's story from their reality" (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2002, p272). A qualitative research approach was, therefore, considered appropriate to explore parents' perspectives within certain parent communities from two schools in the Western Cape.

3.3 Settings and participants

The two schools (school A and school B) were selected to represent urban and rural settings. They were chosen due to the fact that they each seemed to be typical of a number of schools serving their respective communities, although it was primarily a convenience sample. The settings were arranged in collaboration with the principals of the two schools, as well as with the manager of the wine farm where the one group of participants was based. The choice of location needed to balance the needs of the research with those of the participants (Breakwell et al., 1998). The most suitable venue at school A appeared to be the library, since it provided a quiet environment

with no interruptions and privacy, was non-threatening and easily accessible. Due to transport difficulties the second group, from school B, was accommodated on the farm where they worked, at a time that suited them, in a private, quiet venue, namely the outdoor dining room. Seating in a circle was arranged for both groups to encourage involvement and interaction between the participants.

3.3.1 Schools and parents

School A is situated within a low-average socio-economic suburb of Cape Town. The school caters mainly for historically designated “coloured” and a few black learners from very poor to relatively stable financial households. The school is known for its quality education despite its financial constraints, with a very progressive leader (school manager) and dedicated staff. This school was chosen due to accessibility, the familiarity of the surroundings and school staff to the researcher, and for its urban setting. School B is situated on a farm just outside Cape Town. The school caters mostly for farm workers’ children - historically designated “coloured” children - and some black children from the nearby informal settlement. Most of the children come from very poor households. The school is struggling financially and is dependent on the surrounding farmers’ financial support and interest. The children are bussed in, which makes participation in sport or extra-curricular activities difficult. This school was chosen due to accessibility, the familiarity of the surroundings and school staff to the researcher, and for its rural setting.

A combination of purposive and convenience sampling was used to select groups of parents, which promoted variety of information regarding perspectives on citizenship and moral education. Purposive sampling helps to select a sample of representative parents or caregivers based upon specific criteria. In purposive sampling the researcher must first think critically about the parameters of the population and then choose the sample case accordingly (De Vos et al., 2002). The criteria for the selection of the participants were that all parents or caregivers involved had to have children attending one of the chosen primary schools and were part of the local community served by the school. One group of parents from each school was then selected with the help of the respective principals. I expected parents of similar age and developmental stage, although one parent was also a grandmother and others had children in higher grades as well. This did not impact significantly on the group discussions, since the ages ranged from thirty five to forty seven. Since parent participation is often difficult and not guaranteed, convenience sampling was viewed

as appropriate in the circumstances, to ensure a higher degree of participation and willingness.

Two prime considerations for participants in focus groups are convenience and comfort (Breakwell et al., 1998). Each of the two focus groups consisted of six to eight primary caregivers (including biological mothers and fathers, and grandparents), since the literature advocates between six and eight participants as ideal (Albrecht, Johnson, & Walther, 1993). This is based on evidence showing that group size is inversely related to the degree of participation fostered (Breakwell et al., 1998). One group, school A, consisted of eight females, while school B's participants consisted of four males and two females. The average age of both groups was thirty-seven years.

School A's participants were characteristic of the low to average socio-economic group of parents. The participants were connected to the school either directly through their children aged seven to thirteen, or their grandchildren. Eight historically designated "coloured" Afrikaans-speaking females, most of them unemployed, attended the discussion group. The participants were accessed, on advice of the principal, through their involvement with the reading project of the school, or as acquaintances of the reading project mothers who were willing to participate in the research. The parents were literate and had a certain level of expectation of their children academically. Some of the participants knew each other well, while others were only acquaintances. Four of the participants the researcher knew from previous meetings through her involvement in the reading project, while the others were unknown to her.

School B's participants were identified with the help of the farm school principal as a group of parents who all had children attending the farm school and who worked on the same wine farm. Some had school-going children of different ages, while others had only experience of younger school-going children. They were all from the historically designated "coloured" group, living and working on the farm as farm labourers. This group of six Afrikaans-speaking parents knew each other well and seemed to socialise together.

3.3.2 My role as researcher

As the facilitator and researcher, my eight years experience as an educator in a variety of contexts and setting, gave me the necessary background for a deeper understanding

of the issues and concerns the parents raised. I have also taught children of various ages and have worked closely with parents both in the context of behaviour and learning difficulties. Having spent nearly two years at the two chosen schools as an itinerant learning support educator, had enhanced my understanding of the community and the context of the participants. My awareness of the strengths and the limitations of the respective schools supported me in acknowledging the parents' expectations and concerns. I did though at times feel that some parents were protective of the school, due to their involvement with the school or fear of appearing disloyal. The fact that my home language is Afrikaans supported my ability to adapt to the level of the spoken language. This also gave the parents the freedom to comfortably express themselves. My postgraduate studies in psychology, on the other hand, increased the appropriateness of my responses to their questions and my ability to listen actively and reflect on the comments made. It also lessened my anxiety and I felt more prepared to facilitate the group discussions.

Perhaps one of the limitations of my involvement as the researcher and interviewer was that some of School A's parents knew about my previous association with the school; this may have influenced their openness and honesty in expressing their opinions and views. Although I gave them the assurance that all said and discussed would be handled with strict confidentiality and their identities would be kept anonymous, it may have inhibited them and resulted in a certain level of concealment. Another possible limitation could have been the fact that I am a White SA female and I was speaking to groups of parents of a different racial group, though this gave me the advantage of an outsider look, promoting objectivity and non-bias to the views and perspectives raised. Although I felt that being female did not limit the parents in expressing their point of views, I experienced the males in the mixed group discussions as dominant, perhaps in line with the status quo in the farming community. I found it a bit disconcerting when some of the questions asked were not answered according to my expectation. It rather reflected the subjective experiences of the parents in their unique situations. In retrospect these responses added to my understanding of their contexts and personal experiences.

The co-facilitator's written observations or field notes were crucial from a perspective of a person who was male and from the historically designated "coloured" group. He took detailed field notes during the focus group discussions. After the session, we compared our notes and observations. His presence at the group discussions was also

important to create a sense of security and openness about the subject. His notes and observations were used as part of the analysis process, either to support my understanding of the participants' views and perceptions or to give an alternative perspective on the information gathered.

3.4 Data collection

I utilised two semi-structured focus groups discussions, field notes and the co-facilitator's observational comments to collect data.

3.4.1 Procedures

The two identified schools were asked to consider allowing focus groups with selected parents from their school. After they agreed, the Western Cape Education Department's official permission was sought and obtained.

Dates and times were planned and followed through for the following: (1) Information and discussion sessions with the two principals respectively, the farm manager and thereafter with the identified participants. Dates and venues were finalised. (2) Focus groups with the selected participants at the school and farm. (3) Feedback sessions with the participants, the principals of the schools and the farm manager. (4) Audio tape transcription arrangements. (5) Data analysis of the information gathered.

3.4.2 Focus groups

"Focus group research involves organised discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences of a topic" (Gibbs, 1997, p1) in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Krueger, 1998). The focus group is by definition an exercise in group dynamics and the conduct of the group. Therefore the interpretation of results obtained need to be understood within the context of group interaction (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Therefore, two interrelated forms of evidence are derived from focus groups: the group process and the content around which the group process is organised (Breakwell, et al., 1998). Advantages to the use of focus groups include the following: group dynamics can be a catalytic factor in bringing information to the fore; the situation gives participants the opportunity to articulate those normally unarticulated normative assumptions (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2001); it can promote self-disclosure among participants (De Vos, et al., 2002); and provide an attractive medium for public

participation in the research process. It also provides a convenient means to feedback and is an acceptable economical alternative (Bloor, et al., 2001). On the other hand some possible disadvantages to the use of focus groups include: the practical arrangements for conducting the focus groups can be problematic and the moderator needs good levels of group leadership and interpersonal skills to facilitate group discussions (Gibbs, 1997). Bias may be a problem, and social posturing may occur, which is the desire for people to be polite and fit within the norm, or there may be forced compliance (De Vos et al., 2002).

My reasons for using focus group discussions are indicated in the previous paragraph under advantages. The two focus group discussions held were organised in a circle to encourage participation. Although the practical arrangements for conducting focus groups can be problematic, both venues were organised and arranged beforehand through either the school librarian or the farm manager to minimise any inconvenience or confusion. Suitable meeting times were decided upon in collaboration with the school and the farm to ensure greater participation – school “A” an hour and a half before school dismissal to coincide with parent pick-up time, and the other group directly after their working hours. The discussion opened up in a friendly manner to establish rapport and to make introductions. The purpose of the discussion was stated and consent to record the group discussion was requested. Confidentiality and the protection of identity were assured. After gaining consent, questions were posed following the interview schedule (appendix A) using the participants' names to simplify identification when transcribed. Probes were made in an empathic manner to gain clarification on specific issues. The sequence of the questions depended upon the flow of the discussion. Responses were tape recorded from the onset and the time noted. The length of both group discussions was on average an hour and forty-five minutes. Most focus group researchers agree that between one and two hours is the standard duration for each session involving adults (Breakwell et al., 1998).

Being the interviewer was at times challenging especially in my effort to facilitate a balance between equal participation and enough space in which participants could express their views and opinions. This challenge was addressed by giving each group a flexible time period in which to conduct the discussion. Issues around the identification of individual views from the group view were addressed by high quality transcriptions of the audiotapes by a professional person. I attempted to anticipate any problems of this nature and addressed them through structured preparation, especially

in moderating, and effectively transcribing information verbatim. I made use of a quality audio tape recording and a co-facilitator to address unanticipated problems that might have arisen in identifying individual views.

3.4.3 Facilitator's field or diary notes

Field and Morse (1994) describe field notes as a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the course of collecting or reflecting on the data obtained during the study. In focus groups the field notes taken by the co-facilitator and facilitator should include: seating arrangements, the order in which the people speak (to aid voice recognition), non-verbal behaviour such as eye contact, crying, fidgeting, etc., themes that are striking, and highlighting as much of the conversation as possible (De Vos et al., 2002). It is important that this be done as soon as possible after the focus group session. The breadth of the subject matter for diary or field records is as big as the imagination of the researcher (Breakwell et al., 1998).

An important advantage of observation through diary or field notes is that it can help to overcome the discrepancy between what people say and what they actually do – by giving attention to the dynamics that took place in the group (De Vos et al., 2002). Disadvantages include the following: the information gathered during observation are likely to be detailed, highly descriptive accounts and are therefore cumbersome; and it is also subjective (including my own perceptions and beliefs) and not necessarily an objective account of people and events. The researcher's task is to sift and decode the data to make sense of the situation, events, and interactions observed. In my case I recorded thoughts and feelings as well as accounts of physical and social context in diary format. This was done directly after each of the two group discussions as well as during the following week, when certain thoughts and memories of the people and conversations struck me as significant. I thus had three sources of data – written transcripts, field notes and written notes by the co-facilitator. I used my diary and field notes to support me in analysing the data and to clarify interpretations made from the discussions. It also helped me to identify key themes and opinions as well as some of the possible concerns of the parents that were not communicated directly.

3.5 Developing the interview schedule

The schedule of questions, (Appendix A), was designed in an open way to allow respondents to share their experiences in a non-threatening way. An interview guide is necessary only to the extent that it prompts the moderator to recall the key issues to be

discussed and should not be more than suggestive, allowing the moderator considerable latitude to improvise relevant questions and pursue unanticipated lines of enquiry as the discussion progresses (Breakwell et al., 1998). In Section 1, the questions were aimed at finding out what respondents thought were important values desirable in their children as future citizens, while in sections 2 and 3, respectively, how the parents viewed their responsibility and the school's responsibility in mediating values supportive of a democracy. Many concerns that the parents have about the different child-rearing practices and the effects of these, were naturally discussed and highlighted. Questions in general were drawn to elicit certain responses relevant to the research questions, and double barrelled questions and leading questions were avoided. Questions addressing the same topic were grouped together for the purpose of simplifying categorisation of themes developed from data. The interview guide was developed in English and then translated into Afrikaans. The duration of the interview was determined by the amount of data required, the number of questions, the number of participants, establishment of rapport and the participants' willingness to respond. In this study, each group discussion lasted approximately one hour and forty-five minutes.

3.6 Analysis of data: Constant comparative method

Both recorded group discussions were transcribed by a professional person whose mother tongue was Afrikaans. Words were written down in the exact manner as were said by respondents, including their names and symbols for pauses. Since the purpose of a focus group is to gain insight into how respondents represent a particular issue as a whole and on a collective rather than individual basis, “any form of editing during transcription is therefore undesirable” (Breakwell et al., 1998, p. 287). The transcripts were typed, photocopied for use in analysis and compared with field notes.

The constant comparative method was used as the data analysis tool for content analysis. The “constant comparison method” is often used for analytic purposes (Breakwell et al., 1998). The constant comparative method as used in the grounded theory approach was selected to help identify relevant themes (Creswell, 1998). I was not, however, expecting to generate a theory through utilising the grounded theory approach, except in the sense that it helped me to be able to explain the data. I was rather hoping to identify relevant themes that could clarify my research questions through in-depth analysis of the information gathered. The themes that did emerge I

tried to piece together to form a comprehensive picture of the participants' collective experience (Aronson, 1994).

The basic idea of the grounded theory approach is to read (and re-read) a textual database and discover themes and their interrelationships. A grounded theory analytic approach takes a line-by-line analysis and constantly compares the data searching for themes or categories using the thematic analysis technique. I therefore read each page word-by-word and paragraph by paragraph to get the general content of the discussion. Ideas that emerged from each page were noted in pencil next to the paragraph in my own words to support the identification of categories. The data were examined through an inductive process for the purpose of constructing categories. I tried to capture the richness of themes that emerged from the participants' discussions and talk. After the themes were developed through a comparison within and across categories and written down, each page and every tenth line of the transcripts were numbered to simplify identifying quotations that were relevant to the main themes. These quotations were then grouped underneath each theme, and checked as to whether responses from participants fitted within the identified themes, and adjustments were made where necessary. Themes that emerged later from both discussion groups were compared within and across groups to identify differences and similarities between them. During the process of analysis, responses that did not address the research questions directly were noted as "concerns", and were included in the discussion of the findings since they added to the context and meaning of the participants' worlds. Original transcripts in Afrikaans that confirm the quotations used, were kept for reference purpose (See Appendix B), but no real names were included to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The analysis was done on the Afrikaans transcripts, and only the illustrative quotations were translated into English (see Chapter 4).

3.7 Verification of the data (Validity)

The strength of the qualitative research lies in the in-depth study of people's own feelings and perceptions. Verification of the data is an attempt to promote the truthfulness of the findings and in so doing reduce the possibility of error. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.290) refer to the importance of establishing the "truth value" of the study, i.e. its applicability, consistency and neutrality, though I did not anticipate that what parents at school A said could confirm the "truth" of what parents at school B said. By means of sampling (purposive) and the fact that focus groups were involved, was an effort to ensure accurate capturing of the range of parents' perspectives. The

internal validity or trustworthiness of qualitative research, though, is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing (Merriam, 2001). As a researcher one brings one's own biases into the work; it is therefore important to remain aware of these and reflect on them regularly to increase neutrality within the research. In a further effort to minimise subjectivity, my interpretations of reality were accessed directly through my observations and notes and I evaluated these against the observations of the co-facilitator of the groups. To allow others to confirm the accuracy of the analysis, a method called "audit trail" was used whereby each quotation can be verified by an external reader by giving each respondent a number with a page and line number in brackets next to it.

3.8 Ethical Responsibility

Ethical considerations for focus groups are the same as for most other methods of social research (Homan, 1991). The research was carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (A.P.A.) and the ethical requirements of the University of the Western Cape. Informed consent was obtained from the following: The Western Cape Education Department (see Appendix C), the principals of both of the schools (see Appendix D and E), the farm manager, and the individual participants involved in the focus groups (see Appendix F). Participants were well informed that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time, that action such as counselling would be taken if they were traumatised in any way, that confidentiality and privacy were assured of the research and that no harm was intended by the research; on the contrary, the research might be beneficial.

Feedback about the outcomes of the study was given at a date agreed upon between the researcher and the participants. I have an ethical responsibility in light of the findings of the study, to ensure that something practically and user-friendly is given back to the communities from which the participants came from. This gift will take the form of a simple booklet containing effective guidelines for dealing with adolescents and ways to create a positive relationship between parent and child. The goal of such guidelines would be to give some ideas to parents that would support them in being good role models to their children and enhance positive parent-child relationships.

4. CHAPTER 4 : RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents the research results. The results are organised according to the research questions, whereafter a discussion of the common themes and sub-themes follow. Similar themes between the two focus groups interviewed, as well as unique or different themes, are identified and discussed. Responses that do not address the research questions directly are noted as "concerns", and are included in the discussion of the findings since they highlight the context and meaning of the participants' worlds. Themes are then highlighted by illustrative quotations in Afrikaans, followed by the English translation in bold. This is supported by interpretive comments that link with the reviewed literature (see Chapter 2). The note in brackets after each quotation refers to the respondent's number and the page and line number of the source transcript.

4.2 What kind of person would parents like their children to become?

Four broad themes with sub-themes were identified across both focus groups.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Being a nice person

The following category indicates the value parents place on the moral development of their children. It gives an indication of the type of values that parents would like their children to develop. The different nuances of meaning within the illustrative quotations, made categorising them difficult.

4.2.1.1 Sub theme 1: Being caring & accepting

Illustrative quotations

"Ek dink dis iemand wat omgee en na ander se belange omsien, wat altyd daar is as jy hom nodig het"(F1 19:23-24)

"I think it's someone who cares and looks after the interests of others, who is always there when you need him"

"Ja, 'n mens moet sensitief wees vir mekaar se gevoelens. ...Sodat hulle beseft die invloed wat hulle woorde het op die ander kinders se gevoelens."(S2 8:1-3)

"Yes, one must be sensitive to the feelings of others...So that they can realize what affect their words has on the feelings of the other children."

"...hy moet almal aanvaar as 'n mens, sy moenie die een wegdruk omdat hy 'n swarte is of omdat hy 'n witte is nie."(F1 1:17-18)

"...he must accept everyone as a human being, she mustn't reject someone because he is either black or white."

"Ek dink dis 'n baie belangrike punt...om nie neer te sien op ander nie."(F6 30:5-6)
"I think that is a very important point...not to look down on others."

4.2.1.2 Sub theme 2: Being respectful & appreciative

Illustrative quotations

"En sy moet nie haar respek vir ons, as ouers, verloor nie."(F6 3:3-4)
"And she must not lose her respect for us as her parents."

"Hy moet respek kan toon vir 'n grootmens." (F2 22:18)
"He must show respect to an adult."

"Ja, ek dink jy moet al van klein af vir jou kind leer om dinge te waardeer in die lewe... Waardeer jou ouers in die huis, jou broers en jou susters." (F5 29:19-20)
"Yes, I think you should teach your children from a very young age to appreciate things in life...Appreciate your parents at home, your brothers and your sisters."

The numerous responses that were relevant to this section suggest that being a nice person is a virtue that parents expect their children to develop. Their comments seem to suggest that parents', both males and females, place a high value on the way people treat one another, highlighting especially qualities such as being caring, sensitive, appreciative and respectful. They seem to associate a person who behaves in a non-discriminatory manner and treats people equally, with someone who is a democratic citizen of South Africa. In light of their oppressive, "apartheid" past during which they may have experienced discrimination, insensitivity and intolerance, it seems understandable that parents expect the younger generation to develop tolerance towards their fellow human beings. I wonder whether these parents are still experiencing some kind of discrimination or insensitivity, which negatively affects their experience of the world.

Being appreciative and respectful towards older people, especially towards parents, also attracted many responses. It appears to be related to a sense of despondency that some of these parents experience when their children seem to lose their respect for their parents, resulting in a loss of parental authority over their adolescents' life choices and behaviour. Piaget's (1932) theory of developmental stage of moral judgment, suggests that the child becomes morally autonomous when he/she can establish relationships with others based on mutual respect and reciprocity. This suggests that respect between parents and children become mutually agreed upon through their interaction and communication. This highlights the importance of

parents establishing positive communication and interaction patterns with their children not only to enhance respect but also to develop morally autonomous young people. Literature (Boyes & Allen, 1993, Berkowitz, 1998b; Smetana, 1999; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1998) also suggests that the quality of parent-child interactions, family communication patterns, and participation of children in family decision-making play an important role in the transmission of values between parents and children. A nice person is therefore seen as a person who shows others respect and treats them equally.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Being a good person

This theme was identified due to its focus on the ability to choose the moral alternative. It also highlights parents' concern over their children's morality and of becoming a good person.

4.2.2.1 Sub theme 1: Distinguishing between right and wrong

Illustrative quotations

"Ek sal graag wil hê my kind moet kan onderskei tussen reg en verkeerd."(F3 2:24)
"I would really like my child to be able to distinguish between right and wrong."

"...hulle moet kan onderskei wat is goed en of dis nie goed nie. So as hy hier by die deur uitstap, dan moet hy al klaar kan dink dis die regte pad."(F6 31:20-22)
"...they must be able to distinguish between what is good and what is not good. So if he walks out of this door, he must already think that this is the right way."

4.2.2.2 Sub theme 2: Right values

Illustrative quotations

"...dit is belangrik dat my kinders met die regte waardes groot raak, nie net akademies nie, maar ook geestelik." (S3 4:1-4)
"...It is important for my children to grow up with the right values, not only academic, but also spiritual."

4.2.2.3 Sub theme 3: Setting a good example

Illustrative quotations

"...jy kan opkyk na hom."(F4 20:15)
"...you can look up to him."

"Ek sal graag wil hê my kind moet altyd 'n voorbeeld stel aan ander." (S5 14:7)
"I would really like my child always to set an example to others."

"Die ideale persoon is iemand wat goedgemanierd is." (F4 20:12)
"The ideal person is one that is well-mannered."

Becoming a good person suggests a moral connection. It includes the ability to distinguish between right and wrong; someone who has the capacity to be able to judge whether a certain action or response is morally acceptable. This seems to suggest that a certain level of cognitive competence is necessary to enable the person to reason about morally acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory of moral development also illustrates the link between moral understanding and cognitive reasoning, and suggests a correlation between one's level of cognitive sophistication and moral reasoning (White & Matawie, 2004). Choosing the moral alternative, according to Kohlberg, is when children choose the right thing without being told (Pyszkowski, 2001). This is seen as equal to the ability to reason morally independently from others. It appears as if Kohlberg suggest that children, with moral reasoning ability, should be allowed space in which to make their own choices without adult interference. It is unclear whether these parents are aware of the importance of developing moral reasoning ability to support making moral choices. According to White and Matawie (2004), the family can provide an affective and supportive climate in which members feel safe enough to challenge each others ideas on moral issues, in such a way contributing to the development of moral judgement. This relates to an authoritative parenting style that has been found to be the most conducive to the development of moral reasoning (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Walker, 1999). A supportive climate in which children are allowed to reason and share their ideas, supports moral judgement and the ability to make well-considered choices.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Achievement

This category illustrates parents' desire that their children would achieve in life, through different means. Success and achievement seem to be desirable outcomes to most of school B's parents (representing the rural area), and less so for school A's parents. Some of the following quotations, although related to being successful in life, are unspecific and unclear and were therefore difficult to group under a specific sub theme.

4.2.3.1 Sub theme 1: Achieving life goals

Illustrative quotations

"Mens is gelukkig as jy, ...voel dat jy bereik het wat jy wou bereik in die lewe. Dit is whatever hulle wil doen." (S2 2:23-24)

"One is happy if you...feel that you have achieved what you wanted to achieve in life. That is whatever you want to do."

4.2.3.2 Sub theme 2: Having high aspirations

Illustrative quotations

"...omdat ons nie klaargemaak het met skool nie, wil ons altyd hê ons kinders moet 'n hoër trappie klaarmaak en hulle moet darem iets in die lewe bereik wat ons nie bereik het nie." (F3 21:17-19)

"...because we didn't complete school, we always want our children to finish at a higher level and they must at least attain something in life that we couldn't."

"...en vir jou 'n doelwit stel of 'n visie, sê 'dit is wat ek wil wees eendag, teen ...as ek 18 is, sal ek graag dit wil hê."(F4 22:11-14)

"...to set yourself a goal or a vision, to say 'this is what I want to be one day by...by the time I am 18, I would like to have this.'"

"Moet kan iets doen in die lewe en 'n doelwit kan bereik...soos ek sou sê ek laat my sommer groot vat: magistraat of 'n prokureur of 'n juffrou of so iets (word)."(F1 16:10-13)

"Must be able to do something in life and achieve a goal...as I would say, to aim high: (to become) a magistrate, or lawyer or a teacher or something."

4.2.3.3 Sub theme 3: Becoming self-supporting

Illustrative quotations

"Ek sal graag wil hê my kind moet eendag selfversorgend wees."(F3 2:23)

"I would like my child to be self-supporting one day."

4.2.3.4 Sub theme 4: Having a career

Illustrative quotations

"En dit waarin sy goed is, dat sy daarop sal fokus...loopbaan kies (daarvolgens)." (F1 17:2-4)

"And what she is good at, she should focus on...choose her career."

"Ek wil graag hê my klong moet eendag rugby speel...Jy kan eendag vir jou 'n loopbaan daar uit maak." (F2 13:18 & 13:24)

"I really want my lad to play rugby one day...You can make a career out of that eventually."

4.2.3.5 Sub theme 5: Being a leader

Illustrative quotations

"Waar sy kan, moet sy altyd probeer om die leiding te neem in plaas van om gelei te word." (F3 2:24-25)

"Wherever she can, she must try to take the lead instead of being lead."

"So wat ek wil sê is dat my kinders moet 'n eienskap aanneem om 'n leier te word. Hulle moet so groot raak om eendag 'n volk of 'n land (te) kan lei." (S4 16:1-2)

"So what I want to say is that my children should adopt the characteristic of wanting to become a leader. They should grow up able to lead a nation or a country."

"...ek voel ...as ons kinders 'n goeie selfbeeld het, nè, dan is dit dat hulle ...meer positiewe dinge uitstraal soos sy sê leierskap." (S2 18:22-24)

"...I feel ..if our children have a good self-image, hey, then it is that they...exude more positive things, like she says, leadership."

The desired personal quality of "being an achiever" seems to be a means to an end, not necessarily a moral virtue. Success was not clearly defined by the parents, but their comments seem to indicate that it means the achievement of personal goals. Goal setting and high aspirations appear to be crucial in being successful in achieving one's goals. Another motivating factor to achieving one's personal goals, is, according to School A's parents, that it will make one happy. The parents' responses also suggest that they believe that education and success go hand in hand and that a good education (career) will increase opportunities to financial security, which is related to higher societal status. Some literature suggests that much of what parents believe in stems from the values they have acquired from living in a particular culture, values that determine what they consider worthwhile, and what they seek for themselves or their children (Stolz, 1967). The importance of uplifting oneself out of poverty seems to stem from parents' own past experience and lower social status, which is especially true of the rural group of parents. These circumstances seem to be a motivational factor in the type of qualities that they value for their children. The tendency for some lower-class parents to be more exceedingly conscious of money value, agrees with the general finding of Stolz's study done in 1958 in the United States (Stolz, 1967). According to the study fathers who prize economic values tend to come from lower social positions.

In addition, the socio-economic status of the fathers in the rural group (School B) appears to have influenced their support of competitiveness as a quality necessary for

success and achievement. This may also be a reflection of needed survival qualities in a world dominated by money. Free-market economies also emphasise qualities such as confidence, leadership skills, competitiveness, and acting in own self-interest (McKeever, 2001) to ensure financial success and wealth. Whether the parents' comments can be interpreted as supporting either self-interest or the achievement of life goals, is unclear. I wonder, though, how effectively the parents support their children's emotional health to ensure positive self-concepts and confidence.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Becoming a valuable citizen

This theme refers to becoming a citizen of value to South Africa, working for South Africa.

Illustrative quotation

"...as my kind 'n dokter wil word vir Suid-Afrika, dan gaan hy iets bedoel vir die land...hy gaan werk in die land." (S1 1:11-13)
"...if my child wants to become a doctor for South Africa, he will mean something for this country...he will work in this country."

This was the only quotation that referred to becoming a valuable citizen to his/her country. Becoming a doctor was specifically mentioned, perhaps suggesting a career that serves others and in such a way serving the people of the country. It may also suggest that it is important to give back to one's country through using one's skills to make it a better place for all. This therefore might be true of other careers as well. I wonder though whether the parent's comment is not perhaps a reflection of her language skills, and that this affects her manner of expression. Therefore, I am unclear whether this is what she truly wanted to express. It might also imply that it is important to this caregiver that his/her child becomes someone that would enjoy a certain level of social status.

4.3 How do parents perceive their own responsibility in the citizenship and moral education of their children?

Five broad themes with sub-themes from both focus groups were identified.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Positive relationships

The following theme captures ways in which parents think they can establish positive relationships with their children in the hope of influencing them positively. It answers the question of how parents can support the moral development of their children.

4.3.1.1 Sub theme 1: Open, effective communication

Illustrative quotations

"...baie van ons grootmense het nie die vrymoedigheid om met daai kind te praat nie.... So sy (ma) moet die vrymoedigheid hê om met daai kind te sit en gesels." (F4 4:21-24)

"...many of us adults do not have the courage to talk to that child... So she (mom) should have the courage to sit down and talk to that child."

"Hy (ouer) moet openlik wees om mee te gesels." (F4 24:1)

"He (parent) must be open to communication."

"...en dan moet jy ook maar luister wat hy (die kind) sê, want hy't 'n vraag en 'n vraag moet beantwoord word..." (S2 6:2-3)

"...and then you should just listen to what he says, because he has a question and a question must be answered..."

4.3.1.2 Sub theme 2: Mutual respect

Illustrative quotations

"...ook jammer sê, want die kinders is nie altyd verkeerd nie...'Mammie was te vinnig, Mammie was verkeerd, ek is jammer'...Dis om te compromise." (S8 20:19-23)

"...sorry to say, because children are not always wrong ...'Mummy was too hasty, Mummy was wrong, I'm sorry'...It is to compromise."

"En jy as ouer moet ook dan jou kind waardeer vir dinge wat hy doen,...Sê vir hom dankie vir dit wat hy gedoen het...jy waardeer dit ...dat hy (ge) probeer het. En so werk ouer en kind saam." (S7 15:1-4)

"And you as parent should also then appreciate your child for the things he does,..Thank him vir what he has done...you appreciate it ..that he has tried. And so parent and child work together."

"En sy moet nie haar respek vir ons, as ouers, verloor nie."(F6 12:6))

"And she must not lose her respect for us, as parents."

4.3.1.3 Sub theme 3: Positive feedback

Illustrative quotations

"...dit hang ook af van jou as ouer, hoe jy goed oordra vir jou kinders. ...as ek nou dink hoeveel foute ek nou al gemaak het met my harde stem ...daai body language ...nie altyd skree op hulle nie." (S7 20:12-17)

"...it also depends on you as parent, how well you pass on things to your children. ...when I think nowadays of how many mistakes I have already made with my loud voice ...that body language ...not always yell at them."

"As jy kritiek lewer probeer dit...hoe sal ek sê opbouend wees, nie afbrekend nie." (F2 17:5-7)

"When you criticize, try this...how can my words be constructive, not destructive."

"...om haar te wys dis die dinge wat ek wil graag hê in die lewe...want dna weet sy mos ook outomaties, dis wat ek wil hê (van haar) in die lewe." (F2 16:2 & 16:12-13)

"...to show her these are the things I want most in life...because then she knows automatically, that that is what I also want (for her) in life."

4.3.1.4 Sub theme 4: Showing interest & love

Illustrative quotations

"Ek sal sê liefde moet jy betoon aan die kind. 'n Drukkie. ...Gee daai kind net 'n drukkie of vryf sy hand of vra 'hoe was jou dag?'". (S6 21:19-21)

"I would say you need to show love to a child. A hug. ...Just give that child a hug or stroke his hand or ask 'how was your day?'"

"... tyd moet ek maak in my skedule van ek by die huis gekom het. ...ons as ouers moet tyd maak vir onse kinders...'altwee my ouers of een ouer gee 100% aandag aan my..." (S8 5:27 & 6:2-27)

"I must make time in my schedule when I get home. ...as parents we must make time for our children...'both my parents or one parent gives 100% attention to me ..."

4.3.1.5 Sub theme 5: Friendship

Illustrative quotations

"Aan die een hand is jy ouer, en probeer ook maar op die ander hand vriende wees." (F1 24:8)

"On the one hand you are a parent, and also try on the other hand to be friends."

Both groups of parents appear to place a high value on building positive, open relationships with their children in order to promote honest communication and mutual respect. Parental warmth including expressions of affection toward the child, and responsiveness to the child's needs and desires (Knafo & Schwartz, 2003), is said to influence the development of conscience and consequently moral development (Kohlberg, 1964). The parents with especially adolescents at home, seem to view the

establishment of a positive relationship with their teenagers as crucial in having an influence on their behaviour. Some of the parents' comments suggested that they view communication and a positive relationship as possible alternatives to corporal punishment. According to Zahn-Waxler and Robinson (1995), if parents can build a positive, cooperative relationship with the child, serve as good examples, let children know ahead of time how to act, and praise children when they behave well, children misbehaving can be prevented. Positive relationships lead to positive discipline. Vygotsky also views learning as taking place within social mediation such as communication with more mature, expert adults that allows children to make their own decisions and mistakes with the parent or adult as mediator rather than authoritarian presence. He suggests that mediated learning encourages children to engage in "verbalized self-observation" and to reflect on, revise, and control their own thought processes (Berk, 2003).

The parents also indicated the value of communicating their expectations to their children in an effort to increase their opportunities in achieving higher career goals than their own. Literature supports the importance of communicating clear, realistic expectations to children to increase the likelihood of a positive self-concept and the achievement of life goals. Research found that children who develop a healthy sense of agency have parents whom provide emotional support (a secure base) and freedom to explore, which enhances identity development (Berk, 2003). This correlates positively with the parents' comments on providing their children with love, attention, time and support through involvement in their education and everyday life.

The question must be asked, though, whether the parents are actually implementing their good intentions or know how to implement them, since, as will see in later sections, they are experiencing many frustrations in their relationships with their children.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Model desired behaviour

This section continues to answer the question of how parents can promote desired behaviour. The notion that behaviour is learned through imitation comes out strongly in this section.

4.3.2.1 Sub theme 1: Be a positive role model

Illustrative quotations

"Ek rook nie..." "Ja ek is bly nie een van my kinders drink ook nie en rook ook nie"... "Wat jy verkeerd doen, doen die kinders ook." (F2 9:14 & 9:16 & 9:23)

"I don't smoke..." "Yes, I am glad not one of my children drinks or smokes" "What you do wrong, children will also do."

"(Wil kinders) 'positief' (beïnvloed)....Jy moet die voorbeeld positief stel. As jy negatief gaan handel, en jy wil hê die kind moet jou voorbeeld volg, dan gaan jy maar 'n replika van jouself kry." (F1 11:24 & 12:1-2)

"(Want to influence children) "positively"...You must set a positive example. If you behave negatively, and you want your child to follow your example, then you are going to get a replica of yourself."

"Reg, want die ouers is mos die rolmodelle van die kinders. Die kinders kyk mos op na die ouers toe." (F4 9:20-21)

"Right, because the parents are actually the role models for the children. The children actually look up to their parents."

4.3.2.2 Sub theme 2: Identify positive role models

Illustrative quotations

"...soos die Olimpiese Spele ... dan wys ek haar wie's nou Hestrie Cloete en daai Okkert Britz," (F5 15:3-6)

"..like the Olympic Games...then I show her who Hestrie Cloete is and that Okkert Britz."

"...daai's ook 'n motivering wat jy vir jou kind gee, daai mense kom van die agterbuurte van SA, en kyk waar's hulle vandag. Daai stukkie op TV, nou vra sy vir my hoekom is daai mense op die televisie." (F6 15:7-9) "...soos Pres. Nelson Mandela, ...vir my is dit om te sien waarvandaan hy gekom het tot waar hy nou is, is vir my 'n groot voorbeeld. ...Dis hoekom ek hom as 'n ideale persoon sien." (F6 15:19-21)

"...that's also a motivation you give your child, those people come from the backstreets of South Africa, and see where they are today. That piece on TV, now she asks me why those people are on TV." "...like Pres. Nelson Mandela, ...for me to see where he came from to where he is now is a great example. ...That's why I see him as an ideal person."

The parents indicate in this section the seriousness with which they view their responsibility and their awareness of the influence of their behaviour on their children. Their comments highlight the importance that parents model the behaviour that they want their children to imitate. They seem to feel strongly about being positive role models to their children not only in word but also in action. Modelling desired behaviour seems to be crucial to increase the likelihood of the same values developing in their children. The social learning theorists, such as Bandura, highlight the notion

of learning through modelling or imitation. These theorists argue that children largely learn to behave morally through modelling, which is through observing and imitating adults who demonstrate appropriate behaviour (Bandura, 1977; Grusec, 1988). The type of behaviour that some parents are highlighting as important to model includes not smoking, drinking or fighting. This suggests quite a superficial understanding of 'moral' behaviour, and explains some parents' behavioural approach to influencing and disciplining their children.

Identifying positive role models seems to be another method in which some parents hope to influence their children positively, especially in realising their goals. This seems not only to indicate to children what type of person their parents would like them to become, but also appears to reinforce the parents' belief in their ability to succeed e.g. become a sports hero or an altruistic person like Nelson Mandela. One of the parents also identified Nelson Mandela as the ideal person, suggesting that becoming an altruistic, compassionate person is valued highly.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Parental guidance

The following section was only highlighted by School A's parents, the urban group, and tries to answer further what parents can do to support moral behaviour. Most of the comments support the teaching of Christian values to instil a Christian life style and to guide children towards making correct decisions. Only two parents mentioned that children should be supported in making their own decisions and have the freedom to choose.

4.3.3.1 Sub theme 1: Christian instruction

Illustrative quotations

"En as ons hulle geestelik grootmaak in die Here, dan kan ons nie verkeerd gaan nie..." (S1 13:8-9)

"And if we raise them spiritually in the Lord, we can't go wrong..."

"... nou het jy 'n groot verantwoordelikheid, want die Here het jou daai kind geleen en hy sê jy moet daai kind grootmaak dat hy eendag moet hy 'n getuienis wees voor God." (S3 14:6-9)

"... now you have a great responsibility, because the Lord has loaned that child to you and he says you must raise that child so that one day he can be a witness before God."

4.3.3.2 Sub theme 2: Guidance in making correct choices

Illustrative quotations

"Ons moet onse kinders so opvoed dat hulle kan daai besluit, daai regte besluit neem...Ek leer hulle die regte keuses maak. Ek wys watter verkeerde keuse, wat is die nagevolge daarvan." (S4 2:10-18)

"We must bring up our children in such a way that they can take that decision, that correct decision...I teach them to make the correct choices. I show them the wrong choices, the consequences of those wrong choices"

"En moet vir hulle kan lei, vir hulle kan skouer ook in besluite wat hulle neem, en as hulle verkeerde besluite neem, nie vir hulle verder neerdruk nie, maar vir hulle uithelp..." (S2 5:1-10)

"And must be able to lead them, to support them also in the decisions they take, and if they take wrong decisions, not to oppress them further, but to help them...."

4.3.3.3 Sub theme 3: Support independent decision-making skills

Illustrative quotations

"...en dat hulle goed voorbereid is dat hulle self-besluite kan neem en goeie besluite..." (S6 2:10-18)

"...and that they are well prepared and that they can take decisions for themselves and good decisions..."

"...Ek wil hê hulle moet besluite neem wat hulle gelukkig maak, nie vir my of my man of vir Ouma of vir die nie... dat hulle vir hulle self kan dink en self doen whatever self explore en besluite neem." (S5 5:15-22)

"...I want them to take decisions that will make them happy, not me or my husband, or Grandma or anyone... so that they can think for themselves and do for themselves and explore for themselves and take decisions."

Most of School A's parents seem to feel strongly about their role in supporting Christian values and decision-making according to the teachings of the Bible. It also suggests that parents have a specific role to fulfil in accordance to the will of God e.g. communicating God's word to the child; the child is only borrowed from God and should be treated as if he/she is a gift from God. The role that religion plays in the moral development of a child, according to Kohlberg, is unclear (Rosen, 1980).

It appears, according to the parents' comments, as if the majority of this group of parents believe that they should guide or even tell their children what the right or appropriate decisions are, so that when they are faced with alternatives, they would make the "correct" choice in line with what their parents would agree with. This suggests a behaviourist approach to teaching decision-making skills, rather than developing moral reasoning ability and thinking skills as suggested by Kohlberg. Two

parents, on the other hand, highlighted the importance of developing decision-making skills that would support independent decision-making. The last quotation appears to suggest that the parent believes in the child's ability to think and reason for himself and therefore would feel comfortable to allow him the freedom to choose.

This seems to contradict other parents' strong religious beliefs that support decision-making according to the word of God, suggesting that their choices should coincide with a Christian set of values and principles. This contrast was also highlighted by my co-facilitator. It appears as if the parents were unaware of this contradiction and I wonder whether exploring this would have been helpful to them.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Responsibility

The following theme and sub themes highlight the seriousness with which the parents assume their responsibility to educate their children. It answers the question of where the responsibility to morally educate children should start. They conclude that moral education should start at home.

4.3.4.1 Sub theme 1: Responsibility starts at home

Illustrative quotations

"...die opvoeding van die kind. Ek dink al's begin, moet begin hier by ons, ons as ouers." (F1 30:16-17)

"...the education of the child. I think everything begins, must being here with us, us as parents."

"...ons wil ons kinders reg grootmaak. ...maar die maniere moet uit die huis uit kom, van ouer...dat sy lig kan skyn na buitekant." (F5 3:15-18)

"...we want to raise our children in the right way. ...but the manners must come from the house, from the parent..so that its light can shine to the world outside."

4.3.4.2 Sub theme 2: Discipline starts at home

Illustrative quotations

"Ek sal sê dissipline begin by die huis." (S3 5:26)

"I would say discipline starts at home."

"...maar die opvoeder is nie eintlik daar om dissipline, gehoorsaamheid en netheid...vir die kinders te gee nie. Dit kom eintlik, moet meer van die ouers se kant af...kom." (S5 3:9-10)

"...but the educator isn't actually there to give discipline, obedience and neatness...to the children. It actually comes, must ...come more from the parents' side."

I was surprised by the seriousness with which especially School B's parents assumed their responsibility, perhaps due to my experience as an educator of rural children. This section suggests that although some rural parents stated that they did not realise the extent of their responsibility when they initially had children, as this quotation illustrates, "*Ons het nie geweet hierdie verantwoordelikheid is so groot as 'n ouer nie.*" (F2 31:2-3) ("*We did not realise how great the responsibility of being a parent is.*"), they now take their responsibility in teaching their children acceptable behaviour very seriously. It was also quite surprising to hear that most of the parents, both School A and School B, viewed their responsibility in instilling desired values, through education, modelling and discipline, as greater than that of the school. My experience has been that when children misbehave many parents choose to blame the educators involved rather than themselves or their children. It therefore seems very positive that these parents are identifying their role in promoting positive behaviour as crucial and influential, and expressing willingness to take responsibility for their children's behaviour.

Although Kohlberg (1969) and Piaget (1965) saw the parents' influence as less influential than the impact that peer interaction has on moral development, these parents felt strongly about the role they have to play in teaching their children the "correct" way as this quote illustrates "*So as hy hier by die deur uitstap, dan moet hy al klaar kan dink dis die regte pad.*" (F6 31:21-22) ("*So that when he walks out of this door, then he needs to be able to think that this is the right path.*"). The parents' comments seem to suggest that they resort to behavioural methods to ensure that their children follow the "right" path. It is unclear from the above quotations which discipline strategy the parents follow and whether the parents suggest corporal punishment or alternatives such as communication within a positive relationship, as a means to "educate" their children. I also wonder where their approach to discipline and parenting comes from. One possible explanation may be inferred from the comments made by some of School B parents' on the chain effect of intergenerational parenting styles "...I mean for some of us it is a bit difficult to show love to your child...our parents did not give those things to us, now this generation, also falls just in there, because you can...not share" (F1 5:11-26) "Yes, it is nearly something like a chain reaction. A person should try and prevent this, those chains..." (F3 5:18-19). These comments suggest that they are aware of the impact of previous relationships on their current parenting styles, but that it is difficult to change the effect.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Establish support network

This section highlights the parents' need for mutual support and community cohesion in promoting the development of desirable qualities in children. It also shows parents' willingness to form closer relationships with schools and make some suggestions to how partnerships between parents and educators can be established.

Illustrative quotations

"Ons (ouers) moet soos 'n familie wees." (F2 29:3) "Ons moet mekaar se kinders ondersteun, beskerm ja." (F6 29:4)

"We (parents) should be like a family." "We should support and protect each other's children."

"...dis baie belangrik vir jou as ouer om in noue verband met die onderwyser te werk, want so gaan jy jou kind help..." (S5 7:15-16)

"...it's very important for you as parent to work closely with the teacher, because that is how you are going to help your child..."

"Ek sal sê ons moet meer betrokke raak by mekaar (ouer en skool), met ander woorde, as ons meer vergaderings hou, dan kan ons mekaar meer vind en dan kan ons mos iets uitwerk in die vergadering, want elkeen sal sy eie opinie lug...." (F1 12:12-14)

"I would say we must become more involved with each other, in other words, if we have more meetings, then we can find one another and then we can work something out in the meeting, because everyone will air his own opinion..."

It seems clear from parents' comments that since they see the task of parenthood as a big responsibility, they believe that support is necessary amongst parents and between schools and parents – in a sense saying that one can be more effective working in partnership than alone. This need of parents to support each other, communicate their child-rearing practices with one another, and work closely with educators, alerts one to possible discrepancies in the way different parents and educators educate and model appropriate behaviour to children. Hauser-Cram et al (2003) found that children are presumably disadvantaged when their parents and teachers hold different values with respect to desired classroom practices and behaviour; this may also be true when there are discrepancies in the manner adults model and communicate desired behaviour to children. Some research also found that parents and teachers do not necessarily agree upon which values are desirable to transfer to students (Noordin, 1995 as cited in Barone, 2004). Communication between parents and teachers is therefore crucial

The parents' comments also highlight the need to communicate openly with teachers about issues such as discipline and strategies to intervene in children's behaviour, even

suggesting more parent-teacher meetings. This correlates positively with some research (Berkowitz and Bier, 2005; Lickona, 1988; Warren, Young & Hanifin, 2003) that argues that the most effective ways in which moral development, and therefore learning, can be promoted, are through parent-teacher communication and partnership, which enhances value congruence between parent and teacher. This would ultimately help bridge the communication gap between teacher and parent. Brummer (1998) found, however, that although parents indicate that they are willing to work with teachers in partnerships to improve and support their children's academic and moral growth, they seldom actively become involved and act on their promises. Further barriers to closer parent-teacher ties, are limited teacher time and teachers' willingness to listen to and involve parents in, for example, the moral education of their children (Brummer, 1998). Perhaps an outsider is needed to initiate and facilitate the development of parent-teacher partnerships.

4.4 What should the school's role be in the citizenship and moral education of their children? (How should the school promote desirable values?)

Although this question relates directly to the title of the thesis, the parents did not respond as comprehensively to it as I would have liked them to. It might be due to the fact that it was the last question that was presented. I believe though that the responses of the parents in general were indicative of their need to voice their own frustrations and struggles in instilling positive values in their children rather than focusing on the teachers' and schools' roles in moral education.

Two broad themes with sub themes were identified.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Positive relationships

The following theme highlights parents' views on teachers' relationships with their children. Positive relationships appear to support the influence that teachers may have on their students.

4.4.1.1 Sub theme 1: Open, effective communication

Illustrative quotations

"So 'n mens wil reëls hê (in skool), maar daar moet darem kommunikasie ook wees."
(F1 18:18-22)

"So one wants rules (at school), but there must at least also be communication."

"...openlik gesels, veral kinders wat nie met hulle ouers kommunikeer nie... miskien beter doen met 'n onderwyser of met 'n vertroueling by die skool of sy Voorligting-onderwyser..." (S8 18:8-11)

"...speak openly, especially children who cannot communicate with their parents...perhaps this will be better done with a teacher or with a confidant at school or his Guidance teacher..."

4.4.1.2 Sub theme 2: Showing interest & concern

Illustrative quotations

"...as 'n kind in 'n klas is en die onderwyser ondervind 'n probleem...Dan is dit die onderwyser se plig om dan vir hom eenkant te roep en vir hom te vra 'wat is die probleem?' 'Is daar 'n probleem by die huis?'...Probeer ook die ouers in die hande te kry of met die hoof te gesels en dan miskien huisbesoek doen, ..." "Miskien kan hy (die onderwyser) hulle verwys na mense toe wat dan verder daardie kind kan help... by maatskaplike werkers of by 'n organisasie of iets..." (S6 24:16-27 & 25:10-14)

"...if a child is in a class and the teacher experiences a problem...Then it is the teacher's duty to call him to one side and to ask him 'what is the problem?' 'Is there a problem at home?'...Also try to get hold of the parents or to speak to the principal and then perhaps visit the home, ..." "Perhaps he (the teacher) can refer them to people who can then assist the child further... from social workers or from an organisation or something..."

"...ek wil hê 'n onderwyser moet my kind 'n regverdige kans gee. ...'n Oor om te luister as hy my kind te na gekom het, ...moet hy tog vir hom luister. ... te luister hoekom het sy dit gedoen en nie altyd net aanvaar die kinders is stout ..." (S2 26:1-11)

"..I want a teacher to give my child a fair chance. ...An ear which listens when he has treated my child unfairly...he must just listen to him. ... to listen to why she did that and not always just to assume that the children are naughty ..."

4.4.1.3 Sub theme 3: Friendship

Illustrative quotations

"Wat vir my belangrik is, daai na skool...kinders onderwysers nie net as 'n onderwyser (sien) nie, maar nou weer as 'n vriend ook partykeers. Die Saterdagoggende se saamgaan sport toe...'daai onderwyser is vandag my kind se ouer. " (S1 29:1-10)

"What is important to me, is that after school...children don't just see the teachers just as a teacher, but also as a friend sometimes. The Saturday mornings attending sport together...'that teacher is my child's parent today.'"

"...Want die onderwyser is nie net 'n onderwysr, hy's ook 'n vriend van die kind...die onderwyser en die kind moet hand aan hand gaan," (S8 32:3-7)

"...Because the teacher is not just a teacher, he is also the child's friend...the teacher and the child must go on hand in hand..."

It appears as if parents expect similar quality relationships between children and educators as between children and parents. According to the parents' comments,

healthy teacher-child relationships are the building blocks of a positive, even moral influence that educators can have on children. The importance of trust to promote communication between teacher and pupil, extending the relationship to becoming a confidant of the child, is also mentioned. Trust, according to the parents, between educator and pupil are shaped through showing concern and interest in the child. The parents seem aware of the value of a caring adult in a child's life. Parents' expectations of educators therefore appear similar to what they expect of themselves. Literature also suggests that close relationships lead children to heed adult demands because children feel a sense of commitment to the relationship (Berk, 2003).

Parents therefore appear to expect educators to extend beyond a pure academic role to include psycho-social and moral roles in their children's lives. This was also highlighted by my co-facilitator, who mentioned the important role an educator can play in the development of a positive self-concept when he/she takes an interest in the child. In a Vygotskian sense, educators that establish positive relationships with their students are more inclined to create a climate in which moral development can be enhanced. Literature also suggests that the quality of parent-child interactions plays an important role in the transmission of values between parents and children (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Smetana, 1999; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1998). This is presumably also true of teacher-child interactions and the positive effect that positive relationships has on the transmission of desired values.

The parents' comments also seem to suggest that these parents understand the concept of virtue as good behaviour versus naughtiness.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Holistic development of child

This theme seems to link closely with the previous theme regarding educators fulfilling multiple roles in the child's life. It was difficult to label the parents' comments under one theme, though it appears to suggest an education that involves all aspects of development. The chosen label seems to capture the importance parents from School A place on the holistic development of the child.

4.4.2.1 Sub theme 1: Social, emotional and physical development

Illustrative quotations

"En die ander ding by die skool wat ook vir my goed is, positief is, is die koor. Dan het hulle...VCS...is ook iets moois vir die kinders. ...Hulle skoolwerk word nie eenkant geskuif (nie) 'ons gaan nou weer bietjie sosiaal verkeer'..." (S8 29:11-19)
"And the other thing which is also good for me, is positive at school, is the choir. Then they have... ACS (Association of Christian Students) ...also something attractive for the children. ...Their school work is not pushed aside 'we are now going to enjoy some social interaction again'"

"...eendag miskien 'ons gaan nie skoolwerk doen vandag nie, maar ons gaan gou 'n debat (hou)...Ons praat oor enigiets wat vir julle ... raak. Dan sal ek dink, daar sal baie gevoelens uitkom uit daardie gesprek..." (S4 31: 20-24 & 32:3-7)
"...perhaps one day we are not going to do school work today, but we are going to have a debate... We'll talk about anything that ...affects you. Then I think many feelings will come out in that conversation."

"...sport wat die onderwysers aanbied. ...hulle moedig kinders aan 'gaan neem deel aan dit...drama...koor' of buite-aktiwiteite." (S1 28:9-11)
"...sport presented by the teachers. ...they encourage children to 'participate in this ...drama...choir' or extramural activities."

4.4.2.2 Sub theme 2: Spiritual development

Illustrative quotations

"...'n gebedsgroep...van Gr. 5 af wat hulle Vrydagaande 'n Nag van Gebed hou waar die onderwysers saam met hulle bid vir die jongspan." (S3 29:25-27)
"...a prayer group...from Gr. 5 upwards where they have a Night of Prayer on Friday nights, where the teachers pray with them for the youth."

"...die godsdienstige wat die skole aanbied vir die kinders (is goed) ..." (S6 27:17-20 & 28:1-3)
"...the religious instruction which the schools offer to the children (is good) ..."

4.4.2.3 Sub theme 3: Practical skills development

Illustrative quotations

"...deesdae is dit mos as die kind nie akademies vorder nie, moet hy ...iets doen met sy hande of tegniese of so. ... in 'n tegniese rigting kon gestuur het...." (S6 32:11-21)
"...nowadays when a child does not progress academically, he must ...do something with his hands or technical or so. ...sent him in a technical direction...."

"...hy moet ook aan die einde van die dag 'n huis kan dra. So al kan hy nie geleer het op skool nie, hy kan iets produce. Hy kan byvoorbeeld 'n cabinet maker word...die beste mechanic wees." (S7 33:2-6)
"... he must also at the end of the day be able to support a household. So even if he couldn't learn at school, he can produce something. He can for example become a cabinet maker...be the best mechanic."

School A's parents seem very aware of and concerned about the holistic development of their children, including those who are struggling academically. One of the possible reasons for this may be to increase their children's exposure to a variety of activities and consequently their career opportunities. They seem to realise that children have different strengths and that their self-esteem can be enhanced through their participation in a variety of activities, especially if academic achievement is not a given. This suggests that the parents view the school not only as a place of learning and teaching, but also a place in which learners' social and emotional well-being are supported and cherished.

One parent mentioned her expectation of teachers to create opportunities to discuss, debate and share feelings and opinions. This seems to relate closely with Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning, which emphasises the importance of reasoning about moral dilemmas and issues with the expectation that when students hear their peers discuss issues from a higher level, they will gravitate to that position (Kohlberg, 1987). It is unclear though whether her intention with debating and sharing opinions was to enhance moral reasoning ability or rather purely solution-focused discussions.

4.5 Concerns

This theme was created since it gives a more holistic view of the parents' contexts and highlights the many concerns parents voiced spontaneously during the group discussions, although it does not answer any of the original research questions directly. This was especially in response to the reality of the gap between what parents desire their children to become and what their children actually choose to become. It appeared as if some parents felt the need to clarify or justify their efforts in teaching their children the right way, in spite of the lack of control they felt over what their children chose to become. An underlying sense of hopelessness in influencing their children to act in desired ways, was apparent. Some parents of younger children seemed hopeful, while others, especially the parents of older children or adolescents, appeared less positive.

Four broad themes with sub themes were identified from both focus groups.

4.5.1 Theme 1: Poor parental influence

The next section highlights the sense of despondency that parents of the rural group (School B) experience due to their lack of influence over their children's behaviour. They appear to try hard to influence their children positively, but still seems to fail sometimes due to the many factors that seemingly undermine their authority. Both sub themes were only mentioned by the rural group of parents. The following are examples of parental comments that illustrate different aspects of the theme.

4.5.1.1 Sub theme 1: Lack of influence

Illustrative quotations

"...alhoewel jy hom goed opgevoed het. Baie kere dan raak party kinders nog steeds die pad byster." (F2 10:13-14)

"..although you have raised him well. Many times some children still stray from the path."

"Nou's dit trane betaal trane. ...Jy kan nie vir 'n kind 20 jaar grootmaak en op 15- of 16-jarige ouderdom dan word hy 'n skollie. Op 17-jarige ouderdom word hy doodgesteek of met 'n kar doodgery ...dan hoef jy mos nie eens gebore te gewees het nie, want dis 'n mislukking wat jy eintlik nou grootmaak." (F1 28:14-20)

"Now its tears to pay for tears. ...You can't raise a child for 20 years to see him turn into a gangster at 15 or 16 years of age. At the age of 17, he is stabbed to death or run over by a car ...then you should not even have been born, because you are actually raising a failure."

"Dan dink ek 'maar wat maak ons mense, ons ouers wat nie drink nie en rook nie'. ...Dit laat jou mos baie vrae (vra). Hoekom wil jou kind dan nie verder skoolgaan nie, maar daai ouers se kinders gaan dan skool?" (F3 25:6-9)

"Then I think 'but what are we people doing, we parents who do not drink or smoke'. ...It actually makes you (ask) many questions. Why doesn't your child want to continue with schooling, but those parents' children attend school?"

4.5.1.2 Sub theme 2: Factors undermining parental influence

Illustrative quotations

"...'n kind nie meer kan tug nie, is die grootste kopseer vir enige ouer in die land, want die feit bly staan dis hoekom die kinders so uitrafel." (F2 22:5-14)

"...a child can't be spanked anymore, this is the biggest headache for any parent in the country, because it is a fact that this is why the children are turning out so badly."

"...tiernerjare...kyk hier dans daar eintlik druk van sy vriende af op hom om met seker dinge te eksperimenteer, alhoewel jy hom goed opgevoed het." (F2 10:12-13)

"...teenage years...look that is when there's actually pressure from his friends to experiment with certain things, although you raised him well."

"...maar as daai skollie-element jou kind daar by die skool dreig of wat ook al, dan kry jy...nie daai kind by die skool nie...hy dros langs die pad." (F1 11:6-12)

"...but if that gangster element at school threatens your child or anything, then you won't...get that child to attend school..."

"Maar ek dink dis 'n gier wat daar van oorsee af kom, van Amerika dink ek, want daar gaan die kinders dan met 'guns' skool toe...dreig onderwysers en sulke dinge." (F6 7:14-16)

"But I think it's a craze that comes from abroad, from America I think, because then the children go to school with guns... threaten the teachers and such stuff."

"...ouers se 'wat worry jy met my kind?' En dan baklei hulle en so. Dit kom daarop neer dat alle ouers nie dieselfde waardes het of dieselfde dinge bevorder nie." (F5 27:5-7)

"...parents say "why do you worry my child?" And then they argue and so on. It comes down to it that all parents don't have the same values or promote the same things."

"Sy moenie agterbly nie, want as sy kwaad gedoen het, wat help 'n pak slae? ...om haar elke dag te slaan gaan nie werk nie. So jy moet iets anders uitwerk hoe jy vir hom gaan in sy raampie hou." (F6 18:1-12)

"...She musn't lag behind, because if she has been naughty, what good will a hiding do? ...to spank her every day isn't going to work. So you must work out something different to keep him on the straight and narrow (keep him in his frame)."

"Ek dink dit is een van die grootste redes hoekom vandag se jeug so deurmekaar is. Jy as ouer, jy het nooit tyd vir jou kind nie, jy maak nie tyd vir hom nie...Hy raak betrokke by dinge wat verkeerd is, want hy sien al Ma's en Pa's stel nie belang nie." (F2 5:1-4)

"I think that is one of the biggest reasons why today's youth are so troubled. You as parent, you never have time for your child, you don't make time for him...He gets involved with the wrong things, because he sees all the Moms and Dads are not interested."

The parents of school B mentioned a range of possible reasons, as illustrated by the selected quotations, for the undermining of their influence on their children's behaviour. It includes the following aspects: a lack of communication between parents and children; constraints on corporal punishment; negative peer pressure/influence; influence of foreign cultures; contradictory values (or a lack of support) amongst parents; lack of respect; and difficulties in discipline or rather a lack of alternatives to corporal punishment. The main concern seems to be their children's lack of education and consequently a loss of future opportunities. This seems to suggest that the parents' place high value on the influence of a good education on the future opportunities of their children. They seem to have high ideals for their children,

but are often disappointed by their children's choices. Their comments highlight a search for possible reasons, not excluding themselves, for their lack of influence.

Significantly, only the rural group of parents (School B) expressed concerns regarding a lack of parental influence. The reasons therefore seem to be internal to themselves and their community. This group of parents also appears to blame themselves, suggesting a lack of self-confidence in their parenting which ultimately influences their trust in their own ability to influence their children positively. One of the reasons may be that many of their children are adolescents. I also experienced the rural parents as very honest and open when they unrestrictedly communicated their real concerns. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the participants knew each other well or on the other hand due to the lack of opportunity that parents have to share and discuss common problems. I believe though that many of the concerns mentioned by this group can be generalised and are common to many other parents.

The above concerns alert one to possible underlying problems in parenting and discipline styles. Some of the rural parents believe that corporal punishment would solve the current disciplinary problems, while others suggest that beating would not solve it. What makes it difficult, it appears, is the lack of alternatives modelled to these parents. It seems that their own parents, apparently, did not model alternatives to them, which makes implementing alternative discipline strategies difficult. Eisenberg (1986) and others (Baumrind, 1989; Radke-Yarrow & King, 1979; Zahn-Waxler & Chapman, 1982) found that parents of altruistic, responsible children are nurturant and supportive, model altruism, highlight the effects of actions on others, use induction, establish clear expectations for mature behaviour, create opportunities for their children to manifest responsibility for others, and use an authoritative parenting style. An inductive discipline style coupled with an authoritative parenting style appears to be an effective alternative to an autocratic style that includes corporal punishment. Research (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Knafo & Schwartz, 2003) also found that the more parents discussed their values with their children, the more their adolescents' values correlated with theirs.

4.5.2 Theme 2: Negative socio-cultural factors

One parent at School A mentioned her concern over the future of her children and grandchildren from the previously designated "coloured" racial group within the

current socio-political context. It was clear from her comments that she felt very strongly about the impact of the following two factors on their future.

4.5.2.1 Sub theme 1: Racial discrimination

Illustrative quotations

“...want soos ek in die koerant en op die TV and goeters sien, staan ons bruines, of bruin kinders nie eintlik (‘n kans nie) in die land nie, dis meestal die blankes en die swart man. ...Lyk my ‘n mens moet maar na ‘n ander land toe trek...maar ek dink nie hier in die land is veel iets vir my kinders nie (S6 8:20-25 & 9:9-12)

“...because like I see in the newspaper and on TV and stuff, we brown people or children do not actually stand (a chance) in this land, it’s mostly the whites and the black man. ...Looks to me as if we need to move to another country...but I don’t think there’s much for our children in this country.”

4.5.2.2 Sub theme 2: Crime

Illustrative quotations

“...hoe kan ‘n mens kinders grootmaak met al die dinge...kinders wat elke dag wegraak en ...Doodgemaak word...want alles lyk nou donker...Ons kan nie eens ons kinders winkel toe stuur alleen nie. ...Lyk my hulle steel sommer die kind in die strate ook...” (S6 9:22 & 10:5-11)

“...how can we bring up children with all these things...children that disappear and...Get killed...because everything looks dark now...we can’t even send children to the shop. ...Seems as if they just kidnap children in the streets...”

This parent, a female mother and grandmother, highlights two specific reasons for her negativity about the future: the discrimination against her racial group under the new government, and the high incidence of crime in their area. Her attitude may also negatively impact on her children’s and grandchildren’s attitude towards their future, which may result in them feeling hopeless regarding their education and future careers. Most of the other parents though seemed to disagree with her as illustrated by the following quote *“Ons as grootmense ook (sensitief wees vir ander se gevoelens), dit is hoekom ek eintlik jammer voel dat die ouers baie negatief is oor die toekoms, want dit is eintlik ons as ouers nou wat moet die volgende generation grootmaak.” (S4 13:5-8) (We as adults must also (be sensitive to others feelings), this is why I actually feel sorry that the parents feel negative about the future, because it is actually us as parents who need to bring up the next generation),* or otherwise felt too uncomfortable or pressurised by the strong Christian focus of the group to agree. Perhaps this is also a reflection of my own discomfort as facilitator at that point, unsure of how to react to the participant’s legitimate though highly sensitive comments. I felt that within the group discussion we did not need to explore her concerns further since it was not

directly related to the research questions. My co-facilitator commented afterwards that he felt it was an area that I should have explored further.

4.5.3 Theme 3: Poverty

The above theme seems to contribute to the concerns and frustrations of the parents of School B, especially in their ability to provide a good education for their children.

Illustrative quotations

"Ons wil so baie dinge vir ons kinders doen, maar onse geld is nie daarna nie..." (F4 3:14-15)

"We want to do so many things for our children, but we don't have enough money..."

"Al het ons nog die bietjie geld, wil ons vir hulle gelerendheid gee om eendag iets te bekom in die lewe...ons wil iets beters vir ons kinders gee." (F3 10:5-8)

"Even if we still only have a little money, we want to give them education in order to achieve something in life one day...we want to give something better to our children."

"Maar ons groot probleem is geld...ons moet maar 'n bietjie hier vat en 'n bietjie daar vat." (F6 10:16 & 10:20)

"But our biggest problem is money...we have to take a little here and a little there."

The above theme seems to contribute to the parents' frustration in providing the support and education, as they would like to, for their children. Although money seems to limit their effort to support their children in improving their circumstances, their comments also illustrate their commitment to support their children with whatever means they have. The biggest gift, apparently, they can give to their children, is a good education. It makes me wonder about their hope that a good education will ensure financial freedom or success for their children, since it does not guarantee this. These parents' ultimate wish seems to be that their children will rise above their circumstances and make a success of their lives despite financial and other constraints.

4.5.4 Theme 4: Poor communication with educators

This section illustrates another parental frustration (school B) that influences the quality of the education that is provided to their children. This was mentioned by one parent of the rural group.

Illustrative quotations

"Ja, want daar's eintlik 'n groot gaping tussen die ouer nog en die onderwyser. ... want daar's nie kommunikasie tussen die ouer en onderwyser nie." (F2 12:20-23)
"Yes, because there's actually still a great gap between the parent and the teacher. ...because there's no communication between the parent and the teacher."

"Om by die skool te kom is nie eintlik 'n probleem nie. Maar ek weet nou nie of die onderwysers,... as jy nou meer vergaderings saam met hulle wil reël, of hulle altyd sal beskikbaar wees nie." (F2 12:25-26 en 13:1-3)
"To get to the school isn't actually a problem. But now I don't know if the teachers, ... if you want to arrange more meetings with them, will always be available."

This theme illustrates the parent's willingness to support and work closer with educators. The parent highlights the possibility that teachers are not willing or available to listen and spend more time with parents to bridge the current communication gap. This seems to be a concern that can only be solved through commitment from both parties. It suggests that these rural parents are experiencing the educators as unavailable or even unwilling to form closer ties with the parent community. This is unusual, since educators are expected to communicate to parents on a regular basis. The reason for this is unclear, but from my experience it appears as if some educators that teach in rural settings assume that the parents are not as interested in their children's education. This assumption may result in a drop in commitment to quality education and efforts to meet with parents. This situation may increase their inhibition to get involve and voice their opinions, consequently leaving them even more powerless. One needs though to hear both sides of the story before making any judgement on who is to blame for the lack of communication that this parent experiences.

The comment highlights some parents' dilemma, which is that they seem to know their rights to demand more teacher-parent communication, but are too humble or intimidated to approach the issue.

5. CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the main findings of the study are summarised and the significance of the parents' comments is discussed. Some speculations on the meanings of the parents' statements and views, and the possible implications of these, assuming that the analyses of the two focus group discussions are correct, are also given. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and some practical suggestions for the schools, concerned parents, and the education department.

5.2 Main findings of study

The main themes and sub-themes are repeated below in summary as a reminder for the reader.

5.2.1 Qualities or values identified by the parents

Parents' comments suggested the following themes and sub-themes termed "desirable qualities" or "values" as important in the type of person or citizen that they would like their children to become. The desirable qualities of character, identified through the data analysis, are the values parents suggest should be promoted through citizenship and moral education.

Themes identified:	Sub-themes: Desirable qualities or values identified	Highlighted by:
"Being a nice person"	Being caring & accepting	Both groups
	Being respectful & appreciative	Both groups
"Being a good person"	Distinguishing between right and wrong	Both groups
	Right values	School A
	Setting a positive example	Both groups
"Achievement"	Achieving life goals	School A
	Achieving high aspirations	School B
	Becoming self-supporting	School B
	Having a career	Both groups
	Being a leader	Both groups
"Becoming valuable citizen"		School A

“Being a nice, good person” with high values, appears to be desirable to both groups of parents. Achievement and success seem to a priority for especially the males of School B, the rural group (see chapter 4), though School A, the urban group, also indicated the wish for their children to progress on an intellectual level e.g. studying further. School A also highlighted the importance of developing decision-making skills through education. This, coupled with the theme “personal well-being”, is significant in that it was only mentioned by School A, suggesting an expectancy of a higher level of cognitive, spiritual and emotional functioning than seemingly the more concrete, basic priorities mentioned by School B. This may be linked to the difference in the level of exposure that the two groups experience within their everyday lives, as well as in educational level between the two groups. It appears as if the rural group of parents have had little exposure outside their working environment in comparison to the urban group of parents that are situated in town. One can also infer from the comments of the rural group that they did not achieve academically as they would have hoped to as the next quotation illustrates “...because we didn’t complete school, we always want our children to finish at a higher level and they must at least attain something in life that we couldn’t.”

5.2.2 Aspects of parental responsibility

Parents’ comments suggested the following themes and sub-themes concerning their responsibility in the citizenship and moral education of their children. Their comments highlighted aspects of their responsibility as well as ways in which they can promote moral development.

Themes identified:	Sub-themes identified: ways in which parents can promote moral development	Highlighted by:
“Building on a positive relationship”	Open, effective communication	Both groups
	Mutual respect	Both groups
	Positive feedback	Both groups
	Showing interest & love	Both groups
	Friendship	School B
“Model desired behaviour”	Be a positive role model	Both groups
	Identify positive role models	School B
“Parental guidance”	Christian instruction	School A
	Guidance in making correct choices	School A
	Support independent decision-making skills	Both groups
“Responsibility”	Responsibility starts at home	School B
	Discipline starts at home	School A
“Establish support network”		Both groups

From the comments of the parents, one can see that School A’s parents are more likely to use Christian principles to guide and instruct their children. School B’s parents on the other hand identified the importance of being a role model and identifying good role models for their children. Both groups appear to support the establishment of positive relationships with their children based on good communication. Both groups also indicated the importance of parents working closely with educators and other parents in all areas of their children’s education to enhance mutual support and success in instilling desired values.

5.2.3 Aspects of schools’ responsibility

Parents’ comments suggested the following themes and sub-themes concerning the responsibility of the school in the citizenship and moral education of children. Suggestions are also made by the parents on how to promote moral development at schools.

Themes identified:	Sub-themes identified: ways in which schools can promote moral development	Highlighted by:
“Establishment of positive relationships with students”	Open, effective communication	Both groups
	Showing interest & concern	School A
	Friendship	School A
“Holistic development of child”	Social, emotional and physical development	School A
	Spiritual development	School A
	Practical skills development	School A

It appears as if School A’s urban group has higher expectations of the school than School B. The urban parents appear to be more involved in the organisation of the school and therefore enjoy the respect of the educators, while the rural parents seem to experience a sense of exclusion from their children’s education (see “concerns”). Both groups expect of the educators to establish positive relationships with their children based on trust and communication, since this seems to enhance the positive influence they may have on their children. School A’s parents seem more aware, perhaps due to more opportunities created by the school, of the impact and importance of the holistic development of their children. The parents do not seem to be clear about their expectations of the school or the role that the school should play in the moral education of their children. Although they mention that it should be a dual responsibility, they do not mention how specifically.

5.2.4 Concerns

The following concerns, divided into themes and sub-themes, were mentioned by the parents although they did not directly form part of the research questions. The many concerns expressed highlight the struggles and frustrations that parents experience and suggest a need for parents to voice and share their concerns regarding the moral development of their children with other parents and educators.

Themes identified	Sub-themes identified: reasons for concerns	Highlighted by:
“Poor parental influence”	Lack of influence	School B
	Factors undermining parental influence	School B
“Negative socio-cultural factors ”	Racial discrimination	School A
	Crime	School A
“Poverty”		School B
“Poor communication with educators”		School B

The sense of despondency that the rural parents’ experience, due to their lack of influence, was clearly the main underlying feeling expressed (School B). The intensity of their despondency was deepened by the variety of factors that contribute to the undermining of parents’ authority. Their concerns were further increased by poverty, their exclusion from classroom practices, and the high drop-out rate from school amongst their children. This must be viewed in light of the fact that School B’s parents have experience with adolescent children. School A did not mention many concerns, perhaps due to the religious focus of the group that may have inhibited any negativity, as well as some parents’ involvement as librarians at the school. One parent (and grandparent) voiced her concerns regarding unfair discrimination against her racial group and the high crime rate on the future of her grandchildren. Other parents in the group may have felt the same, but perhaps chose to conceal their agreement within the religious atmosphere in fear of sounding negative or as if their trust in God was failing.

5.3 Discussion

The study made me aware of my own assumptions, with previous experience as an educator, of parents in poorer communities. I was encouraged especially by the rural parents’ commitment to quality education and their eagerness to participate in their children’s education. The rural parents’ many concerns, especially regarding the completion of their children’s schooling, challenged my assumption that in communities with a high drop-out rate, parents’ lack of interest increases the occurrence. Their discussions also highlighted the important role that educators can play in either enhancing parents’ involvement or inhibiting them from voicing their

opinions and views. It became clear that parents have a need to be acknowledged, not only as knowledgeable parents, but also as people with a say in their children's education. It appears as if a forum for conversation is lacking between educators and parents in this rural setting. Perhaps one of the reasons behind their lack of involvement is that other educators, like me, assume that these parents are less interested in getting involved in their children's education. Another possible reason may be that educators tend to exclude illiterate parents from the school's management and decision-making processes. Although school governing bodies are established to represent parents' views, many already disempowered (often illiterate) parents are not included in these. It appears that the rural parents' sense of inferiority further contributes to their inhibition to voice their opinions to so-called educated teachers; consequently they do not question what the educators do or add to the learning process. On the other hand, the more literate urban parents seemed to enjoy a higher status at their children's school and as a result contribute to the learning process and expect more from the school. Both groups though expressed a need for more opportunities to communicate openly about common issues and problems with educators to enhance closer ties and partnerships. A concern from both groups, especially the rural group, was the educators' availability and willingness to do so. It seems as if formal intervention e.g. a facilitator, is sometimes needed to ensure better communication between parents and educators and to eventually establish closer partnerships and increase value-congruence. The implication of this may be that their children experience their parents' lack of involvement as a lack of interest in their life and education. Perhaps this eventually leaves them unmotivated, concluding that success or school completion is not that important to their parents. Both groups of parents though indicated the importance of communicating their expectations of their children to them, and School B's parents stressed being and identifying positive role models. These appear to be important underlying aspects to building positive self-concepts and self-motivation in their children. Perhaps parenting and communication styles can explain children's level of motivation and the values they adhere to.

The many concerns that especially School B's parents expressed spontaneously, which were much broader than anticipated by the research questions, raised many questions regarding effective parenting. Both sets of parents were willing to reflect upon their own parenting styles, but I was especially surprised by School B parents' honesty and openness to discuss personal issues and perceived failures in their parenting. This was

very insightful and highlighted the need for parents to voice their struggles in search of possible alternatives to their current parenting approaches. I wondered where their expectations of and approach to parenthood came from. One possible explanation came from some of School B parents' comments on the chain effect of intergenerational parenting styles "...I mean for some of us it is a bit difficult to show love to your child...our parents did not give those things to us, now this generation, also falls just in there, because you can...not share" (F1 5:11-26) "Yes, it is nearly something like a chain reaction. A person should try and prevent this, those chains..." (F3 5:18-19). Although they seemingly realise the importance of establishing a positive, loving relationship with their children, some parents find it hard to show their love and affection to their children since their own parents did not model this kind of behaviour or relationship. Some parents' comments also seem to suggest that the impact of negative peer influence on their adolescents' behaviour increase with a loss of positive or warm parent-child relationship. An important element to the prevention of negative influences appears then to lie in the quality of relationship that they establish with their children from a young age. The implication of distant relationships appears to be that adolescents seek acceptance and advice from others rather than their parents. Some of the research reviewed confirms that democratic family processes that include parental discussion, an inductive disciplinary style, and an authoritative parenting style with its focus on open supportive communication (Berkowitz, 1998b), are conducive to positive relationships with children and enhances moral reasoning ability (Boyes & Allen, 1993; Walker, 1999). The interesting aspect about the parents' comments, is that although they seem to know what aspects are necessary to shape positive relationships with their children, some parents still hold on to corporal punishment as a possible solution to their problems. This suggests a more autocratic parenting style, which inhibits open communication between parents and children. Others again expressed despondency due to the fact that although, according to them, they have created positive conditions, this has not guaranteed positive outcomes.

The influence of peers may explain some of the parents' despondency. As Piaget (1932) argued, peers or equals are viewed as the primary facilitators of the child's moral development, since it is without the influence of authority relationships which exist between children and parents (Berk, 2003). Peers' influences become more influential than parental modelling during especially the adolescent period. The rural

parents raised their concern over the kind of peer influence and the eventual impact of this on their children's moral development and education. In their community where there is a high drop-out rate and many people unemployed, it seems to be a valid concern. The influence on their children is further strengthened by the type of adult role-models they observe on a daily basis. One assumes that within this community children observe a sense of despondency and lack of motivation driven by high rates of unemployment and financial strain.

Corporal punishment which controls behaviour through fear, therefore an external locus of control, is also in contrast with a Kohlbergian approach that seems to support an internal locus of control through the development of good reasoning ability and judgment. Parents appear to resort to external punishment due to a lack of alternative methods of positively influencing their children. Therefore empowering parents with alternatives seem necessary to ensure a shift in thinking about discipline and parenting. It also seems likely that South Africa's history which reinforced secretiveness and inhibition, as well as limited modelling of open communication and opportunities to develop positive relationships, may have influenced these parents style of communication. Poor communication also appears to be a problem worldwide. Research suggests that the parental stage of moral reasoning and explanation (Berkowitz, 1998b; Smetana, 1999) also influence their parenting style. Perhaps the parents' stage of moral reasoning is limiting a more Kohlbergian approach to moral development, consequently inhibiting open discussion of moral dilemmas and issues between parents and children.

The parents, especially from School A, also indicated a need for more opportunities for parents to voice and discuss shared concerns with other parents. It suggests that the focus group discussions were experienced as supportive and informative, perhaps due to them hearing other parents' experiences of similar frustrations and concerns. I found though that both groups of parents seemed to find it difficult to express clearly what they expect of their children and what specific values they considered as important. This may be due to the limited opportunity that parents get to express their views and feelings or perhaps they have not taken time to reflect on what values are important to them and the kind of person they would like their children to become. During the discussions it at times felt as if the parents either got side-tracked by their overwhelming need to talk about their frustrations and concerns regarding parenting, or became too solution-focused. Perhaps the questioning was too abstract, considering

that these parents may have limited exposure of expressing their own opinions. The Vygotskian approach highlights the importance of cognitive development through interaction and communication with competent others. Therefore cooperative dialogues between people that stimulates reflection, is important to enhance higher thinking processes about the subject.

School A (urban parents) highlighted the importance of the role of Christianity in the upbringing of their children. Religion was not mentioned by the rural group, although I cannot assume that it is not part of their lives. This may have inhibited some of the parents of School A from voicing their concerns and struggles more openly due to group pressure to show trust and faith in God to solve their problems. One of the parents (a grandparent), voiced her concerns about the future of her grandchildren within South Africa due to discrimination against her racial group and the high incidence of crime. Her comments were quickly silenced by the staunch Christians in the group, whom implied that her faith in God is weak and that she should not be so negative. This made me wonder about the effect of faith on parents' ability to listen to and discuss issues with their children. Perhaps children are also not allowed to be negative or question life, since this may be interpreted as losing faith in God's control. This suggests that Christian families often do not promote open discussions about religious or moral issues out of fear of questioning their faith. This is also in contrast with a Kohlbergian approach to moral development.

Both groups of parents spoke positively about the two schools and the role the educators are playing in the moral education of their children. It may be that they are truly happy with the current situation, but perhaps the fact that three of the participating parents of School A worked for the school either as reading support volunteers or as librarians, may have influenced this group's spontaneity regarding their feelings about the school's responsibility. School B's parents, on the other hand, appeared less informed and less likely to question the way the school is managed. This is perhaps due to their sense of inferiority, as if they cannot question educated people. The parents of School A involved at the school, were very sympathetic towards the educators and made it clear that parents' should take their responsibility more seriously and not rely on the educators to fulfil this role. Both groups appeared to view their own responsibility to morally educate their children as greater than that of the school.

Interestingly, it appears as if the parents, both males and females, had similar expectations of their daughters and sons regarding male and female roles. No-one seemed to expect the traditional housewife role of their daughters. It rather appeared as if they wanted both males and females to succeed equally on an educational and financial level. Perhaps their own financial struggles have contributed to their openness in this area. This seems positive in light of empowering females to fulfil their potential and take up their rightful place in the workplace and society.

Desirable values are not limited to the values identified by the task group (2001) appointed by the former Minister of Education, Kadar Asmal, described as "desirable qualities of character such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, diligence, responsibility, compassion, altruism, and respect," (Raidt, 2001, p12). The parents suggested the following values as desirable: being sensitive, appreciative, caring, respectful, and accepting. Nelson Mandela was identified as an ideal person by one of the parents, suggesting that being an altruistic person is desired. In contrast, some parents highlighted competitiveness and being goal-orientated as important qualities. The importance of being altruistic and caring seem to have been influenced by the parents own oppressive past, while competitive values are needed to succeed in a more money dominated, free market economy. Significantly, more men were involved in the rural group (school B) discussion, which may explain the high value this group placed on competitiveness and achievement. Scholz's study (1967) also found that fathers of lower social status placed higher value on economic values. It appears as if the parent's financial status, social position, and the way their parents parented them, are decisive factors in determining desirable values in their own children.

The use of the terms "values" and "virtues" in the study was at times problematic. The *Collins Gem English* dictionary and most literature, suggest that values are desirable qualities of character or moral principles, while virtues mean moral goodness or positive moral qualities, which can be seen in the actions of people. It was as if the terms were not clear enough for the parents to identify specific values or virtues. It made me wonder whether the use of these terms as part of educational language is wise, since the expectation that educators should promote "desirable values" or "universal values" is vague and confusing. Parents' comments suggest two types of values: shared or common values (which one shares with the majority of people such as truth and tolerance) and individual values (which are unique to the individual or qualities that are uniquely important and useful to the individual), suggesting that at

least shared values can be promoted at school and at home. This might be too much to ask in a school climate where both rights and respect are paramount. My efforts to try and decide what each of these categories should entail, has led me to believe that there are no specific answers and that it is more complicated than I thought initially. Specific values and their associated virtues appear to be defined as desirable within a specific culture and community, and may therefore differ from culture to culture.

I am also questioning whether my main theoretical framework (Kohlberg's theory of moral development) has been as helpful in understanding parents' views and perspectives as I thought it would be initially. I am questioning its usefulness due to its strong focus on the relationship between cognitive development and moral development. Most of the parents' comments and views were around aspects of moral goodness (virtues) on a concrete level, without making a direct link to the necessity of cognitive development to enhance moral goodness or judgement. I sensed that most parents felt that one does not need to be "clever" to be "good", and that the reinforcement of "goodness" seemed to be based on behavioural techniques rather than the development of moral reasoning ability which relates to a cognitive element. Although School B's group of parents felt strongly about the importance of education in the development of desirable citizens, they seemed to hope that this would improve their financial status rather than increase their moral reasoning ability. School A's group of parents suggested that education does not necessarily result in desirable adults, but rather that positive values be instilled by the family and the consistent reinforcement of these values by parents, schools and religious institutions such as the church. This focus implies a more behavioural approach to ensure moral citizens. Perhaps a "theory of practice" would have been better to understand and analyse the parents' views.

If Kohlberg's theory is true though, it suggests that parents should expect a lot less from their younger children regarding moral reasoning ability since their ability to reason is at a lower intellectual level than those of older children. The implication of this is that the discussion of moral dilemmas and open family communication about moral issues may only be introduced at a much later stage when children have reached for example the conventional level. This aspect of Kohlberg's theory seems to have been implied by some of the parents' comments that suggested the use of more behavioural techniques when disciplining their younger children, while adapting their discipline approach to include more open communication and discussion with their

adolescents. A correlation therefore was suggested between age and reasoning ability by some parents. It is, however, in contrast to what some research and other parents' comments highlighted, namely democratic family discussions and decision-making that include an inductive style of discipline from a young age. This suggests a more Vygotskian approach to child rearing, which suggests mediation with more expert others in a setting of tolerance and understanding (Russell, 2002) to improve moral sense and moral conscience.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The method of selecting the participants through purposive and convenience sampling, not randomly, as well as the size of the sample, fourteen people participating in two focus groups, limit the transferability or generalisation of the findings and the diversity of the groups. The researcher does not claim external validity, though reasoning by analogy could support the use of the results to stimulate discussions in similar contexts or school communities. Diversity was also achieved through a combination of older and younger participants, both female and male participants, and the fact that the two groups were from differing socio-economic backgrounds, one rurally based and the other urban.

The time factor, collecting the data within a specific time-frame in the first year of the M.Psych degree, also limited the scope of the research and the size of the sample of parents involved. The availability and accessibility of parents were strong considerations, which inevitably complicated the logistics of the research. Other limitations include the fact that the researcher worked in the area and was known by some of the participants, which may have resulted in some bias. The fact that the researcher was a white female from a different cultural group as the participating groups of parents, may have had a limiting effect on the type of responses the parents were willing to share and communicate. I acknowledge that the process was not perfect and that I realise that as a white, female facilitator, the participants may have felt pressure to say the right thing in front of me. I also realise in hindsight that the one participant's derogatory language regarding the current government and other racial groups unsettled me, and I was not sure of how to handle the situation.

I felt that some of my questioning was too unclear without enough structure during the first focus group. It created, though, some space in which the participants could freely explore their own opinions and feelings, but it did at times side-track their

conversations. My co-facilitator confirmed that there was no clear shift or boundary from the one "theme" or line of questioning to the other. In retrospect I feel that informing the parents of the research questions beforehand so that they could reflect on the issues might have enhanced their ability to express their views more clearly.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Research-related recommendations

- Exploring factors that inhibit closer parent-teacher partnerships and ways in which they can be overcome.
- Exploring ways to create a platform where parents can voice their views and perspectives on moral education.
- Investigating successful ways to support parents in effective discipline strategies or alternatives to corporal punishment.

5.5.2 Practical actions in the context of the study

- Putting together a simple booklet containing effective guidelines for dealing with adolescents and creating a positive relationship between parent and child.
- Provide a list of practical alternatives to corporal punishment such as “time out”, withdrawal of privileges, showing disapproval or disappointment coupled with consistency, a warm parent-child relationship, and explanations, and so on.
- Run parent workshops to demonstrate “open communication”, and discussion of moral dilemmas and issues with children from a young age.
- Provide practical guidelines on building closer teacher-parent relationships and partnerships.
- Training in communication and facilitation skills for the schools’ management.
- Informing the Education Department of parents’ views and the importance of including parents in the discussion of citizenship and moral education to ensure an inclusive perspective.

5.6 Some conclusions

The data suggest that, at least in this context:

- Parents feel that being a nice, good person is the most desired quality for their children to develop.
- Parents feel that moral education and discipline should start at home, although the instilling of desired values is a dual responsibility including both parents and schools.
- Parents believe that having a positive relationship with their children encourages positive behaviour, although it does not guarantee it.
- Parents often resort to corporal punishment when they do not have alternative strategies, or due to a lack of modelling from their own parents in how to create positive relationships.
- Parents want teachers and schools to be involved in the citizenship and moral education of their children.
- Parents need more regular meetings with teachers to discuss citizenship and moral education to increase value congruence between them, and to enhance open discussions on issues such as discipline.
- Parents need more opportunities to share and explore similar concerns and parenting ideas with other parents.

The literature suggests that:

- An authoritative parenting style is the most conducive to the development of moral reasoning due to its focus on open supportive communication.
- An inductive disciplinary style is important in promoting the stage of moral judgement in children.
- The quality of parent-child interactions influences the transmission of values between parents and children.

- Educators should be adult models of good character and discuss moral issues in a critical and reflective manner that encourages reasoning.
- Parent-teacher communication and partnership increase value congruence.
- The moral development pattern of children is affected by social, cultural, historical and institutional forces.

5.7 Where I am at now

I am at the point of becoming a parent myself. This fact has made the comments of the parents, and especially their concerns, very interesting for me. My views on parenthood and my responsibility to educate my children have been challenged and enriched by the study. Although I am not from the same community as the parents interviewed, I can relate to their dreams for their children and expressed concerns. It has stimulated many questions about my own expectations of my children, and my future parenting and disciplining approach.

I am also on the verge of registering as an Educational Psychologist, which makes the context of the study relevant to my future career. Having an understanding of parents' and educators' concerns, as well as being able to advise them on effective approaches to moral development and education, will be important. I do not think I have specific answers after this study, since I realise that the field of moral education is more complex than I initially thought, but it has stimulated ideas and an interest in exploring the field further to find approaches that can make a difference.

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