



Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is the researcher's own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for a degree.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Signature

Date

27/11/2024

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SUMMARY

South African society and schools have been at the crossroads for a long time, facing the turmoil of moral degeneration. There is an urgent need to find and effect solutions to redress the moral crisis. The depravity of values and destructive behaviour have reached a level where the entire teaching profession is under threat of collapse and intervention is required. The origins of the Moral Regeneration Movement was initiated in June 1997 by the late State President, Nelson Mandela, and aimed to address the degeneration of South Africa into a 'moral slum'. Moral regeneration would confront crime, women and child abuse, domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, drug trafficking, and corruption through a principled commitment to a Code of Conduct (Richardson, 2003:5-7). Moral apathy left a vacuum where none of the objectives were addressed, leading to a tacit acceptance of unacceptably high levels of moral degeneration.

An inclination for the regeneration of this vision of Nelson Mandela provided the impetus for this study, which explored teachers' lived experiences of moral de/regeneration of secondary school learners, gaining insights on how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. A qualitative research approach situated in an interpretive phenomenological paradigm was adopted. The sites selected for the study were ten schools within five education districts of the Gauteng province, South Africa. The methodology comprised the purposeful sampling of teachers within these schools along with semi-structured interviews to generate data; thematic data analysis was employed. Methods of ensuring trustworthiness, as well as the necessary detail to ethical considerations, were emphasised. Implementation was made of the normative paradigm of interpretivism to generate new knowledge by through the lived experiences of secondary school teachers. Exploration of teachers' experiences lead to the findings where four broad themes emerged of moral degeneration in secondary schools. Themes centred on these aspects: teachers' views on morals and moral degeneration; challenges in facilitating a value-based education; evolving discourses on morality; and strategies for moral regeneration. Discoveries in theme four were incorporated into the strategy development for the moral regeneration of secondary schools in South Africa.

The conceptual and theoretical framework revealed the importance of positioning the conceptual model in a value landscape, and played a significant role in the development of a value-based education framework. Considering the complexity and interrelation of concepts, the purpose of moral mechanisms, principles of human morality and moral character traits, moral foundations theory and reasoning, the pillar approach and moral reasoning, moral prototypes and the model for moral motives were considered for the seven strategies developed. Each of the seven strategies contributed towards the development of a value-based education framework.

There is much literature about the moral complexities within the education system and how moral deterioration is mainly responsible for the regression of learners' behaviour. Most research studies have focused on the problem, and how unruly, disrespectful and disobedient behaviour negatively affects the teaching and learning environments in school contexts. A dearth of strategies exists in the intervention and provision of moral education. Exploring teachers' experiences appear to have been overlooked in research on moral degeneration and the establishment of frameworks for moral development.

The strategies developed in this study for the moral regeneration of secondary schools in South Africa is a contribution to the body of knowledge, aiming to promote moral regeneration of secondary school learners in South Africa. These seven strategies individually and collectively address moral degeneration, and aim to promote moral regeneration through the intentional implementation of each strategy. Each strategy has its own specific rationale for implementation, its roleplayers, its methods of implementation, and its desired outcomes. These strategies contribute to a value-based education framework where important aspects are addressed, allowing the assimilation of core values to become embedded within the education system (at school and community level). The strategies create opportunities for training and involvement by important role players, allowing individuals to learn from one another and to engage in the fostering of moral turnaround. This study not only addresses the moral crisis within our education system, but provides a value-based education framework where the seven strategies developed aim to contribute to learners' and teachers' long-term ethical reasoning, their moral judgement and social interaction, and to the inculcation of positive attitudes.

Nelson Mandela's intention for initiating the Moral Regeneration Movement could possibly be partially achieved by implementing these strategies developed for a value-based education model in South African secondary schools.

Key words: degeneration; experiences; morals; regeneration; strategies; value-based

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South African schools are experiencing a current scenario of degenerative values and morals and teachers find it almost impossible to cope with the complex issues of absent fathers, substance abuse amongst learners, physical, sexual, and emotional offences, poverty, crime, gangsterism, unemployment, neglect, learning disabilities, mental illness, juvenile delinquency, homelessness, and self-destructive behaviour (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:1). There is an urgent need for schools to play their role as sites for effective teaching and learning, providing valuable education, eradicating the current alarming rates of anti-social behaviour displayed by learners within the school systems (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:1). There is the general view that guiding and nurturing children's value systems remain the responsibility of families (Botha & Meyer, 2019; Kamau & Davies, 2018; Salami & Okeke, 2018). Amoateng and Heaton (2007) state that families and value systems in South Africa are compromised due to social and economic complexities. Statistics South Africa (2013) revealed that up to 40% of homes in South Africa are headed by women and an estimated nine million children in South Africa are growing up without the involvement of fathers (Statistics South Africa, 2015). According to Botha and Meyer (2019:56), the presence of both parents is considered to be the most important vehicle in the transfer of moral values. The Department of Social Development (2013) highlights the destruction of family values through social and political degeneration and further indicates the dilemma of a vulnerable school system due to compromised family values causing delinquent behaviour amongst learners.

Taking note of the above it appears that both society and family are failing to nurture and direct the youth. This raises the question of how the crisis of moral degeneration can be addressed. Turnbull (2002) highlights that education has the greatest leverage to teach young people the value of becoming morally conscious citizens through a system that promotes social and moral regeneration. It is of importance to assist teachers with the challenges they face and to develop meaningful strategies to impact the moral decision-making of secondary school learners. The value of moral regeneration aims at positively influencing the mindset of learners, thereby creating a school climate which not only promotes the achievement of educational goals, but which also builds a healthy, morally strengthened generation. As Palmer (1999:1) posits, education is transformed through the transformation of individuals and their values.

1.2 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

According to Trafford and Leshem (2008) concepts are clarified as a means for the researcher to gain insight into a phenomenon being investigated. Kumar (2014) views a concept as an image that creates a personalized depiction of a phenomenon based on subjective notions. Botma *et al.* (2010) describe a concept as a theoretical outlook on a phenomenon. In order to conceptualise and contextualise this study, the following relevant concepts are briefly clarified:

1.2.1 Strategies

The Oxford Dictionary (2004:898) defines a strategy as a “plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim”. A strategy therefore intends to achieve a long-term purpose. A strategy involves a process of planning and putting a plan into operation (Oxford Dictionary, 2004:898). Taking cognisance of the above, a strategy clearly identifies what needs to be done to achieve certain objectives. According to Denscombe (2010) a strategy is an active approach with the aim of achieving a specific goal.

In terms of social research, a strategy requires an overview of the whole study as a basis for approaching the research. Hereafter a carefully designed plan of action is considered for the aim of a successful research design. The strategy also looks at a defined goal which can be achieved and clearly recognised in the research questions being investigated (Denscombe, 2010). In the context of this study, strategies entail the research process of gaining valuable information from the lived experiences of secondary school teachers on the phenomenon of moral degeneration, thus aiming at putting a plan together for developing strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

1.2.2 Morals

Chowdhury (2016:1) posits that “[m]orals refer to human behaviour where morality is the practical activity...” In a broad sense morality can be regarded as principles which are linked to a particular philosophy, religion, or culture with inherent standards of conduct (Stanford University, 2002). Tangney *et al.* (2007:345) define a moral life as a “weighted sum of countless individual, morally relevant behaviours enacted day in and day out”. Meier (1999) is of the opinion that morality is more about the redistribution of values. Mucciaroni (2011) explains that morality is not only about what is right and wrong, but rather concerns values that are non-negotiable and rooted in moral principles. Morality involves endorsing values that are not negotiable to compromise (Mooney, 1999:675). Morality should speak to every issue that causes harm to humanity and should always

compete for what is viewed as real, true and/or good (Hunter, 2016). Engeli *et al.* (2012:24) propose that all matters of moral policy involve judgements about what is right and wrong.

In the context of this study, I view morals as human behaviour, a code of conduct viewed as right or wrong, good or bad, of people living together within society; whilst morality portrays the values of a group of people within a specific context and time as morals may change over time.

1.2.3 Moral de/regeneration

The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (DoE, 2001:53) cautions that:

[u]nless we nurture a value system in our schools that is workable, owned by everyone, and in line with the principles not only of the Bill of Rights but of all the curriculum and school governance policy and legislation, we run the dangerous risk of turning our classrooms into the battleground between an anarchic freedom that masquerades as 'human rights' and an authoritarian backlash that masquerades as moral regeneration.

Ladzani (2014:15) views moral regeneration:

[as] the revival of moral values that have decayed. [That] is a process of bringing back all acceptable traditional and cultural behaviour patterns and laws followed when one was growing up. In other words, moral regeneration is the promotion of good conduct and the encouragement of the youth to keep away from social ills and lead a life that is guided by moral values.

In contrast moral degeneration is evident of a moral collapse, negatively affecting the school environment where teachers are facing the risk of being unable to foster a sound value system, impacting the conduct and behaviour of learners.

Louw (2009:ii) submits that moral degeneration:

[is] a universal phenomenon which negatively affects many societies, also the South African society. The South African society, with specific reference to family life and school life is experiencing a serious moral breakdown. The media is constantly reporting this breakdown, which is evident in social ills such as a general lack of discipline and self discipline, violence, poverty, unemployment, a high crime rate, promiscuity, school vandalism, and corruption.

According to Veugelers (2010:650) moral values:

[r]efer to values that express ideas about the good life. Moral values are quite abstract but become meaningful in concrete practices and narratives. Stressing the same abstract moral value can still result in different concrete interpretations of the value and in distinct practices. Moral values should therefore be studied in their context.

Therefore, moral regeneration can be understood as the opposite of moral degeneration which in essence has to do with the moral crisis caused by incidences of murder, robbery, violence, abuse, rape, fraud, and drug trafficking (South Africa, 2000). Other manifestations of moral degeneration as highlighted by De Klerk-Luttig and Van der Walt (2008:114) include “[l]earner and educator misconduct, the increase of self-centredness, rising levels of ethical illiteracy and violence”. According to Lu (2002:15) there are various objectives for moral regeneration which include “deterrence of future wrongdoing, moral education of society, rehabilitation of offenders, restoration of victims, transformation of moral norms, and reconciliation with the past”.

In the context of this study moral regeneration can therefore be regarded as the restoration of morals and the establishment of shared values. Moral regeneration should be regarded as an attempt to cultivate a proactive way of addressing a moral crisis (South Africa, 2000). I will elaborate on moral regeneration in Chapter Two, Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks.

1.2.4 Secondary school

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996) defines a school as “a public school or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R to grade 12.” According to Burton (2008a:1) schools are viewed as establishments that aim at developing and strengthening “(p)ositive citizens with pro-social attitudes and as [places] where [learners] are prepared for the role they are to play in society at large”. Burton (2008b:1) views schools as places where learners gain a knowledge base whilst growing in the necessary skills for community assimilation.

To narrow down this research and place it in context, ‘school’ in this study refers to secondary public schools in South Africa specifically. According to the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996), a secondary school is an institution which educates Grade 8 to 12 learners, possibly between the ages of 13 to 18 and which is divided into: Senior Phase (Grades 7-9); and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grades 10-12). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996) refers to a public school as a public institution that is state-owned and subsidised by the government, accommodating learners of diverse needs, ensuring the fulfilment of human rights, and denying no individual the right to learn.

1.2.5 Learners

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996) describes learners as “receivers of education” and as people “obliged to receive education”. Learners are projected as beneficiaries or “receivers” of an educational environment rather than the “makers” of the environment (South Africa, 1996). Soudien (2019:154) asserts the need for parents to ensure that education remains a priority as learners are regarded as minors. This includes learner development such as the development of interpersonal skills, discovering their strengths and weaknesses, and maturing academically, emotionally, and behaviourally (Wilson, 2004:293). In the context of this study a learner is viewed as a person possibly ranging between the ages of 13-18 years and who is enrolled in Grades 8-12 in a public secondary school.

1.3 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Lapsley (2006) highlights the challenge of moral degeneration in every sphere of life in South Africa and its impact on the behaviour of every individual. Meth (2017:402-405) highlights that the massive entry of people from rural to urban areas worsened moral rectitude, creating enormous slums which are characterised by economic deprivation, unemployment, and underemployment, resulting in catchments for drug traffickers, robbers, vehicle hijackers and other criminal enterprises. These ‘moral slums’ can be described within the social disorganisation theory where there is a complete breakdown of the neighbourhood, the family, the schools and employment opportunities affecting society at large (Siegel, 2011:463). Masombuka (2013:1) asserts that the increase of aberrant behaviour in the socio-educational landscape has to be averted, and for moral conduct and ethical choices to be woven into the education system as it impacts the value systems of young people on many levels.

Caldeira (2000:79) highlights that poverty-stricken squatter settlements are experiencing a serious degeneration of values which directly impacts the moral fibre in every sphere of life and inhabitants are seeking solutions through the socio-political system. Major residential areas in big cities are also experiencing the intrusion of degeneration, limited employment opportunities, increased poverty, social instability, rising crime, breakdown of families and a general decline in value systems leading to moral decadence and juvenile delinquency (Meth, 2017).

Turning to educational and school contexts, Mkhathshwa, a former deputy minister of Education, stated in the Sowetan Live (2021) that the aim of the Department of Education was to establish proactive measures to ensure that South Africa does not degenerate “into a moral slum”. Nieuwenhuis (2007) maintains that a healthy school climate can only be fostered if a sound value system is deeply embedded in learners’ social and academic lives. According to Burton

(2008a:25-27), only 58.1% of teachers at secondary schools feel generally positive about the teaching environment. Bakioglu and Geyin (2009:1) contend that the healthy ethos of a school is of paramount importance to support the academic development of each learner whilst creating a safe environment. Bakioglu and Geyin (2009:1) posit the importance of secondary schools cultivating a learning environment that is free of all forms of antisocial behaviour (violence, assault, drugs, crime, bullying, victimisation, theft, disorder, brawling, robbery, the bearing of weapons and sexual deviancy. Harecker (2012) paints a bleak picture for the teaching profession and specifically the role of teachers as being 'in loco parentis' for learners in healthy school environments. This advocates for the school community to become the model that one seeks in terms of moral regeneration (Veugelers, 2013). Bakioglu and Geyin (2009) argue for the urgency of moral regeneration as the teaching environment is currently facing a moral crisis.

Lee *et al.* (2012) postulate that learners are also confronted by family and peer influence in the abuse of various substances which remains the major cause for destructive behaviour and violent crimes in the home and at school (Dube *et al.*, 2013). A study conducted by the Medical Research Council highlights that nearly half of all child homicides were due to substance abuse in the home (Matthews *et al.*, 2012:1). Apart from children being exposed to destructive behaviours that accompany substance abuse, they also face issues such as economic stress, low levels of parental education, mental pathology, and social isolation, lack of support, stress, and parental unemployment (Porter & Gavin, 2010:99). Parents who abuse substances often vent their frustrations for their abuse, poverty, and unemployment onto their children, causing children to live in fear and anxiety (Netshiombo, 2001). Nielsen (2012) further states that deep-rooted anger and unforgiveness towards absent or abusive parents are often leading factors in rebellious behaviour and delinquency. Adolescents constantly challenge established rules and attempt to transgress socio-educational boundaries in the search of their identity (Smith & Tatalovich, 2003:58). The current breakdown of values in society and family structures has resulted in a transgression of the moral codes of conduct and the norms of behaviour to the extent of causing the school environment to directly oppose the values of 'Ubuntu' as teachers complain about undisciplined, disrespectful, and disobedient learners daily (Abosi & Kandjii-Murangi, 2004; Bottery, 1990).

Learners are often raised in fatherless homes or homes where fathers are emotionally absent in terms of investing in their children's lives (Botha & Meyer, 2019:57-58). Richter *et al.* (2010) look at the moral consciousness of the fatherless home and the need for value-based affirmation where the adolescent struggles with low self-worth, loneliness, depression, anger, rejection, and alienation. Meintjies and Hall (2013) reveal that 64% of children in South Africa live in an extended family environment and only 33% in nuclear families. According to Richter *et al.* (2012) South

Africa has the highest rate of absent fathers (father-absenteeism) in the world. Several studies confirm that broken homes significantly impact the socio-educational development of children and adolescents, negatively impacting their cognitive functionality, emotional stability, and social development (Change, 2015; Chauke & Khunou, 2014; Gray & Anderson, 2016; Mncanca *et al.*, 2016; Vuza, 2017). Research conducted by Allen and Daly, (2007) reveal that fathers have the potential to influence the progression a child makes from infant to learner and their ability to achieve success in adulthood. Another reality as indicated by Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011:209), are the many parents who claim they are not neglecting their moral responsibility but that they are feeling helpless in inculcating values in their adolescent children who have become undisciplined and rebellious. Social disorganisation, the reality of 'moral slums' and the breakdown of the family as described by Siegel (2011:463) makes it clear that the school has a greater responsibility for the upliftment of morality through the regeneration of values.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Smit and Liebenberg (2003) state that South African secondary school teachers need to overcome moral degeneration malaise by instilling values that will create safe schools and societies, promoting unity as a nation, and aiming at the moral development of learners who take pride in their responsibility as citizens. Rens *et al.* (2005) caution that in order to enhance morally mature learners, teachers should work together for the provisioning of moral educational programmes. According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2003), the South African society and schools face a challenge of moral and social emergency and emphasises the urgent need to find solutions to the crisis in South African society in which schools form an integral part. Ferreira and Schulze (2014:1) suggest that it is evident that there is a moral dilemma in schools and that learners lack positive moral guidance from teachers.

Donald *et al.* (2007) points to compromised values and concurrent destructive lifestyles that have reached a level where the lives of teachers are endangered and where the entire teaching profession is under threat of collapse. Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011:208) reported that valuable teaching time is lost on teachers having to discipline children who lack social and moral responsibility, who display unruly, disrespectful, and disobedient behaviour in the classroom. Liang (2007) indicate sexual, emotional, and physical abuse, gangsterism, cyber-bullying as well as verbal abuse as risk factors that negatively affect teaching and learning environments. Nielsen (2012) pointed out the breakdown of parent-child relationships, absence of family systems, instability caused by the absence of biological fathers, and the danger of social fathers and sexual abuse contributing to learners' destructive behaviour at various levels. Teachers are often exposed to a teaching environment where learners are involved in criminal activities such as theft,

rape, robbery, and murder (Department of Social Development, 2006; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2013). In many schools, violence has become a norm and Burton and Leoschut (2013) caution that many learners have access to knives or firearms. Prinsloo (2008) states that the increase in violence creates concern that the school environment is no longer a nurturing place for learners. Prinsloo (2007) further highlights the concern of increasing sexual harassment and abuse on school grounds. In a sample of Grade 11 and 12 learners in the Northern Province, Madu and Peltzer (2001) found that 60% of boys and 53.2% of girls reported various forms of abuse as a learner. These incidents are evident of teaching and learning environments that are not taking responsibility for nurturing and guiding learners towards positive value systems. Gordon (1999) points out that educational facilities have to initiate, strengthen and implement values and norms that guide learners against destructive behaviour.

However, it has become evident that the moral collapse within schools is rooted in the parental structure and the absence of role models in the fostering of morality. According to Baumrind (1991), the family has a significant influence on children's behavior and the development of their characters. Maphalala and Mpofu (2018:2) confirm that the "destabilisation of the family support system has left the school vulnerable to the asocial behaviour being transmitted to its system". Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011:209) further indicate that "[p]arents often neglect their task of imparting positive values in their children", contributing to delinquent and destructive behaviour amongst learners. The teaching environment is replete with the breakdown of parent-child relationships, where many parents neglect their responsibility of setting moral boundaries within the family system (Nielsen, 2012). Instead of taking the responsibility that parents have to nurture the discipline of their children, many are choosing a permissive style of parenting, thereby contributing to learners' defiant behaviour at various levels (Wischerth *et al.*, 2016:185-189). Wischerth *et al.* (2016:185-189) observe that learners who are not guided by parents to set healthy boundaries, resist conforming to the expectations for behaviour set by adults in authority. Hinnant *et al.* (2016:1071-1081) support the view that permissive or lax parenting styles is often associated with risky behaviour, adolescent delinquency, deviant peer affiliations, and substance use. Evidence supports the correlation between parenting styles and children's behavioral problems, concluding that permissive parenting behavior is directly related to children's internalizing and externalizing behavior (Alizadeh *et al.*, 2011:195-200). Baumrind (1991) emphasises that parents' ignorance of their parenting style has the potential to create delinquency in their children, and it is therefore important for parents to influence their children's moral development within a healthy authoritative structure.

Apart from a breakdown in the family system, Statistics South Africa (2017) further points out that South African societies foster high risk environments where learners are exposed to anti-social behaviour. A very alarming factor that influences the core of learners' value systems is the increasing drug problem in South Africa. The Department of Social Development (2013:26) and South African Police Service (2016) highlight this problem which impacts the value system of families and communities, causing more than 60% of crime on a national level.

Richter *et al.* (2010) reported that dysfunctional homes are one of the leading factors for a greater percentage of school dropouts. This problem directly impacts on learners who, instead of being in class, end up loitering in the areas around their homes, shops and schools, and increasing the moral depletion of the social fabric by getting involved in criminal activities (Richter *et al.*, 2010). Learners, who are supposed to desire an education which can add value to their future and the economic growth of our country, are instead becoming a problem to their already fragmented families, or they might even be harassing teachers and other learners in the classroom environment (Lebese *et al.*, 2014:337). Lamont and Molnar (2002:168) emphasise that learners who expose themselves to corruption and crime in this cognitive and emotional developmental stage, will learn to dishonour the moral boundaries of honesty, work ethics, personal integrity, and consideration for others. An unbridled proliferation of adolescents exposed to crime and substance abuse is viewed as one of the major causes of moral corruption of young children and adolescents (Richter & Dawes, 2008:86).

'Moral slums' also bring attendant social dilemmas, such as increasing poverty and unemployment (Singh & Bhoola, 2017:52). Dawood (2014) describes this social pathology as desperation for survival whilst creating major problems as value systems transgress all norms of behaviour. Principals summon parents, reprimanding their children for deviant conduct, and the response is often an angry defence of this 'support to their income' (Kemp, 2016). Teachers have become aware that a complete degeneration of discipline and boundaries are contributing to the risk of a society-wide moral collapse (Dawood, 2014). Kemp (2016) posits that South Africa is replete with official, police and community complicity in drugs, robbery, trafficking and other illegal activities. Education Labour Relations Council (2003) highlights the value crisis in South Africa and the need to address this issue as it is a major concern to the safety and development of learners. Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011:209) assert that the South African society is in total decay and adolescents' mind-sets have become so desensitized that immoral behaviour is a serious issue that teachers face daily in the classroom. Taking the above into consideration, it is evident that teachers face a moral crisis and a dilemma in the teaching environment. Depravity of values and destructive behaviour patterns are evident amongst learners. Instead of schools being educational environments where learners are nurtured and educated in safe caring spaces, they

have become playgrounds for abusive and delinquent behaviour where criminality is fostered instead of resisted as pupils are closely observing societal norms and learning how to dishonour moral boundaries.

Witte (2019:861-862) argues that a process of learning needs to navigate normative behaviour, encouraging desirable behaviour to become the norm whilst undesirable behaviour should be viewed as aberrant and even stigmatised. Witte (2019:863) further emphasises the importance of teachers modelling and promoting responsible norms and habits in their own lives as a vital form of moral pedagogy. Turnbull (2002) holds that learners often spend more time at school than at home and therefore, the school has the potential to be an agent of socialisation, facilitating the moral development of learners through value-based education. Maphalala and Mpofu (2018:1) affirm the need for strategies to regenerate morals and to address the current behaviour of learners that are negatively impacting upon the school community. Children observe and learn in the school environment and teachers have the potential to reduce delinquent behaviour patterns through the purposeful implementation of a value-based curriculum that embraces the holistic lived experiences of learners (Aspin & Chapman, 2007; Ferreira & Schulze, 2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Prinsloo, 2007). The navigation of normative behaviour is further substantiated by Smit and Liebenberg (2003) who stress the importance of values in moral development in both home schooling and the traditional classroom situation.

It is evident from the above that South African society and schools in particular are experiencing a challenge with moral decline and this social crisis at various levels in society poses a risk not only to learners and teachers but also to the country at large. This study, therefore, intended to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. The next section will provide the research questions and aims that guided this study.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question for the study was:

How could strategy development for moral regeneration be optimised in South African secondary schools?

1.5.1 Sub-research questions

In order to address the main research question, the following sub-research questions guided the study:

- How do current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools?
- How do secondary school teachers understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa?
- How do secondary school teachers engage with moral regeneration at school?
- What strategies can secondary school teachers provide to optimise the moral regeneration of secondary school learners?
- How could moral regeneration be fostered by secondary schools?

1.6 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The main research aim of this study was to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

The following sub-research aims were to:

- determine how current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools;
- determine how secondary school teachers understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa;
- engage with, explore, and describe how secondary school teachers engage with moral regeneration at school;
- engage with, explore, and describe what strategies can secondary school teachers provide to optimise the moral regeneration of secondary school learners; and
- explain how moral regeneration could be fostered by secondary schools.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the context of this study the conceptual framework provided a way in which I viewed various definitions of 'morals' from a range of disciplines and perspectives and to identify and name concepts related to 'morals' as well as to deconstruct and categorise concepts related to 'morals' and 'moral regeneration' (Jabareen, 2009:53-55). See Chapter Two for a detailed description of this study's conceptual and theoretical framework. Saunders *et al.* (2013:389) posit that the theoretical framework of and for a research project refers to interconnected thoughts or ideas, bestowing direction to a research project or study. It was important to look at theories that have been developed by previous researchers which were useful and coherent to guide my research topic (Fiske, 2011:257). Fiske (2011:257) points out that theories are often seen as abstract and irrelevant, but they create the practical basis on which research is grounded. Theories lay the groundwork for the pragmatic accountability of all research (Fiske, 2011:257). A theoretical framework was of utmost importance as it was not only used to support my research aims but also assisted me when I interpreted the findings of my study. At the onset of my study the theories below were relevant within the context of moral regeneration and the aim of this study which was to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

1.7.1 Social learning theory

Rushton (1982:462) points out that modern approaches to Social Learning Theory originates from the Behavioural Revolution of 1913 where a study of behaviour challenged the contents of consciousness. Rushton (1982:459) challenged the theory that morality is primarily about intention and looks at behaviour in support of the social learning theory. Rushton (1982:463) proposes that "[t]he role of moral cognition is examined within the Social Learning Theory and proposes that personal rules are internalised according to moral standards".

This theory supports the view that behaviour is learned through the interaction between observation, cognitive maturity, and the external environment (Payne, 2005). Walters (1998:4-5) points out that the environment influences learning and development to the degree which the values, motives and beliefs of a culture or peer group is internalised. Bandura (1989:1175) proposes that social learning takes place in the context of peer relationships. Balogun and Okurame (2011) emphasise that specific behaviour, attitudes, and emotional responses can be transmitted in different circumstances, indicating the value of role modelling. Jones (2001:413) emphasises that children are not born with an inclination to be destructive and delinquent in their behaviour, but they learn to become aggressive and destructive through their immediate life experiences. Siegel (2011:136) argues that the boy who sees his father repeatedly strike his

mother is likely to emulate this behaviour and become a very aggressive adolescent. Today's learners are immersed in a digital world that influences their moral compass. Due to the exponential access to social media platforms and the lack of boundaries, it is becoming more important for parents to be aware of the nature of the sites that their children are exploring as many of them espouse less than ethical environments, contributing to moral illiteracy. O' Keeffe *et al.* (2015:800) reports that adolescents are exposing themselves online to cyberbullying, privacy issues, and 'sexting', manifesting in problematic offline behaviours which include bullying, clique-forming, and sexual experimentation.

Parents need to be aware of the exposure that children are getting with social media. Behaviour can be learnt through observational learning, suggesting that if adolescents observe a popular outcome of behaviour, they are more likely to imitate and adopt the behaviour (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). Adolescents have a limited capacity for self-regulation and they are susceptible to peer pressure as they experiment with social media (O' Keeffe *et al.*, 2015:800). Balogun and Okurame (2011) highlight mentoring as a strategy that is especially relevant to social learning where role-modelling guides boundaries, behaviour, and learning. The Social Learning Theory provides a lens for moral regeneration regarding the extent to which learners are constantly exposed to a particular lifestyle and how their environment and peer group significantly influences their cognition and resultant behaviour, mediating all adaptive and reactive changes in terms of self and others (Hope, 2007), as morals directly refer to human behaviour (Chowdhury, 2016).

1.7.2 Moral development theory

Kohlberg (1987) describes moral development as a product of cognitive development and relevant social experiences. Kohlberg (1987) describes morality in terms of six stages and how a person uses these stages in making a moral decision. The stages are inclusive and based on moral reasoning (Krebs, 2008).

Mathes (2019:3909) describes the original six stages of reasoning:

Stage 1, Heteronomous Morality, involves the reasoning that moral behaviors should be engaged in only to avoid punishment. Stage 2, Individualism, Instrumental Purpose, and Exchange Morality, involves the reasoning that moral behaviors should be engaged in only to achieve good outcomes... Stage 3, Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity Morality, involves the reasoning that people are obligated to care for their family and friends. Stage 4, Social System and Conscience Morality, involves the reasoning that people must obey authority in the form of traditional norms, written laws, and the legal system... Stage 5, Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights Morality, involves the reasoning that morality is guided, knowingly or unknowingly, by Utilitarian philosophy... Stage 6, Universal Ethical Principles Morality,

involves the reasoning that there are universal moral principles that are applicable to all people in all places and at all times.

The Moral Development Theory challenges moral regeneration as the disparities in South African communities would mean a differential reasoning during different stages of development and how moral boundaries are perceived and internalised (Lapsley, 2006). It would mean that a disparity would arise in the moral development of learners in rural, township or disadvantaged schools versus those in urban, privileged, and well-resourced schools due to the different social experiences which would influence cognitive maturity. This substantiates the argument of Krebs (2008) that cognitive development and relevant social experiences directly influence moral development. Mariaye (2006) also connects moral judgements and choices to cognitive development and cognitive maturity. Gray and Anderson (2016) observe that school dropouts, low academic performance, rebellion, and the wrong influences due to peer pressure are just some of the consequences of adolescents struggling without the safety, protection, and emotional security that parents and especially fathers provide. Vuza (2017) substantiates that parents as primary caregivers significantly influence children's emotional state which directly impacts their cognitive maturity.

1.7.3 Social norms theory

The focus of this theory is to determine the relationship between the perception of normative behaviour and how this influences actual behaviour patterns (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). It is interesting to note that traditional intervention programmes aimed at awareness of risky behaviour has shown limited success in changing mindsets (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). The social norms theory highlights that there is a general misperception within a peer group regarding the partaking in unhealthy or risky behaviour which directly influences individual's behaviour (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). Misperceptions often result from assumptions regarding behaviour patterns, cultural perceptions, and the influence of media and entertainment outlets leading to individual's engaging in destructive behaviour which is not consistent with actual behaviour patterns of the peer group (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). In the context of my research, it was of value to explore, describe, and explain how teachers perceived normative behaviour and the influence this has on the actual behaviour patterns of secondary school learners.

1.7.4 Social disorganisation theory

Conole *et al.* (2004:19) propose that the social causes of delinquency and disorganisation seem to be prominent in specific geographical areas. Three central elements in this theory are "poverty,

residential mobility and racial heterogeneity. Variables from subculture [such as] violence, social control and opportunity perspectives are included” (Conole *et al.*, 2004:19).

Available literature verify the strong link between community social disorganisation, victimisation as well as crime that cause physical and social disorder, poverty, family fragmentation, and local unsupervised adolescent peer group networks (Breetzke, 2010; Fox *et al.*, 2010; Sampson & Groves, 1989).

On the other end of the scale, communities who are collectively efficient in exerting informal control and cohesion, have lower rates of crime and delinquency (Prinsloo & Ovens, 2016). This is a real challenge to communities in South Africa and can only be achieved through a desire for collective regeneration of morals. Matsueda (2006:23) posits that the concept of collective efficiency is:

a [neighbourhood]-level concept defined as the willingness of residents to intervene for the common good, which is largely dependent on conditions of mutual trust and solidarity [amongst neighbours]. Collective efficacy is measured by [neighbours'] willingness to intervene when groups of children are hanging out, fighting, vandalizing, and the like.

It is important to note that secondary school learners between the ages of 15 and 18 are at a high risk of being victimised due to peer pressure (Prinsloo & Ovens, 2016). Green (2007) stresses the effects of victimisation and how this causes a vulnerability for delinquent behaviour resulting in an increase towards social disorganisation. The Social Disorganisation Theory supports the notion that the morality in secondary schooling is greatly influenced by social upheaval, a class struggle, poverty, victimization, and delinquent behaviour (Breetzke, 2010; Fox *et al.*, 2010). Masombuka (2013:1) affirms that these morally degenerative behaviour patterns are strongly linked to a socially disorganized landscape.

Within the context of this study, the above theories (Social Learning Theory; Moral Development Theory; Social Norms Theory; Social Disorganisation Theory) are interrelated as these theories provide an explanation and understanding of moral de/regeneration. Students' behaviours are impacted daily by that which they perceive in their milieu (Social Learning Theory), the experiences they have encountered which impacted cognitive maturity (Moral Development Theory), and their perception of behaviour and how this has influenced actual behaviour patterns (Social Norms Theory). Behaviours are further influenced by social and economic disorder, poverty, family breakdown and criminality (Social Disorganisation Theory). This study aimed to challenge degenerative standards and influence strategies to combat moral degeneration. Moral regeneration focuses on the transformation of behaviour patterns that has been learned through

observation (Social Learning Theory), influenced by the external environment (Social Disorganisation Theory), and assimilated through a specific level of cognitive maturity (Moral Development Theory). Moral regeneration aims at redirecting misperceptions regarding behavioural patterns (Social Norms Theory), whereby adopting new behavioural patterns that are consistent with desired, normative behaviour. Campbell (2008) asserts that the objective of moral education aims for the development of a commitment to take responsibility for every action and therefore, teachers play a major role as moral educators of core values and principles. Moral education and the aim of moral regeneration needs sound pedagogics together with an understanding of the lived experiences of teachers and learners to build a value-based framework which will effectively address decision making and judgement forming abilities in the classroom (Chowdhury, 2016:8). The following section provides a brief overview of the chosen research design and methods that underpinned the research. I also discussed the chosen research paradigm as well as providing the rationale for selecting an interpretivist paradigm.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:14-15) highlight the purpose of the research as an important factor when selecting a research method. Creswell (2009:4) states that a research design is “[a] plan or proposal to conduct research”.

Punch (2011:48) emphasises that the chosen research design needs to encompass five main components:

- conceptual and theoretical framework (forms the basis of the research);
- methodology that encompasses methods/strategies to conduct the research in an ethical manner;
- the site (where the research will take place) and the sample (the participants) who will provide the information data during the data generation process;
- by means of relevant data generation strategies; and
- data analysis that entails the application of data analysis strategies.

Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012:132) view phenomenological studies in terms of the meaning that lived experiences hold for participants. Moustakas (1994:13) describes the principles of phenomenology as:

[to] determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in other words, the essences of structures of the experience.

Taking the research questions and aims of my study into account as well as the overall context of this study, I adopted a phenomenological study. The rationale for choosing a phenomenological study was my aim in exploring, describing, and explaining how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. Phenomenology, firstly, because it explicitly centres on the description of the phenomenon and as such, it focuses on crafting descriptive categories on the professed real world from the participants' accounts such as their verbal narratives (transcripts) captured during the individual semi-structured interviews of the teachers (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). Secondly, phenomenology focuses on how the participants' (teachers) meaning-making processes affect their choices to comprehend the meaning of their own lived experiences of moral degeneration and/or moral regeneration (Sloan & Bowe, 2014).

In accordance with the view of Wagner *et al.* (2012:126) the rationale for adopting “[q]ualitative research is concerned with understanding the processes and the social and cultural contexts which shape various behavioural patterns”. Within the context of this study, I strove to explore and understand the lived experiences of the teachers and to create a logical body of knowledge, representing their personalized perceptions of the phenomenon.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:12) define qualitative research as “[an] approach that enables researchers to learn first-hand about the social world which they are investigating by means of participation in that world through focusing on the respondent.”

In the context of the main research question, I aimed at gaining first-hand knowledge of the lived experiences of secondary school teachers with respect to the phenomenon of moral degeneration and how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. As pointed out by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:41), data that was primarily generated through interviews (the spoken word), aimed at a detailed narrative description, analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon being studied. In accordance with Niemann *et al.* (2000:283-285) a qualitative method has advantages for a research study such as mine as it allowed for describing the lived experiences of secondary school teachers; and describing these experiences in terms of their own framework of beliefs and value systems (own specific context); generating data with open, flexible, and non-rigid methods (for example individual interviews / field notes); and developing trust relationship with the participants. Where participants were involved in data generation (individual interviews), it was important to check if

the transcript content represented the spoken words of the respective interviews by means of member checking.

1.8.1 Research paradigm

According to Chilisa and Kawulich (2012:54) every researcher has a very specific perception of truth and knowledge which guides his/her beliefs, thinking, and assumptions about society and self, and a global viewpoint on the world which social scientists term a paradigm. A paradigm is informed by what a researcher believes about reality (ontology), how a researcher knows what is known (epistemology), and what a researcher believes is true (axiology) (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:54). McMillan and Schumacher (2001:15-16) point out that interpretive paradigms aim to present the reality of participants from their personalised viewpoint. Knowledge is therefore created through the interpretation of people's beliefs, experiences, value systems, intentions and their understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hoepfl, 1997:3). Chilisa and Kawulich (2012:56) state that the related assumptions on ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology are important in the interpretivist paradigm.

1.8.1.1 Ontology

My reality in an interpretive paradigm depended on my personal mindset and my social construct of what I believe in. I personally believe that moral degeneration is a current reality in the educational context which greatly impacts the behaviour and conduct of secondary school learners, causing a moral dilemma in schools and society. My personal assumptions about the nature of this reality therefore became a part of the research design and process (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56).

1.8.1.2 Epistemology

Interpretivism views my knowledge about moral de/regeneration to be subjective, as it is socially constructed and dependent on my personal mindset. Therefore, my own experiences of this phenomena (moral de/regeneration) determined the reality of truth and how I interpreted my experiences. Evidence on the reality of this phenomena was dependent on the context and on the secondary school teachers' own reflections, belief systems and claims of moral de/regeneration – my own concerns were therefore validated as legitimate knowledge (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56).

1.8.1.3 Axiology

As interpretivists argue, I believe that my reality is dependent on my mindset and that my knowledge is subjective, therefore social research is value-bound and value-laden. My research paradigm, the choice of the topic 'Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary learners', the methods that I used to collect and analyse data, the interpretation of findings and how they were reported, were all informed by values and biases related to my topic (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56).

1.8.1.4 Methodology

The aim of my research was to explore, describe and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. The research was conducted at secondary schools. The research question which is a statement of the problem as well as sub-questions guided the research design and methods. It was important to establish trust in my communication to participants, ensuring that ethics remained a priority throughout the study (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56). I made use of interpretivism as my social reality was subjective, meaning that it was constructed by secondary school teachers through my interpretation of their lived experiences, rather than a social world that has "[t]angible, material qualities that allow it to be measured, touched, or observed in some literal way" (Denscombe, 2010:121). The research method was further influenced by assumptions about multiple realities (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56). The reality of moral degeneration exists through the way that it was perceived and interpreted. The idealistic aim of moral regeneration focused on the way participants made sense of morality, and how moral values could be adopted to become concrete and practical, redirecting conduct with the aim of transforming the mindsets of learners through value-based teaching (Denscombe, 2010:122). To enable capturing subtle nuances of interpretation, I had to establish trust, rapport and authenticity in communication with participants (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56).

The following section provides a brief overview of the chosen research design and methods; site, sample and sampling; data generation; data analysis; ethical considerations; and trustworthiness that underpinned the research.

1.8.2 Site, sample, and sampling

The site refers to the physical location where the research was conducted (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2014). I made a random selection of different secondary schools within the Gauteng province which included a few education districts with the aim of obtaining information-rich data from diverse contexts. According to Howell (2013), a sample is related to a selected group within

a population, such as the 20 secondary school teachers chosen for this study for the purpose of semi-structured interviews. Punch (2011:48) regards the sample (participants) who will provide necessary information during the data gathering process as a main component of the research design. Denscombe (2010:35) views purposive sampling as a method to obtain the best information by selecting participants whose lived experiences provide valuable insights on the research topic. Boeije (2010) explains that a sampling strategy in qualitative research refers to a calculated selection with the intention of meeting the needs of the study. In this study I made use of purposive sampling of specific individuals, namely secondary school teachers as they could provide information related to their lived experiences of the phenomenon of moral degeneration, and how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools (Creswell, 2013).

1.8.2.1 Site

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014:377), “choosing a site is a negotiation process to obtain freedom of access to a site that is suitable for the research problem and feasible for the researcher’s resources of time, mobility, and skills”. The site of the proposed research study was secondary schools within the Gauteng province. The education districts included Johannesburg South, Johannesburg Central, Ekurhuleni South, Johannesburg East, and Johannesburg North. In order to select secondary schools for the purpose of this research study, I selected two secondary schools from each of the five districts: thus a total of 10 purposefully selected secondary schools. From the 10 secondary schools I purposively selected two teachers from each school. I opted to make use of an independent person who took the responsibility for the recruitment of participants. Schools from quintiles which have been declared as no-fee schools and receive larger budgetary allocations and schools from quintiles which receive smaller state allocations were included in the selection process (Ahmed & Sayed, 2009:206; Mestry, 2014:860). Schools selected were a combination of heavily populated and overcrowded schools in terms of learners, as well as middle-sized schools (Mestry, 2014:860). In the context of this study, it was of importance to purposively select secondary schools from different socio-economic groups and education districts in the province of Gauteng – hence the selection of five districts. Mestry (2014:862) emphasises how outcomes of norms and standards are affected by the availability of resources and states that “[t]eacher inputs include overall expenditure per learner or as physical inputs, teacher-to-learner ratio, class size, teacher characteristics/quality, materials, equipment and books, and facilities/buildings”. These factors are significant in determining educational attainment standards whilst understanding how the site is associated with social learning, moral and cognitive development, social norms, and social disorganisation (Mestry, 2014:862).

1.8.2.2 Sample: Secondary school teachers

According to Denscombe (2010:35):

[p]urposive sampling can also be used as a way of getting the best information by selecting items or people most likely to have the experience or expertise to provide quality information and valuable insights on the research topic. Used in this way, purposive sampling is particularly well suited for creating an (exploratory example). The advantage of purposive sampling is that it allows the researcher to hone in on people or events which there are good grounds for believing they will be critical for the research.

For the purpose of this study, I selected participants through non-probability sampling (purposive), and my sample included secondary school teachers who suited the aim of generating data on moral degeneration of secondary school learners (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:95). In accordance with McMillan and Schumacher (2001:175) I purposively selected participants (secondary school teachers) who provided quality information with the objective of developing strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

I only used one criterion for selecting participants: a *teacher* who was employed at a *secondary school* in the Gauteng Province in any of the following districts in Johannesburg: Johannesburg South, Johannesburg Central, Johannesburg East, Johannesburg North and Ekurhuleni South. Teachers' ages, gender and/or years of experience were not used as participant selection criteria as this study focused on the lived experiences of the participants that would be valuable in understanding the phenomenon of moral de/regeneration to a greater depth, thus being knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation. For the purpose of this study, the teachers were recruited by an independent person to voluntarily participate in this research. See Chapter Three, section 3.3 (Ethical Considerations).

1.8.2.3 Sampling

As highlighted by Durrheim (2006:50), the methodology selected for the research guides one when selecting a sampling strategy. It is in the context of qualitative research that Smit (2010:36) highlights the aim of purposive sampling in selecting participants who can provide information-rich data regarding the phenomenon, whilst addressing the research questions and the main topic of the study. My research was a qualitative study; I therefore opted to use purposive sampling to select *secondary schools* and secondary school *teachers* as participants who voluntarily took part in this study with the aim of gaining information-rich data which addresses the topic of the moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

For the purpose of this study, I conducted 20 individual, semi-structured interviews with the selected teachers from 10 secondary schools. This was a qualitative study, and the focus was not on the quantity of participants, but rather the quality of the information generated during the interviews through the detailed in-depth, lived experiences of secondary school teachers (Bryman, 2012). As suggested by Kelly (2006:289) I continued interviewing the secondary school teachers until data saturation occurred. According to Saumure and Given (2008:195) data saturation is the point in the data generation process when “no new or relevant information emerges” from the interviews. It is at this point when the researcher stops the data generation process and “no more data need[s] to be [generated]” (Saumure & Given, 2008:195).

1.8.3 Data generation

The data generation process commenced once ethical clearance was obtained by the independent person who recruited possible participants at the various schools.

1.8.3.1 Interviews

Maree (2016:37) points out that the researcher must select a relevant research method which will effectively generate data to answer the research questions. According to the Open University Press (2001:58-59) an interview does not only serve the purpose of gathering data, but rather involves a process whereby the researcher and the participant construct a reality based on thoughts, ideas, viewpoints, and experiences. I conducted individual, semi-structured interviews with 20 secondary school teachers to generate data relevant to my research question. In accordance with Wagner *et al.* (2012:274), semi-structured interviews were valuable for probing whilst gathering data and were conducted according to an interview schedule (Appendix A) which contained the interview questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:41), as well as Cohen *et al.* (2000:269) hold the view that qualitative data generation methods have the potential to portray greater depth relevant to the research question as participants' individual viewpoints are explored.

As argued by Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012:134) semi-structured interviews are suitable when a subject may be controversial or sensitive such as moral degeneration. Interviews created a platform for flexibility as open-ended questions allowed for freedom of expression (Greeff, 2011). I discussed the data generation process in detail in Chapter Three, section 3.2.5.1.

1.8.4 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process throughout interviewing, segmenting data into themes with the objective of building an interpretive text (Henning *et al.*, 2013:103). I employed thematic analysis to analyse the text of the 20 transcripts in order to establish my themes, categories, and sub-categories. Bryman (2012) refers to thematic analysis as the extraction of core themes in the data. Braun and Clarke (2006:79) define thematic analysis as a “[m]ethod for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data”. Thematic analysis is a flexible data analysis method that provides rich and detailed accounts of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process of my data analysis entailed six phases of thematic analysis.

- Phase 1: Exploring and becoming familiar with the data
- Phase 2: Generating initial codes
- Phase 3: Searching for themes
- Phase 4: Reviewing themes
- Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
- Phase 6: Producing the report.

The six phases of thematic analysis that were employed to conduct the data analysis of this study is discussed in detail in Chapter Three, section 3.4.1.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:528) research ethics describe the required standards of professional and academic behaviour during a research process. Lincoln and Guba (1989:221) describe ethics as a “[t]est of social relevance, responsibility, usefulness, and moral stature of social science”. Denscombe (2010:59) views ethics as “a system of moral principles by which individuals can judge their actions as right or wrong, good or bad – and social researchers are expected to conduct their research in an ethical manner”. Cohen *et al.* (2000:56), and McMillan and Schumacher (2001:420) highlight the importance of the researcher’s ethical responsibility to the participants on whom data generation depends whilst searching for knowledge and truth. McMillan and Schumacher (2014:134) posit the following ethical considerations which need to be considered to conduct this research: knowledge about ethical principles; professional guidelines;

and legal requirements. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Committee of the Faculty of Education (EduREC) of the North-West University.

To enable the conduct of the research, I sought permission at various levels such as:

- Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education (EduREC). See Ethical Clearance Certificate: Appendix B.
- Request for permission to conduct research from the Gauteng Department of Education and Districts: See Appendix C.
- Permission letter to conduct research from the School Governing Body: See Appendix D.
- Permission letter to conduct research from the School Principal: See Appendix D.
- Participant Information and Consent Form - Teachers: See Appendix E.

I took due care to meet the necessary ethical requirements underscored by honesty, integrity, trust, and objectivity. The following ethical considerations were employed in this study: informed consent (permission); voluntary participation; confidentiality; respect; interpretation of data; and security and ownership of the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Denscombe, 2010; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). I discussed the above ethical considerations in detail in Chapter Three, Section 3.8.

1.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Data needs to be verified for any research to achieve credibility and for the trustworthiness of findings to be regarded as valid and accurate (Denscombe, 2010:297-298). Within the context of qualitative research, Wagner *et al.* (2012:137) emphasise that “[it] is critical to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of your research. You need to recognise your own subjectivity and biases, consider how they may influence your findings, and use strategies to overcome them as much as possible”. The research study employed the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to ensure the trustworthiness of this study.

- Truth value (Credibility)

Kawulich and Holland (2012:243) describe credibility as “[t]he term used to address activities that make it more credible that the findings were derived from the data”. Nieuwenhuis (2016b) considers credibility as a means of proving the congruency of the findings with reality and how to ensure that the reader can verify the accuracy of the research. Bertram and Christiansen

(2014:188) regard credibility as a means of ensuring that findings reflect reality. I needed to verify whether I had correctly grasped secondary school teachers lived experiences regarding the phenomenon of moral regeneration (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012:138). I achieved this by taking the transcripts back to the participants (secondary school teachers) and verifying with them whether transcripts matched their responses (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:275-276).

- Applicability (Transferability)

Denscombe (2010:301) describes transferability as “[an] imaginative process in which the reader of the research uses information about the particular instance that has been studied to arrive at a judgement about how far it would apply to other comparable instances. The question becomes ‘To what extent *could* the findings be transferred to other instances?’ rather than ‘To what extent *are* the findings likely to exist in other instances?’” The reader needs to gauge whether the research findings are relevant and applicable to “[o]ther people, settings, case studies, organizations, etc” (Denscombe, 2010:301). Following Babbie and Mouton’s (2001:277) view on the importance of transferability in research, I continued to conduct interviews until data saturation occurred. I also provided sufficient detailed descriptions of data (verbatim transcripts) within context, and made use of detailed precision when reporting to allow judgements about transferability by those who read the findings of the research study. In agreement with Wagner *et al.* (2012:243) I ensured that all versions of generated data were maintained in their original form (audio-recordings and verbatim transcripts), as transferability was the basis for making similarity judgements about data generated. I ensured clarity about the theoretical lens of the study by comparing data with the theories that have been outlined, ensuring that there was sufficient evidence to support the interpretation of data related to the relevant theories and avoiding any unsubstantiated claims (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:191).

- Consistency (Dependability)

Denscombe (2010:300) views dependability as the analysis of the possibilities of other researchers providing comparable findings if the research had to be repeated. A thorough examination of methods, reasonable decisions, and reputable procedures is necessary to check the reliability of specific findings in the study (Denscombe, 2010:300). Denscombe (2010:300) stresses that dependability “[a]cts as a proxy for being able to replicate research”. Dependability acted as an audit trail in this study, ensuring clarity in data generation and analysis processes and a detailed description of these processes. This allowed for critical discussion to identify any potential bias or misrepresentation (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:190). Furthermore, dependability was enhanced through the compilation of transcripts which reflected verbatim

information. To ensure consistency, audio-recordings of interviews with secondary school teachers were transcribed. Audio-recordings were only destroyed after thorough verbatim transcriptions of the generated data were completed. The thematic analysis process, which consisted of six phases, was clearly documented to ensure clear processes of decisions (Braun & Clarke, 2006) (see Chapter Three, section 3.4.1).

- Neutrality (Confirmability)

Confirmability concerns the issue of objectivity and the degree to which the findings of the study are free of biases, influences, and interests of the researcher (Denscombe, 2010:301). Qualitative data involves a process of interpretation and therefore this study could not be completely free of my influence as a researcher (Denscombe, 2010:301). Consequently, I needed to take note of the advice of McMillan and Schumacher (2014:372) regarding any preconceived ideas about the phenomenon (moral degeneration/regeneration) under study to clearly understand the views, experiences, and meanings that were given by the participants (secondary school teachers). Denscombe (2010:301) emphasises the influence of the researcher's 'self' in maintaining neutrality by pointing out that, "[t]he researcher's identity, values, and beliefs play a role in the production and analysis of qualitative data and therefore researchers should be on their guard to distance themselves from their normal, everyday beliefs and to suspend judgements on social issues for the duration of their research". Following the view of Krefting (1991:217), confirmability is established in congruence with truth value. It was therefore important to keep "[an] open mind" during the data gathering process and not to become indifferent to any opinions that did not necessarily agree with my analysis (Denscombe, 2010:303). During the data generation process and in accordance with Nieuwenhuis (2016b), confirmability was enhanced when I made use of verbatim quotations to support data interpretation and discussion of the findings. I elaborated on the trustworthiness criteria and respective strategies in Chapter Three, section 3.10.

1.11 CHAPTER DIVISION

This study was divided into the following chapters as outlined in Figure 1.1:



Figure 1.1 Chapter division

1.12 SUMMARY

Chapter One provided an introduction to the research study, described its scope and highlighted the background and rationale for conducting this study. Concepts relevant to the study were clarified and a brief description of the theoretical framework relevant to this study were outlined. The research design and method were shortly provided. Ethical considerations and trustworthiness criteria and strategies were highlighted within the context of the study. The following chapter expounds on relevant literature reviewed that underpins the conceptual and theoretical framework within the context of this research study.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: MORALS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the conceptual, and theoretical framework of the phenomenon ‘*morals*’ within the context of moral regeneration within schools. Jabareen (2009:51) explains that a “conceptual framework refers not only to a collection of concepts but more to a construct in which each concept plays an essential role”. In addition, Jabareen (2009:50) posits that “every concept usually contains components originating from other concepts and every concept must be understood in terms of its own components as well as other concepts”. Miles *et al.* (2014) state that a conceptual framework serves as a researcher’s map of the territory and phenomena being studied. In the context of this research, the conceptual framework guided my study when I explored different components that are all connected to the concept of morals and how each are related to the phenomena of moral regeneration.

Jabareen (2009:51) confirms this view by explaining that “a conceptual framework refers not only to a collection of concepts but more to a construct in which each concept plays an essential role”. Kivunja (2018:46) describes the conceptual framework as the total, logical orientation and associations of every underlying thought, structure, and state of known knowledge of the phenomenon through a thorough literature review. Varpio *et al.* (2019:7) view the conceptual framework as a metacognitive process whereby known knowledge is reviewed whilst identifying gaps in the understanding of the phenomenon. Chowdhury (2016:8) accentuates the interrelatedness of concepts and highlights that the development of strategies for moral regeneration within the school context, requires an understanding of the concept of *morals*, and how core issues are related. It was therefore important to unpack ‘morals’ as a concept (see Diagram 2.1).

Kumar (2014) describes the theoretical framework as the structuring of theories evolving from reviewed literature which is directly or indirectly relevant to the research topic, allowing the researcher to identify the main concepts of the chosen study. A theoretical framework is a “logically developed and connected set of concepts and premises – developed from one or more theories” (Varpio *et al.*, 2019:7). It is evident that a theoretical framework is used to support the study and the validity of the phenomenon being investigated. Varpio *et al.* (2019:7) explain that a theoretical framework is created when the researcher firstly defines concepts and theories with the aim of providing grounding for the research, and secondly, when the researcher ties in these

concepts and theories through logical connections, relating them to the study being conducted (Varpio *et al.*, 2019:7).

Diagram 2.1 below provides a map for the exposition of the conceptual framework of morals. The discussion that follows encapsulates definitions and meanings of morals, discourses on moral development, and an analysis of moral behaviour. The diagram also contextualises morality and how this is embedded in a social context. Theories that exist in the literature and their relevance to moral behaviour, development, and reasoning is carefully examined. The exploration of the conceptual framework as outlined in Diagram 2.1 is essential to strengthen the trustworthiness, credibility, and integrity of the empirical findings of the study where the observations and lived experiences of teachers on the phenomenon will be analysed in Chapter Four.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL POSITIONING: MORALS



Diagram 2.1 Conceptual Framework: Morals

2.2.1 Morals

One of the earliest studies conducted on morals was that of Osborne in 1894 where he wanted to discover the “ethical content of children’s minds” and found obedience and truthfulness to be the most valuable expression of children’s morality (Pittel & Mendelsohn, 1966:23). Many studies have been undertaken over the years and research continues to explore the importance of morals impacting behaviour and how certain principles influence the choices made on values, morals, and ethics (Chippendale, 2001). Chowdbury (2016:1) highlights that individuals do not grow up in moral isolation but that it is rather part of a specific moral tradition which allows society to flourish when cultivated to manifest in virtuous behaviour patterns. In the context of this study and the aim of developing strategies for moral regeneration, it was important to explore and understand how universal values and standards of conduct could produce a healthy education system for secondary learners where morals are woven into every fabric of character development.

2.2.1.1 Morals: defined

In Chapter One, section 1.2.2 a brief description of morals was provided. Chowdhury (2016:1) stated that “morals refer to human behaviour where morality is the practical activity...”. Humans make decisions regarding their behaviour and it’s the motivation behind different decisions that alters human behaviour, either adhering to norms or contravening them (Elsenbroich and Gilbert, 2014). Tangney *et al.* (2007:345) show moral emotions as a key element, connecting moral standards and moral behaviour. Healthy emotions have the potential to foster positive patterns of moral behaviour whereas unhealthy emotions are often linked to illegal, risky, or problematic behaviour (Tangney *et al.*, 2007:354). Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334) anchor moral convictions as a compelling directive for behaviour. Tangney *et al.* (2007:345) define a moral life as “a weighted sum of countless individual, morally relevant behaviours enacted day in and day out”. According to Agerstrom and Bjorklund (2009); Aquino and Reed (2002); and Krebs (2008) morals refer to “actions that benefit others at a cost to oneself”. Monroe (2008) describes this complex concept in his article on the moral psychology of rescuers during the holocaust. The moral agency of certain individuals causes the suffering of others to be internalised within their moral identity, motivating them to acts of humanitarian altruism at a cost of personal self (Monroe, 2008). Beauchamp (2001) proposes that moral judgements distinguish ‘right’ from ‘wrong’, indicating standards of righteousness, and serving as a compass for human behaviour.

2.2.1.2 Morals: meaning

Ellemers *et al.* (2019) investigate the psychology of morality and espouse that the meaning of morals is not so much about avoiding evil, but rather about doing the right thing. Reflecting on the study of Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011:199), morals are meaningful in the development of any individual, coinciding with their cognitive development, to make choices and moral judgements in the process of reaching moral maturity. In view of Veugelers' (2010:650) study, morals are embedded in every individual's personal and social identity, and citizen development. It is morals that are eventually expressed in opinions and visible in behaviour (Veugelers, 2010:650). According to Veugelers (2010:650) moral development is the driving force behind concrete attitudes and behaviour. Althof and Berkowitz (2006) aver that societies are only able to flourish if its citizens "hold certain moral and civic values, and manifest certain virtues". As morals are linked to beliefs and attitudes, the meaning is strongly attached to guiding human behaviour (Chowdhury, 2016:1). Within the context of this study, morals are meaningful in the development of the cognitive, social, and emotional skills of secondary school learners to become morally mature in their thinking, feeling and behaviour (Mariaye, 2006:23).

2.2.1.3 Value and purpose of morals

There is no timeline to the validity and purpose of morals in our lives as the characterization of human morality is an ongoing process (Murdoch, 2001:37). Murdoch (2001:37) states that (t)he moral life... "is something that goes on continually, not something that is switched off in between the occurrence of explicit moral choices. What happens in between such choices is indeed what is crucial". One just needs to reflect on the following statement to understand the value, meaning, and purpose of morals, "South Africa is suffering from what can be referred to as a moral laxity problem that expresses itself in general lawlessness and ill-discipline" (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:260). According to Nation Master (2019a), "South Africa (was) one of the least lawful countries in the world, with the fifth highest number of total crimes reported in 2002". The general lawlessness and moral laxity in society has been transported into schools (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:260). School grounds and playgrounds have turned into areas where both teachers and learners feel unsafe due to criminality, violence, and gangster activities (Ngwokabueni, 2015). Ngwokabueni (2015) diagnoses this problem as a disintegration of value systems. Mabuza (2018) supports this view by concluding that a change of values is needed to fight against the upholding of a perverse value system. Children need to be protected from influences and behaviours that corrupt their morality (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1162). Moral regeneration is needed in an education system that is challenged by discipline problems, unacceptable behaviour, and a "(w)eak or inappropriate value system" (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:262).

2.2.1.4 Morals versus values

According to Chippendale (2001) morals restrain and values motivate, resulting in interrelated concepts which are meant to function together with the purpose of achieving morality by influencing behaviour. Values are more than just beliefs; values comprise the worth of norms and principles that define the behaviour of individuals and groups (Bruess & Schroeder, 2014:143). According to Haydon (2006:53), universal values are unanimous and should be recognised and respected by everyone. Kaiser (2024:1-2) proposes that while values are important drivers of attitudes and behavior, there is no generally accepted theory of values, and values are renowned for ambiguity.

Halstead and Taylor (2000) describe value education as particular morals being emphasised in terms of importance within an educational context. The Department of Education (2000:24) highlights the nurturing of values such as tolerance, respect, and self-discipline with the aim of fostering discipline. According to the Constitution of South Africa it remains a goal within education to promote values which support human rights with the aim of protecting the security of learners, whilst preventing harm to others within a non-violent environment (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:119). Value education is necessary for the nurturing of values, virtues, beliefs, and attitudes, aiming at the moral 'socialization' of learners (Pandey, 2005:1). Pandey (2005:1) further considers value education of importance to provide learners with knowledge and skills to make informed decisions that are of moral importance. Pandey (2005:3) views value education as a means of fostering virtues such as integrity, courage, responsibility, and respect for others within the purpose of a general social good.

- Moral values

Values are integrated into every individual's self-image and part of a complex moral psychology (Monroe, 2008:722). Monroe (2008:722) reasons that values determine the human ethical perspective and therefore an integration of values into one's sense of self is critical (Blasi, 2003). Monroe (2008:724) argues that the "integration of critical values into one's sense of self – and the content of the values held dear – constitutes a critical part in the moral psychology". Abend (2012:176) views values as "stable attributes or features of a person, or dispositions, close to their character, identity, and self-image or self-understanding".

2.2.1.5 Morals versus norms

According to Zulu *et al.* (2019:95) norms are applied to the measuring of human conduct. Kelsen (quoted by Hosten *et al.*, 1995) described legal norm as follows: “[N]orm is the meaning of an act by which a certain behaviour is commanded, permitted, or authorized”.

Etheredge (2014) argues the effect of violent behaviour from teachers towards learners and how this could result in greater aversion to comply with school rules and norms, fostering negative attitudes towards school and education.

It is important to understand where the demands for propriety shifted as this changed the orientation of moral absolutes (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:235). During the Middle Ages, a theocentric society regarded God as the centre for the conformity to conventionally accepted standards of behaviour or morals (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:235). The post medieval era brought about the Western philosophy of humanism where a “parallel shift in moral authority occurred from deriving moral absolutes from religion or from God to the idea that human beings possessed natural and inalienable rights” (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:235). Regardless of the shift it is important to note that no rational human being can escape the demands of propriety as even refusing to make a decision on morality is in itself a moral choice (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:253).

According to Lusenga (2010:17), “educated people understand what is considered appropriate in living life, understand the demands of propriety, are committed to right action and comply with the country’s laws and accepted principles”. It is therefore important to create an awareness within the education system that the norms, values, and principles that learners choose to live with will influence the decisions they make and ultimately help to shape their future (Zulu *et al.*, 2019: 253). Thompson (2018:1-6) views moral choices as a determining factor of any person’s approach to propriety and what they view as ‘the good life’ for themselves and the community.

2.2.2 Moral behaviour

As Kavussanu (2008) proposed, any behaviour that significantly influences the security and well-being of others pertaining to morality, can be classified as moral behaviour. Bandura *et al.* (2001:125) perceive the “capacity to exercise some measure of control over one’s thought processes, motivation, affect, and action” of great importance in the outcome of moral behaviour. Within the context of this study, moral regeneration would aim at creating an educational space where teachers and learners foster moral behaviour patterns which nurture respect, love, care, compassion, and fairness, combatting ill-discipline and antisocial behaviour (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:25). Mulaudzi and Mudzielwana (2016:7519) assert the importance of fostering moral behaviour in

education with the aim of ensuring that an environment is created that is conducive for teaching and learning.

2.2.2.1 Moral mechanisms

Moral mechanisms view the research questions through a functional perspective, observing the mechanisms relevant to people's thoughts and experiences related to morality (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) review the different functions of morality and perceive four levels for the purpose of evaluating how morality is affected by the "way people think about themselves, interact with others, live and work together in groups, and relate to other groups in society".

- Intrapersonal mechanisms

This refers to all the ways in which people consider, think, and reason by themselves to determine which behaviour would be considered morally 'right' (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Intrapersonal processes address moral decision-making and engages in moral development and moral foundations (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880).

- Interpersonal mechanisms

Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) note that this refers to how the individual relates to other individuals and responds to their moral behaviours. Interpersonal processes attend to identity definition of moral self-regard and moral image (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880).

- Intragroup mechanisms

Individuals respond to groups and either conform to or resist group norms, resulting in inclusion or exclusion from the group (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Intragroup processes address social regulatory group dynamics of moral norms and moral accountability (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880). Morality impacts the behavioural regulation within the group (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:881).

- Intergroup mechanisms

Social groups respond to and endorse the moral guidelines of groups whose identity and values connects with theirs. Moral issues often lead to disagreements, causing conflicts between groups (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). The endorsement of shared moral values helps to establish and define group-based identities (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:881). Intergroup processes engage in

intergroup social regulatory relations of moral superiority and moral licencing (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880).

The argument of Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) that each of these four mechanisms are helpful to shape the individual's moral concerns, impacting emotions, self-views, and essentially moral behaviour, is relevant for the development of strategies for moral regeneration of secondary learners.

2.2.2.2 Moral character traits

Brambilla *et al.* (2012:151) state that “morality is predominantly associated with characteristics pertaining to the correctness of social targets, e.g., honesty, sincerity, and trustworthiness.” Universal morals address behaviour that indicates fairness, honesty, and concern for the outcomes of others (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:882). Aquino and Reed (2002) identified nineteen distinct character traits which corresponds with Bennett (1991) and Damon (1977) in defining a moral person. These traits are listed as follows: “(c)aring, compassionate, conscientious, considerate, dependable, ethical, fair, forgiving, friendly, generous, giving, hardworking, helpful, honest, kind, loyal, religious, trustworthy, and understanding” (Aquino & Reed, 2002).

2.2.2.3 Values, morals, and principles

Chippendale (2001:2) clearly distinguishes between values, ethics, morals, and principles:

Values motivate, morals and ethics constrain. In other words, values describe what is important in a person's life, while ethics and morals prescribe what is or is not considered appropriate behaviour in living one's life. Principles inform (people's) choice of values, morals, and ethics.

Chippendale (2001:2) further proposes that values refer to worth and influences not only our behaviour but also the behaviour of others as well as mutual interaction. Values guide personal choices, perceptions, and the worth that others are valued with (Chippendale, 2001:2). Chippendale (2001:3) firmly believes that a set of principles need to be reformulated, encouraging informed choices and judgments regarding actions with a greater certainty of the outcome. It is important to note that universal moral values have an abstract nature and therefore any specific moral behaviour can shift depending on the relevant norms and the shared moral standards of groups (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). The social context is a predisposing factor in terms of behavioural norms (Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Greene, 2013; Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012). Camacho *et al.* (2003:508) posit that “value is created by the relation between a person's current regulatory orientation and the manner of goal pursuit a situation induces”. Values are grounded

on culturally accepted standards and customs, joined with personal experiences of goal motivation in relation to the control orientation of what is morally right and socially acceptable (Camacho *et al.*, 2003:508). Haidt and Kesebir (2010) propose that “moral principles indicate what is a ‘good’, ‘virtuous’, ‘just’, ‘right’, or ‘ethical’ way for humans to behave”. One of the main aims of moral guidelines is to prevent harm to others, promoting fairness, empathy, or altruism (Ellemers, 2017). Moral rules are important for individuals within a social community which includes learners, with the aim of preventing selfish and destructive behaviour towards others (Ellemers, 2017).

2.2.2.4 Moral emotions and moral behaviour

Moral emotions are an important element of the human moral apparatus and necessary for understanding behavioural conformity or deviance to moral standards (Tangney *et al.*, 2007:2). Eisenberg (2000:665) reflects that emotions “(h)elp people to distinguish moral features in specific contexts, to motivate moral behaviour, and to undercut immoral behaviour”. Kroll and Egan (2004) view moral emotions as the motivational force to do good and avoiding harm. Haidt (2003:853) defines moral emotions “(a)s those emotions that are linked to the interests or welfare either of society as a whole or at least of persons other than the judge or agent”. Tangney *et al.* (2007:2) argue that the moral emotions of shame, guilt, embarrassment, and pride are self-conscious emotions which evaluate and direct behaviour as a direct result of self-evaluation. Empirical research proposes evidence that shame has the potential to be a negative emotion as it is connected to self, whereas guilt is a more morally adaptive emotion directed at behaviour (Baumeister *et al.*, 1994; Ketelaar & Au, 2003; Tangney *et al.*, 1996b). Shame as a negative emotion focuses on the ‘bad’ self, eliciting fear, hostility, and anxiety, motivating behaviour where individuals are prone to hide or escape due to the self-oriented distress (Eisenberg, 2000:670). Shame is highly correlated with aggressive behaviour (Eisenberg, 2000:669). Guilt focuses on the ‘bad’ behaviour which highlights the negative consequences experienced by others, fostering empathic responses due to other-oriented empathy (Tangney *et al.*, 2007: 6). Eisenberg (2000: 668) supports this viewpoint by highlighting that guilt involves feelings of remorse and regret, eliciting a desire for restitution, confession, and reparation. Tangney *et al.* (2007:9) reason that shame-free guilt as a moral emotion serves to protect all age groups against anti-social and risky behaviour, delinquency, and substance abuse, motivating people to choose the moral paths in life. Eisenberg (2000:666) proposes that guilt and sympathy are viewed as higher-order emotions, motivating moral behaviour and salient in the development of moral character. Mascolo and Fischer (1995) perceive moral pride as an emotion that enhances feelings of self-worth, encouraging behaviour that conforms to social standards of merit. Haidt (2000, 2003); McCullough *et al.* (2001); Emmons and McCullough (2003) further identify gratitude as a positive

moral emotion which benefits relationships and adaptive behaviour. One of the most important moral emotions that implicates moral behaviour is empathy. Empathy is a moral emotional process which involves a cognition of others' perspective, leading to concern for others and a focus on the needs of others (Tangney *et al.*, 2007:18). Eisenberg *et al.* (2004, 2006) support the view that empathy is central to the human moral affective system, motivating concern for others, prompting behaviour to help others, and inhibiting aggressive behaviour that is harmful to others.

Humanization is a powerful way to stimulate the emotion of empathy and to encourage moral behaviour (Bandura, 1999:202). When the moral emotion of empathy is encouraged, individuals become sensitive to the suffering of others, activating evaluative self-sanctions which motivates moral behaviour (Bandura, 1986). The affective domain of morality recognises empathy as an important moral emotion in the regulation of moral behaviour (Noddings, 2003:171). Ruiz (2004: 283) defines the purpose of empathy as:

... feeling, 'pathos', (and) solidarity with other human beings who deserve happiness and recognition. It is not the faculty of reason which moves us to act without duty, but neither is it a mere irrational feeling. Rather, it is an affection (feeling affected, suffering) in our conscience for the recognition for others in certain circumstances.

Dijker (2010:417) reasons that the moral emotions of tenderness, concern, sympathy, moral anger, and guilt are concerned with the moral domains that are linked to the welfare of others, namely caring about others, protecting others from harm, and preventing any further harm to others. An important moral emotion which can be described as an expression of maturity, is discipline. Zulu *et al.* (2019:10) posit that, "[d]isciplined behaviour on the part of the educand can therefore be described as reciprocal ethical behaviour, as an ethically positive response to the engagement of the educator". Moral behaviour is greatly determined by the strength of personal beliefs, attitudes, or convictions, causing resilience to conform to social pressures (Brezina & Piquero, 2007; Langdridge *et al.*, 2007).

2.2.2.5 Social norms motivating behaviour

There are many factors in modern society that may have an impact on an individual's personal existence and on the schooling environment, causing ill-discipline and unruliness (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:10). Social pressures within the environment and social context often encourage people to partake in deviant behaviour or group orientated behaviour dependent on social norms (Ellemers *et al.*, 2008). This context of behavioural regularities refers to the Social Learning Theory and the Social Norms Theory as indicated in Chapter One, section 1.7.1 and 1.7.3. Dreman (1976) highlights that "[r]esearch has shown that verbal moral expressions are influenced mainly by

cognitive factors ... while manifest moral behaviour is mainly a function of social learning ...". On the other side of the social norm's trajectory, moral norms are prescriptive norms, motivating group members to discriminate against those who deviate from moral norms (Cramwinckel *et al.*, 2016: 76). Any compromise of moral norms may lead to derogation and judgement of group members who do not conform to the prescribed standards in morally-laden situations (Cramwinckel *et al.*, 2016:76).

2.2.2.6 Emotional disengagement and violation of moral standards

Jackson *et al.* (2016) propose that internalised moral standards can be suppressed, denied, masked, or bypassed through affect disengagement. Emotional disengagement can manifest in a number of behaviours, but the goal remains to remove oneself from the reality of emotions regardless of the consequences (Jackson *et al.*, 2016). Eisenberg (2000) identifies emotional disengagement as a disconnection from the feelings of other people, encouraging the violation of moral standards and a disregard for the rights and welfare of others.

Zhang *et al.* (2017:56) posit that emotion dysregulation may be the main cause for deficits in the "[a]wareness and understanding of emotions, acceptance of emotions, ability to engage in goal-directed behaviour, and refrain from impulsive behaviour, when experiencing negative emotions". Emotional dysregulation leads to a lack of control over negative emotions, influencing moral reasoning and moral judgment within the five clusters of moral domains which mainly focuses on sanctity, harm, fairness, loyalty, and authority (Zhang *et al.*, 2017:56). Dogruyol *et al.* (2019:1) describes the five moral domains according to the Moral Foundations Theory of Graham *et al.* (2013) and Haidt (2007) which proposes that a process of:

[m]oral understanding is a result of our evolved psychology. According to this theory, there are at least five basic moral foundations, each distinctly evolved to solve a specific adaptive problem in our evolutionary past. *Care/harm* is defined as the caring behaviour toward other group members who are in need of protection. *Fairness/justice* is associated with the sensitivity for inequality and the motivation to maintain justice within the group. *Loyalty/betrayal* is related to protecting the interests of one's own group, favoring one's own group member, and discriminating against out-groups. *Authority/subversion* is the desire to maintain the hierarchical structure in the group, and respect for those who are higher in authority. *Sanctity/degradation* is related to the suppression of carnal desires, a motivation to be pure both physically and spiritually and to avoid infectious diseases.

Within the context of this study, it is of importance to note how emotional dysregulation from these five clusters are connected to the phenomenon of moral degeneration. Honesty, humility, and guilt proneness are moral standards which need to be developed to prevent delinquency, unethical decision making, and counterproductive behaviour (Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816). Honesty and humility are moral character traits which include a broad dimension of moral characteristics associated with fairness, sincerity, modesty, greed-avoidance, faithfulness, loyalty, modesty, and fair-mindedness (Cohen *et al.*, 2013:818). Emotional disengagement from these domains could lead to a violation of moral standards correlated with greed, unethical behaviour, deception, deviancy, and criminal behaviours (Cohen *et al.*, 2013:818). Cohen *et al.* (2013:818) reason that individuals who develop high levels of guilt proneness are more likely to internalise moral values and refrain from unethical behaviour due to the emotional engagement with guilt regarding deviant or illegal behaviour. Guilt proneness is strongly correlated with honesty and humility as it involves the negative evaluation of behaviour necessary for maintaining high moral standards (Cohen *et al.*, 2013:818). Shu and Francesca (2012:3) propose that once individuals behave dishonestly, they “unconsciously suppress their memories of moral norms meant to guide their actions”. Shu and Francesca (2012:5) support the view of Bandura *et al.* (1996) that “moral disengagement allows people to repackage their beliefs regarding ethically questionable behaviour so that the behaviour is re-construed as ethically permissible”. Mather and Johnson (2000) refer to this process of disengagement and the motivation to deviate from moral standards, as “choice-supportive distortion”. The classroom can be seen as a microcosm of society and many of the problems that are encountered by teachers are evident of an aberration from moral standards where learners display deviant behaviour, daily challenging teachers (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:25).

2.2.2.7 Moral disengagement

Bandura (1999:193) views moral disengagement leading to inhumane conduct as a growing problem, individually and collectively. Blair (1995:1) proposes that repeated irresponsible behaviour often begins in childhood, continuing throughout adolescence into adulthood. Individuals with progressive deviant behaviour tend to be aggressive and repeatedly get involved into altercations and physical fights (Blair, 1995:1). Blair (1995:2-7) suggested that for the regulation of deviant behaviour to be activated, moral emotions of empathy, guilt, sympathy, and remorse need to be developed together with the inhibition of violent action and moral distinction. There are many social and psychological mechanisms by which self-sanctions are selectively disengaged from detrimental behaviour (Bandura, 1986:376). Bandura (1999:194-203) explains moral disengagement as a process of “[m]oral justification, euphemistic labelling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, distortion of consequences, dehumanization, and attribution of blame”. Diagram 2.2 below illustrates the “[m]echanism

through which moral self-sanctions are selectively activated and disengaged from detrimental behaviour at different points in the self-regulatory process” (Bandura, 1999:194).

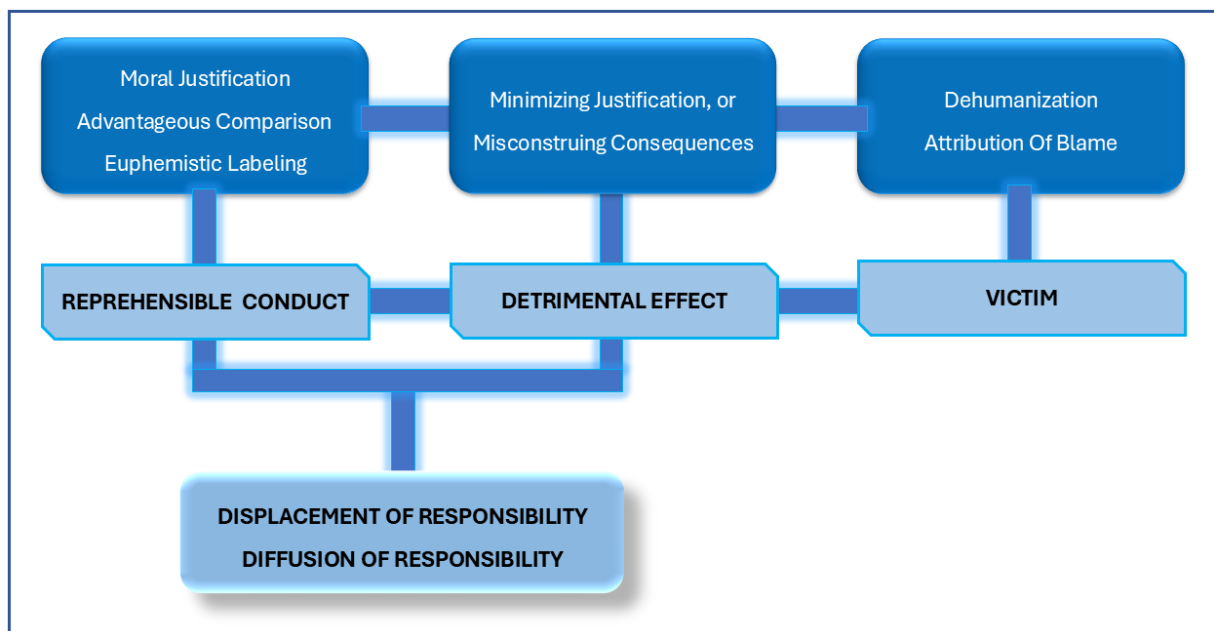


Diagram 2.2 Moral disengagement (Adapted from Bandura, 1986:376)

- Moral justification

Moral disengagement and the engagement in harmful conduct is set in motion as individuals or collective groups begin to justify their behaviour as acceptable (Bandura, 1999:195). Bandura (1999:195) describes the radical shift that takes place when destructive behaviour is clothed in moral wrappings and cognitively redefined for outrageous purposes. Bandura (1999:195) encapsulates moral justification by stating that “[t]hose who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities” (Bandura, 1999:195). Destructive conduct has been justified for centuries in the name of religious or nationalistic ideologies (Kramer, 1990). Many learners today justify unruly or destructive behaviour in the classroom, defending it with their constitutional rights (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:47-49).

- Advantageous comparison

Bandura (1999:195-196) describes how harmful conduct is made to look good by exploiting comparisons of behaviour. One’s own destructive conduct is made to appear benevolent by contrasting it with immoral and offensive inhumanities (Bandura, 1999:196). Absolving comparisons from blame relies heavily on moral justification, advancing moral disengagement (Bandura, 1999:196).

- Euphemistic labelling

Verbal sanitisation has the potential to turn harmful behaviour and assaultive actions into 'respectable' behaviour as specialised jargon recreates corruption, cruelty, and absurdities, depicting events as legitimate, and reducing personal responsibility (Bandura, 1999:195). Teachers often complain that atrocities are camouflaged in a sanitising parlance, and euphemisms cover up the injurious effects of many reprehensible acts within the classroom (Bandura, 1999:195).

- Distortion of consequences

Bandura (1999:199) explains that as long as harmful conduct can be ignored, minimized, distorted, or disbelieved, there is little reason for any self-evaluation or self-sanction. It becomes easy for learners to disengage from any moral self-sanctions as they bear no responsibility for the consequences of their behaviour (Kilham & Mann, 1974).

- Dehumanization

Moral self-sanction depends on how each individual views those being mistreated and if an emphatic foundation has not been laid in the formative years, leading to a direct response to the feelings of others, the perpetration of inhumanities are rationalised (Bandura, 1986). The evidence of this is seen daily in classrooms in serious incidents of bullying between learners with no regard for the feelings of those being victimized (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:29-30). Bandura *et al.* (1975) note that the power of humanization can counteract cruel conduct as people are able to connect their lives to the welfare of others, supporting proactive moral behaviour.

- Attribution of blame

Bandura (1999:203) views the blaming of circumstances or rivals as an exonerative way of escaping destructive actions and shifting responsibility which becomes a mechanism for moral justification.

- Displacement of responsibility

Self-exemption displaces responsibility and sanctions disobedience and harmful behaviour (Bandura, 1999:196). The teaching environment has become destabilised due to ill-discipline from learners and the exoneration from any liability for destructive behaviour, often causing teachers to flee from classrooms (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:69).

- Diffusion of responsibility

Bandura (1999:198) posit that “moral control is also weakened when personal agency is obscured by diffusing responsibility for detrimental behaviour.” When everyone becomes responsible for harmful behaviour, no one becomes accountable for their actions (Bandura, 1999:198).

Bandura (1999:206) comments on Edmund Burke’s aphorism that “[t]he only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing” needs a companion adage, “[t]he triumph of evil requires a lot of good people doing a bit of it in a morally disengaged way with indifference to the human suffering they collectively cause.” Learners who become morally disengaged are less troubled by their destructive behaviour, less prosocial, prone to a victim mentality, easily angered, and inclined to peer pressure involvement in anti-social or delinquent conduct (Kwak & Bandura, 1998). Zulu *et al.* (2019:10) describe “ill-discipline and antisocial behaviour as an ethically negative response to the engagement and actions of the teacher as an educator”. Discipline and prosocial behaviour functions optimally within the moral domain of respect (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:10). “If respect is withheld by learners it leads to an increase in self-infrahumanization which is related to a higher endorsement of unethical behaviour” (Renger *et al.*, 2016:553).

2.2.2.8 Moral beliefs leading to the abstention of delinquent behaviour

Bandura *et al.* (1996) argue that “moral standards and self-sanctions are important predictors of moral behaviour”, which confirm that moral beliefs potentially impact behaviour. Research indicates that abstainers from delinquent behaviour are more likely to endorse conservative values and high moral standards (Hogan *et al.*, 1970; Moffitt *et al.*, 1996; Shedler & Block, 1990). Brezina and Piquero (2007:436) point out that individuals who choose to abstain from delinquency often do so because of a strong conviction of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, supporting the viewpoint that moral beliefs are the foundation for this behaviour. Shu and Francesca (2012:35) support this viewpoint by proposing that individuals who regard morality as a salient matter, allow behaviour to be guided by internal and external moral codes, including mission statements and honour codes. The conviction to abstain from delinquency because of strong moral standards often lead to the exclusion by the peer group who places an emphasis on the ‘party subculture’ (Brezina & Piquero, 2007:437). Piquero *et al.* (2005) state that strong moral beliefs motivate individuals to self-select into pro-social peer groups. Brezina and Piquero (2007:440) as well as Leifman *et al.* (1995) argue that adolescents who choose to abstain from delinquent behaviour often model the behaviour of their parents as role models. In relation to the Social Norms Theory, they are less likely to partake in the peer culture of unhealthy behaviours such as substance abuse and have less conflict with legitimate authorities (Brezina & Piquero, 2007:440; Leifman *et al.*, 1995).

According to Moffitt *et al.* (2002:196) the adolescent who retains a profile of strong self-regulation, abstaining from delinquent behaviour, has a stronger probability to continue with this behaviour into adulthood, displaying a profile free of crime and mental disorders. This is consistent with the modelling and has the added advantage of supporting learners' needs. Participants stated that the emphasis was placed on mentorship and guidance in terms of moral values within the peer group. This creates opportunities for the development of Interpersonal Mechanisms as individual learners relates to the mentorship of other learners and responds to their moral behaviours. Teachers reflected on the potential of learners in encouraging one another and spreading positive messages about 'doing the right thing'. Participants further highlighted the impact of learners becoming involved in the presentation of teachings on morals, values and beliefs.

2.2.3 Moral development

Moral development has been studied through a psychological, theoretical, and philosophical lens since the beginning of the twentieth century (Turiel, 2008). Freud investigated the concept of conscience and the relationship between an individual and society, where the need for instant gratification eventually matures as a process of internalized emotional mechanisms which regulate behaviours (Turiel, 2008). Skinner examined how behaviours reinforced by value judgements and influenced by cultural norms develop as morality (Turiel, 2008). Piaget considered knowledge and judgements about social relationships central to moral development and proposed that a variety of experiences and emotional reactions are included in this domain (Turiel, 2008). Kohlberg greatly influenced research on moral development and moved the domain out of the confines of a psychological analysis into a philosophical definition with his six stages, depicting a progression of judgements (Turiel, 2008).

Turiel (2008) proposes that the moral realm is not one-dimensional and that morality is a multifaceted conception that includes the integration of thought, emotions, actions, and development. Individual life experiences and different social roles impact moral development and play a major role in how moral principles are endorsed (Haskuka *et al.*, 2008). It is evident that one's own social class, race or personal convictions influence the moral evaluations of others and whether self-anchoring, self-distancing, or self-justifying intentions will be amplified (Iyer *et al.*, 2012). Turiel (2008) regards morality as a complex concept as humans keep striving for social and moral harmony, yet the qualities of fairness, justice, care, loyalty, and sanctity have proven difficult to achieve in a social world where conflict, opposition, and moral resistance remains a reality.

2.2.3.1 Cognitive development

Evidence from functional neuroimaging clearly demonstrates that a set of regions in the frontoparietal area of the brain is implicated in cognitive control and the necessary controlled processes to condemn harmful actions (Cushman *et al.*, 2012). Within the cognitive developmental model, it is proposed that the sophistication of a person's moral development will predict a person's moral behaviour (Kohlberg, 1971; Rest & Navarez, 1994). Aquino and Reed (2002:1423) propose that the fundamental difference between the "[c]ognitive-developmental model and the socio-cognitive model is that the former emphasizes moral reasoning, whereas the latter emphasizes self-regulatory mechanisms". Both are important as complex moral thinking can only affect behaviour in the presence of a cognitive-developmental process in conjunction with self-regulatory mechanisms (Aquino & Reed, 2002:1423).

2.2.3.2 Moral identity

Tanay in Rittener and Myers (1986) found identity a critical concept in the development of a moral identity. Hart *et al.* (1998) defined a moral identity as "a commitment to one's sense of self to lines of action that promote or protect the welfare of others". Aquino & Reed (2002) and Blasi (1980) describe a moral identity as "a self-schema organized around a set of moral trait associations that motivates moral behaviour". Developing an altruistic identity and a moral identity rooted in empathy will require a critical perceptual shift towards the needs of others (Monroe, 2008:703). Moral identity is impacted by self-concept and moral inclusion, or exclusion is a cognitive process (Monroe, 2008:704). Despite self-image, it is moral identity that 'sets a cognitive menu of options' where actions are considered (Monroe, 2008:713). Aquino and Reed (2002) and Blasi (1984) view moral identity as the integration of a person's moral character into his/her overall self-concept. Moral identity is a reliable predictor of moral behaviour (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Blasi, 1984) and when strongly rooted in self-definition, compassionate behaviours are given high importance in terms of social responsibility (Reed *et al.*, 2007). Shao *et al.* (2008) view one's moral identity as a main predictor in moral functioning as moral judgement and choice is influenced by personal interpretation and acknowledgement. The personal commitment to engage in any moral action is directly related to moral identity with the aim to remain dependable to one's 'moral self' (Blasi, 1984). Goodman (2000:51) describes moral identity as the "pivot that transforms a shouldn't or should into a mustn't or must". Fenigstein *et al.* (1975) posit that moral identity consists of two dimensions, internalization which is characterized by an introspective awareness of thoughts and feelings, and symbolisation which is identified by the impact that we have on others as a social object. Aquino and Reed (2002:1424) are of the viewpoint that moral identity is rooted in a characteristic conceptualisation connected to a social antecedent, meaning

that a moral identity is adopted in terms of the moral characteristics represented by the social group of choice. This could be a religious group, for example, Christians or Muslims, or a known or unknown individual which serves as a mentor of moral standards adopted as an identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002:1424).

There is validity in this statement as there is an outcry today for pedagogics to justify that religion be brought back into the education system as a foundation for moral standards (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:226). Zulu *et al.* (2019:226) argue that the return of Religious Education instead of the current policy of banning religion and that Religious Education will provide a strong base for the regulation of social behaviour. Simpson *et al.* (2016:256) support this argument by reasoning that “religiosity shapes morally relevant attitudes and behaviour in a wide variety of ways”. Religious identification is a strong motivating factor in maintaining ingroup loyalties, respecting authorities, and endorsing sexual purity and sanctity (Simpson *et al.*, 2016:256). Simpson *et al.* (2016:257) propose that “[a]theists are perceived to lack a codified moral system, transmitted through the teachings of a religious community and holy texts, rendering them ‘moral wild-cards’ without a firm, moral foundation to their actions”. Cramwinckel *et al.* (2016:75) propose that religious beliefs are a strong influence on conformity to values and group norms. Abrams *et al.* (2000:906) further state that belonging to a religious in-group, encourages conformity and adherence to group norms and standards, therefore maximising the deterrence of any in-group deviance from prescriptive and proscriptive moral standards affiliated to the religion. Simpson *et al.* (2016:264) conclude that religion elicits individuals to be grounded in all moral domains, especially authority as God is seen as the supreme moral authority.

2.2.3.3 Moralisation of self and self-control

Research has labelled self-control as the “moral muscle” due to the impact that it has on moral behaviour and avoiding temptations (Gino *et al.*, 2011; Mead *et al.*, 2009; Muraven *et al.*, 2006). As self-control is converted into values, the process of moralization takes place and self-control becomes a morally significant trait, regulating the choices between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ (Mooijman *et al.*, 2018:585). The dimensions of care/harm and fairness/cheating within the Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) protects the individual’s rights and autonomy, but self-control is needed for the individual to take care of themselves/others, not to harm themselves/others, to be fair to themselves/others, and to prevent cheating (Mooijman *et al.*, 2018:586). Baumeister *et al.* (2007) are of the viewpoint that “(s)elf-control has been theorized as the capacity to inhibit immediate personal desires in the service of long-term goals and values” (Baumeister *et al.*, 2007). Mooijman *et al.* (2018:586) reason that self-control needs to be converted to a moral value for moralization to be realised. Mooijman *et al.* (2018:587) are supported by McCullough and

Willoughby (2009) in emphasizing that “[r]eligiosity, social conservatism, group identities, and cultural collectivism are positively related to the moralization of self-control by virtue of religious, conservative, and collectivistic individuals’ endorsement of binding moral foundations”.

Reflecting on the reality of ill-discipline and antisocial behaviour within the educational environment, moralisation of self and self-control is becoming increasingly important (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:49-50). Discipline has become a highly controversial topic, and many argue against the degrading long-term psychological effects (Kilimci, 2009:242). According to Bitensky (2006:11) corporal punishment does not contribute towards the moral development of the child. Instead of reinforcing desirable behaviour in learners, and teaching them to resolve conflict peacefully, it only halts the transgression. Elbla (2012:1657-1661) is of the viewpoint that corporal punishment is more prone to affect behaviour modification on a short-term instead of leading to the desired long-term moralisation of self which leads to prolonged disciplined behaviour in the absence of the teacher.

2.2.3.4 Emotion regulation

Cushman (2013:274) argues that every choice that needs to be made involves cognitive and emotional processing. These processes underlie moral development and the aversion to doing harm. Eisenberg (2000:665) views emotion regulation as an individual’s ability to effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience. People who can regulate their emotions are more likely to experience positive emotions like sympathy/empathy rather than distress or anxiety (Eisenberg, 2000:674). Blair *et al.* (2001:800) reason that affective empathy plays a crucial role in the emergence of morality. Moral socialisation is achieved through the process of inducting empathy and drawing attention to the distress, moral welfare, and plight of others (Blair *et al.*, 2001:800). Blair *et al.* (2000) include the research of Hoffman (1987) and Turiel (1983) in validating the degree to which the emotional regulation of empathy develops morality. Children are able from their second year of life to distinguish between their own and others’ internal states, allowing them to become emphatically involved in the distress of others (Eisenberg, 2000:679). Eisenberg (2000:679) reasons that two-year-olds have an awareness of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ and the emotion of empathy motivates prosocial actions or reparative behaviours. Empathy continues to increase with age in childhood into adolescence and this is where the parental role is salient in fostering the healthy regulation of emotions. Research gives clear evidence that the development of the affective/moral orientation is positively/negatively related to parental behaviour and associated emotion regulation (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Ferguson & Stegge, 1995; Kochanska, 1991; Kochanska & Aksan, 1995). Children who are constantly exposed to negative emotions exhibit high levels of aggression and externalizing deviant behaviour (bullying, lying, and stealing)

(Eisenberg *et al.*, 1996a; Stice & Gonzales, 1998). Within the context of this study, it is important to note that emotional regulation is salient in the moral development of any individual. In the current crisis of a moral collapse within the schooling system combined with delinquent behaviour and conduct disorders, emotional regulation is relevant in the aim of moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

2.2.3.5 Moral guidelines within the group

Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012:882) point out that there are “[c]ulture-specific conceptions of what is considered morally ‘right’ behaviour”. Even within one culture, group-specific morals may be evident depending on the adherence of different social groups or sub-cultures to political or religious factions (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:882). Implicit or explicit behavioural codes of conduct have the potential for moral guidelines to become “identity-defining indicators” (Brandt & Reyna, 2011; Giner-Sorolla, 2012). Ellemers and Van Der Toorn (2015:190); and Clark *et al.* (2017:74-75) argue that the enactment of morality principles may vary depending on defining norms and distinctive features of the cultural, religious, or political context. This viewpoint is supported by Haidt (2001:817) who states that people of different social groups or cultures endorse different moral values. Ingroup norms are a motivating factor for individuals to think, feel, and act within the expectations for group behaviour (Ellemers *et al.*, 2008:1397-1398). Bettencourt and Hume (1999) posit that the shared values of group members are often a more salient factor guiding individual behaviour than personal identity. Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012: 882) reason that intragroup moral conflict may arise where different members of one group endorses or rejects norms that represent the group’s moral values. Within the context of this study, strategies for moral regeneration could be challenged by learners of different social groups and sub-cultures where the conception of morally ‘right’ behaviour may vary considerably. The implications of different political, generational, religious, and cultural group values need to be facilitated with sensitivity for moral regeneration to be realised for secondary school learners (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:885). Diagram 2.3 illustrates the significance of group morals and relevant behaviour that secures group inclusion (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015:192).

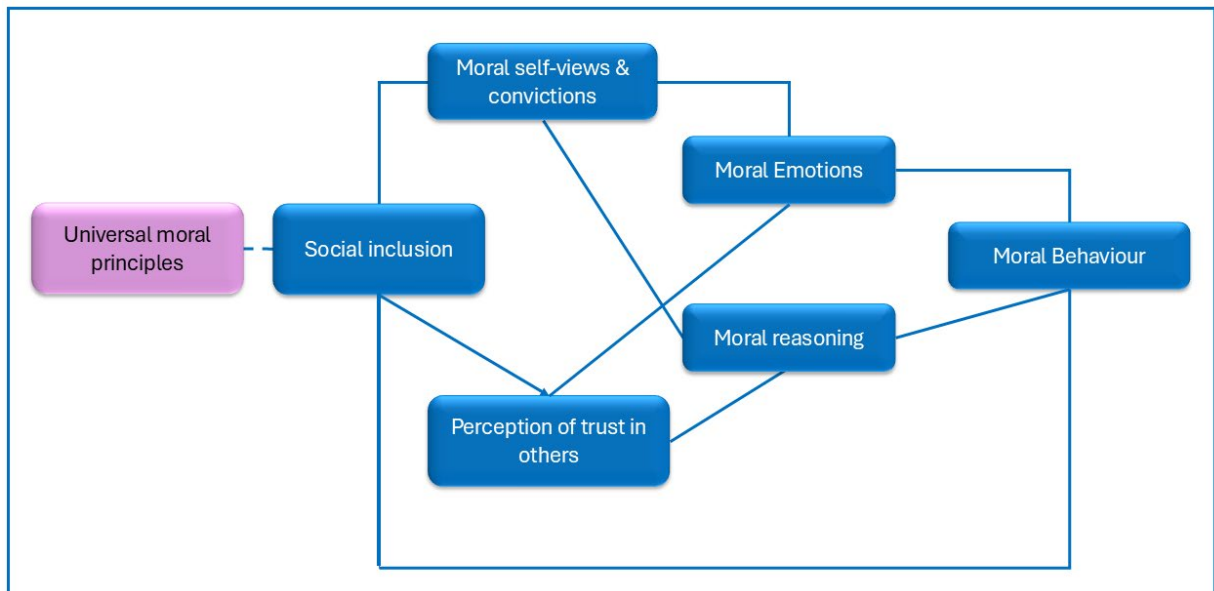


Diagram 2.3 The Significance of Group Morals (Adapted from Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015:192)

Ellemers and Van Der Toorn (2015:192) highlight that “[s]ocial groups provide people with moral anchors for their personal convictions. Shared moral values impact upon the way [people] see [themselves] and others, and on the reasoning and emotions that make us behave in ways that characterize the moral values of the group and secure group inclusion”.

2.2.3.6 Influence of the peer group on moral behaviour

Ellemers and Van Der Toorn (2015:189-190) propose that people’s viewpoints of morality can be determined by defining norms and distinctive features of their peer group, impacting moral reasoning, moral emotions, moral self-views, moral judgments, and moral behaviour. Pagliaro *et al.* (2011:1117-1118) examine the influence that the peer group has to motivate the enactment of moral values shared by the ingroup as a means of earning respect and acceptance, elevating feelings of inclusion and self-esteem. Group members often regard their social identity as a greater influence on their behaviour than aspects of personal identity (Bettencourt & Hume, 1999; Pagliaro *et al.*, 2011:1117-1118). Peer group identities are often subject to the endorsement of shared moral values which impact the behavioural regulation within the group (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:881). Van Der Lee *et al.* (2017:748) posit that morality/immorality is a strong deterrent in terms of peer group acceptance or rejection. Group members will evaluate the extent to which individuals are able to contribute to the group’s goals and if the member is not able to devote himself/herself to the group’s appropriate behaviours and attitudes, exclusion occurs (Van Der Lee *et al.*, 2017:749). Any individual who implicitly challenges the group’s norms and standards will be expected to conform or face rejection (Van Der Lee *et al.*, 2017:749). Kouchaki

(2011:702) argues that people's moral self-concept can be influenced by observing the chosen moral actions of others, liberating them to engage in immoral behaviour. Individuals are prone to model the behaviour of the in-group into their own self-concept, changing their behaviour according to in-group expectations (Kouchaki, 2011:702). Kouchaki (2011:704) proposes that blurred self-other boundaries and self-concept will affect how others influence moral behaviour. Feelings of being connected to a group is easily manipulated by the sense of belonging, causing a shift in an individual's moral identity, justifying the choice to partake in morally questionable behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:712). Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012:882-883) support this view by stating that individuals are prone to seek information from the peer group that they consider as self-relevant regarding views on what is 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour, regardless whether society or the broader social community is in disagreement with the group's perspective on conduct.

2.2.4 Moral reasoning

Moral development is a process whereby moral feelings are probed and cultivated, followed by a process where moral feelings are expanded with reasoning, allowing moral motivations to lead to moral actions (Kuang, 2023:792). Within this process of reasoning, moral self-evaluation and self-regulatory mechanisms are discussed as important functions leading to moral action.

2.2.4.1 Moral self-evaluation

Bandura (1999:194) explains that the ongoing exercise of self-evaluation motivates and regulates moral conduct, leading to inhibitive and proactive behaviour. Inhibitive behaviour is the power to refrain from inhumane behaviour and proactive conduct is the passionate investment into humane convictions and moral obligations (Bandura, 1999:194). Pagliaro *et al.* (2016:2) reason that in addition to moral self-evaluation, concerns about other people's views of the moral self, influence the degree that individuals endorse moral-based norms. Ellemers *et al.* (2013) support this view by arguing that people's sense of self-worth is strongly determined by acknowledgement of their moral behaviour and inclusion by the group. Pagliaro *et al.* (2016:1) explain that people value the evaluation of their behaviour as moral or immoral as this impacts on their moral reputation. As moral reputation carries more weight than competence, respect is valued within the process of self-evaluation and when this is negatively judged by the group, individuals are motivated to restore a positive reputation (Ybarra *et al.*, 2012).

2.2.4.2 Self-regulatory mechanisms and the impact on behaviour

Within the social cognitive theory, Bandura (1991) describes moral reasoning being translated into actions through self-regulatory mechanisms which are anchored in moral standards and self-sanctions. Self-sanctions are rooted in proactive self-organizing, self-reflective mechanisms which govern moral conduct when activated (Bandura, 1999:193). Self-sanctions are the first step in how individuals would approach morality and conduct behaviour collectively. Monroe (2008:728) reasons that if cognitive categorization has the potential to influence our ethical perspective, it also holds the possibility to influence our behaviour. Bandura *et al.* (2001:125) examine the fostering of prosocialness and self-regulating mechanisms in the controlling of transgressive behaviour. Through self-development and promoting prosocialness, the inclination to partake in harmful conduct is reduced through moral self-sanctions (Bandura *et al.*, 2001:125). Prosocialness fosters co-operation, helpfulness, sharing, and empathy which becomes a deterrent to transgressive behaviour as emotional sensitivity towards the suffering of others is awakened (Bandura *et al.*, 2001:127). Bandura *et al.* (2001:132) emphasise that cognitive self-arousal of anger, vengeful thoughts, and vindictive rumination fosters detrimental conduct and requires the adaptation of self-management and self-control to positively influence behaviour. The development of self-regulatory skills is needed to divert the negative affect caused by everyday experiences which have the potential to impact behaviour with levels of uncontrolled aggression, leading to serious social and legal consequences (Bandura *et al.*, 2001:132). Thought processes and emotions directly influence human behaviour and self-regulation is needed to exercise control (Bandura *et al.*, 2001:132). Raush (1965) and Bandura *et al.* (1996; 1999) highlight that self-sanctions need a harmonious social milieu to foster prosocial behaviour and counteract aggressive and harmful affectivity. Within the context of this study it is of importance to explore and understand the lived experiences of teachers on the phenomenon of moral degeneration and the possible impact of self-regulatory mechanisms to foster an incentive for secondary learners to make positive life choices leading to moral regeneration (Bandura, 1995; Maddux, 1995; Schwarzer, 1992).

2.2.4.3 Moral Reasoning

Emotion is an important factor in moral reasoning and the internalization of moral principles that reflect a concern for the welfare of others (Carlo *et al.*, 1992:334). Carlo *et al.* (1992:334) reasons that empathy is necessary for the development of altruism and prosocial moral reasoning. If emotion is not nurtured and developed, the affective correlates of prosocial moral reasoning will be handicapped, impeding internalized reasoning that reflects sympathy, perspective taking, and cognition of consequences (Carlo *et al.*, 1992:343). These are all important factors in the

development of behaviour regulation. Behaviour necessitates a sequence of functions within the process of reasoning. When a situation is faced, reasoning begins, leading to moral judgement where a decision needs to be made between two existing and contrasting moral alternatives (Perugini & Leone, 2009:747). Perugini and Leone (2009:747) reason that any deficits in reasoning skills may compromise moral decision-making. Perugini and Leone (2009:753) also propose that a moral/immoral self-concept implicitly influences reasoning and the motivation of behaviour associated with the self.

2.2.4.4 Moral cognition and moral action

Blasi (1980:1-2) argues the central role of moral cognition in moral functioning, saying that morality is characteristic of habits, behavioural traits, and action tendencies which should lead to moral behaviour. Blasi (1980:4) reasons that no action would be moral without cognitive development leading to judgement of accepted values. The mechanism of moral cognition in relation to moral action involves moral information that needs to be processed within the moral values of an individual, allowing moral reasoning to take place (Blasi, 1980:6). The moral cognition of any content or information also depends on an individual's understanding of morality which develops with age and maturity (Blasi, 1980:7). Blasi (1980:8) states that moral behaviour follows moral cognition.

Blasi (1980:11-15) gives evidence of numerous studies done by Betke (1944); Kohlberg (1958); Ruma (1967); Fodor (1973); Hudgins and Prentice (1973); Jurkovic and Prentice (1974); Jurkovic (1976); and Campagna and Harter (1973); Kantner (1976); Schmidlin (1977); and Haviland (1977) "that delinquent individuals tend to use developmentally lower modes of moral reasoning than do matched nondelinquents". Blasi (1980:25) proposes that Krebs and Kohlberg consider the role of IQ and attention to be significant factors in the process of moral cognition and how each situation is read, influencing moral behaviour. Within the context of Kohlberg's theory, the relation between moral thinking and moral action can be tested by looking at the behavioural conformity to the values of the in-group, the laws of society, and the commands of legitimate authority (Blasi, 1980:35).

2.3 MORAL DE/REGENERATION

Reflecting on moral degeneration as discussed in Chapter One, section 1.2.3, a moral collapse is evident, negatively affecting the school environment where teachers are facing the risk of being unable to foster a sound value system and impacting the conduct and behaviour of learners. Moral degeneration as highlighted by De Klerk-Luttig and Van der Walt (2008:114) include "learner and educator misconduct, the increase of self-centredness, and rising levels of ethical illiteracy and

violence". Taking the interrelated concepts of morals and morality into consideration as discussed above, it is indisputable that moral regeneration begins with the reformation of a self-centred self-concept, developing the ability to see the needs of others and how a moral character can be nurtured within the moral domains of care, fairness, harm, loyalty, authority, and sanctity.

Thompson (2018:9,11) affirms the importance of everyone in the education system, from ministry to the youngest learner, learning to understand the difference between right and wrong, what is morally acceptable behaviour or not, and on what principles, values and rules the society operates. As Nolan (2009:13) observes, this understanding links the value and meaning of human life. The education system faces problems of enormous proportions, requiring a concentration on the development of a moral consciousness in the hearts and minds of all teachers and all learners. Moral regeneration can only be stimulated through a moral awareness and the development of compassion and moral empathy (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:257). Moral regeneration needs the inclusion of universal morals which are not culturally, politically, generationally, or religiously exclusive (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:878). Osswald *et al.* (2010:1093) propose that moral prototypes have the potential to influence behaviour which is 'good', 'moral', or 'right'. The caring prototype develops sympathy, empathy, concern, and a helpful attitude (Osswald *et al.*, 2010:1079). The just prototype influences fairness, morality, truthfulness, and honesty (Osswald *et al.*, 2010:1079). The brave prototypes aim to nurture courage and an adventurous nature for the heroic (Osswald *et al.*, 2010:1079).

As mentioned above, moral regeneration focuses on the reformation, development, and nurturing of a moral character. Sonnentag and McDaniel (2013:432) investigate character development education with the aim of fostering a 'moral rebellion'. A reflection on the program 'Facing History and Ourselves' lead to a discussion on critical thinking and the fostering of moral choices (Sonnentag & McDaniel, 2013:433). Sonnentag and McDaniel (2013:433) recognise the need for nurturing the levels of moral obligation where individuals are motivated to become courageous, compassionate, and socially active when facing morally problematic situations. Individuals need to take a principled stand, choosing to do the 'right thing' amidst the pressures of deviant behaviour (Sonnentag & McDaniel, 2013:433). According to Monin *et al.* (2008:76-77) 'moral rebels' refuse to comply with the status quo and reject silence to compromise values that will involve 'doing the right thing'. 2008). Monin *et al.* (2008) posit that 'moral rebels' face social rejection as they purposefully defend their internalized beliefs and values. The behavioural code of a 'moral rebel' refuses to compromise internalised values regardless of the behaviour of others (Monin *et al.*, 2008). Nurturing 'moral rebels', will require fostering a mindset where there is disobedience against unjust authorities, taking an ethical stand and refusing to comply with compromised values (Monin *et al.*, 2008). Colby and Damon (1992) propose that the fostering of

'moral rebellion' further requires the development of highly moral individuals who focuses on moral goals that are consistent with accepted norms of virtuous conduct (Trevifio *et al.*, 2006). Sonnentag and McDaniel (2013:444) highlight the importance of morally integrated positive role models in the process of nurturing the character development of 'moral rebels'. Within the context of this study, strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary learners need to take into account that "higher levels of moral trait integration" require the inclusion of "positive family members, positive teachers, and positive role models" (Sonnentag & McDaniel, 2013:444).

2.3.1 National and international discourses on moral regeneration

National discourses on the breakdown of morality in South Africa can be traced back to the moral regeneration policy initiatives of 1996 (Rauch, 2005:9). Strategies consisted of four pillars, focusing on the prevailing moral climate, the development of strong community values, and the upliftment of the education system (Rauch, 2005:9). Rauch (2005:9) points out that the origins of the Moral Regeneration Movement was initiated by the late State President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela and key South African religious leaders in June 1997. Rauch (2005:9) reflects on Nelson Mandela's timeless statement:

[O]ur hopes and dreams, at times, seem to be overcome by cynicism, self-centredness, and fear. This spiritual malaise sows itself as a lack of good spirit, as pessimism, or lack of hope and faith. And from it emerge the problems of greed and cruelty, of laziness and egotism, of personal and family failure. It both helps fuel the problems of crime and corruption and hinders our efforts to deal with them.

Nelson Mandela called on religious leaders to get involved in the moral regeneration initiative with the ANC and linked it to the concept of African Renaissance which was strongly supported by Thabo Mbeki (Rauch, 2006:10). Much of what our late former president envisaged can be linked to Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013) Model of Moral Motives as initiatives focused on the elimination of corruption through self-enrichment in the public and private sector (social order/communal solidarity), corruption in the justice system (social justice/communal responsibility), violence in familial settings (not harming/self restraint), and the abuse of women and children (not harming/self restraint). Richardson (2003:4) elaborates that moral regeneration aimed at the establishment of proactive measures to prevent the degeneration of South Africa into a 'moral slum'. The Moral Regeneration Movement recognized the moral assault on South African society, manifesting in high levels of crime, woman and child abuse, abuse of people with disabilities, abuse of the elderly, domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, drug trafficking, corruption, and white-collar crime (Richardson, 2003:5). Richardson (2003:5) points out that moral regeneration would confront the:

[d]evaluation of people; racism in key societal institutions; sexism and gender oppression as practiced by many South Africans in their daily lives, and in societal institutions and the socialisation of children; undermining and abuse of the Bill of Rights; breakdown of the family as a key social institution; huge gaps between the “haves” and the “have-nots”; poor work ethic; culture of enrichment; individualism and selfishness; lack of integrity and honesty among some people in position of influence; perceptions of slow delivery to the poor; culture of entitlement; consumerism and materialism; high levels of poverty.

Moral regeneration aimed at influencing society from positions of leadership and would include a Code of Conduct where signatories would commit to the high-sounding principles of integrity, incorruptibility, good faith, impartiality, openness, accountability, justice, respect, generosity, and leadership (Richardson, 2003:7). Discourses sought a ‘campaign’ approach to mobilise the moral regeneration initiative but sadly the lack of clarity about the mission and its strategy remained a key challenge (Rauch, 2005:10). The emphasis remained on structures and the process never led to a mass mobilisation of moral regeneration between government and society (Rauch, 2005:10). Moral apathy has led to a moral vacuum where the objectives of the Moral Regeneration Movement was never addressed, leading to an unacceptable level of moral degeneration in South Africa (Richardson, 2003). Richardson (2003) highlights that discourses and ‘campaigns’ need to motivate individual members of society to rebuild the moral fibre of a nation. Sevenhuijsen *et al.* (2003:302) point out that policies have immense power and authority to shape the way we think and function in society. The Department of Social Development (2006:1-2) aligned its policies with the principles of moral regeneration, stating that families need to become the foundation of our social order, producing normative behaviour. Sewpaul (2005:316) questions the policy document of the National Family Policy (DSD, 2006) and the message that the moral fibre of individuals and communities need to be rebuilt with the aim of promoting moral regeneration. Sustainability and redefining the motives of a morally regenerative vision remains an ongoing challenge due to a lack of unity and scepticism against discourses, policies, and the motives of government and organised NGOs (Rauch, 2005).

Morality is not an isolated phenomenon but exists in communities of association, such as family, the education system, and social institutions (Richardson, 2003:10). Richardson (2003:10) highlights that values are internalized and reinforced through meaningful socialisation within institutions. Morality requires community at a conceptual and practical level and moral regeneration requires teaching, training, and encouragement within a community of which the education system provides opportunities for this objective to be realised (Richardson, 2003:10).

Discourses in the United Kingdom within the moral regeneration arena includes policies focused on problematic behaviour within neighbourhoods and how to motivate a responsible majority to take a stand against a deviant, antisocial minority (Wallace, 2010:815). Wallace (2010:815) critiques how individuals can rebuild the moral fibre within communities by upholding the values of fairness and reciprocity (Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory, 2012), and promoting the values of restorative social justice (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes' Model of Moral Motives, 2013). White (2003) elaborates on this viewpoint by emphasizing that this entails the need for adequate distributive justice and the promotion of equitable opportunities where citizens become accountable to their community with the aim of improving neighbourhood conditions. White (2003) supports the viewpoint of Wallace on upholding the values of fairness and reciprocity through the enforcement of individual obligations and punishment for the failure to uphold the social order due to antisocial behaviour. Wallace (2010:815) emphasises that individual citizens need to take responsibility for deviant behaviour in their communities, thereby setting the standards for moral regeneration. Sound discourse and policymaking are necessary to bring about unity in the boundaries for 'acceptable' community conduct, notwithstanding the complexities of economic, cultural, community, religious, and resource disparities (Wallace, 2010:816). Wallace (2010) affirms that the reformation of behaviour within any social order remains a moral regeneration priority. Chippendale (2001) is of the viewpoint that a reformulation of principles is needed, enabling individuals to make informed choices and judgements which will promote the moral regeneration of societies in which we live.

2.4 MORALITY

Haidt (2008:70) captures the cross-disciplinary nature of morality with his definition that "moral systems are interlocking sets of values, practices, institutions, and evolved psychological mechanisms that work together to suppress or regulate selfishness and make social life possible". Haidt (2007, 2008, 2012) identified five distinct moral foundations as the core of morality: Harm/Care, Fairness/Reciprocity, In-group/Loyalty, Authority/Respect, and Purity/Sanctity. The Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) proposes that moral systems are built on multiple dimensions, where the individual becomes the point of moral concern for the dimensions of Harm/Care and Fairness/Reciprocity, and the group at the point of moral concern for the dimensions of In-group/Loyalty, Authority/Respect, and Purity/Sanctity (Mooijman *et al.*, 2018:586). Morality therefore entails how people relate to each other in terms of justice, rights, and welfare (Turiel, 1983). Shweder *et al.*, (1997) consider autonomy, community, and divinity as the 'big three' of morality. Cultures strive for cooperative communities where selfishness is suppressed and in-group loyalty, authority, respect, and spiritual purity are encouraged in the moral domain (Haidt *et al.*, 1993; Jensen, 1998; Shweder *et al.*, 1997).

2.4.1 Origin and historical evolution of morality

Early writings in Mesopotamia recorded payable debts between merchants (Haidt, 2008:65). The Code of Hammurabi, the Hindu Vedas, the Egyptian Instructions of Amenemope, and the Hebrew Bible all mark the origin of moral texts (Haidt, 2008:65). Haidt (2008:65) proposes that morality has been at the core of human development since creation with Adam and Eve struggling to make the right choice, and humankind still facing the same battles with the cognitive dilemma of choosing between morality and immorality. Plato and Aristotle studied the nature of 'good' people and 'good' societies, and Aristotle's emphasis on developing a moral character at the individual level of identity and self was classified as an ethical concept (Haidt, 2008:65). Durkheim (1973) delivered strong arguments on the moral psychology of 'hedonism', proposing that the pursuit of pleasure is driven by selfishness and that constraints are necessary for morality to flourish (Haidt, 2008:66). Piaget (1932/1965) was the first to launch the cognitive-developmental approach and agreed with Durkheim (1973) on the value of discipline and constraint in the education of children. Kohlberg (1969) continued to expand the cognitive-developmental theory and became the leading figure in the cognitive revolution with his emphasis on information processing. Bandura (1991) leads the social-cognitive theory with his focus on self-regulation and self-control to actively avoid moral disengagement. Contemporary philosophy reflects on moral development as virtue ethics (Anscombe, 1958; Nussbaum, 1986; Slote, 1983). Haidt (2012:7) views reasoning as the most important way to obtain moral knowledge, proposing that any child exposed sufficiently to sharing, turn taking, and playground justice, will eventually internalise morality as they rationalise through decisions and problems. Adam Smith (1759/1853) views empathy as the foundation of morality and contemporary psychologists provide clear evidence on the importance of empathy as the new synthesis in moral psychology when making ethical decisions (Batson, 1991; Preston & de Waal, 2002; Singer *et al.*, 2004). Reflecting on the evolution of morality it is evident that there has been a desire throughout history for individuals and collective groups to be motivated in behaviour regulation, suppression, or activation for the greater 'good' of others and society.

2.4.2 Morality: Defined

Various intellectuals have attempted to define ethics or morality, whether in terms of the "Biblical Ten Commandments, the Kantian categorical imperative, the Rousseaulian 'sublime maxim', the Socratic standard, Aristotle's virtue ethics, the Confucianist or the Taoist standard", but it remains clear that standards and norms are needed for any society or educational system to function optimally (Gray, 2003:112). According to Haidt and Kesebir (2010) "[m]orality indicates what is the 'right' and 'wrong' way to behave, for instance, that one should be fair and not unfair to others".

Blasi (1980:1) argues that:

few would disagree that morality ultimately lies in action and that the study of moral development should use action as the final criterion. Moral action is seen, implicitly or explicitly, as complex, imbedded in a variety of feelings, questions, doubts, judgments, and decisions... From this perspective, the study of the relations between moral cognition and moral action is of primary importance.

The Oxford American Dictionary (2004) refers to morality as “[p]rinciples concerning the distinction between right and wrong or moral behaviour”. In Chapter One, section 1.2.2 it was clearly stated that in a broad sense morality can be regarded as principles which are linked to a particular philosophy, religion, or culture with inherent standards of conduct (Stanford University, 2002). Haidt (2001:817) supports this view by stating that people of different social groups or cultures may endorse different moral values.

Haidt (2001:817) defines morality as “[t]he evaluation of the actions or character of a person that are made with respect to a set of virtues held to be obligatory by a culture or subculture”.

Haidt (2008: 70) also captures the cross-disciplinary nature of morality and defines it as follows: “moral systems are interlocking sets of values, practices, institutions, and evolved psychological mechanisms that work together to suppress or regulate selfishness and make social life possible”.

Churchland (2011) concludes that “[m]orality seems to be a natural phenomenon constrained by the forces of natural selection, rooted in neurobiology, shaped by the local ecology, and modified by cultural development”.

2.4.3 Morality: Meaning

Meier (1999) stated that morality is more about the redistribution of values. Mucciaroni (2011) explained that morality is not only about what is right and wrong, but rather concerns values that are non-negotiable and rooted in moral principles. Morality involves endorsing values that are not negotiable to compromise (Mooney, 1999:675). Haidt and Kesebir (2010) reason that morality is a mechanism needed for social life to function optimally. Moral principles help to manage problems and challenges within social groups. Morality should speak to every issue that causes harm to humanity and should always compete for what is viewed as real, true and/or good (Hunter, 2016). Engeli *et al.* (2012:24) posit that all morality policy matters involve judgements about what is right and wrong.

Chippendale (2001:6) views morality as an inbuilt user's manual that guides human behaviour:

It is everything that based on the experience of the past, we have collectively agreed to be ruled by. It is the norms, the rules, the customs, the laws, the commandments whereby out of the power of caring, the power of reflection, the power of language, and the power of habit, we establish social expectancies for moral sensitivity, moral intelligence, and moral agency.

From the theoretical perspective, Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334) extracts three key principles that capture the essence of human morality:

- Social anchoring of right and wrong

Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334) argues that “[m]oral convictions are seen as compelling mandates, indicating what everyone ‘ought’ to or ‘should’ do”. Behavioural intentions of individuals are greatly influenced by the social norms of others and what they deem important (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:334). Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334) relates people’s judgements about ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ to their social and cultural identity which clarifies disagreements on a religious, political, or social level (Greene, 2013; Haidt & Graham, 2007). Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334); Ellemers (2017); and Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012) argue that the conceptions of right and wrong reflect the values of social groups sharing moral guidelines.

- Conceptions of the moral self

Ellemers *et al.* (2019); and Hofmann *et al.* (2014) highlight a second principle of human morality which is rooted in self-awareness. Moral failures have far-reaching implications and people avoid self-condemnation, rather aiming to protect their self-image of morality by averting responsibility for behaviour or disregarding the impact on others (Pagliaro *et al.*, 2016). Instead of making an effort to engage in moral behaviour, people are prompted to adjust their moral reasoning and to endorse self-justification of behaviour (Haidt, 2001). Perugini and Leone (2009:753) propose that a moral/immoral self-concept implicitly influences reasoning and the motivation of behaviour associated with the self.

- The interplay between thoughts and experiences

A third principle of human morality involves the deliberate thought processes regarding ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ and evolving behavioural realities. Emotions/feelings, which include distress, empathy, anger, outrage, guilt, or shame predisposes responses and reasoning, shaping the reflection on principals and moral ideals (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:335). Haidt (2001) reasons that moral guidelines are shaped by a very clear connection between deliberate thinking and intuitive knowing.

Kierkegaard insisted that a complete engagement of the human will is needed for choices and commitments to be made which will augment the ethical structure of life (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:274). Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) supports the notion that “morality matters for the way people think about themselves, interact with others, live and work together in groups, and relate to other groups in society”. The purpose of moral standards aims to communicate what is considered as good, virtuous, or just behaviour (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:878). The role of parents and teachers are of significance in fostering character development and nurturing moral values (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1160). Ethics of community and ethics of moral purity need to be instilled at home and within the school context. Parents and teachers can impact the moral stance that learners have and are able to change the views on destructive behaviour (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1161).

2.4.4 Proscriptive and prescriptive morality

Morality and behavioural regulation involve mainly two domains, one of approach or activation (prescriptive morality) and the other of avoidance or inhibition (proscriptive morality) (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013:219). Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013:220) reason that the “behavioural inhibition system, based in avoidance, is an aversive motivational system that is sensitive to punishment and negative outcomes”. The inhibition of behaviour, restraining any temptations to be involved in harmful behaviour, and focusing on what we ‘shouldn’t do’, is labelled a proscriptive morality (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013:220). Proscriptive morality is based on avoidance and the protection from harm. The moral domain of prescriptive morality is focused on doing ‘good’, by doing what we ‘should do’. Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013:220) argue that prescriptive morality involves behavioural motivation to do the ‘right thing’, engaging in behaviours that are helpful to others. Both proscriptive and prescriptive moral regulation motivates protection from harm, and both are important for the avoidance of negative outcomes and the motivation of positive outcomes (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013).

2.4.4.1 Model of moral motives

Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013) expanded on the Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) with a Model of Moral Motives (MMM) which distinguishes between a domain that suppresses bad behaviour using a proscriptive regulation and another that promotes good behaviour through the implementation of a prescriptive regulation. (Carnes *et al.*, 2015:351). Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013) argue that the Moral Foundations Theory excludes social justice which is a critical prescriptive group morality with the objective of provision and activation. The binding moralities of MFT, namely loyalty, authority, and purity are represented as Social Order in the Model of Moral Motives, forming part of the proscriptive group morality which aims at protection and

inhibition (Carnes *et al.*, 2015:352). Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013:221) argue that the proscriptive versus prescriptive morality creates a comprehensive moral landscape.

Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013:221) propose six cells in their taxonomy as illustrated in the table below, based on inhibition motives (proscriptive) to protect self and other, and activation motives (prescriptive) to provide for self and the group. The three proscriptive motives – self-restraint/moderation, not harming and social order/communal solidarity focus on behavioural regulation to avoid harmful/destructive behaviour. The prescriptive motives – industriousness, helping/fairness, and social justice/communal responsibility focus on behavioural activation of ‘doing the right thing’, or becoming ‘moral rebels’ (Sonnentag & McDaniel, 2013:433). Sonnentag and McDaniel (2013:433) recognise the need for nurturing the levels of moral obligation where individuals are motivated to become courageous, compassionate, and socially active when facing morally problematic situations. Prescriptive motives encourage individuals to take a principled stand, choosing to do the ‘right thing’ amidst the pressures of deviant behaviour (Sonnentag & McDaniel, 2013:433). Carnes and Janoff-Bulman (2012) argue that prescriptive (generosity, courage) as well as proscriptive (self-discipline, humility) virtues are needed for moral regulation and activation to facilitate group living, encourage cooperation and maximise the well-being of society.

Table 2.1 Model Of Moral Motives (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013:221)

	Self (Personal)	Other (Interpersonal)	Group (Collective)
Protect / Inhibition (Proscriptive Regulation)	Self-restraint Moderation	Not harming	Social order/ Communal Solidarity
Provide / Activation (Prescriptive Regulation)	Industriousness	Helping/fairness	Social Justice/ Communal Responsibility

2.4.5 Morality embedded in a social context

Tomasello and Vaish (2013) view the first tier of morality (harm/care) in the maintaining of social order where individuals are encouraged to observe and reciprocate emphatic, kind, fair, and altruistic behaviours that would help to protect individual and group survival. The second tier (fairness/reciprocity) is viewed as *social signalling* functions of a greater good (Tomasello & Vaish, 2013). Ellemers *et al.* (2013:161) argue that the behavioural choices of individual members of a

group are greatly impacted by group-specific norms. Rai and Fiske (2011) are of the viewpoint that moral standards help to coordinate social interactions in communities by regulating negative behaviour. Ellemers *et al.* (2013:162) reason that moral standards shared may become a part of people's social identities, regulating behaviour through the guidelines of a specific group-based identity. Schwartz (1992) argues that morality remains the dominating guiding principle for individual behaviour within the group. Due to the importance that people attach to moral goals and moral self-views, the in-group members have the potential to positively influence behaviour within the social context (Ellemers *et al.*, 2013:168-169). Deviance from moral values and norms are often non-negotiable within the in-group and those who do not comply run the risk of exclusion (Ellemers *et al.*, 2013:183). Zulu *et al.* (2019:226) argue that the return of Religious Education instead of the current policy of banning religion provide a strong base for the regulation of social behaviour.

2.5 THEORIES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO MORAL BEHAVIOUR, MORAL DEVELOPMENT, AND MORAL REASONING

As discussed in Chapter One, section 1.7, the Social Learning Theory; Moral Development Theory; Social Norms Theory; and Social Disorganisation Theory are interrelated as they all play a collective role in moral degeneration. Students' behaviours are impacted daily by that which they perceive in their milieu (Social Learning Theory), the experiences they have encountered which impacted cognitive maturity (Moral Development Theory), and their perception of behaviour and how this has influenced actual behaviour patterns (Social Norms Theory). Behaviours are further influenced by social and economic disorder, poverty, family breakdown and criminality (Social Disorganisation Theory).

Moral regeneration focuses on the transformation of behaviour patterns that have been learned through observation (Social Learning Theory), influenced by the external environment (Social Disorganisation Theory), and assimilated through a specific level of cognitive maturity (Moral Development Theory). Moral regeneration aims at redirecting misperceptions regarding behavioural patterns (Social Norms Theory), whereby adopting new behavioural patterns that are consistent with desired, normative behaviour. Campbell (2008) asserts that the objective of moral education aims at the development of a commitment to take responsibility for every action and therefore, teachers play a major role as moral educators of core values and principles. Moral education and the aim of moral regeneration need sound pedagogics together with an understanding of the lived experiences of teachers and learners to build a value-based framework which will effectively address decision-making and judgement-forming abilities in the classroom (Chowdhury, 2016:8).

2.5.1 Social learning theory

This theory supports the view that behaviour is learned through the interaction between observation, cognitive maturity, and the external environment (Payne, 2005). Walters (1998:4-5) points out that the environment influences learning and development to the degree which values, motives and beliefs of a culture or peer group is internalised. Jones (2001:413) emphasizes that children are not born with an inclination to be destructive and delinquent in their behaviour, but they learn to become aggressive and destructive through their immediate life experiences. Within the context of this study, it is relevant to explore the value of the different concepts of behaviour and how the implementation of mechanisms can influence social learning. Balogun and Okurame (2011) highlight mentoring as a strategy that is especially relevant to social learning where role-modelling guides actions and learning. It is within this context that the concepts of moral mechanisms, values, morals, principles, social norms, and moral beliefs have the potential to influence social learning (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Piquero, 2007:436). Implementation of these behavioural strategies can motivate learners to abstain from emotional disengagement, deviant behaviour, and the violation of moral standards (Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818). Moral regeneration needs to challenge the Social Learning Theory and the extent to which learners have been exposed to a particular lifestyle and how their environment and peer group influenced their cognition and resultant behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:702). Moral reasoning is needed to develop a cognitive/developmental approach to morality, controlling transgressive behaviour through moral action (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1991; 1999:193; Blasi, 1980:1-8).

2.5.2 Moral development theory

Moral regeneration needs to challenge the disparities in South African communities which caused a differential reasoning during different stages of development and how moral boundaries were perceived and internalised (Lapsley, 2006). This means that a disparity could be evident in the moral development of learners in rural, township or disadvantaged schools versus those in urban, privileged, and well-resourced schools due to the different social experiences which would influence cognitive maturity. This substantiates the argument of Krebs (2008) that cognitive development and relevant social experiences directly influences moral development. Mariaye (2006) also connects moral judgements and choices to cognitive development and cognitive maturity. Gray and Anderson (2016) observe that school dropouts, low academic performance, rebellion, and the wrong influences due to peer pressure are just some of the consequences of adolescents struggling with the impact of cognitive immaturity.

Within the context of this study, moral development mechanisms need to be implemented to develop a mature moral identity, to moralize self and learn the art of self-control, to develop the regulation of emotions, and to develop the skill to 'do the right thing' by becoming 'moral rebels' (Monroe, 2008:703; Mooijman, 2018:585; Eisenberg, 2000:674-679; Sonnentag & McDaniels, 2013:433). Moral development will impact the morality of group norms and how the peer group influences moral behaviour (Ellemers *et al.*, 2008:1397-1398; Kouchaki, 2011:702). Moral development facilitates a cognitive/developmental approach to morality leading to moral evaluations of self, moral cognition, and moral action (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1999:194; Blasi, 1980:1-8).

2.5.3 Social norms theory

The focus of this theory is to determine the relationship between the perception of normative behaviour and how this influences actual behaviour patterns (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). Misperceptions often result from assumptions regarding behaviour patterns, cultural perceptions, and the influence of media and entertainment outlets leading to individuals engaging in destructive behaviour which is not consistent with actual behaviour patterns of the in-group (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). In the context of this study, it was of value to understand how moral behaviour and moral development can impact social norms amongst learners, facilitating moral regeneration in secondary schools. As with the social learning theory, moral mechanisms, values, morals, principles, and moral emotions can influence social norms and motivate the abstention from deviant behaviour and the violation of moral standards (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Chippendale, 2001:3; Camacho *et al.*, 2003:508; Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818). Moral development impacts social norms through the development of a moral identity, influencing morality-based group norms, and motivating the peer group to develop a mindset of 'doing the right thing' (Monroe, 2008:703; Haidt, 2001:817; Kouchaki, 2011:702; Sonnentag & McDaniels, 2013:433).

2.5.4 Social disorganisation theory

The available literature attests to the fact that there is a strong link between community social disorganisation, victimisation as well as crime that cause physical and social disorder, poverty, family fragmentation, and local unsupervised adolescent peer group networks (Breetzke, 2010; Fox *et al.*, 2010; Sampson & Groves, 1989). On the other end of the scale, communities who are collectively efficient in exerting informal control and cohesion, have lower rates of crime and delinquency (Prinsloo & Ovens, 2016). Moral regeneration needs to challenge social disorganisation in South Africa, and this can only be achieved through a desire for the collective regeneration of morals. The Social Disorganisation Theory supports the notion that morality in secondary schooling is greatly influenced by social upheaval, a class struggle, poverty,

victimization, and delinquent behaviour. Masombuka (2013:1) affirms that these degenerative behaviour patterns are strongly linked to a socially disorganized landscape. Moral behaviour can impact our socially disorganised learners through the facilitation of moral mechanisms, values, morals, principles, and social norms motivating behaviour that abstains from the violation of moral standards and delinquency (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Chippendale, 2001:3; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Camacho *et al.*, 2003:508; Zhang *et al.*, 2017:56; Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818). Moral beliefs are needed to impact progressive deviant behaviour in a socially disorganised milieu where moral disengagement has become the norm (Bandura *et al.*, 1996; Piquero, 2007:436).

2.6 SUMMARY

The main aim of Chapter Two was to develop and describe the conceptual and theoretical framework regarding morals that underpinned this research study. A diagram on the theoretical framework of morals created a detailed structure of the main concepts and how they are interrelated within the context of this study. The meaning, nature, and purpose of morals were clarified to lay the foundation for a detailed description of the concepts addressed on moral behaviour, moral development, and moral reasoning. Within the context of this study it was important to conceptualise moral de/regeneration followed by an investigation into national and international discourses on moral regeneration. A detailed conceptual and theoretical outline was given of morality which included clear definitions, meaning, and the domains of proscriptive and prescriptive morality. A discussion of theories (social learning theory, moral development theory, social norms theory, social disorganisation theory) and their relevance to moral behaviour, moral development, and moral reasoning concluded this chapter. Chapter Three outlines the research design and methods that guided this empirical research. Ethical considerations, trustworthiness criteria, and strategies will be highlighted within the context of the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research design and method that guided the empirical research and describes the various processes that were followed to conduct the research. This includes the research paradigm of inquiry; the nature of the research; methodological approach; the site, sample, and sampling process; data generation and data analysis processes. Trustworthiness strategies are described, and ethical considerations were discussed in detail.

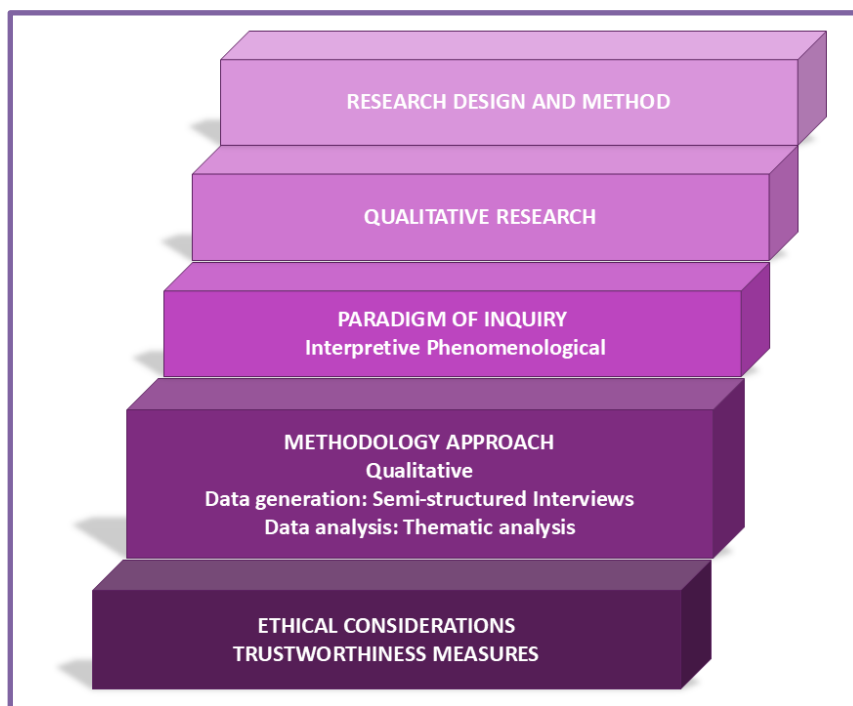


Figure 3.1 Research Design and Method

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

According to Griffiee (2012:44) a research design “is a model or blueprint of how the researcher intends conducting the research and answering the research question[s]”. The purpose of a research study leads the researcher to select the most suitable research design and method with the aim of answering the research questions and achieving the aims of the study (Okesina, 2020:63). Saunders *et al.* (2009:136-138) highlight that the research design encapsulates the features of purpose, strategies employed, choices regarding data collection procedures and analysis, as well as the time horizon for the research study and ethical considerations. Creswell

(2009:4) states that a research design engages the process of inquiry whilst guiding the methods used in the research. The main purpose of the research design is to provide a conceptual and theoretical framework that makes it possible to answer the research questions by employing relevant methodology that aligns with the research questions (Punch, 2011:48). Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012:132) describe a phenomenological study in terms of the meaning of lived experiences in a real context where the research is conducted in real situations. Sloan and Bowe (2014) explain that the researcher aims to study the phenomena in a real-world context where the research is carried out in real situations and where the researcher can identify experiences about the phenomenon being studied.

I opted for qualitative research as this method could benefit my own observations and descriptions. Qualitative research could be used to assess knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and opinions of secondary school teachers on the phenomenon of moral de/regeneration (Leedy, 1993). Data generation was verbal and therefore my methodology was qualitative, concerned with people (secondary school teachers), personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and lived experiences (Leedy, 1993).

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:133) emphasise that “qualitative research focuses on phenomena that occur in natural settings, that is in the real world. It involves studying those phenomena in all their complexity”. In view of this assertion, qualitative research was the fitting method to study the complexity of moral de/regeneration in secondary, public schools. In accordance with Leedy and Ormrod (2005), qualitative research would be suitable as it will serve the following purposes for my study:

- Description: To reveal the lived experiences of secondary public school teachers on moral de/regeneration.
- Interpretation: To gain new insights on moral de/regeneration and how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.
- Verification: The credibility of qualitative research needs to be verified and therefore the validity of the assumptions, claims, theories, or generalizations within the secondary school contexts needed to be tested according to the Trustworthiness Measures as discussed in section 3.6.

- Evaluation: Descriptive information needed to allow for the objective gauging of the findings of this study as a means for the reader to judge the effectiveness of strategy development for moral regeneration in South African secondary schools. Evaluation was done in relation to the Trustworthiness Measures discussed in section 3.6.

3.2.1 Paradigm of inquiry: Interpretive Phenomenological

Guba and Lincoln (1994) describe paradigm as the researcher's lens, while McGregor and Murnane (2010:419) define paradigm as "a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality". Creamer (2003) views the paradigm of inquiry as the philosophical stance that fundamentally guides the researcher methodologically, ontologically, and epistemologically. Moustakas (1994:13) describes the philosophy of phenomenology as lived experiences and the relationship with those who can comprehensively describe the experiences. Okesina (2020:60) defines interpretivism as "a paradigm that aims to understand people and social phenomenon". According to Okesina (2020:60) the interpretivist researcher aims "to explore and understand phenomenon inductively" and therefore my objective was to use specific evidence gained from interviewing teachers to generate new knowledge (inductive) about their lived experiences on the phenomenon of moral degeneration and the impact on education in the classroom. The interpretive paradigm therefore aimed to present the reality of teachers and their lived experiences of moral degeneration from their unique personal point of view (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:15-16). The main aim was to explore, describe and explain the phenomenon of moral degeneration within secondary school contexts and how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimized in South African secondary schools. Interpretive phenomenology focused on an explicit description of the phenomenon and teachers' unique experiences of the phenomenon – moral degeneration – and the meaning attached to their knowledge (Tomaszewski *et al.*, 2020:1). As stated by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Hoepfl (1997:3), the interpretive phenomenological method allowed knowledge to be created through the interpretation of the participants' (secondary school teachers) experiences of the phenomenon (moral de/regeneration) that was under investigation.

Chilisa and Kawulich's (2012:56) view of ontology of interpretive phenomenology allowed my personal mindset and assumptions about the reality of moral de/regeneration to be built into the research process. The epistemological view in this study determined that my knowledge about the phenomenon was subjective and therefore my intersubjectivity to the teachers' lived experiences of moral de/regeneration at schools greatly determined the reality of truth during data generation (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56). As emphasised by Chilisa and Kawulich (2012:56) the axiology holds that the intersubjectivity of knowledge determined by the interpretive

phenomenology that was guided and informed by values and biases related to moral de/regeneration. Data generation in this study was qualitative where language (interviews), and reflection of secondary school teachers' lived experiences of the phenomenon played a major role. The research took the form of communication/conversation between myself and the teachers with the purpose of establishing an express process of ideas where I attempted to gain understanding through the spoken word of the lived experiences of secondary school teachers and the phenomenon of moral de/regeneration (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56). As my social reality remained subjective, idealist interpretivism guided the interpretation of lived experiences of the participants.

3.2.2 The nature of the research

Adopting an interpretive phenomenological paradigm, I had to consider the research questions and aims of my study which focused on exploring, describing, and explaining how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

- Exploratory

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:12) view exploratory research as a process that enables researchers to explore the social world which they are probing by means of engaging with the participants. The exploratory nature of this qualitative research study aimed at gaining a broader understanding of the phenomenon of moral de/regeneration in South African secondary schools by means of exploring the lived experiences of teachers in secondary schools through semi-structured interviews.

The logical basis for espousing a qualitative research method in accordance with the view of Wagner *et al.* (2012:126) was based on understanding the social and cultural contexts which shaped various behaviour patterns in secondary schools leading to the phenomenon of moral degeneration. The qualitative method was associated with the normative paradigm of interpretivism, aimed at generating new knowledge (inductive) (Okesina, 2020:64). I therefore aimed to make meaning of the lived experiences through the eyes of the secondary school teachers and explored their views on the development of strategies for moral regeneration in South African secondary schools.

- Descriptive

Niemann *et al.* (2000:41) state that interpretive phenomenology aims at describing the lived experiences of participants within their own framework of beliefs and value systems, which allows for data to be generated through open, flexible, and non-rigid methods. The emphasis was on creating a description of the perceived real world from the participants' narratives (Tomaszewski *et al.*, 2020:4). This necessitated the development of trust relationships with secondary school teachers to contribute to the descriptions of the phenomenon (moral de/regeneration) as experienced within school context.

3.2.3 Methodological approach

Saunders *et al.* (2009:595) define methodology as “the theory of how research should be undertaken, including the theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which research is based and the implications of these for the methods or method adopted”. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001) the purpose of any research methodology is to enable the researcher to attain the aims as stated in the research questions. In accordance with the view of Wagner *et al.* (2012:126) a qualitative methodological approach was most suitable to support data generation and analysis for this study, as rich data could be gathered on the social and cultural causes which had a degenerative effect on morality and behaviour patterns in secondary schools. Using an interpretive phenomenological approach, data was primarily generated through interviews (the spoken word), which aimed at an exploration of the narrative, comprehensive analysis of the information, and the interpretation of participants' accounts of moral de/regeneration (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:41). Methodology aimed to generate data which would capture the lived experiences of participants (secondary school teachers) in their daily environment (Wagner *et al.*, 2012:126). As supported by Niemann *et al.* (2000) the advantages of a qualitative research method facilitated the gathering of rich data on the lived experiences of secondary school teachers on the phenomenon (moral de/regeneration) in the school context. Their input was of valid importance to develop useful, effective, and realistic strategies that could regenerate morality amongst secondary school learners. Through an idealist interpretivist research lens, my social reality was subjective, and interviews included a process of reflection on the personal experiences of teachers (Denscombe, 2010:121). Qualitative research was further supported by teachers' assumptions on the multiple realities of the cause-and-effect connection of the phenomenon of moral degeneration (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56).

3.2.4 Site, sample, and sampling

- Site

I have already mentioned in Chapter One (1.8.2.1) that the selected site for the study was secondary schools in the Gauteng province which included districts such as Johannesburg South, Johannesburg Central, Ekurhuleni South, Johannesburg East, and Johannesburg North. The rationale for selecting schools from various districts provided a way to obtain information-rich data relevant to the phenomenon of moral de/regeneration within a diverse school context.

- Sample

I purposively selected secondary school teachers who are in the best position to provide information on the phenomenon being studied as experienced at schools (Denscombe, 2010). See Chapter One, section 1.8.2.2. The purpose of qualitative research aims at exploring the phenomenon at a practical level, making significant conclusions about the lived experiences of participants; therefore, the size of my sample was governed by the level of meaningful information that the sample would deliver rather than the size of the sample (Denscombe, 2010). The strategy that was most suited for this research was non-probability sampling where participants (teachers) were specifically identified (Sanders & Pinhey, 1983). For the purpose of this study, I employed purposive sampling to select participants who have experience of the phenomenon of moral degeneration in school context. Purposive sampling is selective to only include participants of interest who suit the purpose of the study under investigation (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:95). See Chapter One, section 1.8.2.2.

- Sampling

Smit (2010:36), shows that purposive sampling is useful in qualitative research to enable the researcher to select participants who can provide information-rich data regarding the phenomenon whilst addressing the main research question. The sampling process necessitated the approval of the following authorities: Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education (EduREC) (Appendix B), Department of Education (Gauteng) (Appendix C), School Governing Body (Appendix D), Principal of the selected school (Appendix D), Selected teachers (Participants' consent form) (Appendix E).

The selection criterion for the purposive selection of participants for this research was a teacher appointed at a secondary school in the Gauteng Province in any of the previously mentioned districts in Johannesburg: Johannesburg South, Johannesburg Central, Johannesburg East, Johannesburg North, and Ekurhuleni South.

3.3 DATA GENERATION

For the purposes of this study, I selected a relevant data generation method which would allow for effective data generation whilst answering the research questions (Maree, 2016:37). As explained in Chapter One, section 1.8.3, I opted for individual interviews that allowed me to explore and generate data by means of probing which ensured an opportunity to tap not only into the participants' experiences but also allowed me to clarify any uncertainties during the interviews. According to Babbie (2004:266) probing is used for participants to elaborate when inappropriate or incomplete responses are given to the interview questions. Babbie and Mouton (2007:289) also indicate that probing is useful for getting in-depth answers. Probing can be used to maximise the amount of data generated by verifying that what the interviewer heard is what the participant meant (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:109). I audio-recorded each interview after permission was obtained from the participants, enabling the verbatim transcribing of transcripts for data analysis purposes. Thus, I explored in-depth issues that were relevant to the research question as participants' individual experiences could be explored. The emphasis in the interviewing process in this study was to get teachers to elaborate on their own experiences of moral degeneration in the context of secondary schools (Denscombe, 2010). One of the main reasons that I chose individual interviews as a research method for data generation was that teachers might not have been very open and transparent on various issues, for example when conducting focus group interviews (Thombs *et al.*, 2007).

I was fully aware that the interviewing process could present challenges in terms of racial and social dynamics as feelings and viewpoints on the phenomenon were being dealt with and therefore it was of utmost importance to build trust and rapport with every participant. It was important for me to explain the purpose of the research, what the interviewing process entailed and what the participation of teachers would require. Each individual interview was audio recorded after the necessary written consent was obtained from each participant. It was important for the participants (secondary school teachers) to be aware that the individual, audio-recorded interviews would be transcribed and used during the data analysis process of the study. The data generation process took place at ten different secondary schools in the province of Gauteng in the five districts as mentioned in Chapter One, section 1.8.2.1 and Chapter Three, section 3.2.4.

3.3.1 Data generation process

- Individual interviews

In order to explore moral degeneration, it was important to firstly provide teachers with sufficient information about the purpose of the research and what their individual participation would entail. The information that highlighted the purpose of this research and what their participation entailed was captured on the participants consent form (Appendix E). Written consent was obtained from each participant (individual teachers) prior to the commencement of the individual interviews. After the participants gave written consent, I audio recorded each individual interview and transcribed the data for future use during the data analysis process. Individual semi-structured interviews aimed to generate sufficiently rich data through exploring the participants' (teachers') experiences on moral degeneration in schools. I made use of probing to elicit communication, inquiring closely into the participants' experiences, allowing me to obtain rich data (Denscombe, 2010). I created an individual file for each participant (teacher) that contained their consent form (Appendix E), their demographical information, interview questions, interview schedule (Appendix A) and any additional observational field notes regarding the individual interviews. The interviews were conducted in English as all participants indicated that they were fluent in English. An independent person recruited participants for this study.

The following questions were posed to each participant to explore their experiences on moral degeneration (Interview schedule: Appendix A):

- What do you view as moral degeneration in South African schools?
- What do you think contributes to moral degeneration in South African schools?
- In your opinion how do current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools?
- How do you understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa?
- How do you engage with moral regeneration at your school?
- What strategies can you provide to optimise the moral regeneration of learners at your school?
- In your opinion – how could moral regeneration be fostered by secondary schools?

Denscombe (2010) points out that exit questions are important for participants to raise any additional issues that need to be shared with the researcher. In order to conclude the interview, I therefore posed the following exit questions to each participant at the end of each interview:

- Is there anything else that you would add about moral degeneration?
- Is there anything else that you would like to add to your expectancy of developing strategies for moral regeneration of secondary school learners?

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis method that I used was thematic analysis, allowing me to identify, analyse, and report themes within the data gathered (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is a flexible method and provided for a very rich and detailed account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method was ideal at the level of lived experiences, as the research process entailed exploring the lived experiences of teachers regarding the phenomenon and contributed to my commitment to understanding the phenomenon under investigation as from the participants' point of view.

3.4.1 Data analysis process

Thematic data analysis was applied to analyse 20 transcripts and entailed six phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006:87):

- Phase 1: Exploring and becoming familiar with the data

Following the transcription of the data, I re-checked transcriptions with the audio-recorded interviews. I read and re-read the transcripts, allowing for a detailed scrutiny of data collected. During the reading process I took notes of my initial thoughts and key ideas.

- Phase 2: Generating initial codes

During phase 2, I coded interesting features of the data using a structured approach and collating data relevant to each code.

- Phase 3: Searching for themes

My aim was to group the various codes into potential themes for analysis. I therefore clustered data relevant to identified themes, which then became the categories and sub-categories for analysis.

- Phase 4: Reviewing themes

I ensured that there was a clear connection between the themes and the coded extracts, assisting me in generating a thematic 'map' of analysis.

- Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

This entailed an ongoing process of analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story revealed by it, thereby generating clear concepts and names for each theme.

- Phase 6: Producing the report

This phase included the selection of examples and riveting extracts, completing the analysis of extracts, and relating the analysis to the research question and literature review, and producing a report on the analysis.

Thematic analysis provided for a level of meaning, and transparency was permitted through verbatim quotations which allowed the reader to gain insight into the basis of my interpretation of data gathered (see Chapter Four, discussion of findings).

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As highlighted in Chapter One, section 1.9, ethical considerations are of utmost importance and Denscombe (2010:59) confirms that all research is to be guided by a code of ethical principles. I therefore had to ensure that I adhered to the following ethical principles with the aim of protecting my accountability for my conduct during the research study:

3.5.1 Informed Consent

According to Ogletree and Kawulich (2012:64) informed consent is "the agreement of participants to participate in research without feeling coerced, ensuring that participants are fully informed about the purpose, duration, methods, and potential uses of the research." Secondary school teachers were given a choice to agree to voluntary participation in the research study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:66). In accordance with McMillan and Schumacher (2014:130), the teachers were given a clear explanation of the aim of the research, outlining their role in the development of strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners and making them aware that they could withdraw from participation at any time. Participants (secondary school teachers) were informed about the purpose of the study and the possible benefit that this could hold for them as many teachers within school context are challenged by moral degeneration. As emphasised by Denscombe (2010:67) it needed to be clear that the voluntary consent of every secondary school

teacher was prioritized without any element of coercion, dishonesty, deception, or controlled limitations. The consent was obtained in writing where secondary school teachers were expected to sign a declaration with details of the proposed research, understanding their involvement and ensuring their willingness to cooperate (Denscombe, 2010:68). The consent form outlined that audio recordings would be necessary for accurate capturing of data during interviews for data analysis purposes. Prior to signing the consent form the content was explained to participants and they were given an opportunity to ask any questions or clarify any issues regarding the study. Prior to conducting the research, I obtained permission and approval from the following authorities: Department of Education (Gauteng) (Appendix C), School Governing Body (Appendix D), School Principal (Appendix D).

3.5.2 Voluntary participation

Participation in the research project was voluntary and participants (secondary school teachers) could withdraw from the research at any stage without penalty. If any of the teachers that were approached for the study, declined participation, I needed to respect their decision without any explanation. It was important to be honest and transparent with the participants to ensure that integrity and trust allowed unrestricted participation which optimised the generation of data (Denscombe, 2010).

3.5.3 Confidentiality

In agreement with McMillan and Schumacher (2014:134) the participants' right to confidentiality needed to be protected through assigning each teacher with a code which ensured that their identity would not be revealed. These codes were used on the transcripts to ensure confidentiality during the data analysis process as well as the publication of findings. In this qualitative research study secondary school teachers were assured that the data gathered during semi-structured interviews would only be used for the purpose of the study, and that it would remain a priority to protect all privileged information (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:101). In agreement with McMillan and Schumacher (2014:133) the research study would not expose the secondary school teachers' identifiable information of their lived experiences gathered during the study. Audio recordings were deleted after completion of the transcription of audio-recorded interviews. Any other personal identifiable information that was audio recorded and transcribed were omitted.

3.5.4 Respect

Since this research dealt with the controversial phenomenon of moral de/regeneration, it was important to remain sensitive to the perceptions of secondary teachers and to respect their viewpoints. Participants needed to be aware that their views carried a high degree of validity and that every thought, feeling, experience, or interpretation was respected by me as the researcher. Trust and integrity remained high priorities throughout the interview process to ensure that respect was maintained (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

3.5.5 Interpretation of data: Honesty, trust, integrity, and objectivity

As described by Babbie and Mouton (2001:530) I aimed to minimise any potential misinterpretation or misuse of findings by informing participants (secondary school teachers) of any risks for them to partake in the study. I made it a priority to honour the ethics of honesty, trust, transparency, and integrity with all participants by providing unbiased and accurate information regarding the specific aims of the research study. I made it possible for participants to ask any questions that arose during the research process and to provide transparent answers. To avoid any misinterpretation, secondary school teachers were informed of aspects (on the consent form before the commencement of an interview) such as:

- Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw participation without any penalty;
- The study had been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education (EduREC) at the North-West University;
- Individual interviews were conducted according to the guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures;
- Informing participants about: What the research study was about / What was expected of them / Highlighting possible risks / Protecting their confidentiality / The use of the findings / How they would know about the findings of this research.

Objectivity was ensured after the completion of the transcripts by returning to each interviewee to check whether the information captured was indeed what they said during the interview, and for me to clarify any uncertainties in terms of the transcribed data. After the data analysis, I had a consensus meeting with an independent coder to confirm and verify the themes and sub-themes that I identified. Making use of an independent coder ensured trustworthiness of the data

generated for the research. Independent coding also eliminated any bias or subjectivity in the analysis of data.

3.5.6 Security and ownership of the data

As emphasised by Denscombe (2010:66) I needed to ensure the security of records and data as the research study concerned the viewpoints of individuals. Participants were informed that audio recordings would be deleted when the process of transcription were completed. Electronic transcripts were secured by passwords which were only available to my promoters and me. Hard copies of transcriptions were sent to the independent coder which were returned to me after consensus was reached on identified themes. The data which included hard copies and electronic data will be kept for five years in a locked space in my promoter's office, whereafter all material will be deleted and destroyed.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS MEASURES

According to Connelly (2016) the quality of a study based on the degree of confidence in data and methods used can be encapsulated as trustworthiness. Given (2008:895) lists trustworthiness measures as: credibility, applicability, dependability, and confirmability of the selected research study.

3.6.1 Truth value (Credibility)

The credibility of this study was strongly connected to the view of Bertram and Christiansen (2014:188) as a means of ensuring that the findings of the study reflected reality. It was important to verify that the lived experiences of participants (teachers) reflected the truth of moral degeneration and how this negatively impacted the teaching environment. For the purposes of credibility, I was careful to use the correct information given by the teachers and included quotes from verbatim transcripts. As substantiated by Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement with participants (teachers) whereby I became familiar with the setting and the context, allowing me to test for misinformation whilst building trust and obtaining rich data. It was important to point out the most relevant features and essential factors related to the problem of moral degeneration and to focus on the detail during persistent observation (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121). Credibility was further strengthened through the strategy of feeding back data and interpretations to participants (teachers) as I looked at the data with a different perception (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121).

3.6.2 Applicability (Transferability)

As referred to by Babbie and Mouton (2001:277) it was important to keep in mind that the aim of the research study was to ensure that the research findings could be applied to strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners across the spectrum of education in South Africa. I collected sufficient, detailed descriptions of data to allow for objective judgements about the applicability for strategy development for moral regeneration in South African secondary schools. Applicability also applied to the theoretical lens of the study and how the data gathered and analysed compared with the theories that have been outlined (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:191). As confirmed by Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) transferability was strengthened by describing not only the lived experiences of participants (teachers), but their contexts as well so that these experiences became meaningful to an outsider.

3.6.3 Consistency (Dependability)

I needed to remain accountable to dependability to ensure that the data generated would remain consistent if this study was conducted again with the same participants or in a similar setting (different secondary schools). In agreement with Bertram and Christiansen (2014:190) dependability ensured clarity in data generation and the process of analysis whilst allowing for critical discussion to avoid any misrepresentation. Consistency was enriched during the data-generation process by keeping to the outlined questions for individual interviews, ensuring that a consistent exploration of the phenomenon could be followed. As described by Korstjens and Moser (2018:121) I followed a consistent process regarding the research design and methodology throughout data generation and analysis whilst the records of the research path were kept throughout the study.

3.6.4 Neutrality (Confirmability)

As described by Guba (1981:80) it was important to ensure a degree of neutrality where the findings of this study were shaped by the personal viewpoints of the participants (teachers) instead of the biases and motivations of myself the researcher. My own preconceived ideas about moral degeneration needed to be suspended in order to clearly understand the viewpoints of the participants (teachers) to verify the findings of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:372). It was therefore important to appoint an independent coder who could verify the findings and confirm my expounding of data. I also included sufficient verbatim quotations to support data interpretation (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b:125).

3.7 SUMMARY

Chapter Three provided a detailed description of the research design and method. This included the qualitative research approach; the interpretive phenomenological paradigm of inquiry; the site; descriptions of the purposeful sample; and the sampling strategy employed. Data generation and data analysis processes as well as ethical considerations were highlighted. The trustworthiness criteria and respective strategies were discussed. In Chapter Four, I will present and discuss the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES ON THE PHENOMENON OF MORAL DEGENERATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the data analysis. Purposeful sampling, as discussed in section 3.2.4, was used where I selected secondary school teachers who were in the best position to provide information on the phenomenon being studied at secondary schools. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 individual secondary school teachers, whereafter data saturation occurred. During the interviews the participants were given the opportunity to share their experiences on the phenomenon of moral degeneration in secondary schools. Their input was needed to develop meaningful strategies for moral regeneration of secondary school learners. As already mentioned in chapters 1 and 3, the selected site for the study was secondary schools in the Gauteng province which included districts such as Johannesburg South, Johannesburg Central, Ekurhuleni South, Johannesburg East, and Johannesburg North. The different districts provided an opportunity to gain rich and diverse depictions of moral degeneration in secondary schools. The consent form included clear information on the study, the purpose of the research, and how the findings of the research would be stored and disseminated. The consent form also recorded biographical information of the participants which would be protected according to the agreement for confidentiality and anonymity. In accordance with Cleary *et al.*, (2014:95) participants were coded as follows; D1 S1 P1, which represented District 1, School 1, and Participant 1.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Four broad themes emerged from the findings on teachers' lived experiences of moral degeneration in secondary schools. Themes centred on: teachers' views on morals and moral degeneration; challenges in facilitating a value based education; evolving discourses on morality; and strategies for moral regeneration. Table 4.1 below illustrates the identified themes, categories, and subcategories.

Table 4.1 Identified themes, categories and sub-categories

THEME 1: TEACHERS' VIEWS ON MORALS AND MORAL DEGENERATION	
Category 1: Conceptualising morals	
• Sub-category: Defining moral principles • Sub-category: Perceptions of ethical behaviour	
Category 2: Root causes for moral decline	
• Sub-category: Societal influence on morality • Sub-category: Parental and familial factors • Sub-category: Influence of social media and technology	
THEME 2: CHALLENGES IN FACILITATING A VALUE BASED EDUCATION	
Category 1: External pressures and influences	
• Sub-category: Influence of socio-economic circumstances • Sub-category: Lack or absence of a strong religious foundation	
Category 2: Struggles and constraints that teachers face	
• Sub-category: Balancing curriculum demands with moral education • Sub-category: Unhealthy learner behaviour	
THEME 3: EVOLVING DISCOURSES ON MORALITY	
Category 1: Shifts in moral paradigms	
• Sub-category: Modern perspectives of morality	
Category 2: Ethical complexity and ambiguity	
• Sub-category: Moral ambiguities in contemporary society	
THEME 4: STRATEGIES FOR MORAL REGENERATION	
Category 1: Collaborative approaches to moral education	
• Sub-category: Building partnerships for moral development • Sub-category: Establishing clear moral frameworks	
Category 2: Cultivating ethical awareness and values	
• Sub-category: Implementing comprehensive moral education programmes • Sub-category: Nurturing Spiritual and Ethical Foundations • Sub-category: Adoption of Restorative Measures	
Category 3: Commitment to value-based pillars motivating behaviour	
- Sub-category: Fostering moral awareness - Sub-category: Creating a moral foundation through role modelling - Sub-category: Empowering learners as moral agents	

4.2.1 Theme 1: Teachers' Views On Morals And Moral Degeneration

Theme 1 reflects on secondary school teachers' views on morals and moral degeneration. The participants conceptualised morals by defining moral principles and sharing their views of the guidelines that dictate 'right from wrong'. Participants further identified the root causes of a moral decline and the main influences were connected to the societal impact on morality, parental and familial factors and the effect of social media and technology.

4.2.1.1 Category 1: Conceptualising Morals

Teachers related how morals determine the kind of human beings that learners become by providing an internal compass, allowing them to navigate their way through life and making decisions in their interactions with others and their environment. The participants opined that morals somehow guide learners' behaviours and life choices as human beings. The participants viewed morals as clear guidelines that dictate 'right from wrong', therefore influencing learners' behaviour. Teachers' statements also made it clear that morals were conceptualised as a series of principles, motivating value-laden behaviour.

D1 S1 P1: *"Well...I think morals are our internal compass... it sort of allows us to navigate our way through life,... we use them to make decisions on how we interact with our environment."*

D1 S1 P4: *"Okay... its difficult, but for me personally morals are values, those principles that somehow guide our behaviours and life choices as human being."*

D4 S10 P17: *"Uhm... It's all about behaviour... choosing to do the right thing."*

D3 S5 P9: *"Mm...Mm... jy weet wat is reg en verkeerd, en jy tree op volgens wat reg is, al hou jy nie noodwendig daarvan nie."* (You know what is right and wrong, and you act according to what is right, even if you don't necessarily like it.)

D2 S3 P5: *"Uhm...I feel morals influence behaviour."*

D3 S7 P14: *"So, what I think is that it will be that personal compass... we need it... to make decisions."*

D5 S8 P15: *"Mm...Mm... morele waardes, dis om absoluut 'n definitiewe skeidslyn te he tussen wat reg en verkeerd is, so, jy moet weet wat is sosiale norme."* (Moral values is to have a very clear dividing line between what is right and wrong, so, to know what social norms are.)

D5 S8 P15: *“Wel... dit kan nie verander volgens die generasies nie, nee, dit moet timeless wees. Daar moet soos lewensreels wees... dit is waarde leefstyl...”* (Well... it cannot change according to generations, no, it has to be timeless. There must be like, life rules... it is a value lifestyle.)

D5 S9 P18: *“Uhm... well I feel it is uncompromised... I believe that morals is something that you stand with whether somebody is for it, or someone is against it...you can't please people”*

D1 S4 P6: *“... morals oor die algemeen bepaal maar hoe tree ek op, hoe praat ek met mense, hoe gaan ek om met mense rondom my... Mm... en ek dink dit gaan sover as in jouself ook.”* (...morals in general determine how I behave, how I talk to people, how I interact with people around me, and I think it goes as far as within yourself as well.)

According to Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334) moral convictions are viewed as an integral guide for behaviour. Murdoch (2001:37) supports this statement that there is no timeline to the validity and purpose of morals in our lives and that it is an ongoing process. This is in line with the findings of Mooney (1999:675) that morality involves endorsing values that are not negotiable to compromise. Teachers concurred with Beauchamp (2001) that moral judgements are necessary in assisting learners to distinguish 'right' from 'wrong', indicating a higher standard of human behaviour. Participants' views were in accordance with the view of Ellemers *et al.* (2019) that the meaning of morals are mainly about doing the right thing. Teachers agreed with the literature that morals are meaningful in the development of learners moral judgements and the making of choices (Bayaga and Jaysveree, 2011:199).

4.2.1.1.1 Sub-category: Defining moral principles

Quotations of participants demonstrated that moral principles are a compelling standard of right and wrong and a directive for the behaviour of learners. Teachers' comments made it clear that moral principles indicate towards a good, right, or ethical way to behave. Participants stated that moral guidelines prevents harm to other learners and promotes fairness and empathy. Teachers further reasoned that moral principles are important to prevent destructive behaviour towards other learners. Teachers were of the viewpoint that moral principles are internalised through learners' upbringing, their education, their socialization with others, and their exposure to religious teachings. Participants' views gave evidence that learners do not grow up in moral isolation, but that they are constantly exposed to a variety of moral traditions which allow their behaviour to be developed in certain ways.

D3 S7 P13: *"Ehh... it is kind of that part of you that will always know your values, your upbringing... Mm... I feel all those things will hopefully guide you in terms of doing what is right to ensure that the society that we live in, is obviously better."*

D3 S7 P13: *"Mm... I think upbringing plays a huge role. Religion does play a huge role as well."*

D5 S9 P19: *"Uhm... where people grow up, how they incorporate those morals, and that is eventually what you reflect on others, your beliefs, your values..."*

D5 S9 P18: *"So, mm... principles, ethics, stance and quite honestly, I feel it starts at home."*

D2 S3 P5: *"... our morals are mostly based on where we come from, our background, our history."*

D3 S7 P14: *"Well... for me, that comes from what my parents taught me. They tried to teach me about right and wrong, good and bad."*

D3 S5 P10: *"Uhm... ek dink dit is maar gebaseer op 'n geloofs benadering, en dan natuurlik is dit ook maar te doene met iets soos erfenis. Dit is vir my ietsie wat oorgedra word van generasie tot generasie..."* (I think it is based on a faith approach, and then naturally it also has to do with heritage. For me it is something that is transferred from generation to generation.)

D1 S4 P7: *"Ja... ek voel hy strek reg deur, van jou geloof af tot dit wat jy glo is reg en verkeerd, tot dit wat 'n mens uitleef..."* (Yes, I feel it stretches right through, from your faith to that which you believe is right and wrong, to that which a person lives out.)

D1 S4 P7: *"Persoonlik... wel vir my is dit die morele waardes, dit is die boustene van daardie twee; 'n standvastige huis met hulle waardes en dissipline, saam met jou Godsdienst."* (Personally... well for me it is the moral values, it is the building blocks of those two; a steadfast home with values and discipline, together with your religion.)

D1 S4 P6: *"Shoo... my eie morals is gebaseer op my geloof... ek dink baie keer morals kom van die huis af, maar daardie huis is gewoonlik gebou op sekere morals, standards, en norms, en..."* (Shoo... my own morals are based on my faith... I think

morals often come from home, but that home is usually built on certain morals, standards, and norms.)

Teachers' viewpoints concurred with the general view that guiding and fostering children's value systems remain the responsibility of families (Botha & Meyer, 2019; Kamau & Davies, 2018; Salami & Okeke, 2018). Families and value systems in South Africa are compromised due to the social and economic complexities and this often causes a dichotomy in the intensity and contextuality of value systems (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007). Botha and Meyer (2019:56) supports the view that both parents are the biggest role players in the transfer of moral principles. Teachers' statements are in keeping with Simpson *et al.* (2016:256) who support the argument that religion shapes moral principles and behaviour in a wide variety of ways. Identifying with a religion is a strong motivating factor in maintaining moral behaviour (Simpson *et al.*, 2016:256). Participants' statements are in agreement with the literature that religious beliefs are a strong influence on the conformity to values and norms (Cramwinckel *et al.*, 2016:75). This view is further supported by Abrams *et al.* (2000:906) who state that the belonging to a religious in-group, encourages conformity and adherence to group norms and standards.

Participants expressed the view that the guidelines of moral principles are prone to shift from generation to generation due to the influences of society.

D4 S6 P12: *"Uhm... wel morele waardes het baie geskuif. Of dit nou verkeerd is of nie is maar baie debatteerbaar."* (Well moral values have shifted a lot. Whether it is wrong or not is very debatable.)

D3 S5 P10: *"Shoo...tye het verander. So, wat gewerk het een honderd persent wat my pa met my gedoen het, gaan nie een honderd persent werk met my seun nie, en gaan beslis ook nie eendag werk as hy dit met sy seun doen nie."* (Shoo... times have changed. So, what worked one hundred percent what my dad did with me, is not going to work one hundred percent with my son, and will definitely not work in the future if he does that with his son.)

D4 S6 P12: *"Mm... soos nuwe generasies nou ontwikkel en gebore word... ek glo hulle uitkyk gaan verander. En gaan ons ons morele pole skuif? Ehh... gaan ons dit aanpas? Hoe gaan ons dit define, want morele waardes gaan verskil?"* (As new generations are developing and are born... I believe their viewpoint will change. And will we shift our moral boundaries? Will we adjust it? How will we define it, because moral values will differ?)

D3 S5 P9: *“Weet jy... daar is ‘n hele verskuiwing van morele waardes... jy moet relevant bly, maar jy kan nie... die grys area word net al hoe groter en dit is, dit is die ding.”* (Do you know there is a complete shift of moral values... you must remain relevant but you can’t... the grey areas just get bigger and that is, that is the thing.)

These quotations resonate with Zulu *et al.* (2019:10) who found that there are many factors in modern society that may have an impact on an individual’s view of moral principles. Participants viewed social pressures within a changing environment with the potential to influence behaviour and social norms (Ellemers *et al.*, 2008).

Teachers also noted that moral principles are more complex to define in a multicultural community.

D1 S4 P6: *“Ehh... dit is ‘n baie bree konsep dink ek, veral in Suid-Afrika omdat ons so ‘n diverse land is.”* (It is a very broad concept according to me, especially in South Africa because we are such a diverse country.)

D4 S6 P12: *“Wel... wat miskien vir die, kom ons se vir die nie-blanke gemeenskap ‘n morele waarde is, is dalk nie vir die blanke gemeenskap ‘n morele waarde nie.”* (Well... what might be, let’s say for the non-white community a moral value, is maybe not for the white community a moral value.)

D3 S7 P14: *“Mm... I think there is a grey area when it comes to morals... just think about it... everyone comes from so many different backgrounds, religions, cultures.”*

The participants’ statements highlight that moral principles could be linked to a particular philosophy, religion, or culture with its inherent standards of conduct (Stanford University, 2002). Teachers’ accounts are in agreement with Conole *et al.* (2004:19) who propose that the central elements of racial heterogeneity could influence the variables of the morals within a subculture.

4.2.1.1.2 Sub-category: Perceptions of ethical behaviour

Teachers perceived ethical behaviour as a lifestyle that indicates standards of righteousness. Their views demonstrated that ethical behaviour benefits families, teachers, and other learners, whilst contributing to attitudes and behaviours where individual learners and the school as an educational institution can flourish.

D4 S6 P12: *“Mm... empatie en respek vir hulle ouers...”* (Empathy and respect for their parents.)

D2 S3 P8: *“Shoo... for me, everything positive... something good in that behaviour.”*

D1 S1 P4: *“Mm... I think its all about what kind of human being you are... because things like honesty, integrity, respect, compassion and fairness are part and parcel of morals... so... if one displays these kinds of characteristics, then one can be viewed as a good citizen to our nation...”*

D3 S7 P14: *“Ehh... isn’t it how my morals affect other people, and how their morals make me feel?”*

D2 S3 P5: *“... doing the right thing, uhm... being ethical.”*

D3 S5 P9: *“Mm... ‘n sterk morele waarde orientasie...Uhm... ‘n morele gewete...”* (A strong moral value orientation... a moral conscience.)

D5 S9 P18: *“Well... for me its a set of principles and values that a child is raised with... and also then to build and form and cultivate and groom a well-grounded individual.”*

D5 S8 P15: *“Mm... ek glo jy moet definitiewe norme he waarvolgens jy lewe...”* (I believe you must have definite norms according to which you live.)

D5 S8 P16: *“Uhh... you have got empathy and courage and loyalty and those kinds of things...”*

D4 S10 P20: *“... what is the right thing to do...”*

D5 S9 P19: *“I think... how they make those morals their own... Uhm... and that is eventually what you reflect on others, your beliefs, your values...”*

D4 S10 P17: *“Okay... firstly the way you conduct yourself... well... in terms of other people. In terms of things like honesty, integrity, respect. So... doing what is right in a situation...”*

D2 S2 P3: *“Ehh... its all about rules and standards to live by in a society... Uhm... it’s that ability to reason in an ethical manner.”*

The participants’ statements are in keeping with literature that moral reasoning is an important factor for the internalization of moral principles to influence behaviour in such a way that a concern for the welfare of others is regarded as a standard to live by (Carlo et al., 1992:334). In agreement

with Carlo et al. (1992:334) teachers viewed empathy as necessary for the development of prosocial moral reasoning. Prosocial moral reasoning is necessary to develop sympathy and a cognition of consequences in terms of individual conduct in relation to other people (Carlo et al., 1992:343). Teachers resonated with the viewpoint of Brambilla et al. (2012:151) that ethical behaviour is associated with the characteristics of honesty, sincerity, respect, integrity, and trustworthiness. Statements made by participants are consistent with findings that morals address ethical behaviour which indicates fairness, honesty, respect, integrity, and compassion for the outcomes of others (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:882). Teachers mentioned a few of the character traits that Aquino and Reed (2002) identified as the ethical behaviour of a moral person which included compassion, empathy, honesty, integrity, respect, fairness, courage, and loyalty.

These quotations illustrate that a conceptualisation of morals and moral principles is important in understanding how standards of ethical behaviour are necessary to produce a healthy education system for secondary learners where morals are woven into every fabric of character development.

4.2.1.2 Category 2: Root causes for moral decline

Findings in this category clearly revealed that participants were very aware of the exponential increase of moral degeneration amongst learners and that this posed a real threat to the stability of the education system. Teachers' views provided evidence on the societal influences, resulting in a 'consequence-less' generation. Participants further espoused the lack of parental structure and discipline as a root cause for moral decline, creating a need for learners to have a moral compass. Teachers expressed views that they felt powerless against the adverse influence of social media which has become unethical companions, posing a real concern as celebrities become the new moral compass for direction and choice. Participants raised their personal awareness that the education system is challenged by a moral decline, causing delinquent behaviour, degrading values, and degenerative peer relationships.

4.2.1.2.1 Sub-category: Societal influences on morality

Teachers agreed that learners were exposed to the influences of wider society which undermined good moral values. This correlates with the reasoning that social norms potentially motivates behaviour. Participants concurred that there are many factors in modern society that are failing to nurture our youth, causing a negative impact on learners' behaviour and on the schooling environment, causing ill-discipline and unruliness. The teachers in this study raised their concerns of the social pressures within the environment which encourage learners to partake in deviant behaviour dependent on popular social norms.

D5 S9 P18: *"Yoh... not sure where to start... societal decay...Mm... society has let our children down... everything is just passed...it is really from society. Society is polluted. And it is crippling us as teachers..."*

D1 S1 P4: *"... I tell you... moral degeneration started in our societies and have influenced every school."*

D3 S7 P13: *"Man... I get angry... people do not have a moral compass to say, 'no this is not right', uhm... and I think it stems from our leaders who have allowed corruption to infiltrate every area of our society."*

D1 S1 P4: *"Shoo... moral degeneration started in our societies and have influenced every school...those same kids who came from those societies... man, they get into the schools and that is when everything gets more and more problematic."*

D1 S4 P6: *"Mm... as jy met 'n samelewing sit waar die meerderheid maar kom uit 'n plek waar daar nie moral standards en 'n moral onderbou is nie, is die invloed baie negatief."* (If you sit with a society where the majority come from a place where there are no moral standards and a moral underpinning, then the influence is very negative.)

D3 S7 P13: *"Well... if they see drugs thriving in our community, witnessing the dealers getting rich quick, continuing to do it, bribing the cops, then they go that route... you know... in our country there is no such thing as consequences. We see a lot of people getting away with things, and in return, that is how society has become... uhm... bad behaviour seems 'normal' because the standards of morality in society have dropped so much."*

D5 S9 P19: *"Uhm... the biggest contributing factor to moral degeneration in our school is society... I am telling you... our corrupt society plays an important part. Our kids, they do not see a better world out there. There are so few positive examples... Mm... it's almost like doing the right thing has become an exception... also they live in a broken down society, in completely broken homes..."*

Participants' views resonate with Kemp (2016) who argues that South African society is saturated with official, police and community complicity in drugs, robbery, trafficking and other illegal activities, causing a degeneration in the standards of morality. Teachers' views are in agreement with Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011:209) that the South African society is in such a degree of decay that learners mind-sets have become so desensitized that immoral behaviour has become the new norm. It became clear from teachers' comments that school grounds and playgrounds have

turned into areas where they feel unsafe due to criminality, violence, and gangster activities (Ngwokabueni, 2015). Participants were in agreement with Ngwokabueni (2015) that one of the main causes of this problem could be ascribed to a disintegration of value systems within our society. There is a desperate need for young people to witness the lives of role models in society who refuse to compromise their moral compass.

D2 S3 P8: *“Shoo... honestly... they just do as they please... ehh... just do whatever they want to do, knowing that they will not face any challenges or that there will be any consequences for bad behaviour. It is no longer what is the right way. Mm... it is mostly connected to what is happening in society... it is society to begin with... the information that kids are being fed that when you are in a classroom, a teacher cannot discipline you...”*

D3 S5 P10: *“Uhm... dit lei my na die tweede ding wat ‘n krisis is, ‘n ‘consequenceless society’, jy weet. Ons lewe in ‘n gemeenskap wat nie gevolge het nie...”* (This leads me to the second thing that is a crisis, a consequenceless society, you know. We live in a society where there are no consequences.)

D4 S6 P11: *“Wel... daar is soveel omstandighede in ons samelewing buite die skool wat ‘n rol speel, en ongelukkig penetreer dit weer terug in die skool in.”* (Well... there are so many circumstances in our society outside of school that plays a role, and unfortunately it penetrates back into school.)

D4 S10 P17: *“Ehh... what they see in their community, and the people around them doing... Mm... if you look at morality in our societies in general, it is quite a scary, scary thing. I think if we look at the amount of corruption we have on every level, it has just become accepted. So... people always try to look for the shortcuts, and what they can get away with, rather than doing what is right.”*

D4 S10 P20: *“Uhm... they are coming from different circumstances. Different communities in Johannesburg... you can see the differences in behaviour...”*

It is clear from the participants' comments that society has an influence on morality. South African society is experiencing a serious moral breakdown which is evident in social ills such as a lack of discipline, violence, poverty, unemployment, a high crime rate, risky sexual activity, school vandalism, high dropout rates, and corruption (Louw, 2009:2). Societal influences in South Africa has lead to a moral crisis and is evident in the high incidences of murder, robbery, violence, abuse, rape, fraud, and drug trafficking (South Africa, 200). The decay of values in our societies

is setting an example for our learners that moral standards are no longer the norm. Participants related that South African societies have become environments where learners are constantly exposed to anti-social behaviour (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Doing the right thing has become an exception, and this influences learners' choices and behaviour patterns. This viewpoint resonates with the Social Learning Theory where Walters (1998:4-5) points out that the environment influences the internalisation of values, motives and beliefs of a culture or peer group. The Moral Development Theory further challenges the disparities in our communities and how this has the potential to cause differential reasoning and internalisation of moral boundaries (Lapsley, 2006). This means that a disparity could be evident in the moral development of learners in disadvantaged communities due to the different social experiences influencing their behaviour. The findings in these quotations are substantiated by Krebs (2008) who points out that relevant social experiences directly influences moral development.

Available literature on the Social Disorganisation Theory attest to the fact that there is a strong link between communities where social disorder prevails, and fragmented moral standards (Breetzke, 2010; Fox *et al.*, 2010; Sampson & Groves, 1989). On the other end of the scale, communities who are efficient in exerting control and cohesion, have lower rates of crime and delinquency (Prinsloo & Ovens, 2016). There is increasing evidence supporting the Social Disorganisation Theory and the notion that degenerative behaviour patterns are strongly linked to a socially disorganized landscape (Masombuka, 2013:1). Societies void of ethical and moral behaviour contributes to socially disorganised learners where behaviour manifests in the violation of moral standards and the development of delinquency (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Chippendale, 2001:3; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Camacho *et al.*, 2003:508; Zhang *et al.*, 2017:56; Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818). As observed by the teachers in their daily lived experiences in the classroom, a socially disorganised milieu eventually gives rise to moral disengagement that becomes the norm (Bandura *et al.*, 1996; Piquero, 2007:436).

4.2.1.2.2 Sub-category: Parental and familial factors

The findings makes it clear that parents are absent and uninvolved in guiding and nurturing their children's value systems. Teachers viewed the absence and lack of involvement in parenting in two ways. Parents were either physically or emotionally absent and uninvolved in nurturing values, or they became permissive and lacked the necessary authority in guiding the moral development of their children. Participants' views make it evident that families and value systems are compromised due to the lack of parental guidance and parental influence.

D1 S1 P4: *“Well... a big one for me... it is not our duty as teachers to establish the foundations of moral values. Ehh... we should enforce it, but it is not our role to start the journey with the kids... you know... parents fail to implement the basics of morality at home, it is very difficult for us to accomplish anything at school.”*

D4 S6 P12: *“Jis... ek raak opgewerk man... ouers is nie meer so betrokke soos wat hulle moet wees in hulle kinders se lewe nie... kinders gaan agteruit... jy sal die ouers bel, hulle sal nie antwoord nie. Hulle wil nie betrokke raak in hulle kinders se lewe nie. Baie van die ouers met wie ons nou te doen het, is alkoholiste. Nee man... jy sien dit in die kinders se gedrag, hulle smag na ouerliefde, ouer omgee... jis... hulle sal alles in die klas doen om dit te probeer ontvang, want hulle soek daardie aandag, so hulle sal stout wees, hulle sal aangaan, want die ouer is absent... afwesige ouers is nommer een.”* (Yeez... I get worked up man... parents are not as involved as they should be in their children's lives... children are regressing... you will phone the parents and they won't answer. They don't want to get involved in their children's lives. Many of the parents that we are now involved with, are alcoholics. No man... you can see it in the children's behaviour, they are desperate for their parents' love, for their parents to care...yeez... they will do everything in the class to receive it, because they are looking for attention, so they will be naughty, they will carry on, because the parent is absent... absent parents is number one.)

D3 S5 P9: *“Uhm... huislike omstandighede is nie, ek dink nie dit is great nie. Sy is gereeld in my kantoor want sy enforce the law... sy moet dit by haar huis doen. Sy is die ou wat wet en orde by haar huis handhaaf.”* (Home circumstances isn't, I don't think it is great. She is regularly in my office because she enforces the law... she must do this at home. She is the one who has to maintain law and order at home.)

D1 S4 P7: *“... daar is nie 'n voorbeeld in die huis nie... so basically die rolmodel in die huis ontbreek, so ek dink... gebroke huise...”* (There is no example in the home... so basically the role model in the home is missing, so I think... broken homes.)

The statements made by teachers were indicative of the view expressed by the Department of Social Development (2013) which highlighted that family values were compromised and degenerating, threatening to cause a vulnerable school system where delinquent behaviour was evident amongst learners. Participants strongly agreed with Louw (2009:2) that moral degeneration was mainly caused by family life experiencing a serious moral collapse.

D1 S1 P1: *"You know... it's a lack of parental influence and guidance. It's become obvious that parents are not active participants in the upbringing of their children... most of the time, both parents have to work. So... children are left, or they raise themselves, or they are placed in the care of adults who also know no different. Personally... if the child has not been exposed to good character development at home, that child is not equipped to deal with life issues from a moral perspective... that is how I see it."*

D2 S2 P2: *"Gee... students have lost their moral compass man and I think this is because their parents are so busy... parents are just absent... parents' don't understand how their actions affect their children's behaviour... moral degeneration in South African schools is a result of our learners not having a compass... Uhm... there is no guidance, there are no parents..."*

D2 S2 P3: *"Mm... the first thing that I see and I say it to you now, is the lack of parental involvement. The number one thing that our kids say to us is that; 'My mother does not care'. Kids actually tell you that. And the more you talk to kids the more you realise that the relationship between parent and child is non-existent... it's sad that the parents and the children do not have a relationship and then it leads to drug abuse that I also see in my class because parents are absent. Man... parents are so busy working, living their own lives, that kids are left on their own so often... Mm... and when a child is left alone without supervision for several hours in a week it will not end well."*

D1 S4 P6: *"Wel... ek kan se amper elke kind wat voor my opeindig, kom uit 'n gebroke huis uit. Geskeide huis en soos ek vroeër gese het, morals begin by die huis. 'What is right and what is wrong'... Mm... baie geskeide huise en daar waar 'n ma of 'n pa afwesig is, mis 'n kind maar altyd iets uit. Jy weet... daardie rol wat gespeel moet word, is nie daar nie."* (Well... I can say almost every child that ends up in front of me, comes from a broken home. Divorced home and like I said earlier, morals begins at home. What is right and what is wrong... many divorced homes and where a mom or a dad is absent, the child misses out on something. You know... that role that needs to be played, is not there.)

D5 S9 P18: *"Uhm... because parents also when it comes to their responsibility as parents, they have also passed the buck onto teachers. The parents no longer are involved in the grooming, in the discipline of their children and basically... well... they are expecting the teacher to do all of this."*

The participants' responses are supported by Harecker (2012) who describes the somber prospects of education due to the very difficult role of teachers being viewed to be 'in loco parentis' by parents who no longer take responsibility for their children.

D4 S10 P17: *"... the home environment definitely has an influence. There just seems to be no moral guidance."*

D5 S9 P19: *"Ehh... I tell you... we receive very little support from parents. Very little support from home... sometimes when we send reports home, things are not taken seriously, and we do not get any feedback. You know... if the child is not given that support or help, how do we build that child's character to become the adult they should be? One of our biggest struggles as teachers are the lack of parental support... Mm... parents who are not building the moral fibre of their children..."*

D2 S3 P8: *"Man... parents are to blame! There are too many parents who are just not interested in their children's education. Mm... when you call a parent, they do not come."*

D3 S5 P10: *"Jis... baie, baie min uit 'n gesonde huishouding waar ma en pa teenwoordig is, en nog gelukkig is, en nog getroud is en so meer, kry ek uit sulke huishoudings regtig gevalle waar jy kan se daar is bietjie agteruitgang in die morele waardes en normes nie. Uhm... maar uit die aard van die saak gaan dit baie gebeur in 'n huisgesin waar 'n seun byvoorbeeld grootword sonder 'n pa..."* (Yeez... very, very seldom from healthy households where mom and dad are present, and still happy, and still married and so forth, do I find from such households real cases where you can say that there is a slight degeneration in the moral values and norms. But, from the nature of the matter it often happens in a household where a boy for example grows up without a father.)

D4 S10 P20: *"Uhm... the lack of parental involvement... they are busy, they are working... one-parent households... just a mom or just a dad, whether they are divorced or passed away... there is a lack of parental support. I can tell you... one-parent households are becoming, well, a lot more prominent... so... parents are not spending quality time with learners, showing them the right way... they are not there. It's a real problem... they are absent, so learners tend to go to social media, watching TV shows, and the things that do not point them in the right way. Mm... because they do not have that proper guidance at home."*

The perceptions of teachers resonate with the increasing evidence that children often harbour deep-rooted anger towards absent parents, resulting in rebellious or delinquent behaviour patterns (Nielsen, 2012). Teachers strongly agreed that the breakdown of family values has become the predominant cause for the regression of the norms of behaviour, leading to teachers complaining about undisciplined, disrespectful, and disobedient learners (Abosi & Kandjii-Murangi, 2004; Bottery, 1990). Botha and Meyer (2019:57-58) found that learners are often raised in fatherless homes or homes where fathers are emotionally absent in terms of nurturing and supporting their children. It was revealed by Statistics South Africa (2013) that up to 40% of homes in South Africa were headed by women, and this number has increased due to the high divorce rate prevalent in families. Participants stressed that an increasing number of learners are growing up without the involvement of fathers (Statistics South Africa, 2015). Teachers were in agreement with Botha and Meyer (2019:56), that absent fathers play a major role in learners' behavioural problems, and that both parents are considered as important role players in the transfer of moral values. Participants reported, as was confirmed in the study of Richter et al. (2010) that absent parenting created a need for value-based affirmation, causing secondary school learners to struggle with low self-worth, loneliness, depression, anger, rejection, and alienation. Teachers affirmed that a high rate of divorces are leading to broken homes and this aligns with Meintjies and Hall (2013) who revealed that only about 33% of children live in nuclear families. Participants confirmed that a lack of parental involvement due to broken homes negatively impact the socio-educational development of children (Change, 2015; Chauke & Khunou, 2014; Gray & Anderson, 2016; Mncanca et al., 2016; Vuza, 2017). There is evidence that parental involvement has the potential to influence the progression a child makes and their ability to achieve success in adulthood (Allen & Daly, 2007).

Teachers further stated that a lack of parental guidance occurred when parents were misguided in nurturing values through permissive parenting, compromising the moral development of their children due to their fear for any confrontation. Parents would often choose their children's (learners) side and verbally attack teachers when they needed to intervene in or enquire about a learner's disruptive or unwanted behaviour.

D2 S2 P3: *"Ehh... it's unreal... parents think that their kids are their friends. I always hear people saying that when they are parents, they are going to do things differently because they know what it felt like when their parents had too many rules and they were too strict. Man... it's that attitude is what leads to moral degeneration because you are taking away some of the key things that are needed in order to mould a child. Uhm... that is what is happening. Parents are seeing their kids as friends and not as*

their children. They do not want to do the uncomfortable thing where you need to say; 'No'."

D5 S8 P15: *"... wel... omdat daar van die ouerhuise af net nie meer dissipline toegepas word nie. Ek se vir jou... ons kry soveel gevalle waar die ouers geen outoriteit toepas nie... daar is nie dissipline by die huis nie... daar is nie konsekwensies nie... absolutely geen repercussions vir wat jy verkeerd doen nie... dit is absoluut ons grootste probleem. Uhm... dit kom van die huise af, want daar is geen konsekwente gevolge vir oortredings nie... dit kom absoluut van die huis af dat daar nie meer waardes en norms by die huis nagevolg word nie. Die kinders kan op TV kyk wat hulle wil, hulle kan op social media doen wat hulle wil. Hulle het net geen grense van die huis af nie."* (Well... because from home discipline is no longer enforced . I am telling you... we get so many cases where the parents do not enforce any authority... there is no discipline at home... there are no consequences... absolutely no repercussions for what you are doing wrong... that is absolutely our biggest problem... it comes from home because there is no consistent consequences for transgressions... it absolutely comes from home that values and norms are not being followed at home anymore. The children can watch on TV whatever they want, they can do on social media whatever they feel like. They have no boundaries from home.)

D3 S7 P14: *"Mm... as a teacher in my classroom... I say, 'I blame your parents... where is your ethic to come to school? Why are you at home if you are not sick? I blame your parents... why are they allowing you to do these things'? Parents have a major influence on moral degeneration. I tell you... the parents will defend them at every turn. I mean I had a child who physically attacked the teacher, and that parent defended their child. Crazy... maybe it is how generation Z has chosen to raise their children. In a lot of cases, it's about, 'I do not want my child to dislike me...'Uhm... their idea of what is going to lead to them being accepted, influences their parenting behaviour..."*

D3 S5 P10: *"Man... moet op huis begin. Daar is nie vir my 'n ander logiese verduideliking nie... ek kan vir jou 'n voorbeeld gee. Het jy 'n situasie waar jy 'n kind vang se nou maar rook. Mm... nou om te rook in skoolklere op die skoolperseel en so meer is absoluut blatant teen die skoolreels... nou spreek jy die leerling aan oor die feit dat hy gerook het, en mens gebruik maar as 'n afskrikmiddel baie keer die kinders se ouers. Uhh... maar die wind word bietjie uit jou seile uitgehaal as jy vir 'n*

kind se 'hoor hier, ek het jou nou gevang rook en ek gaan jou ma bel', en die leerder se reaksie is, 'maar my ma koop my sigarette vir my'. Dit maak dit baie moeilik, want vir ons as onderwysers, waar is die 'end of the line'?" (Man... must start at home. There is no other logical explanation... I can give you an example. You have a situation where you find a child smoking... now to smoke in school uniform on the school premises is absolutely blatantly against the school rules... now you address the learner about the fact that he smoked, and one often uses as a deterrent the child's parents... but the wind is slightly taken out of your sails when you say to the child, 'listen here I caught you smoking and I am going to phone your mom', and the learner's reaction is, 'but my mom buys my cigarettes for me'. This makes it very difficult, because for us as teachers, where is the 'end of the line'?)

D3 S5 P10: *"Uhm... ons het hierdie tipe probleme waar ons hoor, 'Meneer kan se wat Meneer wil, my pa se dit is reg, so ek gaan doen wat my pa se'."* (We have these types of problems where we hear, 'Sir can say whatever Sir wants, my dad says it is okay, so I am going to do what my dad says'.)

Teachers perceived that parents have become negligent in their task to impart positive values and set healthy boundaries for their children, contributing to an attitude of entitlement where learners defend their delinquent and destructive behaviour (Bayaga & Jaysveree, 2011:209). Participants concurred that the family support system was no longer stable, as parents were not upholding their role of authority in terms of discipline, causing asocial behaviour to be transmitted to the schooling system (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:2). Teachers remarked how principals would call in parents, reprimanding their children for peddling drugs in the school, and that the parent's response would often be angry and defensive (Kemp, 2016). Teachers have become very aware that a complete degeneration of discipline and boundaries are contributing to the risk of a moral collapse (Dawood, 2014).

D3 S7 P14: *"...you know... I have watched them fail their kids... I see the results in our children. These children are not equipped to take care of themselves, and parents are allowing them to make big decisions which they are not ready to make, or allowing them to experience things that they are not ready to experience."*

D3 S7 P13: *"Mm... we have parents who take no accountability. I mean we had a parent who came to see us, I think it was two weeks ago. You won't believe... the kid has been absent for 100 days this year! A real problem... Uhm... they brought travel bags for us, wanting to bribe us so that their kid can pass and stay at school. So what happens... the kid watches the behaviour of their parents, thinking that money allows*

them to get away with things. They develop an attitude of, 'if you call my mom and tell them I am getting deregistered, they can buy you a nice bag, and you will change your mind'."

Parents' unwillingness to guide their children to take accountability for their misdemeanours, and compromising school rules by attempting to bribe teachers, are exposing learners to corruption and teaching them to dishonour the moral boundaries of honesty, work ethics, personal integrity, and consideration for others (Lamont & Molnar, 2002:168).

Another reality are the parents who claim that they are not neglecting their moral responsibility, but that they are feeling fearful and helpless in setting boundaries with adolescents who have become undisciplined and rebellious.

D5 S8 P15: *"Yoh... as jy met die ouers praat sal jy verstom wees! Vandag bel ek 'n ouer en ek se vir haar, 'jou kind se sy het 'n hoofpyn in die eksamen, kan ek vir haar panado's gee? Uhm... haar antwoord, 'Ek weet nie meer wat om te doen nie, sy vat net pille, sy luister nie vir my nie' en 'se jy nou vir my wat moet ek doen'."* (If you speak with the parents, you will be amazed! Today I phoned a parent and I said to her, 'your child says she has a headache in the exams, may I give her panado's? Her answer, 'I don't know what to do anymore, she just takes tablets, she doesn't listen to me' and 'you need to tell me what I need to do'.)

D5 S9 P19: *"Mm... some parents always try and shift the responsibility to us as teachers. They are like, 'no you try. I have tried, I am washing my hands clean from this situation'."*

D4 S6 P12: *"... ek se vir jou... die ouer kan glad nie met die kind deal in die huis omstandighede nie. Hulle het geen beheer meer nie. Man... die ma sal partykeer aangerand word deur die kind. Dan sal ons agterkom, soos vandag weer, die kind is aggressief, act op by die skool...dan kontak ons daardie enkel ouers, en die ma se vir ons, 'hoor hier, maar ons het presies dieselfde probleem by die huis, ons weet nie meer wat om te doen nie'."* (I am telling you... the parent cannot deal with the child in the home environment at all. They have no control anymore. Man... the mom would sometimes be assaulted by the child. Then we will realise like today, the child is aggressive, acts out at school... then we contact those single parents, and the mom would say to us, 'listen we have the same problem at home, we don't know what to do anymore'.)

As emphasized by Baumrind (1991), the family significantly influences behavior and character development. Participants' views therefore identify that the moral collapse within schools is rooted in the absence of parental guidance in nurturing a moral compass in their children. Teachers' perceptions correlate with the view of Nielsen (2012) that there is a breakdown of parent-child relationships, causing parents to neglect their responsibility of setting moral boundaries within the family system. Teachers' comments resonate with the view of Wischerth *et al.* (2016:185-189) that parents who choose a permissive style of parenting contribute to learners' defiant behaviour at various levels. Participants' views stressed that learners who are not guided by parents who set healthy boundaries, resist conforming to the expectations for behaviour set by the teachers (Wischerth *et al.*, 2016:185-189). Teachers' statements correlate with the views of Hinnant *et al.* (2016:1071-1081) that permissive parenting is often associated with externalizing behaviours and adolescent delinquency. Teachers supported the correlation between parenting styles and children's behavioral problems, concluding that parents who chose permissive parenting, became directly responsible for children exhibiting negative and rule-violating behavior (Alizadeh *et al.*, 2011:195-200). Participants' responses resonated with Baumrind (1991) that parents cannot afford to be ignorant about how their parenting influences the behavior of their children. Teachers emphasized the importance of parents adopting an authoritative perspective to guide their children's moral compass (Alizadeh *et al.*, 2011:195-200).

4.2.1.2.3 Sub-category: Influence of social media and technology

Teachers' statements make it evident that the content of social media and technology is currently influencing the behaviour of learners. Teachers raised their concerns that learners were being influenced by less ethical role models idolised on social media that corrupted their morality. Celebrities are becoming the new moral compass for truth and choices. Teachers expressed the view that popular content on social media is a major cause for moral decline, causing delinquent behaviour, degrading values, and degenerative peer relationships.

D5 S9 P19: *"Uhh... social media has such a big impact on learners... this definitely contributes to moral degeneration... man... kids are so obsessed by social media platforms, that they are not emphasising the importance of their education, or focusing on bettering themselves. Mm... they are more interested in how you can promote your body and make money out of it, and our kids are influenced by that mindset. And the problem is, sometimes our focused learners are influenced by this mindset that lacks vision and purpose... Uhh...our focused learners then forget what they have learnt at home, or by supportive teachers, and they are influenced by the negativity of derogatory videos on Tik Tok...there is very little that parents or teachers can do to*

prevent this kind of exposure, and try and safeguard our kids against what they are influenced by..."

D5 S9 P19: *"Yoh... young people obsess about social media! They are unable to see the moral traps. Those degrading values are in your face and there is such apathy about morality... Mm... anything goes and the young people are attracted by that."*

D1 S4 P7: *"Ja... ons is op sosiale media 24/24 ure op 'n dag. Uhm... die dinge wat hulle sien en die dinge waarop hulle toegang het vir die sosiale media, maak 'n groot verskil in 'n kind se denkpatroon."* (Yes... we are on social media 24/24 hours a day. The things that they see and the things that they have access to for social media, makes a big difference in a child's mindset.)

D1 S4 P7: *"... man... kinders kan op enige site gaan. Daar is ouers wat nie eers weet wat op hulle kinders se fone aangaan nie. So... ek dink daardie deel, die voorbeeld wat hulle sien bly so belangrik... Uhm... daar is geen morele waardes in 90% van daardie goed nie... Hulle blootstelling aan die sosiale media dink ek maak 'n groot verskil oor hoe hulle dink oor wat mag en wat mag nie gebeur nie... Mm... die hele konsep oor wat mag en wat mag nie, word beïnvloed deur hulle influencers."* (Man... children can go on any site. There are parents who don't even know what is going on on their children's phones. So I think that part, the example that they see is so important... There are no moral values in 90% of that stuff... Their exposure to social media makes a big difference in how they think about what is allowed and what shouldn't be allowed... the whole concept about what should and what shouldn't, is influenced by their influencers.)

D1 S4 P6: *"Uhm... dan dink ek die groter issue is, en ek dink dit is seker die grootste bydraende faktor, sosiale media... want... 'n selfoon is 'n habit met 'n groot invloed... ons is verslaaf. Hulle is konstant op 'n selfoon. Daardie ding bepaal jou morals... Mm... die sosiale media maak die kinders basies groot. So... waaraan hulle blootgestel word op sosiale media het 'n geweldige impak. Stupid goed eintlik... goed wat op dopamien gedryf is. Kyk hoe snaaks is dit... Uhm... kom ons dans, kom ons kyk hoe, kom ons kyk hoe verkeerd kan ons wees, goed soos dagga gebruik en daardie tipe dinge. Dit is mos sosiaal aanvaarbaar op sosiale media. Jy weet... vroeër jare toe fone nie so groot was nie, het jou ouers geweet waarmee jy besig is."* (Then I think the bigger issue is, and I think it is probably the biggest contributing factor, social media... because... a cellphone is a habit with a big influence... we are addicted. They are constantly on a cellphone. That thing determines your morals...

Social media is basically raising our kids. So... what they are exposed to on social media has a major impact. Stupid stuff actually... stuff that is driven by dopamine. Look how funny is this... let's dance, let's see how, let's see how wrong we can be, stuff like using marijuana and those type of things. It is socially acceptable on social media. You know... past years when phones were not so big, your parents knew what you were busy with.)

D1 S4 P6: *"Uhm... jy het dalk bietjie tyd by jou stoute vriende by die skool spandeer, maar oor die algemeen, was ouers die onderbou van kinders se morele standarde, en ouers het bepaal waaraan hulle kinders blootgestel mag word. Mm... en nou op 'n selfoon, weet ek nie waarna my kind kyk nie. Ek weet nie waarmee hulle besig is nie, want ek is self te besig op my eie selfoon, en dit is wat die kinders se moral compass bou. Uhh... dan kom hulle skool toe, en nou moet jy met hierdie massa deurmekaarspul en chaos sit... want... jy moet eintlik die vraag vra, is daar ooit nog morals?"* (You maybe spent some time with your naughty friends at school, but in general, parents were the foundation of children's moral standards, and parents determined what their children were allowed to be exposed to... and now on a cellphone, I don't know what my child is watching. I don't know what they are busy with, because I myself is too busy on my own cellphone, and that is what is building children's moral compass... then they come to school, and you have to cope with this mess and chaos... because... you actually have to ask the question, are there still any morals?)

D5 S8 P16: *"Uhh... first on my list is social media. The fact that learners are able to open up to any platform, and with regards to Tik Tok what they can access... and... what they can see which obviously influences them in a major way... some of the stuff that they are watching is really very toxic..."*

D4 S10 P20: *"Parents are absent man... so learners tend to go to social media, watching the TV shows, and the things that do not point them in the right way... because... they do not have that proper guidance at home... social media plays a big role. Uhh... because what goes viral? Good things do not really go, morally good things do not really go viral. Mm... somebody slapping somebody else, or a school fight will get a million views. Somebody giving somebody a bread, because they are hungry, will get 20 views. So... that definitely does contribute to the moral decay in life... social media is a big, big problem."*

D5 S8 P15: *“Mm... ek dink dis grootliks sosiale media en groepsdruk... want... hulle sal eerder dood wees as uit die mode wees... hulle het nie grense nie, want daar is net soveel gaps vir hulle op sosiale media. Uhm... hulle neem enigiets af wat hulle dink gaan hulle popular maak... So... dit gaan vir my absoluut, die sosiale media en die gebrek aan reëls vir die media, daar is weer die ding van... Norme en waarde, is net te oop. Jy weet... daar is geen boundaries nie.”* (I think it is mainly social media and peer pressure... because... they would rather be dead than out of fashion... they have no boundaries, because there are just so many gaps for them on social media... they film anything that they think will make them popular... So.. for me it is absolutely social media and the lack of rules for the media, it is that thing again that... norms and values are too open. You know... there are no boundaries.)

Participants' views concurred with literature that today's learners are immersed in a digital world that influences their moral mindset. Due to the exponential access of platforms and the lack of boundaries, it is becoming more important for parents to be aware of the nature of the sites that their children are exploring as many of them are less than ethical environments, contributing to moral degeneration. Learners are exposing themselves online to cyberbullying, privacy issues, and 'sexting', manifesting in problematic offline behaviours at school which include bullying, clique-forming, and sexual experimentation (O' Keeffe *et al.*, 2015:800).

D5 S8 P16: *“Uhh... social bullying is really big on social media.”*

D3 S5 P10: *“Ja... die kinders gebruik sosiale media en eerstens, hulle is geneig om met mekaar baie vieslik te wees met sosiale media ensovoorts, want hulle is gesiglose wesens. Cyberbullying as mens so kan stel gebeur nogal waar die kinders mekaar afkraak op sosiale media... want... ek meen soos ek weereens se jy is 'n gesiglose wese...”* (Yes... the children use social media, and firstly they are prone to be really ugly with each other with social media etcetera, because they are 'faceless beings'. Cyberbullying if one can put it, happens where the children disparage each other on social media... because... I mean as I say again, you are a 'faceless being'...)

Participants' viewpoints correlates with Rushton (1982:459-462) who pointed out that within the Social Learning Theory, behaviour is challenged by the contents of consciousness. Teachers' insights echo Payne's (2005) who supports the view that behaviour is influenced by observation within the external environment. Teachers pointed out that social media and technology is currently one of the major influences on learning and development to the degree where values and beliefs are internalised (Walters, 1998:4-5). Participants proposed that social learning takes place within the context of the relationship that learners have with social media which has become

the 'superpeer' (Bandura, 1989:1175). Teachers further emphasized that they felt powerless as specific behaviours and attitudes are transmitted in different circumstances, indicating the influence of social media which has become an unethical companion (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). Participants' perceptions are supported by the viewpoint of Jones (2001:413) that children learn to become aggressive and destructive through their immediate experiences. Social media has now become the new moral compass, influencing harmful behaviours as children are exposed to media platforms where they spend an inordinate amount of time consuming inappropriate media.

Teachers argue that children who are repeatedly exposed to violent or sexualised content, are much more likely to develop high-risk sexual or destructive behaviours (Siegel, 2011:136). As social media becomes the new moral compass, new behaviours are learnt through observational learning, imitating and adopting those behaviours even if they are risky or destructive in content (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). In accordance with Balogun and Okurame (2011) teachers highlight the importance of mentoring as a strategy that is especially relevant to social learning where social media guides actions and behaviour.

Statements by teachers are endorsed by the findings of Balogun and Okurame (2011) that social media has become the new moral authority, navigating new behaviours as learners observe platforms, imitating and adopting destructive and unethical behaviours due to social media deeming them 'acceptable'. Participants agreed with the importance of parents mentoring their children as they navigate social media platforms, guiding them in the process of social learning, and avoiding the risk of social media becoming an unprincipled influence (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). Teachers' perceptions revealed the need for parents to become aware of the risks of their children being exposed to limitless social platforms, and the need for boundaries due to their susceptibility to peer pressure. Participants indicated the risks of social media influencing behaviour and learning as learners are exposed to a particular lifestyle which is endorsed by the peer group (O' Keeffe, 2015:803). Teachers' statements pointed out that parents' ignorance regarding the significant influences of social media is a contributing factor for resultant unethical behaviour, bullying, depression, social anxiety, and degrading values in terms of self and others (O' Keeffe, 2015:803).

4.2.2 Theme 2: Challenges In Facilitating Value-Based Education

Theme 2 reflects on secondary school teachers' views on the moral collapse within schools and how this impacts their efforts towards facilitating a value based education. The participants lacked motivation, experiencing frustration having to deal with a range of external pressures and influences causing an exponential increase in moral degeneration amongst learners. Participants further identified that learners were exposed to the influence of socio-economic circumstances

such as poverty which impacted moral values. Teachers viewed the lack or absence of a strong religious foundation at schools as a contributing factor to the decline of values. Theme 2 expounds the struggles and constraints that teachers face to balance curriculum demands with moral education. Participants are also experiencing immense pressure as they must address a range of behavioural issues, affecting learner wellbeing.

4.2.3 Category 1: External pressures and influences

Participants expressed views that learners were vulnerable to the influences of wider society which challenge people and circumstances that represent good moral values to effectively impact their mindset. Teachers are experiencing a current scenario of degenerative values and morals and find it almost impossible to cope with the complex social ills of absent fathers, substance abuse amongst learners, violence, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, poverty, crime, gangsterism, unemployment, neglect, homelessness, and corruption. These external pressures are playing an important role in the moral breakdown of learners. Participants also made it clear that learners are facing increasing pressure to conform to role models in society which influences their view on morality.

D3 S5 P10: *“Mm... die ‘influencers’ natuurlik, wie is die ‘influencers’...hulle volg al hierdie ‘degenerates’, as mens dit amper kan se, en dit is die wat hulle rolmodelle word.”* (The influencers naturally, who are the influencers... they follow all these degenerates, if one can almost say that, and it is these that become their role models.)

D5 S8 P16: *“... Uhm... I link their lack of empathy back to their trauma, and the fact that there is no one there for them... man, their situations... its what happens in their minds, because they are not able to process it all without support.”*

D5 S8 P15: *“... groepsdruk... hulle sal eerder dood wees as uit die mode wees...”* (Peer pressure... they would rather be dead than out of fashion.)

D1 S4 P6: *“Mm... die wereld... ek se vir jou die wereld dryf so hard aan liberalisme... dis daai druk van wees jouself, wees wie jy wil wees, dat op die einde van die dag dink ek die ‘moral of the day, be yourself’. Wees net wie jy wil wees, ‘and if there is no order, there will be chaos. There will be anarchy.’ En dit is waar ons sukkel in die klas vandag, want ek kan nie iets vir jou se nie, jy moet jouself wees, maar jy word nie gelei volgens enige ‘morals’ nie, ‘so who know?’”* (The world... I am telling you the world drives so hard on liberalism... its that pressure of being yourself, be who you want to be, that at the end of the day I think the moral of the day, be yourself. Be just

who you want to be, and if there is no order, there will be chaos. There will be anarchy. And that is where we struggle in the class today, because I cannot say something to you, you must be yourself, but you are not being led according to any morals, so who know?)

D4 S6 P11: *“Man... pressure... pressure from everybody. Pressure from your community, pressure from the parents, pressure from your friends. Uhm... if you have to fit in, you need to do things. Uhh... the main thing that is breaking them down now for the degeneration, is basically also stress, anxiety, pre- and post-Covid plays a big role. Covid did do something to a lot of kids emotionally...”*

D4 S6 P11: *“Mm... now the new thing that is coming here is the gangsterism. The big gang fights in Westbury between the ‘Fast Guns’ and the ‘Varados’ is playing a major role... a lot of kids are joining a gang just to fit in... I mean, the gang provides an alternative. Yeah... they need to feel safe. Learners that walks out of this school is scared that they will not even get home because of the gangsterism in Westbury, because of the fights, because of the intimidation, because of the aggression in the community. Uhh... some people do escape, some people do escape instead of going to gangsterism, but unfortunately they turn to substance abuse. Now instead of forming a gang... I am experimenting with substances... man we have a big problem with substance abuse in this school.”*

D2 S2 P3: *“Sho... we got a drug issue. Our kids are falling under pressure, falling under the pressure of drugs and so many other things. Weed has become like a cigarette... our kids smoke it... and there is nothing in place to help. Uhh... and on top of that we have had kids that we know sell weed and cigarettes at school. Alcohol abuse is another problem...our kids have no good influences in their lives... Ehh... their older brothers are actually drug addicts. Their older siblings also sell drugs, and they are part of a gang.”*

D3 S5 P9: *“So... ‘everything goes’, want die kinders het mos regte... Uhm...nou kan die kinders kom en aandring op hulle regte... jy het seker al die ‘rumours’ gehoor oor (skool X) wat ‘wolwe’ het by hulle skool. En nou is daar mos vir hulle ‘n ‘scratch’ boom...”* (So... everything goes, because the kids have rights... now the kids can come and demand their rights... you have probably heard the rumours about (school X) that has wolves at their school. And now there is a scratch tree for them...)

D3 S5 P9: *“Mm... Mm... stres... stres het ‘n invloed op hulle gedrag... daar is niemand by haar huis wat vir haar se, ‘ek kan sien jy is ‘n bietjie opgestres, waarmee kan ek help’... so iewers moet hulle uitlating gee... die druk orals is net geweldig groot...”* (Stress... stress has an influence on their behaviour... there is no one at home who says to her, ‘I can see that you are a little stressed out, what can I help with’... so somewhere they have to give expression... the pressure everywhere is just incredibly big.)

The findings accord with the view of Lee *et al.* (2012) and Dube *et al.* (2013) that learners are exposed to many harmful influences of which the abuse of various substances remains the major cause for destructive behaviour and violent crimes at school. Participants verbatim quotations support evidence in literature that learners are being exposed to issues such as a lack of support which compounds stress as they struggle to process different emotions (Porter & Gavin, 2010:99). This is supported by Richter *et al.* (2010) who express the need for support and value-based affirmation where the adolescent struggles with low self-worth, loneliness, depression, anger, rejection, and alienation. Teachers expressed thoughts that the influence of the peer group and pressure to conform to a changing world where boundaries are constantly shifting, increases the risk for negative behaviour as adolescents constantly challenge established rules and attempt to transgress socio-educational boundaries in the search of their identity (Smith & Tatalovich, 2003:58).

4.2.3.1.1 Sub-category: Influence of socio-economic circumstances

Participants highlighted that family values have been impacted through the socio-economic degeneration in South Africa. Teachers further indicated the dilemma of a vulnerable school system due to compromised values caused by poverty as many households are struggling to provide for the needs of children. Participants identified poverty as a root cause for a decline in values as crime amongst learners was concerning.

D4 S6 P12: *“Uhm... man dis die hele opset in Suid-Afrika. Dit is heeltyd ‘n gesukkel om te ‘survive’, en as ek nie agter myself kyk nie, is daar niemand anders wat agter my gaan kyk nie. Uhh... ek dink dit kom ook van die ouerhuis af, en dit word so aan die kinders oorgedra, ‘luister ons moet survive. Ons is in ‘n baie moeilike situasie, ons het nie geld vir kos nie’, en ook as gevolg van die klas kinders waarmee ons te doen het. Meeste kom uit armoede uit. So...dit is, ‘ek moet agter myself kyk, ek moet survive... ek gaan dalk in die tronk op land, maar ek gaan moet steel om te survive’...”*

(Man it’s the whole setup in South Africa. It is a struggle the whole time to survive and if I don’t look after myself, there is no one else who will look after me. I think it also

comes from the home and it is transferred in such a way to the kids, 'listen we must survive. We are in a difficult situation, we don't have money for food' and also as a result of the class of children that we deal with. Most come out of poverty. So it is, 'I must look after myself, I must survive... I may land up in jail, but I must steal to survive'.)

D4 S10 P20: *"Yeah... different areas in Johannesburg, and especially where there is poverty you can see the differences in behaviour. Background and poverty play a big role. Uhh... you can see what area learners are from based on their morals and values... where certain things might be acceptable in their community, like crime, they will justify why they must be allowed to do whatever they want to do. It becomes their frame of reference."*

D5 S9 P19: *"Mm... poverty affects them on every level... it becomes a state of mind, that they cannot be better, that this is what they are stuck in. Man... it really limits them. They convince themselves that they cannot be better. It becomes a poverty mindset instilled by their circumstances."*

D1 S1 P4: *"Poverty also contributes to moral degeneration... Uhh... if you look at most of our public schools, and you go deeper into the lives of those kids, you find out that there is real poverty at home and maybe both parents are not working. Sho... kids from these poverty-stricken homes cannot ask their parents for anything. Even buying a book for reading is impossible. Parents are saying to them, 'sort yourself out, go and find your own money and buy your own stuff.' Uhh... uhh... when you are pushing the kid away as a parent, constantly saying, 'No, I do not have the money', many kids will go out and make their own plans. When they do go out, where will they go? The first thing, especially the boys, will just go and steal something from someone, sell it, get the money, and get whatever they want."*

D1 S1 P4: *"Mm... if the parents are constantly unable to afford anything the kids need without reinforcing the values of honesty or hard work, poverty itself leads to degeneration. Ehh... poverty is often a root cause leading to certain types of crime... and we know that crime is morally wrong. If a pupil resorts to crime, it means that basic moral values are missing..."*

D4 S6 P12: *"Uhh... 'poverty' is 'n groot factor... wat sal hulle nou 'worry' oor waardes as hulle nie kos het nie."* (Poverty is a big factor... what will they worry about values if they do not have food.)

It is clear from teachers' depictions of the impact of poverty that families and value systems in South Africa are compromised due to the social and economic complexities (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007). Participants' views find favour with Louw (2009) that moral degeneration negatively affects South African society resulting in school life experiencing a serious moral breakdown. Social ills evolving from socio-economic circumstances has led to an unacceptable degree of violence, crime, and school vandalism. Teachers' verbatim quotations agree with Meth's (2017:402-405) view that poverty-stricken slums are characterised by economic deprivation, unemployment, and underemployment, resulting in depots for drug traffickers, robbers, vehicle hijackers and other crimes. Learners who are exposed to the social disorder are often without guidance, adopting destructive behaviour patterns which then infiltrate the school. Participants' descriptions of the impact that the socio-economic degeneration in South Africa has on family values are indicative of the social disorganisation theory. This theory is characterized by a complete breakdown of the neighbourhood, the family, the schools and high unemployment affecting society at large (Siegel, 2011:463).

Participants proposed that the social causes of delinquency and disorganisation seem to be prominent in specific socio-economic areas where poverty is prevalent (Conole *et al.*, 2004:19). These views concur with available literature which verify the strong link between community social disorganisation, victimisation as well as crime that cause physical and social disorder, poverty, family fragmentation, and local unsupervised adolescent peer group networks (Breetzke, 2010; Fox *et al.*, 2010; Sampson & Groves, 1989). The Social Disorganisation Theory supports the notion of teachers that the morality in secondary schooling is greatly influenced by social upheaval, a class struggle, poverty, victimization, and delinquent behaviour (Breetzke, 2010; Fox *et al.*, 2010). Masombuka (2013:1) affirms the view that morally degenerative behaviour patterns are strongly linked to a socio-economically disorganized landscape. Participants further agree with the perspective of Caldeira (2000:79) who highlights that poverty-stricken squatter settlements are experiencing a serious degeneration of values which directly impacts the moral fibre of learners and the secondary schools that they attend. Learners are exposed to increased poverty, social instability, rising crime, breakdown of families and a general decline in value systems leading to moral decadence and juvenile delinquency (Meth, 2017).

4.2.3.1.2 Sub-category: Lack or absence of a strong religious foundation

Some teachers believed that the lack of a strong religious foundation at schools contributed to the degeneration of values. Participants expressed ideas that the absence of a core religious foundation allowed learners to be more exposed to the influence of wider society and unethical role models than to the moral values that religion represented. Teachers viewed religion as an

authoritative set of organized beliefs and systems that assists parents in the development of a moral compass to guide behaviour and promote social unity and control.

D1 S4 P6: *"Mm... volgens my is 'morals' gebaseer op geloof... Uhh... en ek dink dit kom van die huis af, maar ons huise is nie meer gebou op 'n sterk geloofs fondasie wat 'morals, standards and norms' bou nie."* (According to me morals are based on faith... and I think it comes from home, but our homes are no longer built on a strong faith foundation that builds morals, standards and norms.)

D1 S4 P7: *"Ja... ek se die hele fondasie kom van jou Godsdiens af en jou agtergrond moet in jou ouerhuis gevestig word. Kinders wat in so 'n huis groot word, is verseker moreel georiënteerd. Uhh... dit is besig om weg te val en ons het verseker probleme. Die Godsdiens onderbou is besig om weg te val, en daardie kinders het nie meer 'n morele voorbeeld nie. Jy weet... die boustene van morele waardes, 'n standvastige huis saam met jou Godsdiens val weg. So, ja... ek dink regtig ons moet daardie ding kan saam trek van ouers wat net weer gesag het in hulle huis, kerk toe gaan, wel, ten minste in God glo"* (Yes... I say the whole foundation comes from your religion and your background must be established in your home. Children who grow up in such a home, are certainly morally orientated. It is busy falling away and we definitely have problems. The religious foundation is busy falling away, and those children do not have a moral example anymore. You know... the building blocks of moral values, a steadfast home together with your religion falls away. So, yes... I really think we must pull that thing together of parents that just has authority in their home again, goes to church, well, at least believe in God.)

D5 S9 P18: *"Uhh... I am not coming from a specific angle, but in a Christian household children are taught to honour their parents. They are taught that stealing is wrong... actually lying is wrong. This is not instilled by parents at home anymore."*

D3 S7 P13: *"Religion does play a huge role in the roots of our moral compass. Uhm... households are failing in raising children with this guide."*

D3 S7 P14: *"I taught in a Catholic school, and religion was quite strong. You know... you could see the big influence from the parents in the children's behaviour. It was because of our religion that we were really steadfast in terms of how we ran the school. Mm... the structure and the routine. Our curriculum was very value-based you know? This religion of be kind, be good was something taught quite vigorously, and because of this the kids had a different identity."*

D5 S8 P15: *“Mm-hmm... ek voel Godsdienste gee vir ons definitiewe norme waarvolgens ons lewe. Ek is ‘n groot ‘fan’ van liewe Jesus en juis daarom respekteer ek my leerlinge. Ek is nie ‘n skreeuer of ‘n bakleier en ‘run’ daardie hele saal sonder om te skreeu. Hopelik sal die kinders my voorbeeld volg.”* (I feel religion gives us definite norms according to which we live. I am a big fan of Jesus and because of that I respect my pupils. I am not a shouter, or a fighter and I run the whole hall without shouting. Hopefully the children will follow my example.)

D3 S5 P10: *“Uhh... ek sal se jy weet, morele waardes en norme is maar gebaseer op geloof. En dit is ‘greatly missing’ onder die ‘kids’. Wat waardes betref, ek dink dit is ‘n geloof-ding, en ek se geloof, ek se nie noodwendig Christenskap nie. Jy weet... selfs in jou Islam, in jou Hindoe, in al daardie gelowige aspekte, is daar ook morele waardes en norme wat hulle die kinders leer, wat hulle van die kinders verwag. Daar is ‘n groot ‘gap’ in ons fondasie en dit moet gebaseer wees op ‘n geloofs benadering.”* (I will say you know moral values and norms is based on faith. And that is greatly missing amongst the kids. Where values are concerned, I think it is a faith-thing, and I say faith, I don’t necessarily say Christianity. You know... even in your Islam, in your Hindu, in all those faith aspects, there are moral values and norms that they teach their children, what is expected of the children. There is a big gap in our foundation, and it must be based on a faith approach.)

D2 S2 P3: *“You know... religion has been taken out of school and I think that is where we went wrong. Is it okay for us to accept that we have kids who believe in absolutely nothing, but maybe these kids believe in nothing because we have made religion nothing. Uhh... maybe we need to bring that back to schools... you know... like have a space for Muslim kids, have a space for Christian kids, have a space for Hindu kids, for all of us. Yeah... in that there is a power present that guides us from going wrong. When God is there, as a Christian... it is really important to get religion back into schools.”*

D1 S1 P1: *“Uhh... you know... many students are irreligious, so have no form of guidance when it comes to morals, knowing right from wrong. Regardless of whether religion is indoctrination or not, it still fostered a sense of right from wrong, which is very lacking these days.”*

The views expressed by participants made it clear that the content of children's minds could be positively impacted by a healthy religious foundation, resulting in a greater degree of obedience and truthfulness, indicated in learners' morality (Pittel & Mendelsohn, 1966:23). Teachers' findings concur with the literature that morals are linked to beliefs and attitudes, therefore believing that a religious foundation is strongly attached to guiding human behaviour (Chowdhury, 2016:1). Our beliefs about religious or cultural norms has the ability to motivate our standards of behaviour as they represent that which is valuable to our specific culture or religion. A set of beliefs and attitudes then guides our principles of what we believe to be right or wrong (Chowdhury, 2016:1). Statements are in keeping with Brezina and Piquero (2007) and Langdrige *et al.* (2007) that moral behaviour is greatly determined by the strength of personal religious beliefs, attitudes, or convictions, leading to a greater resilience to conform to social pressures. There is validity in teachers' statements as there is an outcry today for religion to be brought back into the education system as a foundation for moral standards (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:226). Participants' accounts are in keeping with Zulu *et al.* (2019:226) that the current policy of banning religion has encouraged moral degeneration; he supports the argument that Religious Education will provide a strong foundation for the regulation of social behaviour. This line of reasoning is further corroborated by Simpson *et al.* (2016:256) who argue that religion helps to shape attitudes and behaviour within the moral sphere. Religious identification remains a strong motivating factor in maintaining allegiance to specific peer groups, respecting authorities within the school system, and supporting behaviour that are in favour of sexual purity (Simpson *et al.*, 2016:256). Teachers' views concur with Simpson *et al.* (2016:257) that the removal of a moral system, transferred through the teachings of a religious foundation, intensified delinquent behaviour as learners lacked the moral conscience that religion provided. Cramwinckel *et al.* (2016:75) contends that religious beliefs have a strong normative influence on learners' desire to conform to the values and norms of the religious group. Participants' verbatim quotations make it evident that belonging to a religious group encourages conformity to group norms and standards, maximising resilience to deviate from the moral standards affiliated to the religion (Abrams *et al.*, 2000:906). In agreement with teachers' findings, Simpson *et al.* (2016:264) supports the notion of the demands for propriety that religion elicits for learners to be grounded in all moral domains.

4.2.3.2 Category 2: Struggles and constraints that teachers face

The teachers experienced immense pressure to teach the curriculum whilst attempting to address moral education. Constant pressure of meeting deadlines and targets frustrated teachers as it took time away from interaction with learners at a more personal level. Teachers felt that pushing demands of the syllabus meant less time to address important behavioural issues and learner wellbeing, causing them to feel despondent. Participants struggled with having learners of all ages

in class which greatly challenged their authority and the maintenance of discipline. Additional problems like pregnancy amongst learners, the use of illegal substances resulting in addiction, absence from school without acceptable reasons, disrespect for authority, and bullying were challenges teachers needed to address on a daily basis causing burnout amongst teachers.

D2 S3 P5: *"Yeah... management..., educational management and the demands from Government. The demands they give us is ridiculous and unattainable in our current environment. Mm... everything has a ripple effect because it is coming from Government, and obviously the Head of the school feels that pressure and is forced to lay additional demands on us in the classroom, and we are unable to achieve these unrealistic goals."*

D4 S6 P12: *"Jis... die department gaan maar net aan, en hou aan om die slaagsyfer te verlaag, 30% is maar reg. Uhh... maar hoe kan jy na 'n dokter toe gaan wat geslaag het met 30%, of 40%, of wat ookal in matriek? Jy kan nie. So, op die ou einde van die dag, moet jy die basiese regkry om seker te maak dat die kind 'perform' in die klas."* (The department just carries on, and carries on to lower the pass rate, 30% is right. But how can you go to a doctor who passed with 30%, or 40%, or whatever in matric? You can't. So, at the end of the day, you must get the basics right to ensure that the child performs in the class.)

D4 S6 P12: *"Uhm... ons sien onderwysers hier opdaag... wat nie 'n 'cooking clue' het hoe om met dissipline te werk nie, wat nie 'n 'cooking clue' het hoe om met kinders te werk nie. So... ons grootste 'downfall' met die kind, kom van daar af. Jy moet jou onderwysers versigtig identifiseer... anders doen hulle meer skade as wat hulle die kind help."* (We see teachers arriving here... that doesn't have a cooking clue how to work with discipline, that doesn't have a cooking clue how to work with children. So... our biggest downfall with the child, comes from there. You must identify your teachers carefully... otherwise they do more damage than what they are helping the child.)

D4 S10 P17: *"So... you know teachers are complicit in some cases. Papers are being leaked...people selling papers for money, so the integrity of the whole system is compromised... you have people who are in it for the money, rather than a calling."*

D2 S3 P8: *"Ehh... policy makers who lack understanding... policies sort of alienates a teacher that a teacher has no rights, because the most important person is the child. You know... policymakers forget that the most important thing remains the education that the child should be receiving. That is a real problem when kids have more rights*

than teachers, becoming entitled and refusing to accept responsibility for their behaviour.”

D2 S3 P8: *“Man... do you know a teacher was stabbed by learners inside the school premises using scissors. I get so angry... the worst was that nothing ever happened to that learner. There are no consequences! There are no consequences... even now... with learners who display bad behaviour, the Department of Education forces you to keep that learner, as dangerous as they are, they say we need to keep that learner. Uhh... they suspend them but there is no expulsion, and even if they are eventually expelled, they move from one school to another.”*

D1 S1 P1: *“Mm... its very complicated. I personally feel that most teachers are not equipped with emotional intelligence and find it very difficult, themselves to navigate through their own emotions, uhh... let alone help children process their own.”*

D3 S5 P9: *“Nee, onderwysers se waarde word nie erken nie... want op ‘n stadium raak al hierdie, dissipline goeters net te veel. Jy weet... dit raak partykeer bietjie ‘too much’... jy moet eintlik jou eie sielkundige he om ‘sane’ te bly.”* (No, teachers’ value does not get recognised... because at a stage all this discipline stuff just gets too much. You know, sometimes it gets a bit too much... you must actually have your own psychologist to remain sane.)

D2 S3 P8: *“Uhh... there seems to be a big gap between policymakers, teachers, and learners, because everyone pulls into their own direction. Yeah... a lack of unity is challenge number one. The lack of encouragement and motivation, together with a disregard for the teaching profession makes our work very difficult...”*

Participants’ views expose a current scenario of degenerative values and morals, and teachers find it almost impossible to cope with the complexity of issues they face without the support of educational management and policymakers (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:1). Teachers expressed their concerns that the Department of Education placed too much emphasis on learners’ rights, thereby creating an imbalance with regards to their responsibilities. As morality involves the endorsement of values that are not negotiable to compromise, any privileges that students have need to be equated to accountability (Mooney, 1999:675). Participants suggested that the Department of Education needs rather to place the importance on issues where harm is caused to fellow learners; and should nurture what could be viewed as real, true and good (Hunter, 2016). Teachers indicate that the absence of meaningful consequences following destructive behaviour, weakens the school’s role as sites for effective teaching and learning, adding to the alarming rates

of anti-social behaviour currently displayed by learners within the school systems (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:1). Teachers proposed that a more punitive approach would greatly assist their authority in the classroom as the teaching environment has become destabilised due to ill-discipline from learners and the exoneration from any liability for destructive behaviour (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:69). It is clear that teachers need to be assisted with the professional challenges and constraints that they face in order to impact the moral decision-making of secondary school learners. The value of teachers need to be supported, to create a school climate which fosters a healthy, morally strengthened generation allowing for sound educational governance (Chowdbury, 2016:1).

4.2.3.2.1 Sub-category: Balancing curriculum demands with moral education

The teachers expressed feelings of hopelessness and burnout as there was constant pressure for curriculum demands to be met while attempting to address moral values and behaviour challenges. The lack of support from the Department of Education, creating constant pressure to meet deadlines and targets frustrated teachers as it took valuable time away from interaction with learners at a more personal level. Participants found that policies from educational management prioritised the demands of the curriculum which minimised time to address important behavioural issues and learner wellbeing. Constant pressure of meeting deadlines and targets frustrated teachers because it took time away from their interaction with learners at a more personal level. This has a significant impact on teachers' ability to address regeneration through the impartation of values and assisting learners to develop an awareness of value based behaviour.

D2 S3 P5: *"Uhh... I tell you... unrealistic pressure from Government and educational management negatively impacts our time with pupils. This even impacts discipline."*

D2 S3 P5: *"Uhm... there are Congolese, pupils from Cameroon, Nigeria, and a lot of other foreigners in our school. This puts pressure on us. So... learners come with their own values and traditions and cultures into the school... ehh... so if you take Afrikaans for example, it is like their fifth language, right, so it is really difficult for them and if we look at results at the end of the term or year, it is shocking. But it is shocking because these learners are so demotivated to do a subject like Afrikaans because they know that they are failing it...[intervenes]"*

D2 S2 P2: *"Mm... I also think teachers are so content-laden, we are forced to complete so much work in such a short space of time. Uhh... we do not have the time to interact with our learners and actually find out, who they are. You know... not to see a child for a child, we just see them as these kids, whose books need to be up to*

date, and they are always checking curriculum coverage, food control, file control, everything is about meeting targets and not about a person.”

D2 S2 P2: “Okay... so, everything is about curriculum content deadlines. There is nothing about being a person. Like what does it mean to be a successful person? Uhh... and by successful I do not mean just having a high-paying job. Because you can get a high-paying job, but then, if you are mean and terrible to the people that work under you it goes back to the moral degeneration that you dealt with, throughout your life and so...”

D5 S9 P19: “So... maybe the GDE needs to realise that pushing the curriculum does not achieve all the goals... the bottom line is the degeneration of morals are influencing results.”

D1 S1 P4: “.... You know... policies in the curriculum are not working on ground level... Ehh... there is a gap between the teachers who are struggling with real issues and the policymakers in department, you know? Uhm... seniors in the department need to visit us regularly and enquire how policy structures can assist us. We just receive a whole lot of policy documents that must be implemented, even if they are ineffective. Mm... the curriculum is always pressurized with the time given... the CAPS document highlights the skills that must be enforced, but we do not have enough time to implement those skills. The Department just pushes content...[intervenes]”

D2 S3 P5: “No... no... no... the quality of time we have as teachers are so limited. Sometimes as a teacher, I look at my learners after the period and I ask myself, ‘did I actually teach enough’ because I spend five minutes trying to settle them down, ten minutes checking yesterday’s work, another ten minutes to tell the noisemakers ‘please stop making a noise’ and our periods are only thirty minutes each. Oh yeah... I forgot to add that the learners take like five minutes to get to the classroom.”

Teachers’ views on the lack of support from the Department of Education and pressurized curriculum demands, do not create the kind of educational establishments that aim at developing and strengthening learners with value-based belief systems and pro-social attitudes who are prepared for the role they are to play in society at large (Burton, 2008a:1). Participants further expressed concern that whilst learners are gaining a knowledge base, the limited time that teachers have to work through curriculum demands, limits growth in the necessary skills for community assimilation (Burton, 2008b:1). It became evident that the curriculum needs to include

learner and character development for moral regeneration to become a reality amongst secondary learners. Necessary opportunities and time should be incorporated for learner development such as the development of interpersonal skills, discovering their strengths and weaknesses, and maturing emotionally, and behaviourally (Wilson, 2004:293). Teachers perceived that the current pressure on content delivery and deadlines exasperated the projection of learners as “receivers of education”, leaving very little scope during brief periods of interaction with teachers to contribute as “makers” of the social environment (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996).

4.2.3.2.2 Sub-category: Unhealthy learner behaviour

Participants anticipated a possible moral collapse due the rapid growth of moral degeneration amongst learners who were displaying unhealthy behaviour, negatively impacting their wellbeing. Behavioural issues displayed a complete disconnect between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’. Teachers were facing depression, burnout, anxiety, and needing the assistance of psychologists whilst receiving minimal support from the Department. It was evident that teachers felt ill-equipped having to deal with learners using illegal substances, absence from school without acceptable reasons, disrespect to authority, criminal activity amongst learners, increasing bullying and victimisation, pregnancy amongst learners, and having learners of different ages in class.

D3 S7 P14: *“Yeah... behaviour is not manageable right now... man you get complex issues that fall from the sky, and you are like, wow, okay, how do I manage this? I mean as a grade head, I have bought pregnancy tests. I have fetched a child and removed a learner from their house. I have done challenging things and I did them based on that moral compass... but then again am I doing the right thing? Mm... I do not know, I am not trained for this... we really need to better trained...”*

D3 S7 P13: *“Uhh... now there is no discipline... now learners are backchatting, teachers are constantly, you know, they are leaving. You know... because of the way that learners affect staff members, teachers are truly battling. Mm... learners who do not go to school, work is not done, and they do not really care but it becomes our problem... kids get away with bad behaviour towards a teacher, without consequences.”*

D4 S10 P17: *“Uhm... these kids... respect is just non-existent. Not just for the teachers, but also for the other learners... also... the honesty thing, they do not want to take responsibility for wrongful behaviour, and being called out for being wrong...”*

D2 S3 P8: *"So... the learners know that there are no consequences for their bad behaviour... learners choose to constantly behave in ways that causes teachers to feel powerless and negative towards the profession...Ehh... be it with bad results, be it with non-attendance, be it with bullying, even crime amongst the students... it is the teachers' problem and we are feeling hopeless."*

D2 S2 P3: *"Uhm... we have got alcohol abuse, drug abuse... they do not respect anyone, therefore they do not respect other people in positions of power or in authority and that is a big struggle that we have with our kids. Uhh... our kids have no good influence in their lives... their older brothers are actually drug addicts. Their older siblings also sell drugs and they are part of a gang. So... you know to be honest our kids are raised to continue the vicious cycle at school."*

D5 S8 P16: *"Mm... some of the kids are so angry... there is a lot of aggression... pent-up anger. Mm... a lot of parents actually are fearful of their children. It is aggravated by substance abuse, it is scary. Learners who are using substances, have no regards for any values. Man... they are selfish and numb... and then bullying... that is very big... Bullying plays a major role in moral degeneration, and I think bullying is being aggravated by social media where we see a lot of it. Kids are making their own reels, bullying each other..."*

D2 S2 P3: *"... the rate at which girls are falling pregnant right now is a terrible thing and I think that we need to do something about that. Uhm... our girls perceive that there is actually no consequences to their actions... we need to have consequences put in place for the sake of moral standards. You know... we have got moms now sitting with innocent kids who have never had sex and now they see this pregnant girl as an interesting person to hang around with...it almost begins to seem enticing to the young girls who are still virgins."*

D2 S2 P3: *"Yeah... and then we also have a problem with kids who are over 18 and still at school. They are now 20, 21. We have a 21/22-year-old right now and it is difficult to discipline him because he is an adult... Ehh... kids look up to him and what he does looks so cool... no man... we cannot be having 22-year-olds sitting with 16-year-olds in grade 10."*

The importance of teachers' perspectives on behavioural issues within the classroom environment proposes that learners' behaviour significantly influences the security and well-being of others pertaining to any morality (Kavussanu, 2008). Participants observed that learners lacked the capacity to exercise control over their actions when influenced by substances which greatly influenced their moral behaviour (Bandura *et al.*, 2001:125). Continually having to address behavioural issues without support and the necessary consequences, cause teachers to feel powerless in creating an educational space where moral behaviour patterns could be fostered, nurturing respect, love, care, compassion, and fairness, combatting ill-discipline and antisocial behaviour (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:25). Feeling powerless exacerbated the frustration that teachers experienced and increased a lack of motivation to regenerate value-based behaviour. Collaboration and co-operation between all role players is essential for teachers to feel empowered in the regeneration of a moral ethos. Mulaudzi and Mudzielwana (2016:7519) assert the importance of fostering moral behaviour whereby an environment is created that is conducive for teaching and learning. This is greatly inhibited due to teachers having to repeatedly deal with substance abuse, alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancies, disrespect to authority, absence from school, and 'adults' in the classroom which they felt ill-equipped to handle. To exacerbate the dilemma, teachers emphasised that the restriction to their 'rights' versus learners' 'rights' caused many valuable teachers to leave the profession.

In concord with the Social Learning Theory, teachers supported the view that behavioural issues often stemmed from what the learners observed in their older siblings as well as the external environment (Payne, 2005). This viewpoint is supported by Walters (1998:4-5) who points out that the environment has a significant influence on the learning and development of a young person and the degree to which the dysfunctional behaviour of a culture or peer group is internalised. This resonates with teachers' insights that social media influences learners' behaviour in the classroom, and therefore connects with the Social Norms Theory where the focus is to determine the relationship between the perception of any behaviour patterns and how this influences actual behaviour patterns (Martens *et al.*, 2006:295). The Social Disorganisation Theory supports the notion of participants that the behavioural issues in secondary schools are greatly influenced by social upheaval, a class struggle, and poverty. This resonates with the standpoint of Masombuka (2013:1) who affirms that degenerative behaviour patterns are strongly linked to a socially disorganized landscape characterised by poverty, unemployment, overcrowded living spaces, and broken homes. Teachers are finding it increasingly difficult to impact socially disorganised learners through the facilitation of moral mechanisms, motivating positive behaviour that abstains from the violation of moral standards and delinquency due to the lack of support, restriction to their rights, time constraints, and the absence of consequences

(Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Chippendale, 2001:3; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Camacho *et al.*, 2003:508; Zhang *et al.*, 2017:56; Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818). Literature (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 1996; Piquero, 2007:436) attest to the notion that moral beliefs need to be supported by all partners in the educational milieu to impact deviant behaviour in a socially disorganised milieu where moral disengagement has become the norm.

4.2.4 Theme 3: Evolving Discourses On Morality

Theme 3 demonstrates how teachers view global and national discourses on morality within the educational contexts. Participants expressed how the new voice for moral democracy is becoming a hurdle for proactive measures to ensure that value systems within South African schools do not further degenerate. Teachers communicated their concerns that the current discourses on a 'new morality' is threatening a healthy school climate and the fostering of a sound value system that needs to be embedded in learners' social and academic lives. They reported that morality was being masqueraded by the shifting of boundaries causing a social pathology which is creating major problems as value systems transgress all norms of behaviour.

4.2.4.1 Category 1: Shifts in moral paradigms

Participants aver that learners became vulnerable to the influences of a liberal discourse within the wider society which challenged the moral paradigms that represented good moral values and traditional behavioural norms. They viewed the current scenario of moral democracy as degenerative, leading to a moral collapse as values and morals became almost irrelevant within modern society's paradigms of behaviour. Participants also reported that learners are facing increasing pressure to conform to the role models of a 'new morality' where the freedom of expression in society has evolved into a conversation which influences their view on morality, as boundaries are being shifted. Teachers further commented that apart from dysfunctional behaviour being encouraged, which causes confusion, international and national discourses initiating moral regeneration in schools are minimal.

D5 S9 P18: *"Uhm... we have also...ja... become so lenient that we want to accommodate everyone. So, what do we do? We compromise... so we are falling flat on our faces. Completely flat on our faces, because we will never get to a point where we can accommodate everyone. Man... it creates chaos..."*

D3 S5 P10: *“Man ek wil vir jou se... ek dink eintlik dat die teendeel is besig om te gebeur. Ons is nie besig met ‘n ‘moral regeneration’ nie, dit is ‘degeneration’. Dit is eintlik net besig om slegter te word want jy kan doen net wat jy wil... in my opinie is ons besig om al hoe verder weg te beweeg van wat die norm moet wees... Mm... van wat ons morele waardes moet wees. Ons is al hoe... kinders se regte...”* (Man I want to say to you... I think actually that the opposite is busy happening. We are not busy with a moral regeneration, it is degeneration. It is actually just busy getting worse because you can do just what you like... in my opinion we are busy to move further away from what the norm must be... from what our moral values must be. We are all how... children’s rights...)

D5 S9 P18: *“Yes... we have become too liberated in the way that we do things... so very little is done to have the right conversations in schools...it’s decay, decay, our society is... I mean society discourse feeds that and promotes that.”*

D3 S5 P10: *“Uhh... kinders se regte en ek is ‘n voorstander van kinders moet regte he, maar dit is besig om waansinnig te word oor die hoeveelheid regte wat kinders moet he. Ons is besig om heeltemal die dam onder die eend uit te ruk in terme van wat ons mag en nie mag se nie, en doen en nie mag doen nie, dat ons vergeet dat ons het ‘n kind wat in die vormingsproses van sy lewe is, wat gevorm moet word.”* (Children’s rights and I am in favor of children must have rights, but it is busy becoming insane over the amount of rights that children must have. We are busy to completely pull the dam from under the duck in terms of what we may and may not say, and do and may not do, that we forget that we have a child who are in the developmental process of his life, that must be shaped)

D3 S5 P10: *“Mm... nou se ons vir die klein boompie, ‘jy boompie, jy kan groei net waarnatoe jy wil, the world is your oyster, jy weet. Jy kan net doen wat jy wil, ons gaan nou nie met jou regte inmeng en vir jou se wat om te doen nie.’ Man, dit is bog... jy kan nie... die gesprekke maak dat die kinders absoluut rigtingloos is...”* (Now we say to the small tree, you little tree, you can grow just where you want to, the world is your oyster, you know. You can just do what you like, we are not going to interfere with your rights and tell you what to do.’ Man, that is nonsense... you can’t... the conversations make that children are directionless...)

D1 S4 P7: *“Uhm... internasionaal dink ek die grootste gesprek wat ons van weet, is maar die sosiale media...ek dink die negatief sien ons baie meer gereeld in terme van wat jy ookal lees op ‘n sosiale blad...”* (Internationally I think the biggest conversation that we know about, is social media... I think the negative we see much more often in terms of whatever you read on a social page...)

D1 S1 P4: *“Mm... I think the media plays a big role in conversations...they are making it popular, motivating young kids to do the ‘wrong thing’. You know... kids have access to talk about criminality, where the guilty person gained something from doing the ‘wrong thing’... it stimulates wrongful behaviour. The message is, “we can do whatever we want.”*

D1 S4 P6: *“You know... in my personal opinion, the world view if I can call it that, is leaning towards moral degeneration not regeneration... ek meen... tans sit ons met baie nuwe gevalle, goed waaraan ons nie gewoond is nie, wat ons nou moet leer.”* (You know... in my personal opinion, the world view if I can call it that, is leaning towards moral degeneration not regeneration... I mean... at present we are sitting with many new cases, things to which we are not used to, that we must now learn.)

D4 S6 P11: *“Ma’am... I think there are many people who are sending a very degenerative message to the youth. Look at the whole thing of the energy drinks, the new one that just exploded here in South Africa... Uhm... learners need to find the right voices on the social media platform so that their lives can be impacted towards moral regeneration.”*

D5 S9 P19: *“Look... these days messages promote freedom of speech, freedom to be who you are... Uhh... these messages often confuse kids’ moral standing. I am not saying that we need to keep them prisoners and force them into a certain mindset, but will this achieve regeneration of morals, or a confusion of morals?”*

D3 S7 P14: *“Uhm... Tik Tok is now the platform used for every single discourse that can possibly influence the youth. Like I said, they are impressionable, so if someone who has a title, very often actually an academic, pushes this LGBTQ notion, saying, “gender is not a thing and it is all in people’s heads”, young people are influenced by that. You know... its almost as if they feel they have to support what social media platforms trend... I am telling you... they are becoming little activists, it is the weirdest thing... pupils are becoming activists for trends. Mm... they are, and like I said, we are stuck in this weird place of being forced to allow them to believe whatever is*

trending. So it's what they call a new 'freedom of speech'...the modern day discourse..."

D2 S2 P2: *"Mm... conversations have become a whole culture about I would say, living a life that is not real... I think the voices of social media like Instagram, Tik Tok, etc. When kids watch these videos like these mock things, they go into 'moulds', they just follow. You know... social media has a powerful voice and has a huge impact on moral degeneration. Kids see that life is having a lot of money, dressing up... Uhm... I am not seeing or hearing any content guiding the youth to find their moral compass."*

D5 S8 P16: *"So... you know... kids would rather follow discussions today that are completely off track in terms of the moral radar and what we want to encourage. I feel we need to invest in shifting their mindset to follow positive role models who are having the right kind of discussions."*

Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012:882) point out that there are "[c]ulture-specific conceptions of what is considered morally 'right' behaviour". Teachers expressed their concern that the new norm of wanting to be so lenient that we want to accommodate everyone, is compromising the cultural and group-specific morals that may be dependent on the adherence of different social groups or sub-cultures to political or religious factions (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:882). They further explained that current discourses where moral paradigms have clearly shifted due to the focus on rights, are implicitly and explicitly impacting the potential for behavioural codes of conduct and moral guidelines to influence the boundaries of "identity-defining indicators" (Brandt & Reyna, 2011; Giner-Sorolla, 2012). Within the context of evolving discourses, teachers found that strategies for moral regeneration could be challenged by the new voice for moral democracy where the conception of morally 'right' behaviour may vary considerably. The implications of shifting the boundaries within political, generational, religious, and cultural groups are a cause for concern and potentially negates the fostering of moral regeneration for secondary school learners (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:885). Respondents' views resonated with the Social Learning Theory as they emphasized that specific moral behaviours, attitudes, and emotional responses are shifting as they are being influenced through the role modelling of a new liberalism (Balogun & Okurame, 2011) Today's learners are immersed in a world where a masqueraded morality are shifting the boundaries of their moral compass. Within the context of the Social Learning Theory, teachers are concerned that due to the exponential access of platforms and the lack of boundaries, it is becoming more evident that adolescents are exposing themselves online to behaviours that are leading to sexual identity experimentation (O' Keeffe *et al.*, 2015:800). Teachers are experiencing a great deal of uncertainty regarding parents' awareness of the

exposure that their children are getting with social media. Learners are imitating behaviours through their exposure to the new voice of moral democracy, adopting moral ambiguities through observational learning (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). Participants identified adolescents limited capacity for self-regulation, making them susceptible to peer pressure as they experiment with the shifting of moral boundaries (O' Keeffe *et al.*, 2015:800).

4.2.4.1.1 Sub-category: Modern perceptions of morality

Teachers observed that modern views of morality were amongst the factors impacting learners' behaviours and the consequential increase in school dropouts, low academic performance, rebellion, and an adherence to the wrong influences due to the pressure of the voices of a moral democracy. Participants clearly emphasized that global and national discourses focused on the inculcation of a culture of inclusivity, embracing the orientation of a new morality where the focus was on the inclusivity of pronouns and the LGBTQ community. Teachers reported that discourses feed on societal decay and that perceptions were shifting causing values to be compromised. The voices of moral democracy were void of any strong cultural roots and religion was diluted or removed. Participants experienced that dysfunction was a consequence of attempting to accommodate the shifting of moral boundaries, causing chaos and confusion amongst learners.

D5 S9 P18: *"Uhh... bring it down to the whole sexual orientation thing and unfortunately, it is now being enforced in schools and taught from a very young age that a child has the choice to decide whether they want to be a he, a she, a it, or a them, or even a helicopter, you know?"*

D3 S5 P10: *"Man... ek wil vir jou se dit is eintlik net besig om slegter te word want jy kan nou in 'n skool sit in Australie en jy kan se, wel ek assosieer met 'n wolf, ek assosieer met 'n wolf en dit is my regte om te howl wanneer ek wil en om 'n scratch pad te he vir wanneer ek anxious en gefrustreerd is ensovoorts..."* (Man... I want to say to you it is actually just busy getting worse because you can now sit in a school in Australia and you can say, well I associate with a wolf, I associate with a wolf and it is my right to howl when I want to and to have a scratch pad for when I am anxious and frustrated etcetera...)

D5 S9 P18: *"Man... I am telling you... if anything nationally and internationally, dysfunction is more and more encouraged by the day. Uhm... we have also become so lenient that we want to accommodate everyone."*

D1 S1 P1: *"Mm... there has been an initiative... inculcating a culture of acceptance of all... a culture of inclusivity, where all people are embraced regardless of their differences."*

D5 S9 P18: *"Yeah... you have the freedom to decide what and who you want to be. And I think that is our greatest demise... liberalism... we have become so liberated in the way we view and do things. So, we will never get to a point where we reach consensus."*

D5 S9 P19: *"Man I get angry... modern day discourses have degraded values in our societies with all the talk about rights, because kids now have the audacity to tell a teacher that they cannot tell them what to do, that they have their own mind and can do what they like."*

D5 S8 P15: *"So, ek dink daar is net nie 'n bewustheid, daar is nie 'moral education' vir hulle om te weet, hoe stel ek myself in 'n slegte lig nie, want dit gaan alles oor die populariteit van wat hulle kry uit wat hulle doen. So, as ek nou nie wil baklei vanmiddag nie, maar ek slaan 'n outjie plat op die sypaadjie, is ek die 'hero' want ek gaan 20 'likes' op my video kry!"* (So, I think there is just not an awareness, there is no moral education for them to know, how do I portray myself in a bad light, because it all goes about the popularity that they get out of what they do. So, if I don't want to fight this afternoon, but I hit a guy flat on the sidewalk, I am the hero because I am going to get 20 likes on my video.)

D3 S7 P14: *"Mm... like I said, we are stuck in this weird place of being forced to allow them to believe whatever social media is trending. So, it's what they call a new freedom of speech. That is the modern-day discourse."*

D2 S3 P5: *"Uhh... I tell you concerns are portrayed as humour today and people will use humour to highlight serious issues on the app called Tik Tok. This is concerning man... it leads to further desensitisation on moral issues."*

D1 S4 P6: *"You know... once again the problem lies in our definition of morals, because the world out there is telling us that they see moral regeneration as I said, literally be yourself, so things like LGBTQ, dit kom beslis nie van die huis af nie."* (You know... once again the problem lies in our definition of morals, because the world out there is telling us that they see moral regeneration as I said, literally be yourself, so things like LGBTQ, that definitely does not come from home.)

D5 S9 P19: *“Uhm... it’s almost as if liberalism has become the ‘new morality’, and young people are too immature to understand the impact of what this new freedom advocates. They still need to be guided until a certain age where they can be free to choose what they want to do. So, we should be able to guide our kids to understand the impact of the modern-day discourses, masqueraded as moral regeneration.”*

D3 S7 P14: *“Mm... you know... the social platform is allowing a confused identity, and the whole LGBTQ thing to look like an inclusive identity. So, a new liberalism seems to look like regeneration.”*

Teachers’ views on contemporary morality agree with the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (DoE, 2001:53) cautioning that unless we nurture a value system in our schools that is workable, bought into by everyone involved in the educational process, we run the risk of turning our classrooms into a battleground where moral democracy masquerades as ‘human rights’. Moral values have decayed due to the process of replacing traditional and cultural behaviour patterns with a new inclusive morality where everything becomes acceptable. Participants emphasized that moral regeneration is facing a dichotomy where the promotion of good conduct and the encouragement of the youth to keep away from social ills, is being challenged by the voices advocating a modern-day discourse that threatens to shift the beliefs of young people (Ladzani, 2014:15). Teachers are facing the reality of a moral collapse, negatively affecting the school environment where they are facing the risk of being unable to foster a sound value system as they compete with modern-day discourses calling for freedom of speech, encouraging learners to become activists for whatever social media is trending. Teachers are concerned that the process of learning which needs to navigate normative behaviour, is now confronted by new norms where aberrant behaviour is encouraged in the aim of destigmatization and establishing comfortable identity patterns (Witte, 2019:861-862). The general consensus amongst teachers was that current perceptions of morality are causing a desensitization towards normative behaviour, encouraging the shifting of boundaries for the mindset of young people to embrace liberalism.

4.2.4.2 Category 2: Ethical complexity and ambiguity

Participants commented that many complexities arise with a global and national embracing of a moral democracy. Emphasizing a culture of inclusivity still confronts traditional cultural orientations of morality and religions who view the new liberalism as moral degeneration. Teachers expressed great concern about new laws being passed and the ethical complexity of allowing 12-year-olds to take decisions for which they had not yet developed the necessary emotional maturity and intelligence. Teachers remarked that ambiguities around social media

platforms regarding content censorship, cyber-bullying, identity orientation, and sexual abuse are a main cause for ethical complexities. Participants indicated that laws around discipline and specifically corporal punishment are more concerned about complying to ethical complexities, than assisting teachers to develop healthy disciplinary measures to cope with the current scenario of disciplinary chaos that teachers are experiencing. Participants expressed views that the attempts to shift moral boundaries is causing chaos as the ethical intricacies are becoming increasingly morally unacceptable.

D2 S2 P2: *"... you know... they watch politicians, especially previously disadvantaged kids because they want better lives, but they are not being guided in a way that is going to help them to become better people. Yeah... so you hear kids saying things like, "We want the land back", for example. But they do not understand what it means. Uhm... they just say what they hear, but they do not understand that there is a lot more to it. If farming stops in South Africa because people come in and take over all the farms, Zimbabwe could become our own reality. Mm... that is literally what it means."*

D2 S2 P3: *"You know... we recently had the girls creating this Instagram page where they were shaming everybody. And I realised that this is a major problem. I would sit with my kids in my class, and I would chat with them about the purpose of their cell phones. Yeah... they need to realise that they use their phones in such a negative way which results in cyberbullying. For them to go on and shame somebody and put their personal things on a social platform is so ugly, and it is actually a criminal offence. Man... they are not allowed to do this!"*

D5 S9 P18: *"So, tell me... how do you put the deciding vote, how do you put the baton in a 12-year old's hand and say, "listen this is now your playing field." I am at a point now where I can really say, "no, I am not going to stand for this. I do not want to be part of your dysfunctional choices." I am at that point where I can say that, but can 12-year-old really..."*

D3 S5 P10: *"Man... se nou vir my... hoe gee jy vir 'n 12 jarige die 'sole right' om besluite te neem oor homself... jy het nie die intelligensie of emosionele koeffisient om dit self te kan doen nie. Dit is hoekom jy vir grootmense moet luister want jy weet nog nie wat jy is of waar jy moet wees nie."* (Man... tell me now... how do you give a 12-year-old the sole right to make decisions over himself... you don't have the intelligence or emotional coefficient to do it yourself. That is why you have to listen to adults because you still don't know what you are or where you must be.)

D5 S9 P18: *"Uhh...hmm... I mean... the new law that is being passed now... where the 12-year-old has to decide, and from the age of 12 they decide whether they want their orientation changed, or whether they do not want their orientation changed. There are a lot of things that are being introduced in our homes and in the school system at large. And that just cripples us. Man... It cripples us as a nation, it cripples us as a race, it cripples us as you know, the education field, because we do not have much of a say. So, it actually means moral degeneration... it compromises everything..."*

D2 S2 P3: *"You know... one of my points was that the internet needs to learn to censor certain content. Because of the lack of censorship our kids are exposed to things way too early. And they have access to everything without any control at the click of a button. And that is our biggest problem. Man... that is our biggest problem. You know this is where parents come in. Parents now need to double the role that they play because they constantly need to be checking what their kids are doing on their cell phones. Yeah... we have gone to what they call the fourth revolution. Uh... huh... so, we need to review what access we give to kids under the age of 21. What are they allowed to access without a parent's consent, you know?"*

D5 S9 P18: *"Hah... but you know, because Government had the corporal punishment, you know the whole corp... I will not let Government raise my children for me. Because growing up, I used to be disciplined, and I am just like, I am just alright. Corporal punishment was still part of our system. But I would like to believe that some did abuse it. It is like you know, sparing the rod, spoiling the child outcomes that we have at home."*

D1 S4 P6: *"So... se vir my hoe gaan ons nou te werk? Ons moet nou vir jou 'n badkamer gee want mense raak kwaad as jy in die dogters se badkamers ingaan want geslagsgewys is jy nie 'n dogter nie. Gaan jy by die seuns badkamers in, nee dan word jy gebully."* (So... tell me how do we go to work? We must now give you a bathroom because people get angry if you go into the girls bathroom because gender based you are not a girl. If you go into the boys bathrooms, no then you are bullied.)

A general consensus amongst participants was the view that South Africa is suffering from moral apathy as laws around discipline and human rights are more concerned about complying to ethical complexities than being engaged in restraining the general lawlessness and ill-discipline that teachers are currently experiencing (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:260). They agreed that school grounds have turned into areas where both teachers and learners experience a high degree of ambivalence,

becoming uncomfortable with the ethical ambiguities regarding sexual identity issues. Teachers' viewpoints resonated with Ngwokabueni (2015) who diagnosed this problem as a disintegration of value systems. Their statements are in keeping with Mabuza (2018) by concluding that a change of values is needed to fight against the upholding of a perverse ethical system to support moral democracy. It was evident that teachers felt the need for ethical principles to protect children from influences and behaviours that corrupt their morality (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1162). Teachers suggested that moral regeneration is needed in an education system that is challenged by discipline problems, unacceptable behaviour, and a "[w]eak or inappropriate value system", resulting in compromised views of human rights (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:262).

Teachers expressed an understanding towards the ethical complexity of removing corporal punishment as a means of enforcing discipline but felt that the Department of Education's (2000:24) alternative measures to foster discipline through nurturing values such as tolerance, respect, and self-discipline were greatly lacking. According to the participants there was substantial support for human rights but without the necessary comprehension of the need to protect the security of learners within a digital environment where censorship was no longer a priority (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:119). Teachers therefore emphasized the importance of value education for the nurturing of values, virtues, beliefs, and attitudes, aiming at the moral 'socialization' of learners (Pandey, 2005:1). Findings revealed that value education as a means of fostering virtues such as integrity, courage, responsibility, and respect for others is necessary to overcome the ambiguities regarding current ethical principles and the support for liberalism within global and national human rights movements (Pandey, 2005:3).

4.2.4.2.1 Sub-category: Moral ambiguities in contemporary society

Teachers expressed their concern about learners ongoing exposure to conversations on social media where everything is deemed as acceptable. However, the question pertains to the appropriation of acceptability and the determinants of moral standards. Teachers reported that social media is the modern-day discourse with different voices, confusing logic and challenging morals. Participants maintained that a dichotomy persists between the voices of moral democracy and those advocating for strong cultural roots and undiluted religious beliefs. South Africa is still a country with a strong religious element that perceives the new liberalism as moral degeneration. The diversity of cultures and religions intensifies the complexity of accepting moral ambiguities in contemporary society. Participants question the extent to which moral boundaries are shifting to accommodate ambiguities. Current discourses are stretching the boundaries to such an extent that the desire for an '*inclusive identity*' is allowing learners to develop a '*confused identity*'.

D1 S4 P6: *"But... our children, their exposure to international input is once again through social media. What they are constantly exposed to is what they begin to accept. They begin to tell you that it is okay to decide your sexuality, and that it is okay to be whoever you want to be. Uhm... so yes, internationally they might say that morals are regenerating, but according to whose morals? According to whose standards? Has liberalism become the new morality?"*

D3 S7 P13: *"Ehh... they are so desensitised that if you tell them about a person who killed 25 people, they find it really cool. They will engage in ugly stories like that. So, social media is confusing kids, and that is why we must ensure that morals are rooted into the curriculum, where positive messages, and people doing the right thing becomes the norm. Uhh... train their minds so that there is no more confusion and that doing the right thing becomes the narrative."*

D5 S9 P18: *"Yeah... sometimes it was like, that is what the Bible says, so you need to do it" ... so, the Bible can be abused. So, I think it is all about, what needs to be right, but then also, internationally you know Christian morals, ethics, and values have been so diluted, and in many schools, it has been completely chopped out."*

D1 S4 P6: *"Uhm... daardie is 'n probleem. Die voorvader 'visits' wat baie keer gebeur, 'which is 100% fine in the African traditional religion, but against someone else's moral. The way you act, react, or the way that whole episode takes place, impacts people differently according to their moral values. So yes, it is tough to really accommodate all these things at once, and maybe that is why internationally they are pushing for this liberalism, where we need to accept everything. Everything is fine, everybody can be what they want to be. So that is where we are at this moment. Uhh... it is quite chaotic in a sense of what is right and what is wrong, because the way you see things and the way the next learner see things is not necessarily the same. Yeah... moral boundaries are shifting..."*

D3 S7 P14: *"Uhm... we also have another challenge that we are personally working on, as we have got a lot of kids who have received a 'calling' and there is no policy anywhere that tells us what to do in these situations, so we are trying to navigate what that looks like. So, it is... the reality is you cannot tell the sangomas, the homosexuals, or the transgenders, that they have no place in our schooling system. So, how do we fit them in without upsetting the traditional families..."*

D3 S7 P13: *“Man...you know what will always trend are the bad things, because that is what is being put out there! This is causing so much confusion! Uhh... huh... I think of a recent incident at school where someone’s bad behaviour was trending, and all the young boys looked up to this person going against moral values. But then again, all the good people who do good, will never trend because that is not what feeds society. So, it is always what will get more views, what will get more likes?”*

D1 S4 P6: *“Yeah... but when you come from different backgrounds with different morals, what is morally acceptable to you is not necessarily morally acceptable to me. So, the LGBTQ has become a thing here at school now. We have got one learner that really demands that he/she, whatever, can be determined by the learner, and we have to accept that.”*

D4 S6 P12: *“Weet jy... al is daar gesprekke, dit kom nie by die kind uit nie. Ja... daar in die arm gebiede, ‘it is just a fight for survival. Why? The most basic needs are not met. Dit kom nie by die kind uit nie. Hulle gaan vir jou se, hoor hier, jy het nou hierdie gesprek met my oor dagga, ek het nie eers kos nie. Ek het ‘n afwesige ma, ek het ‘n pa wat my ma slaan, ek het dit of dat. Nou moet jy met my hieroor kom praat. Ek gebruik hierdie, hierdie goedjies om te ontsnap uit my realiteit uit. Basic needs that are not met.”* (Do you know... even if there are conversations, it doesn’t reach the child. Yes... there in the poor areas, it is just a fight for survival. Why? The most basic needs are not met. It doesn’t reach the child. They are going to tell you, listen here, you are having this conversation with me about dagga, I don’t even have food. I have an absent mother, I have a dad who hits my mom, I have this or that. Now you must talk to me about this. I use these, these things to escape out of my reality. Basic needs that are not met.)

D1 S4 P6: *“... as I said, literally be yourself, so things like LGBTQ, dit kom nie van die huis af nie. Uhm... dalk nog nie soseer in Suid Afrika nie, ‘but internationally it is much more acceptable. It is a fairly new concept for South Africa and specifically for a country which I believe is still quite strong in its religion, whether our faith is Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, or even the traditional African religion. These things do not belong to our religion, it does not belong in our culture. It is an uncomfortable fit for our morals.”* (... as I said, literally be yourself, so things like LGBTQ, that doesn’t come from home. Uhm... maybe not yet so much in South Africa, but internationally it is much more acceptable. It is a fairly new concept for South Africa and specifically for a country which I believe is still quite strong in its religion, whether our faith is

Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, or even the traditional African religion. These things do not belong to our religion, it does not belong in our culture. It is an uncomfortable fit for our morals.”

D3 S7 P14: *“Uhm... Tik Tok is a platform used for every single discourse that can possibly influence the youth. Like I said, they are impressionable, so if someone who has a title, very often actually an academic, pushes this LGBTQ notion, saying, gender is not a thing and it is all in people’s heads, young people are influenced. Mm... who are they going to pay more attention to? The ‘influencer’ or the conservative teacher? I think this all comes from a society-based problem. Uhh... they have all these voices, confusing logic, and challenging morals. We know as adults, if anyone starts speaking with passion and confidence, they can make you believe in something...”*

Teachers’ viewpoints resonate with the arguments of Ellemers *et al.* (2013: 161) that the behavioural choices of individual members are currently greatly impacted by group-specific norms advocating freedom of speech and challenging moral identity. Participants revealed that the degeneration of moral standards can partly be ascribed to liberal discourses which are confusing the norms of social interactions within communities by dysregulating normative behaviour (Rai and Fiske, 2011). In accordance with Ellemers *et al.* (2013:162) the confusion of moral standards shared by those who embrace a ‘new morality’, has become a part of people’s social identities, dysregulating behaviour through the continuous shifting of boundaries. The lived experiences of participants resonate with Schwartz (1992) who argues that morality remains the dominating guiding principle for individual behaviour within the group, and therefore it is unavoidable for moral degeneration to occur with the increasing masquerading of morality. Due to the importance that people attach to moral self-views, the in-group members have the potential to influence behaviour within the social context of a moral democracy (Ellemers *et al.*, 2013:168-169). Deviance from moral values and norms are inevitable within the current directive to comply with the moral ambiguities within contemporary society (Ellemers *et al.*, 2013:183).

Within the context of the Social Learning Theory, it is relevant to understand the value of the different concepts of behaviour and how the implementation of liberal mechanisms influences learning. Teachers highlighted the merit of mentoring as a strategy that is especially relevant to social learning, buffering the impact of liberal trends guiding behaviour (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). Even though the trends to embrace liberalism is a major cause for moral dysregulation, participants emphasized that moral mechanisms, values, morals, principles, social norms, and moral beliefs have the potential to influence social learning (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Piquero, 2007:436). Teachers feel that the implementation of moral strategies are

meaningful in motivating learners to abstain from emotional disengagement, deviant behaviour, and the violation of moral standards which corresponds with the discourses of moral democracy (Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818). Participants indicated the need for moral regeneration to challenge the trends of a 'new morality' within the framework of the Social Learning Theory, and the extent to which learners have been exposed to alternative lifestyles, influencing their cognition of morality and associated behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:702).

Within the context of the Social Norms Theory, teachers asserted that learners' exposure to a contemporary society embracing moral ambiguities, has created an urgent need for moral development to impact social norms through the development of a moral identity (Monroe, 2008:703; Haidt, 2001:817; Kouchaki, 2011:702; Sonnentag & McDaniels, 2013:433). It became evident that two poles exist within the Social Disorganisation Theory. One is characterized by progressive deviant behaviour in a socially disorganised milieu where the shifting of moral boundaries has become the norm. The other is defined by dire poverty and a fight for survival where the voices for democracy are not heard within a socially disorganised landscape (Bandura *et al.*, 1996; Piquero, 2007:436). Moral ambiguities are creating a complex landscape for moral regeneration and sound partnerships are needed between teachers, parents, and learners to ensure that the shifting of social norms is not the main determinant of a learner's morality. Teachers suggested that social media needs to be used in such a way that notwithstanding the shifting of boundaries causing societal decay, learners can choose to become activists for a moral narrative.

4.2.5 Theme 4: Strategies For Moral Regeneration

Theme 4 embodies teachers' understanding of fostering a vision for moral regeneration within school contexts in South Africa. Participants expressed the need for nationwide initiatives for moral regeneration to be accomplished in schools. Collaborative approaches need to focus on the development of partnerships built on a foundation of clear moral frameworks. Participants advocated creating a pyramid of consistent cooperation between learners, teachers, and parents with the aim of regenerating values. School management, HOD's, teachers, and learners need to buy into a vision for moral regeneration to become a collective reality. Teachers communicated the need for ethical awareness and values to be nurtured. Participants stressed that efforts to nurture a pedagogy of care through outreach programmes was of importance to reinforce moral values. It was communicated that transformation was needed for regeneration to be adopted. Extensive moral education programmes need to be employed which fosters a spiritual foundation and inculcates a notion of gratitude. Teachers are required to become intentional about the adoption of restorative measures and to commit to the implementation of the pillars of morality.

Participants expressed the necessity for teachers' engagement with moral regeneration, creating a moral foundation through role modelling. The development of mentorship programmes was recommended as a means of empowering learners to become moral agents and supporting learners needs.

4.2.5.1 Category 1: Collaborative approaches to moral education

Teachers emphasized that a consistent and dedicated cooperation between school staff, the department and parents will improve essential values. It was also suggested that the involvement of religious and community-based institutions would significantly impact moral regeneration initiatives. Participants observed the importance of management and teachers to collaborate in building a school climate where learners as well as teachers feel respected and safe. Cooperative strategies include that learners' parents are required to become more involved in their children's lives to foster values at home which could then be reinforced at schools. Teachers highlighted the significance of parents collaborating with school staff by adhering to schools' policies and supporting projects to foster morality in schools. The involvement of parents is notable in strengthening the hands of teachers in the regeneration of values. Partnership is required from the Department of Education who needs to be involved in the regeneration process whilst ensuring that involvement and support is maintained. Participants suggested that policies concerning the preservation of values in schools need to be developed by the Department of Education.

D1 S1 P1: *"Uhm... personally... I believe secondary schools could foster moral regeneration by working together with the parents and churches, you know religious institutions. I believe it takes a village to raise a child, so the different input will equip learners with the support they need to be moral beings."*

D4 S10 P17: *"Yeah... I think for me also, again, the religious institutions and the community-based institutions needs to become involved in moral regeneration initiatives... Uhm... they also need to become vocal about morality."*

D2 S2 P3: *"Mm... like I was part of Women Paying it Forward, an organization that came to work with our young ladies. Just trying to light that flame again, because our kids has lost that passion to be at school. Uhh... having people come in and work with our kids and helping to break that stereotype of teenagers, generalization of teenagers. Now bringing in people like Women Paying it Forward helps to break that generalization of teenagers because you then help them to see how they can make a*

difference. Man, it is so important for us to help our kids to find their purpose. And I think bringing people like Women Paying it Forward allows that..."

D3 S7 P13: "You know, from management the grade heads have to come up with a plan to think of ways that they can ensure that the grade embodies those values. Uhh... as teachers you then need to come up with a plan to ensure that you then embody those values. Everyone should cooperate to embrace these values. Parents then also need to try and find ways to make this work so that the triangle is then sharing the same vision."

D5 S9 P18: "You know... the first thing that we need to do is we really need to get the buy in of parents. Uhm... where parents actually work with us, and work towards this one, you know, vision and mission statement. But, it can only be accomplished if we are all in the same page... if we all understand that these are my roles, these are my responsibilities, these are my expectations, I need to show up, and I need to come in line to do this."

D1 S4 P6: "Mm... I think the Department must realize that moral degeneration is taking place in schools because we can see it in academic standards. Kids are not doing as well as what they used to, due to moral degeneration. So, the implementation of more counsellors, social workers, or psychologists. You need a team to deal with this issue."

D5 S8 P16: "You know... if you think of the triangle, which includes the school, the parents, and the kids, the school can only do so much if the parents does not support the school. The triangle then just falls apart."

D5 S9 P19: "So, maybe the GDE needs to realize that the degeneration of morals are influencing results. So, what I am trying to say is the GDE needs to have a holistic approach. They need to become involved with social workers when they know that there are serious problems in learners' homes. Try and give that support to learners. Uhm... like I said, they must implement policies where we have those necessary periods where we focus on the importance of... where we can instill belief systems, morals, and values, in the lives of our kids."

D1 S1 P4: *“Uhm... I believe all the schools need to build on the same values, and therefore the Education Department need to incorporate certain policies where moral values need to be fostered in all schools. All schools, regardless of whether it is a township school, or a Model C school, must implement the same policies.”*

D3 S5 P9: *“Ja... in elk geval die kinders, die ouers en die onderwysers wat saam die magic veroorsaak. Samewerking tussen leerlinge, onderwysers, en ouers moet ‘reinvent’ word. Die een kan nie sonder die ander nie.”* (Yes... in any case the children, the parents and the teachers who together cause the magic. Cooperation between learners, teachers, and parents must be reinvented. The one cannot without the other)

D4 S6 P12: *“Uhh... die ouerhuis moet weer daardie standvastigheid vir die kind gee en morele waardes begin leer van wat reg en verkeerd is. Dit is vir my baie belangrik, en dan moet die ouerhuis en die skool interlink met mekaar sodat daar met een voice met die kinders gepraat word. Want dit help nie as dit net van ons kant af kom nie, en die skool probeer iets positiefs doen, maar daar gebeur niks in die gemeenskap of in die ouerhuis nie. “It has to be a team effort.” Gemeenskap, skool, ouerhuis.”* (The parents’ house must again give that steadfastness to the child and begin to teach moral values of what is right and what is wrong. That for me is very important, and then the parents house and the school must interlink with each other so that there is one voice with which the kids are spoken to. Because it doesn’t help if it only comes from our side and the school tries to do something positive, but nothing happens in the community or in the parents’ home. It has to be a team effort. Community, school, parents’ home.)

Teachers’ viewpoints that a collaborative approach is necessary for moral regeneration initiatives to be optimized, is supported by Chowdhury (2016:1) who suggest that individuals do not grow up in moral isolation but rather that they are part of a holistic moral tradition which cultivates norms and values. The value of partnership is that there is a continuous effort for human morality to be an ongoing process (Murdoch, 2001:37). Murdoch (2001:37) states that morality is something that goes on continually, not something that is switched off in between school, home, and the community. Participants’ assertions resonate with Tangney *et al.* (2007:345) highlighting that a moral life is determined by countless individual, morally relevant behaviours which need to be implemented daily. This is only possible if a coherent effort is made by all parties involved to nurture morally relevant behaviour. Within the context of this study, moral regeneration could only be realised if an educational space was created where teachers, learners and parents foster moral behaviour patterns which nurture respect, love, care, compassion, and fairness (Zulu *et al.*,

2019:25). Morality functions both intra-personally and inter-personally. Therefore, it is important how the learner observes and relates to other individuals which includes their parents and their teachers, responding to their moral behaviours (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880). Learners also respond to groups and therefore the community plays a pivotal role in the collaboration for conforming to moral norms and moral accountability (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880-881). Teachers therefore considered a partnership as a valuable means for morality to impact behavioural regulation.

4.2.5.1.1 Subcategory: Establishing clear moral frameworks

Teachers stressed the importance of setting very clear boundaries and expectations for restorative measures to be adopted by learners. They highlighted the challenges of nurturing morality in a 'consequence-less' society. Boundaries were either shifted or non-existent and therefore learners needed to develop an understanding of the consequences of bad behavior. Participants reported that the school's punitive system needed reviewing to enable teachers to maintain discipline in the classroom. Teachers acknowledged that a restorative system proved valuable within the inductive approach. It is important for discipline to be enforced by all partners within the educational process. Moral frameworks for discipline are grounded on a value system and therefore collaboration is pivotal for behavioral regulation.

D3 S5 P10: *"Jy weet... dissipline is nie net my werk nie, ek kan nie as een man verantwoordelik gehou word vir 920 kinders se dissipline in die skool nie. Ek kan dit nie doen nie, ons moet almal saam werk. Die skool het 'n stel reëls wat ons almal moet 'enforce'. Ons moet dit almal bekragtig."* (You know... discipline is not only my job, I cannot as one man be responsible for 920 children's discipline in the school. I can't do it, we all have to work together. The school has a set of rules that we all must enforce. We must all ratify it.)

D4 S6 P12: *"Uhh... as die skole se hande afgekap word, dan kan ons niks doen nie. En ook die hele stelsel van hoe die skole nie meer mag tugtig soos wat dit in die outyd was nie. Jy weet... kinders weet die mag is weggevat van skole af, en hulle misbruik dit om op hulle regte aan te dring. Jy kan nie meer 'n kind 'n pakslae gee nie. Jy kan nie eers skeef na 'n kind kyk nie, dan is die ouer by die skool, en dan is die onderwyser in die moeilikheid. Uhm... dit is ook 'n baie groot rede hoekom dit so agteruit gaan. Jis... ons moet outoriteit he om te kan 'act'. As ons nie kan 'act' nie, sal die hele generasie agteruit gaan."* (If the schools' hands are cut down, then we can't do anything. And also the whole system of how the schools no longer can chastise like what it was in the olden times. You know... children know the power is taken away

from schools, and they abuse it for their rights to be insisted upon. You cannot anymore give a child a hiding. You cannot even look askance to a child, then the parent is at the school, and then the teacher is in trouble. It is also a very big reason why it is deteriorating. We must have authority to can act. If we can't act, the whole generation will deteriorate.)

D3 S5 P9: *"Okay. So, die eerste ding 'obviously' is daar moet 'n mate weer van 'n, ek wil nie die woord strafstelsel inbring nie want dit is vir my so 'n negatiewe woord. Maar daar moet 'n mate van 'n, noem dit dan nou maar 'n 'incentive' ne. So, ja, ek voel daar moet definitief, ek weet nie, 'n tipe van 'n verandering of 'n transformasie wees in hoe jy kinders laat sien dat, luister hier, dit wat jy nie gedoen het nie, is nie reg nie, dit is die nagevolg. Restorasie in terme van dissipline. So, die droom sou wees om 'positive reinforcement' daar te he. Uhh... 'n tipe van 'restorative discipline' instede van 'punitive discipline'."* (Okay. So, the first thing obviously is there must be a degree again of a, I don't want the word penal system brought in because it is such a negative word. But there must be a degree of, call it then an incentive. So, yes, I feel there must definitely, I don't know, a type of change or a restoration in how you let children see, listen here, that which you didn't do, is not right, it is the consequence. Restoration in terms of discipline. So, the dream would be to have positive reinforcement. A type of restorative discipline instead of punitive discipline.)

D1 S1 P4: *"I think firstly, we need unanimous consistency in how we undertake discipline while teaching. Every teacher needs to ensure that every class that is taught are mindful to respect each other. Man, we cannot compromise discipline! Yeah, we need to be consistent in giving learners rules, and for them to know that if rules are not followed, there are certain consequences. Uhh... learners must know that misconduct will result in uncompromised consequences."*

D2 S3 P8: *"Exactly. So, the moment a teacher displays that they have a deep knowledge of the subject, together with strict boundaries regarding behavior, everything changes with the learners."*

D5 S8 P16: *"Yeah... but more with making sure that the learners know they have to be aligned with the rules. There needs to be consequences for breaking rules. So, in schools it should be very strict with regards to, not corporal punishment, but there has to be consistent consequences. So, it comes down to making sure we have got our boundaries, these are the rules, these are the regulations, you follow them."*

D1 S4 P6: *"Uhm... because back in the day there was no explanation, just rules and expectations. Authoritative discipline often lead to rebellion whereas an inductive approach, where we actually reason about behavior, help learners to adopt values. Can teachers develop the patience to give learners the answers to all their 'why's'? Why do you need to care about your appearance, why do you need to be on time, why do you need to work hard, why do you need to do your homework? Let me tell you, because I believe in you, I want to see you grow in life and I know how it works out there in the big world".*

D3 S7 P13: *"Uhh... and we are moving away from the punitive discipline to the more restorative. So, the child needs to think about their behavior and which value they need to restore that behavior. So, they are then forced to reflect and share what they think of that value."*

D1 S4 P7: *"Mm... wel kinders moet weet dat sekere dinge is net 'n 'no go', en dit is snaaks jy weet in party klasse word goed toegelaat en in die volgende klas word dit nie toegelaat nie. En dit is waar baie van ons probleme ontstaan, so ek se net altyd 'n mens moet konstant bly in dit wat jou reels in jou klas is. Kinders moet baie bewus wees van 'n klas se grense, dan het jy nie probleme in terme van ouens wat nie respek het vir jou nie, en wat nie kan stilbly as jy klasgee nie."* (Well children must know that certain things are just a no-go, and it is strange you know in certain classes things are allowed and in the next class it is not allowed. And that is where many of our problems originate, so I just say always a person must remain consistent in that which your rules are in your class. Children must be very aware of a classes boundaries, then you don't have any problems in terms of guys who have no respect for you, and who cannot remain quiet while you teach.)

D2 S3 P5: *"You know what, we definitely need corporal punishment in a school like this. The kids would be afraid to get into trouble. They would respect rules and regulations. Learners would respect teachers. Right now they don't care. They are not afraid of being threatened. They will be afraid of corporal punishment. Uhh... they are not scared of break detention or cleaning the corridors, they have great fun with that and it doesn't change their behavior. Mm... consequences for bad behavior needs to be felt for learners to do the right thing."*

D4 S10 P17: *"Mm... I am so grateful that our school does not allow the boundaries to shift. We have got a very good discipline system in place. So, when kids step out of line, they are made aware of it, parents are brought in, there are hearings. Uhm... so, there are conversations happening, there are dialogues taking place. You know... I think that is part of any moral regeneration, being made aware of the fact that they have done something wrong, and that there are consequences. After doing this, and getting the parents involved in the disciplinary process, there has been a shift in how the parents see boundaries, and consequences when boundaries are transgressed. Uhm... otherwise, morals just further degenerates, because every time there are no consequences, boundaries just keep shifting."*

Teachers reported that lawlessness and moral negligence has found its way into most schools, creating unmanageable scenarios (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:260). Classrooms have turned into areas where teachers are intimidated instead of respected, and measures are necessary to deal with learners who are often out of control (Ngwokabueni, 2015). Teachers' views gave evidence that clear frameworks are needed where boundaries are not compromised and where expectations are direct regarding learners' behaviour, motivating the adherence to norms (Elsenbroich and Gilbert, 2014). References to the inductive approach and reasoning about behaviour, resonate with the views of Tangney *et al.* (2007:345) where moral emotions as a key element connects to moral behaviour. Participants expressed the benefits of restorative discipline and how healthy emotions have the potential to foster positive patterns of moral behaviour, whereas unhealthy emotions often linked to punitive discipline has the potential to exacerbate rebellious or problematic behaviour (Tangney *et al.*, 2007:354).

Discipline and uncompromised boundaries protect children from influences and behaviours that corrupt their morality (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1162). Teachers expressed the need for clear disciplinary frameworks in an education system that is challenged by unacceptable behaviour, compromised values, and unsuitable views of how fellow learners should be treated (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:261-262). The Department of Education (2000:24) highlights the nurturing of values such as tolerance, respect, and self-discipline with the aim of fostering discipline. Teachers reported that the nurturing of respect for authority is pivotal in the development of a milieu where learners acknowledge rules and regulations. The disciplinary system cannot afford to deteriorate within an education system which has to protect the security of learners, whilst ensuring that the school remains a non-violent environment (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:119). Some teachers advocated the return of corporal punishment as an effective punitive system, but this has been abused and therefore any form of corporal punishment is prohibited. This view is supported by Etheredge (2014) who argues that any form of violent behaviour from teachers towards learners could result in greater

aversion to comply with school rules and norms, fostering negative and rebellious attitudes towards school and education. Teachers' responses as captured verbatim agree with Lusenga (2010:17), that learners need to understand and conform to accepted standards of behaviour, committing themselves to comply with the school's rules and accepted principles. Participants felt that the adherence to specific norms, values, principles, and rules within the schooling system will influence the long-term decisions that learners make, and ultimately help to shape their future (Zulu *et al.*, 2019: 253).

4.2.5.2 Category 2: Cultivating ethical awareness and values

Teachers reported that there was a real need to nurture ethical awareness and values amongst the learners. Many teachers took up the responsibility to foster a moral awareness in learners by taking on different projects and employing different strategies. Some participants expressed the need for programmes and workshops to address issues around moral values. Teachers also indicated that motivational speakers and external programmes were invited to foster moral awareness, inspire good behavior, and to emphasize the benefits of value-based living. Some teachers attempted to nurture a pedagogy of care and create a spirit of giving or Ubuntu by means of feeding schemes. Participants noted that exposing learners to disadvantaged communities and especially learners with special needs, instilled the essential values of respect, gratitude, and empathy. Teachers reflected on the intentional development of programmes to foster empathy and compassion amongst fellow learners, which greatly assisted in almost eradicating bullying within the schooling system. Comprehensive moral education programmes assisted learners in reflecting on their belief systems and developing an awareness on the importance of morality. The nurturing of a strong spiritual foundation by teachers contributed to the regeneration of values and the creation of a teaching environment in which ethical foundations were strengthened.

D1 S1 P4: *"Uhm... it should be the vision of every teacher, because even if I am teaching Physics, there are some morals that I need to nurture in my kids. So, values can be taught in small things... Yeah, just imagine the difference we can make if every teacher in every subject takes maybe ten minutes, or even five minutes where we implement a certain value that promotes moral behavior. And I also think schools need workshops whereby learners who are truly facing challenges leading to dysfunctional behavior, can be put into a moral regeneration workshop."*

D5 S8 P15: *"Ja, wel... dan voel ek daar moet elke week 'n tema wees waar waardes uitgelig word. Verskeie waardes moet in weeklikse temas bespreek word, dinge soos roetine, eerlikheid, integriteit, empatie, hoe om jou omgewing netjies te hou, herwinning van vuilis, en so meer."* (Yes, well... then I feel there must every week be

a theme where values are highlighted. Several values must in weekly themes be discussed, things like routine, honesty, integrity, empathy, how to keep your environment tidy, recycling of waste, and so on.)

D3 S5 P9: *“Wel, ek dink... kinders bewus maak, jy weet... kinders bloot stel aan morele waardes. Uhm... kom ons loods ‘n projek en se... kom ons se vir Mei maand is ons op integriteit. Kom ons doen alles wat jy aan kan dink met integriteit. Ons reel iemand wat kom praat oor integriteit. Ek dink sulke goeters kan werk...”* (Well I think... making children aware, you know... exposing children to moral values. Let us launch a project and say... let us say for May month we are on integrity. Let us do everything that you can think of with integrity. We organize someone who can speak about integrity. I think such goodies can work.)

D5 S8 P15: *“Uhm... so, ek hou een keer ‘n jaar ‘n funksie met ‘n spesifieke tema. So, hierdie jaar het ek die ‘Values in Education’ gedoen. Ek hou ook elke tweede jaar ‘n empowerment day. Dan split ek die seuns en die dogters, en ek kry sprekers wat met die seuns praat, en sprekers wat met die dogters praat. Uhh... dan touch ons op baie ernstige goed. So, ons praat oor emosionele wellbeing, wat goed is vir jou, hoe jy na jouself kan kyk, en in die proses kan jy ‘n standaard stel waarvolgens jy kan lewe. So, wat ons eintlik probeer doen is om vir hulle ‘n tick list te maak van wat jou values is. So, ek is trots op myself, ek het respek vir myself, en ek post niks op social media nie, As ek emosioneel siek voel dan gaan praat ek met iemand... Een keer ‘n maand het ons ook ‘n tema en op die manier bereik ons kleiner groepies.”* (So, I hold once a year a function with a specific theme. So, this year I did the Values Education. I hold also every second year an empowerment day. Then I split the boys and the girls, and I get speakers who speak with the boys and speakers who speak with the girls. Then we touch on very serious stuff. So, we speak about emotional wellbeing, what is good for you, how you look after yourself, and in the process, you can set a standard according to which you live. So, what we actually try to do is to make a tick list for them of what your values are. So, I am proud of myself, I respect myself, and I post nothing on social media. If I feel emotionally sick, then I go and speak to someone...Once a month we also have a theme and in this way we reach smaller groups.)

D5 S8 P16: *"Uhh... I have seen with my colleagues how the kids who are part of the sports teams, experience things that changes their behavior tremendously. That really does benefit the learners. To be part of a group, a positive group... and the teamwork. And, you know the learners' values are built up in a positive sense. So, with a lot of my colleagues, I see that their learners who perform well in their sports or who are dedicated, have a completely different moral compass. Yeah, they are motivated to get their behavior in line with what is expected of them, if I can put it as simple as that."*

D4 S10 P20: *"Ja... ek dink om goeie voorbeelde te kry van wat reg is, en dit bloot te stel aan die leerders. So, waar jy praatjies het met beroemde mense en so, weet, wat jy ag as rolmodelle van die korrekte gedrag en morele waardes. En hulle stories te vertel, en vir die leerders te wys wat eintlik te verwagte is."* (Yes... I think to get good examples of what is right, and to expose it to the learners. So, where you have talks with famous people and so, know, what you consider as role models of the correct behavior and moral values. And to tell their story and to show the learners what is actually expected.)

D3 S5 P10: *"Jy weet... as ek met kinders praat in my kantoor, die stoutes, dan 'reinforce' ek morele waardes. Maar nie net dit nie, in my klasse... natuurlik op die sportveld, een honderd persent. Mm... die fokus van 'becoming a good citizen'."* (You know... when I talk to kids in my office, the naughty ones, then I reinforce moral values. But not just that, in my classes... Naturally on the sports field, one hundred percent. The focus of becoming a good citizen.)

D4 S10 P17: *"Uhh... as I said, it needs to be external as well. What kind of organizations, especially churches can become involved in moral regeneration. There needs to be a drive to invite motivational speakers who can come and encourage young people to shift their mindset about doing the right thing."*

D4 S7 P13: *"So, having values and instilling them from the time that the child walks into the school... you know, internalizing them as norms."*

D5 S9 P18: *"Mm... I try to incorporate values and point back to that. For example, I am very big on abstinence... so I love to always reinforce values even while I am teaching Afrikaans. I will incorporate it into my themes. The moment I get an opportunity or a question, I create a teachable moment because my girls are very comfortable with me, and they are very comfortable asking questions pertaining life."*

So, when that comes up, then I see that as an opportunity for me to quickly, you know, just throw in a life nugget, you know those, “girls remember your self-worth, girls remember who you are.”

Teachers' views conformed with Chowdhury (2016:1) who highlights the need to cultivate virtuous behavior patterns amongst the learners. Teachers who owned the responsibility to foster values in learners were able to contribute to the education system, encouraging learners to weave morals into their character development (Chowdhury, 2016:1). This was partly achieved through programmes and workshops which addressed current issues around moral values, emphasizing value-based behavior. Participants were in agreement with Elsenbroich and Gilbert (2014) that the motivation behind learners' decisions could only positively alter their behavior if there was sufficient nurturing towards prescriptive behavior. Literature refers to proscriptive morality where the focus is on the avoidance of harmful behaviour, and prescriptive morality, where doing 'good', doing the 'right thing', and focusing on what we 'should do' is cultivated (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013:220). Participants explained that a pedagogy of care and helpfulness towards others is fostered by encouraging a prescriptive moral domain (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013:220). Teachers argued that the behavioural motivation to do the 'right thing', cultivated behaviours with positive outcomes within the schooling system (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013).

Teachers emphasized the importance of creating an awareness through the intentional implementation of programmes with learners, highlighting that the norms, values, and principles that they choose daily, influences their decisions and ultimately plays a role in shaping their future (Zulu *et al.*, 2019). Pandey (2005:1) considers the nurturing of values within education of importance to provide learners with knowledge and skills to make informed decisions that are of moral importance. Teachers viewed all programmes which fosters virtues such as integrity, courage, responsibility, empathy, and respect for others of importance to develop an awareness of morality (Pandey, 2005:1). Within the context of this study, it is therefore noteworthy that moral regeneration needs to aim at creating an educational space where teachers and other role players foster moral behaviour patterns which nurture respect, love, care, compassion, and fairness, combatting ill-discipline and antisocial behaviour (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:25). Teachers asserted the importance of cultivating moral behaviour amongst learners with the aim of ensuring that an environment is created that is conducive for teaching and learning (Mulaudzi & Mudzielwana, 2016:7519).

4.2.5.2.1 Sub-category: Implementing comprehensive moral education programmes

Teachers viewed the implementation of programmes to foster empathy and compassion amongst fellow learners of high importance. Employing comprehensive moral education programmes could potentially assist learners in reflecting on their belief systems and developing an awareness on the importance of morality. The nurturing of values through the creation of a sound foundation where teachers contribute to the regeneration of values, creates an environment in which ethical foundations are strengthened. Teachers attempted to nurture a pedagogy of care and create a spirit of giving by means of feeding schemes. Participants expressed notions that exposing learners to disadvantaged communities and especially learners with special needs instilled the essential values of respect, gratitude, and empathy. Regeneration programmes were also nurtured through the intentional dedication of sports coaches who exposed poverty-stricken learners to opportunities, creating a positive mindset and a sense of belonging. programmes could either be facilitated by teachers who need help and training, or by external organizations who can become involved with learners, building relationships, and assisting the development of their emotional intelligence.

D2 S2 P3: *"Yeah, like I was part of Women Paying It Forward, an organization that came to work with our young ladies. Just trying to light that flame again, because our kids has lost that passion to be at school. They do not see anything good about being at school. So, it is important for us to help our kids to find their purpose. Mm... and I think bringing people like Women Paying It Forward allows that. We allow girls to find that purpose with the guidance of strong female mentors."*

D1 S4 P7: *"Uhh... so, jy weet as ek nou dink hier by ons, ons is gelukkig genoeg om 'n sosiale werker aan te gestel het, hierdie maand 'n jaar terug. En net om haar te he om dinge te dryf soos 'n gemeenskapsprojek. Net die kinders weer te leer dat hulle moet empatie kan he, hulle moet ook kan gee, en nie net altyd wil ontvang nie. Ja... op ons onkoste, maar dit maak 'n verskil in die sin van jy het iemand om die programme te dryf. Uhh... wel dit is uitreik gebaseer. Uhm... dit gaan vir ons daaroor dat die kinders se fokus net 'n slag moet skuif van hulleself af... maar ja bewuswording word geskep. En hopelik met die leerlinge se uitreik, raak hulle bewus dat daar ander mense is wat ook swaar kry. Ja, so ek dink net dit trek die lyn eventueel deur na die morele waardes toe"* (So, you know if I think here by us, we are lucky enough to have appointed a social worker, this month a year ago. And just to have her to drive things like a community project. Just to teach the children again that they must have empathy, they must also give, and not just always want to receive. Yes... on our

expenses, but it makes a difference in the sense of you have someone to drive the programmes. Well, it is outreach based. It goes for us about that the children's focus just for once must shift from themselves... but yes awareness is created. And hopefully with the learner's outreach, they become aware that there are other people who also struggle. Yes, so I think just that pulls the line eventually through to moral values).

D4 S6 P11: *"You know... the principal has a programme he has called 'Locus Parentis', which is the register teacher. They become the 'Locus Parentis'. And this 'Locus Parentis' then takes charge. If the child is going through a difficult situation, they talk to the register teacher. Uhh... if the register teacher cannot dissolve it, they come to us for the 'Positive Release Program'. So, I think the best thing in schools, is to develop that 'Locus Parentis'. Just to have a register teacher who can be a 'point of light' when the learners need to talk."*

D2 S2 P3: *"Uhm... I also help [name of an individual] in taking part in our school's charity program. So, we always take our kids to visit the less fortunate. Yeah... we have them engage and see what it means to struggle. And we sometimes allow these kids to see that even though their homes are not the best, they have homes. You know, first of all, nurturing the spirit of giving. And they also walk away feeling very blessed. It also allows them to constantly see that as much as they think that they have the bad end of the stick, there are always others that have way less than them. It should develop their compassion for the suffering of others."*

D1 S4 P7: *"Uhh... en dan het ons 'n 'Reach' periode. So, weereens dit is 'n eie inisiatief, want nou mag jy mos nie Godsdien's preek nie, so een keer 'n maand het ons mense wat uit die gemeenskap uit saam met verskillende kerke werk, en dan kom hulle na die klasse toe, waar hulle dan volgens 'n tema tyd spandeer met die kinders. So, die idee was aanvanklik om die kerk gemeenskap te betrek by die oordrag van waardes. Uhh... dis 'n baie goeie spasie waar morele waardes bespreek kan word en waar wysheid lig kan werp op tiener menings."* (And then we have a 'Reach' period. So, once again it is our own initiative, because now you may not preach religion, so once a month we have people out of the community who work with the different churches, and then they come to the classes, where they according to a theme spend time with the kids. So, the idea was originally to involve the church in the transfer of values. It is a very good space where moral values can be discussed and where wisdom can shed light on teenage opinions.)

D2 S3 P5: *"Yeah... another important thing that impacts the value system at school, is the fact that learners from poverty-stricken homes are demotivated. Uhh... we have this amazing basketball teacher and what he did out of his own, is almost 'adopting' these poverty-stricken learners as his own. They go for championships, and they win all their games, and you know he told them, if they do not go to class and do well in their schoolwork, they are not on his team anymore. Uhh... there are three new basketball cabinets, displaying all of their wins for this year only. Yes, he is really motivating them in their academics because they know at the end of the day their reward is to play basketball for a top team, and he is a top coach. Yeah... you can see the change in their work ethic, it is amazing how they strive to do the right thing."*

D4 S6 P11: *"Uhh... for me it involves four blocks. We implement the 'Positive Release program' where we connect with the pupils on a physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual level. The programme is cross-cultural and cross-religion. I know there are a lot of ethnicities, and a lot of religions in our school, but at the end of the day I connect with all of them. For me... it is helping the learner figuring out what is going on. Mm... it is very holistic, but more on anger, addiction and personal pain. I want to help them through the personal pain because they cannot talk to mom, and dad has never been there. And when the child comes into the 'Positive Release Program' there is a nurturing concept. That changes everything."*

D2 S2 P2: *"Uhm... I try to follow a notion of a pedagogy of care. So, I am in charge of this school's feeding scheme... the kids that I teach, they help me to hand out the food to the kids who are on the feeding scheme list. And every year I run a charity outreach, and I take the kids involved to different charity organizations each year where we spend time with the kids or the elderly and we just speak with them, just so that we get a sense of, you know, life is not okay for everyone. You know... this is the only way to develop empathy and inculcate a notion of gratitude. We need to have programmes where the kids reach out ..."*

Comprehensive moral education programmes are necessary for the development of moral mechanisms and for morality to become functional within the schooling system (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Teachers' conclusions concur with literature that morality is affected by the way learners view themselves, interact with others, work together in groups, and relate to other groups. (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). The ways in which learners think and reason by themselves, needs to be nurtured to determine behaviour that would be considered morally 'right' (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Participants reported that moral education programmes have the potential to nurture

moral decision-making and moral development (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880). Teachers found that programmes can impact the way in which the individual relates to other individuals and respond to their moral behaviours (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880). Participants viewed programmes which encompass morality of importance as they potentially influence the way individuals either conform to or resist group norms (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). This is very meaningful in addressing behavioural regulation within the group (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:881).

Teachers' experiences are in line with the findings of Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) that comprehensive moral education programmes are helpful to shape learner's moral concerns, impacting their emotions, their mindset, their self-views, and essentially their moral behaviour. Programmes implemented at several schools have been effective in developing the moral traits of caring, compassion, consideration, fairness, generosity, giving, helpfulness, kindness, trustworthiness, and understanding (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Participants' experiences with their outreach programmes are in line with the research of McCullough *et al.* (2001) as well as that of Emmons and McCullough (2003), identifying gratitude as a positive moral emotion which benefits relationships and adaptive behaviour. Teachers further reported that outreach programmes nurtured the development of one of the most important moral emotions, namely empathy, implicating moral behaviour. Participants found that the development of empathy lead to concern for others and a focus on the needs of others rather than self (Tangney *et al.*, 2007:18). This viewpoint is supported by Eisenberg *et al.* (2004, 2006) who emphasizes that empathy is central in motivating a concern for others, prompting behaviour to help others, and inhibiting aggressive behaviour that is harmful to others. Teachers concurred with the findings of Bandura (1986) that when the moral emotion of empathy is encouraged in learners, they become sensitive to the suffering of others, activating evaluative self-sanctions which motivates moral behaviour.

Participants who were able to inspire learners to abstain from delinquency because of their affiliation to a sports team, placed an emphasis on the moral standards internalized by the subculture of the team (Brezina & Piquero, 2007:437). Teachers' experiences are in line with Piquero *et al.* (2005:47) who noted that adolescents who choose the strong moral standards of the sports teams' subculture to guide their behaviour, fit into the profile of compliant, well-behaved students who are well adjusted, and academically motivated.

4.2.5.2.2 Sub-category: Nurturing Spiritual and Ethical Foundations

Teachers believed that the lack of a strong religious foundation at schools contributed to the degeneration of values and expressed the need for the reinstatement of a spiritual basis. Participants expressed that many students are 'irreligious', having no form of guidance when it comes to morals, and knowing 'right' from 'wrong'. Regardless of which faith is followed, religion still fosters a sense of 'right' and 'wrong', which is lacking these days. Teachers reported that religion needs to be given a space in the schools as the prohibition of a spiritual foundation has inculcated a nihilistic attitude. They stated that removing God from the education system has led to a rudderless generation who have ultimately become insecure due to the absence of a moral foundation. Participants reported that being able to commence the day with a spiritual input, allows many learners to 'regroup' when leaving a dysfunctional home situation prior to arriving at school. Nurturing a spiritual foundation influenced belief systems, ethical foundations, discipline and behavior in significant ways.

D2 S2 P3: "Mm... you know religion has been taken out of school and I think that is where we went wrong. Is it okay for us to accept that we have kids who believe in absolutely nothing, but maybe these kids believe in nothing because we have made religion nothing. Uhh... maybe we need to bring that back to schools. Yeah, have a space for Muslim kids, have a space for Christian kids, have a space for Hindu kids, for all of us. Uhm... and in that there is a power present that guides us from going wrong. When God is there, as a Christian, ... when you are feeling at your lowest, dealing with things and there is no support, just falling on your knees and knowing that God is listening to me and that He will help me to sort out this problem, changes everything. No cigarette, no drug, no amount of alcohol can fix this, only Him. It is really important to get religion back into schools."

D5 S9 P18: "You know... in my class, my kids will pray in the morning, because I believe it is important for you to set the tone for your day and to command your day. Because if you do not do that, like I said, if you do not do that, if you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything. Mm... creates a calm for the day, and also it gives them a sense of peace when they are anxious. So, bringing back our assemblies and bringing back prayer and opening the school day, and setting your tone for your school day. I think those for me are the most important things we have lost."

D5 S8 P15: *"Mm... so, ek sal eerstens aanbeveel as ek nou byvoorbeeld die hoof van die skool is, of ek het nou Carte Blanche, dat ek elke dag se oggend storie begin met gebed. Ek het dit nou begin hier in die personeelkamer, en daar is iemand wat vir ons met 'n gebed open, want die mense is so onrustig as hulle by die skool kom. So, ek voel ... as jy in die klas instap moet daar dadelik 'n rustigheid wees wat ons nie altyd het nie, so ek voel daar moet 'n vyf minute stilte tyd wees, dit hoef nie langer te wees nie, waar jy byvoorbeeld die 'School Prayer' lees."* (So, I will firstly recommend if for example I am the principal of the school, or I have Carte Blanche, that I begin every days morning story with prayer. I have now started it here in the staff room, and there is someone who opens for us with a prayer, because the people are so fidgety when they get to school. So, I feel... when you step into the classroom there must immediately be a tranquility which we do not always have, so I feel there must be a five-minute quiet time, it doesn't have to be longer, where you for example read the School Prayer.)

D5 S9 P19: *"Yeah... we have got a Bible study group. Whenever I can see there is a gap, then I can say okay, let us see what the Bible says about this, and I can start speaking with the learners. Sometimes we even have class discussions where they speak about many topics, and I will incorporate these morals and values into these discussions. Like I said, I can show you their results, I mean these kids are flourishing...it actually helps them become better learners. Uhh... and they become more positive towards one another as well, how they treat one another."*

D3 S5 P9: *"Uhm... weet jy, ons het 'n baie sterk geestelike fondasie, ja. Hier word nog elke oggend geopen op die vierkant, sowel as elke saal opening. Ja, daar word met skriflesing en gebed by elke funksie wat hier is geopen. As jy die alles wegvat, dan is hier 'n groot leemte... dan het ons'n groot probleem ...ons het CSV, ons kids doen 'Praise and Worship'. Ek se vir jou... vir 'regeneration' moet jy konnekteer met Godsdienst, dit inkorporeer, dit is die 'crux' ..."* (You know, we have a very strong religious foundation, yes. Here we still open every morning on the square, as well as every hall opening. Yes, there is scripture reading and prayer with every function here that is opened. If you take it all away, then there is a big gap... then we have a big problem... we have CSV, our kids do Praise and Worship. I tell you... for regeneration you must connect with religion, incorporate it, it is the crux ...).

Teachers' viewpoints on the value of a spiritual foundation dovetail with Aquino and Reed (2002:1424) who propose that a moral identity is adopted in terms of the moral characteristics represented by the social group of choice. This could be a religious group, such as Christians or Muslims which then fulfils the role of mentorship of moral standards adopted as an identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002:1424). Participants' experiences are in line with the findings of Zulu *et al.* (2019:226) emphasizing the outcry today that religion be brought back into the education system as a foundation for moral standards. Teachers' perspectives concurred that the return of Religious Education will provide a strong base for the regulation of social behaviour (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:226). Simpson *et al.* (2016:256) supports this argument by reasoning that "religiosity shapes morally relevant attitudes and behaviour in a wide variety of ways". Participants reported that religious identification remains a strong motivating factor in developing morally acceptable behaviour, instilling respect for authorities, and endorsing sexual purity (Simpson *et al.*, 2016:256). Simpson *et al.* (2016:257) propose that those who oppose religion often lack a moral system with a firm moral foundation to their actions.

Teachers' findings support the view of Cramwinckel *et al.* (2016:75) who propose that religious beliefs strongly influence a conformity to values and group norms. There was general consensus that the belonging to a religious in-group, encourages conformity to group norms and standards, therefore maximising the deterrence of any in-group deviance from moral standards affiliated to the religion (Abrams *et al.*, 2000:906) Simpson *et al.* (2016:264) argue that religion supports individuals to be grounded in all moral domains, especially authority as God is seen as the supreme moral authority. Teachers supported this argument in the context of the disciplinary problems currently experienced within the schooling system, and especially in the domains of authority and respect.

Participants stated that principles of morality are distinctive features within a religious context and therefore a spiritual foundation enables the development of defining norms within the education system (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015:190). This viewpoint is supported by Haidt (2001:817) who states that people within a religious group endorses moral values. Religious in-group norms are therefore a motivating factor for learners to think and act within the expectations for group behaviour (Ellemers *et al.*, 2008:1397-1398). Teachers' viewpoints concurred that moral regeneration needs the inclusion of multi-dimensional morals which are not culturally or religiously exclusive (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:878), with the characteristics of proximity, intensity, contextuality, and malleability (Kaiser, 2024).

Within the context of nurturing a spiritual foundation, the Social Learning Theory is relevant in terms of the extent to which learners have been exposed to a particular religion and how their cognition and resultant behaviour have been influenced by what they learned from the interaction with their in-groups (Kouchaki, 2011:702). Different social experiences influence cognitive maturity. Teachers' statements substantiate the argument of Krebs (2008) that cognitive development is influenced by the relevant experiences of the religious in-group.

Participants perceived that the nurturing of a spiritual foundation has the potential to motivate the abstention from deviant behaviour and the violation of moral standards (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340; Chippendale, 2001:3; Camacho *et al.*, 2003:508; Cohen *et al.*, 2013:816-818).

4.2.5.3 Category 3: Commitment to value-based pillars motivating behavior

Teachers reported that moral awareness could be fostered through a unanimous commitment to the pillars of morality. This could only be possible if management, teachers, parents and learners made a coherent effort to rebuild a moral climate where a value-based education impacted behavioral morality. Participants agreed that moral awareness needed to be inculcated through an all-encompassing structure permeating every section of learning and teaching. Employing programmes of empowerment was considered as a valuable means of fostering moral awareness. Creating a moral foundation through role modelling meant that principals and teachers needed to become living examples of integrity and good values, ensuring that learners respected them. Teachers and school authorities need to reflect on their own belief system and develop an awareness of the example they set to learners. Participants expressed the need for mentorship programmes and empowering learners as moral agents. Teachers felt that such programmes developed role modelling of behavioral morality within peer groups whilst supporting learners needs.

D3 S7 P14: *"Yeah... so, he was a deputy for about six years and then he was appointed as principal last year February. Uhm... he came in steadfast with a new initiative. We used to have something called the 10 pillars. So, these were value-based words that we taught our kids in Grade 8, representing what we stand for. He has now changed to the 12 values, and they are... Okay, so the first one is appreciation. The second one is enthusiasm. Next, we have community. Then compassion, courage, courtesy, critical thinking, honor, humility, integrity, open-mindedness and respect."*

D4 S10 P20: *"Uhh... our pillars. We start with our pillars, and we truly live according to our pillars of empathy and inclusion. We live, we strive for it. And we give the*

learners the opportunity, no opportunity is the wrong word, so, we as teachers try to strive towards it. We strive towards it."

D3 S7 P14: *"Mm... his vision is, "If I take the values and make them a part of every sphere of school life, you are going to take them on". You know... it is the actual systems that he is pushing a complete change into, and if I look at how the kids adopted it, it is insane. Yeah... you see it coming alive. It is really very encouraging to see how these kids are embracing these values. He has made it part of their entire school life. It started in small ways, but it is fully endorsed and fully embraced now, and these kids really are manifesting it in their behavior. Uhh... they are now going to build actual pillars. So, as you walk into the admin block, you are going to read the words."*

D4 S10 P20: *"Mm... ek dink wat goed is hier, is almal koop in dieselfde 'moral values', ons koop almal in. Ons het dieselfde 'set of moral values' en ons het sisteme in plek om daardie 'moralities' uit te leef, en ons begin daar met, soos ek gese het, die 'pillars'. Ons pilare waarop ons rus ..."* (I think what is good here, is everyone buys into the same moral values, we all buy in. We have the same set of moral values, and we have systems in place to live out those moralities, and we begin there with, as I said, the pillars. Our pillars upon which we rest).

D3 S7 P14: *"Uhm... he said, 'I need it in their faces, I need them to live and breathe it, because I need them to carry it. And it cannot just be in the morning assembly when I am saying to them these are what they are when a teacher does an assembly about what it is, I need it to be their life'. Yeah, their life."*

D4 S10 P20: *"Uhh... ons 'pillars' is 'empathy', 'integrity', 'commitment', 'excellence' en 'inclusion'. Uhh... in elk geval ja, so ons rus op daardie vyf pilare en almal moet uitstreef daarvolgens, en dit is wat ons ag dalk as 'n morele, 'n morele veilige plek of 'n morele reguit pad om te loop. So, jy moet iets he om op te bou, dit is ons fondament."* (Our pillars are empathy, integrity, commitment, excellence and inclusion. In any case yes, so we rest on those five pillars, and everyone must aspire according to that, and that is what we consider maybe as a moral, a moral safe place or a moral straight road to walk. So, you must have something to build on, it is our foundation).

Within the context of supporting the fostering of value-based pillars and the impact on morality, Chippendale (2001) highlights that values motivate with the purpose of achieving morality by

influencing behaviour. This viewpoint is supported by Bruess and Schroeder (2014:143) who recognize that values comprise the worth of norms and principles which has the potential to define the behaviour of individuals and groups. It needs to be emphasized, and Haydon (2006:53) supports the perspective that values should be recognized and respected by all faiths and all cultural groups.

Halstead and Taylor (2000) describe the importance of value education as particular morals are being emphasized. The standpoint of teachers for a commitment to the pillars of a value-based ethos is valuable within an educational context. The Department of Education (2000:24) highlights the nurturing of values such as tolerance, respect, and self-discipline with the aim of fostering discipline, but sadly value-based pillars are greatly lacking within the secondary schooling system. Participants' outlooks corroborate with the statement of Pandey (2005:1) who states that value education is necessary for the nurturing of values, virtues, beliefs, and attitudes, having the potential to morally socialize learners. Teachers' perceptions are in line with Pandey (2005:1) who considers the importance of nurturing value education to provide learners with skills to make informed decisions that are of moral importance. A commitment to fostering a moral climate which is represented by value-based pillars of morality, resonates with Pandey (2005:3) who views value education as a means of fostering virtues such as integrity, courage, responsibility, and respect for others.

Teachers reported that principals who supported a commitment to the pillars of behavioural morality, made it very clear that values needed to be integrated into every learner's self-image, becoming a part of their moral psychology (Monroe, 2008:722). Monroe (2008:722) substantiates this reasoning that values determine the human ethical perspective and therefore an integration of values into learners' self is critical (Blasi, 2003). Participants stated that the fostering of a value-based school climate has the capability to influence learners' disposition, their character, identity, and self-image (Abend, 2012:176). Within the context of the Social Disorganisation Theory, moral behaviour can be fostered amongst our socially disorganised learners through the facilitation of moral mechanisms, values, morals, principles, and social norms within a moral climate, motivating behaviour that abstains from the violation of moral standards (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019; Chippendale, 2001; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010; Camacho *et al.*, 2003; Zhang *et al.*, 2017; Cohen *et al.*, 2013).

4.2.5.3.1 Sub-category: Fostering moral awareness

Teachers agreed that moral regeneration could only become a reality through the fostering of moral awareness within the schooling system. Moral awareness needed to permeate every sphere of school life, becoming ingrained into learners' moral psychology. Participants reported that programmes of empowerment are necessary for the nurturing of moral awareness. It was

stressed that principals, teachers, learners and parents needed to become intentional for moral awareness to be developed, and that moral values are required to be continuously reinforced. Teachers felt that the development of moral awareness would allow learners to become well-rounded and socially well-adjusted individuals in society. It was further agreed that the fostering of moral awareness has the potential to develop emotional intelligence, allowing learners to be more self-aware and able to co-exist harmoniously with their fellow learners.

D1 S1 P1: *"Mm... you know... our schools should allow us to teach our children more about ethics, morals, principles and general etiquette to become socially adjusted individuals. We should develop their awareness of values."*

D4 S10 P17: *"Uhh... it has got to be in their face, it has got to be something that confronts them all the time. Morality needs to become a loud voice, saying, 'this is the way we go, this is the way we do things' ... it has got to be in their face."*

D3 S7 P14: *"Yeah... we are a completely value-based school. It is not all about how we correct behavior, but rather developing an awareness that teaches learners how to correct it themselves. Our principal is very big on restoration and developing values to do that."*

D4 S10 P17: *"Yes, to develop values must be intentional. We must make a conscious effort, otherwise nothing will change. We have done it in this school, and we have seen regeneration when it is intentional. We need to keep on emphasizing that the right choices are the best choices to make... shifting their mindset to the point that they consider whether their choice is really a good idea."*

D2 S2 P2: *"Uhm... I think in every lesson that we teach, we need to develop values. There is a moral lesson in every lesson, and we should not just think everything is about content. Bring in discussions. Can we shift their mindset while we teach? We need to school our kids for being responsible adults out of school. Uhh... so, when you leave school and you go into the workplace and you are in a position where you can do the right thing or not, are you going to have integrity? Are you going to say this is wrong, I am not going to be involved even if this makes you unpopular? Man... school should be a place where we mold our kids to become responsible citizens to fit into a society that is well functioning."*

D4 S10 P17: *“Man... kids lack empathy today. The only way to develop empathy, is to get involved in a broken society which allows us to see that we are still privileged, and that we have so much to be grateful for. Let’s become a generation that builds up and edifies, a generation who makes a difference, I think. Uhh... change their mindset. Yes, and highlight the good that they can bring into the world.”*

D1 S4 P6: *“You know... if I want learners to develop a moral character, moral growth needs to be more outcomes based. If I suggest change, I am not necessarily suggesting changing the content of the curriculum, but the way we present it, in the sense of how to deliver my content ... Uhh... it’s the angle that we come with for a generation that questions. For values to grow we need smart psychology, teaching learners the benefits of morals. ‘So, yes morals may not always look like fun, but it will definitely serve you’ ... help students to make sense of the values.”*

One can start by asking the question, why does moral awareness need to be fostered? Ngwokabueni (2015) answers this question by stating that our education system is facing a disintegration of value systems. Mabuza (2018) supports this view by concluding that a change of values is needed to fight against the upholding of a currently perverse value system where dysfunctional behaviour and ill-discipline is at the order of the day. The nurturing of moral awareness creates a moral climate where learners can be protected from influences and behaviours that corrupt their morality (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1162). Teachers agreed that the development of moral awareness is needed in an education system that is challenged by unacceptable behaviour, compromised values, and perverse views of the world and human failing (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:261-262). Schools have become unsafe and are experiencing a current scenario of degenerative values and morals and teachers find it almost impossible to cope with the complex issues present in the classroom. Substance abuse amongst learners, physical and sexual abuse, crime, gangsterism, and juvenile delinquency are but a few of these concerns that teachers face daily (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:1). Teachers therefore emphasize the importance of fostering moral behaviour with the aim of ensuring that an environment is created that is conducive for teaching and learning (Mulaudzi & Mudzielwana, 2016:7519).

Participants’ views hone in with Lusenga (2010:17), who argues that a moral awareness is necessary for learners to develop an understanding of what is considered appropriate in living life and becoming committed to actively enact accepted principles. Teachers highlighted the importance of creating a moral awareness within the education system, ensuring that the norms, values, and principles that learners choose to live with will influence the decisions they make, and ultimately help to shape their future (Zulu *et al.*, 2019: 253). Participants’ perceptions are

supported by Nieuwenhuis (2007) who asserts that a healthy school climate can only be fostered if a sound value system is deeply embedded in learners' social and academic lives.

4.2.5.3.2 Sub-category: Creating a moral foundation through role modelling

The participants saw the example set by teachers as a priority and emphasized that learners watch the lives of teachers. Teachers reported that teaching presents a platform where a teacher's life shows off. It was stressed that by being a role model, a teacher has the ability to regenerate learners' values. Participants highlighted that teachers should always choose behavior that models exemplary morals. Boundaries and expectations could only become non-negotiable if role modelling by teachers is consistent and credible.

D2 S3 P8: *"Yeah... I actually do. I prioritize the example I set and the kids respect me for good reasons, because when they walk into my class, obviously it is not all of them, but the majority of the ones I teach, understand why they have come to that class. Uhm... it really depends on the teacher, and with me it had to take me to know my subject really well. It had to take me to know that when the kids are here, I have to teach with passion. And that is what I do, so I do not have to inform a lot on behavior. Yeah... learners know when they come into my class, they are here to work and to listen."*

D1 S4 P7: *"Ek se vir jou... 'n onderwyser moet 'n rolmodel wees ten alle tye. As jou leerlinge jou iewers in die dorp sien, dan moet hulle kan se, 'dit is my juffrou', en jy is nie besig met dinge waarmee jy nie besig moet wees nie. Shoo... ja kinders hou elke beweging dop hoor. Hulle hou vir jou dop, so ek glo dit is nogal een van die dinge wat 'n verskil maak vir hoe 'n leerling jou hanteer as onderwyser. Mm... onderwysers moet waardes voorhou soos dit behoort te wees. Onderwysers besef nie hoe groot rol dit speel nie."* (I am telling you... a teacher must be a role model at all times. If your pupils see you somewhere in town, then they must be able to say, 'that is my teacher', and you are not busy with things that you shouldn't be busy with. Shoo... yes children watch every movement hey. They watch you, and I believe it is actually one of the things that makes a difference in how a learner treats you as a teacher. Teachers must present values as it should be. Teachers do not realize how big a role it plays).

D2 S3 P8: *"So, it all depends whether a teacher is prepared, whether a teacher knows their subject, and whether a teacher is willing to teach with passion. You know, learners feed off that energy and it just becomes so much easier. It comes down to a teacher's approach... Uhm... the moment a teacher displays that they have a deep*

knowledge of the subject, together with strict boundaries regarding their own behavior, everything changes with the learners.”

D4 S10 P20: *“Man... die beeld wat ons uitdra, en dan hoe ons met mekaar praat voor die leerders, nie op ons voorname nie, jy gebruik die van. So, ons probeer die dinge hier doen soos ek doen, nie soos ek se nie. Wel, doen wat ek se, maar ons doen, ons leef daarvolgens ook. Ja, doen wat ek se, en dan doen ek die teenoorgestelde nie. Nee. Dit is nie hoe ons hier werk nie. Ons moet die voorbeeld gee, en wys en uitleef.”*

(Man... the image that we carry out, and then how we speak to each other in front of the learners, not on our first names, you use the surname. So, we try doing things here like I do, not like I say. Well, do what I say, but we do, we live accordingly as well. Yes, do what I say, and then I do the opposite. No. It is not how we work here. We must give the example, and show and live out).

D1 S4 P7: *“Uhh... mentorskap. Dit gaan oor mentorskap, so of dit gaan oor fone, dit wat hulle op sosiale media post, of wat ook al, so ja daardie is belangrik. Want daardie rolmodel vir die kind is belangrik. Ek dink daardie morele ding is maar vir onderwysers ook ‘n uitdaging.”* (Mentorship. Its about mentorship, so if its about phones, that which they post on social media, or whatever, so yes that is important. Because that role model for the child is important. I think that moral thing is also for the teachers a challenge).

D5 S9 P18: *“Yeah... so, as a role model you are actually regenerating your learners’ values. So, I am a role model for the, the values that I want to see develop in their lives. That means choosing my behavior that models morals. Yes, because they are watching. They are watching, all the girls know us. Mm... so, I need to be the best model of the values I want to see in them.”*

D4 S10 P20: *“Uhm... dit is dalk iets kleins soos die manier hoe onderwysers aantrek. En, ons rook glad nie op die skoolgronde nie. Die hoof het dit totaal en al verbied. Lank voor die Onderwysdepartement dit gedoen het, het hy gese dit is nie ‘n goeie voorbeeld om te stel nie. Uhh... ag, en ander klein goedjies, ons het ‘n kroeg hier oorkant die pad gehad, en die hoof het gese jy kan nie daar uithang nie, want as die kinders huistoe loop, kan hulle nie sien hulle onderwysers sit daar en drink nie. Dit is die verkeerde beeld om uit te gee. En, dit maak ‘n baie groot verskil hoor, want kinders watch. Kinders watch ons.”* (It is maybe something small like the way that teachers dress. And, we do not smoke on the school grounds. The principal totally prohibited it. Long before the Education department did it, he said that it is not a good example

to set. And other small things, we had a bar here opposite the road and the principal said you can't hang out there, because when the kids walk home, they can't see their teachers sitting there and drinking. It is the wrong image to give out. And, it makes a very big difference hey, because kids watch. Kids watch us).

Participants' quotations resonate with Kouchaki (2011:702) who argues that people's moral self-concept can be influenced by observing the chosen moral actions of others, liberating them to engage in chosen behaviour. Teachers affirmed the importance of everyone in the education system understanding the difference between right and wrong, what is morally acceptable behaviour or not, and on what principles, values and rules they need to operate (Thompson, 2018:702). Only if teachers grasp the importance of their own principles, values and rules, will they be able to be effective role models of behaviour to learners. For teachers to role model moral behaviour, requires the development of a moral consciousness in the hearts and minds of all teachers (Nolan, 2009:13). Teachers emphasized that a process of learning is navigated by the role modelling of normative behaviour, encouraging desirable behaviour to become the norm (Witte, 2019:863). Witte (2019:863) further emphasises the importance of teachers modelling and promoting responsible norms and habits in their own lives as a vital form of living moral pedagogy. Learners often spend more time at school than at home and therefore, teachers have the potential to be agents of moralisation, facilitating the development of learners through value-based role modelling (Turnbull, 2002).

As reported by participants, children 'watch' the behavior of teachers. Children observe and learn in the school environment and teachers have the potential to influence behaviour patterns through their intentional and purposeful role modelling to learners (Aspin & Chapman, 2007; Ferreira & Schulze, 2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Prinsloo, 2007). The Social Learning Theory supports the view that behaviour is learned through interaction and observation, therefore underpinning the impact of role modelling (Payne, 2005). The literature proposes that social learning takes place in the context of relationships (Bandura, 1989:1175). Teachers' viewpoints are highlighted by Balogun and Okurame (2011) who emphasize that specific behaviour, attitudes, and emotional responses can be transmitted in different circumstances, indicating the value of role modelling. The impact of role modelling on behaviour is emphasized by Siegel (2011:136) who argues that the boy who sees his father repeatedly strike his mother is likely to become a very aggressive adolescent. It is therefore evident that the value of role modelling by teachers and how this impacts the behaviour of learners cannot be underestimated. Teachers' own morals are reflected in the learners and therefore it remains the responsibility of every teacher to role model the values that they expect the learners to exhibit. Role modelling has the greatest influence on the values of respect and discipline which becomes intrinsic values as they are imitated.

4.2.5.3.3 Sub-category: Empowering learners as moral agents

Teachers reflected on the positive outcomes of employing programmes whereby empowering learners as moral agents. The development of mentorship programmes impacts leadership and role modelling and has the added advantage of supporting learners' needs. Participants stated that the emphasis was placed on mentorship and guidance in terms of moral values within the peer group. This creates opportunities for the development of interpersonal mechanisms as individual learners relate to the mentorship of other learners and respond to their moral behaviours. Teachers reflected on the potential of learners in encouraging one another and spreading positive messages about 'doing the right thing'. Participants further highlighted the impact of learners becoming involved in the presentation of teachings on morals, values and beliefs.

D5 S9 P19: *"Yeah... learners themselves, because they love to encourage one another, and they have presentations, teaching one another about different morals, values, beliefs. You know, it really works when learners teach learners. It helps them grow emotionally and gives them inner strength."*

D1 S4 P7: *"Man, baie van daardie mentors is kinders wat 'n indruk maak op daardie graad agt kind vir die res van sy lewe. Ja, en daar veral met die morele waardes waar 'n matriek dogter vir die graad agt dogtertjie kan se, "luister jy gaan nie met matriek seuns nou hierso 'n verhouding aanknoop nie, dis die redes, bly weg". Jy weet dis simple goedjies vir 'n kind, maar op daardie ouderdom beteken dit so baie, en ek se altyd daar is daardie kans dat iemand hulle kan ondersteun en onderskep voordat die bodem uitval. Uhm... so tel jy bietjie probleempies op vroeër as wat dit aanvanklik sou uitkom. So, ja mentorskap is 'n goeie onderbou vir die graad 8's."* (Man, many of those mentors are children who make an impression on that grade eight child for the rest of his life. Yes, and there especially with the moral values where a matric girl can say to the grade eight girl, "listen you are not going to enter into a relationship with matric boys, these are the reasons, stay away". You know its simple things for a child, but at that age it means so much, and I always say there is that chance that someone can support and intercept them before the bottom falls out. So, you pick up little problems earlier as what it initially would come out. So, yes mentorship is a very good foundation for the grade 8's).

D3 S7 P13: *"Uhm... for instance, in the classroom, I have a 'buddy' system. Yeah, every year they mingle, minute mingle, move, mingle with the next person. When I stop the time, that is your buddy, and you are ultimately responsible to be a friend to*

that person. So, if that person is absent, you need to find out why the person is absent and send them the work. If it is their birthday, wish them a happy birthday. Yeah... you know, having a friend in the classroom also helps because you have kids who do not have friends at school. Mm... and it forces you to become friends with someone who you never thought you would become friends with."

D1 S4 P7: *"Uhm... ja, mentorskap is definitief 'n belangrike ene. Elke graad agt het 'n mentor. So daar het ons die prefekte, die bestuurspan wat elkeen so drie of vier graad agt's het. En dan is dit daardie ding van "jy is nie hulle sielkundige nie, jy is nie hulle 'pel' nie, jy is hulle mentor". So hulle vra vir jou die vrae, maar daar het ek al gesien maak 'n groot verskil vir ons graad agt's. Jy weet... net die feit dat hulle iemand het wat hulle kan lei."* (Yes, mentorship is definitely an important one. Every grade eight has a mentor. So there we have the prefects, the management team that each have about three or four grade eights. And then it is that thing of "you are not their psychologist, you are not their buddy, you are their mentor". So they ask you the questions, but there I already saw makes a big difference for our grade eights. You know... just the fact that they have someone who can guide them).

D3 S7 P13: *"You know what... the 'buddy' system develops compassion. Uhm... essentially if you see that something is wrong with your buddy, then you will let me know. If your buddy has not been answering your calls, you need to be worried. I feel for me it really helps, because there is a sense of we are in it together, and we are all working towards the same goal, and we are all grounded by what is good, becoming aware of what is wrong. Uhh... it establishes the core value of human empathy... learning how to care for each other."*

Reflecting on the viewpoint of Ellemers *et al.* (2019) who investigated the psychology of morality, explaining that the meaning of morals is not so much about avoiding evil, but rather about doing the right thing, the value in empowering learners as moral agents cannot be underestimated. The aim of mentorship is all about encouraging learners to adopt both a proscriptive and a prescriptive moral behaviour. Teachers reflected that mentorship leads to a restraining of any temptations to be involved in harmful behaviour, focusing on what learners 'shouldn't do' (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013: 220). Proscriptive morality is based on avoidance and the protection from harm. Empowering learners as moral agents also nurtures the moral domain of prescriptive morality which focuses on doing 'good', by doing what we 'should do'. Participants supported the view of Janoff-Bulman and Carnes (2013: 220) who argue that prescriptive morality involves behavioural motivation to do the 'right thing', engaging in behaviours that are helpful to others. Mentorship

involves the motivation to engage in the regulation of moral behaviour. Both proscriptive and prescriptive moral regulation motivates protection from harm, and both are important for the avoidance of negative outcomes and the motivation of positive outcomes (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). The conviction to abstain from delinquency because of strong moral standards often leads to the exclusion by the peer group, but if learners are empowered to motivate their peers to do the 'right thing', the subculture's mindset has the potential to change (Brezina & Piquero, 2007:437). Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012:882-883) support this view by stating that learners are prone to seek answers from mentors within the peer group that they consider as self-relevant, validating their views on what is 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour. Teachers clarified that the selection of moral agents was important, proposing that individuals who regard morality as a salient matter, allowing behaviour to be guided by internal and external moral codes, could be considered suitable for the role of mentorship (Shu & Francesca, 2012:35).

4.3 SUMMARY

Four main themes, each with respective categories and sub-categories, highlight teachers' depiction of their lived experiences of the phenomena of moral degeneration in secondary schools in South Africa. The main themes reflected teachers' views on morals and moral degeneration, challenges in facilitating a value-based education, evolving discourses on morality, and strategies for moral regeneration. Theme four was incorporated in the strategy development for moral regeneration of secondary schools in South Africa. The conceptual and theoretical framework that played a role in the development of strategies, as well as the seven strategies developed for a value-based education framework will be discussed in the following Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR THE MORAL REGENERATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reflects on the findings and describe what strategies secondary school teachers could provide to optimise the moral regeneration of secondary school learners. Secondary school teachers provided the necessary information on the phenomenon being studied as experienced at secondary schools and the need for the development of such strategies. Teachers are acutely aware of the moral collapse within the education system and the society-wide degeneration of morality. It has become evident that degenerative behaviour patterns and the need for a value based educational landscape are currently priorities for most secondary schools in South Africa. The department places great emphasis on outcomes and results, and yet our teachers are desperate to vacate the profession against a backdrop of needs which are not met due to the lack of support structures. It is evident from the findings that teachers are of the opinion that learners are not being adequately prepared to become accountable and responsible citizens of our country, whilst morality is on the decline. The teaching profession is in need of clear objectives, a rational plan of action, and aimed outcomes for the regeneration of morals amongst secondary school learners.

5.2 STRATEGIES FOR MORAL REGENERATION

In this chapter I provide a framework for the development of strategies for moral regeneration. In this context I also describe the phases of the strategies and the development of the strategy design. The strategies involve various role-players, recipients, and a process of implementation required for the aimed outcomes to be achieved. A strategy can be defined as “[a] plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim” (Oxford Dictionary, 2004:898). Strategies therefore need to be developed to achieve a long-term purpose. Strategies should identify specific goals with an active approach to achieve certain objectives (Denscombe, 2010). The strategies also require that the defined goals recognise the challenges as outlined in the research questions being investigated (Denscombe, 2010). In the context of this study, strategies aim to put a value-based education framework together for the optimisation of moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

Diagram 5.1 depicts the conceptual model in value landscapes relevant to this study, which comprised of relevant multifaceted aspects of morals as described in the conceptual and theoretical framework in Chapter Two. The interrelatedness of the multifaceted aspects also assists in indicating how they were helpful in shaping strategies for the aim of optimizing the moral regeneration of secondary learners.

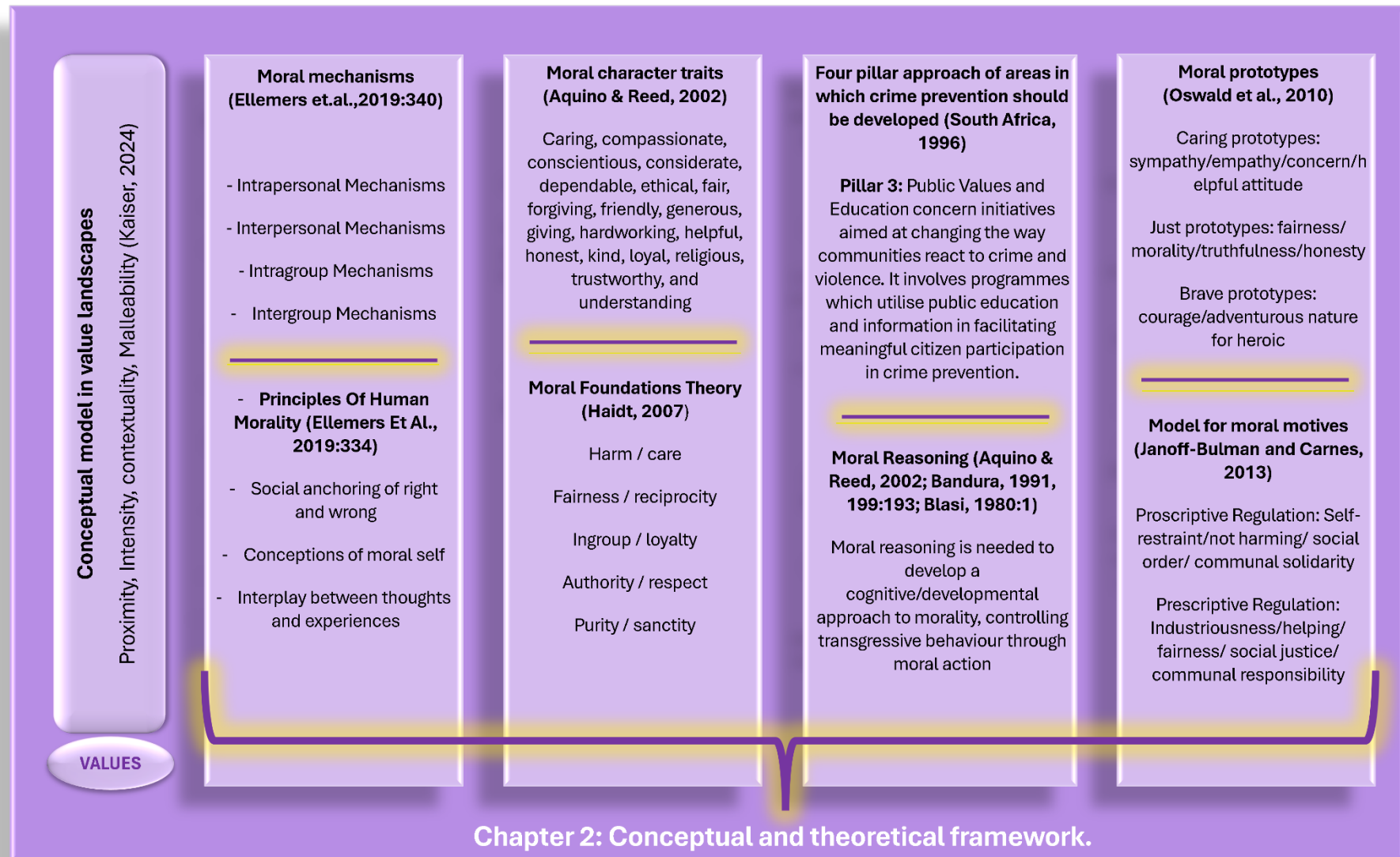


Diagram 5.1 Conceptual model in value landscapes

(i) Moral mechanisms (Ellemers et al., 2019:340)

The argument of Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) that each of these four moral mechanisms are helpful to shape the individual's moral concerns and judgements of others, impacting emotions, self-views, and essentially moral behaviour, is relevant for the development of such strategies.

- Intrapersonal mechanisms
- Interpersonal mechanisms
- Intragroup mechanisms
- Intergroup mechanisms

(ii) Moral character traits (Aquino & Reed, 2002)

The moral character traits as expounded by Aquino and Reed (2002) are valuable in the development of strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary learners as each one of these character attributes benefits others. Agerstrom and Bjorklund (2009) support this notion that moral behaviour regards the welfare of others as a priority. Strategies for moral regeneration therefore aims to foster character traits with the objective of motivating secondary learners to develop a moral identity that seeks to pursue a selfless concern for the well-being of fellow learners. These character traits are listed as follows: Caring, compassionate, conscientious, considerate, dependable, ethical, fair, forgiving, friendly, generous, giving, hardworking, helpful, honest, kind, loyal, religious, trustworthy, and understanding.

(iii) Four Pillar approach of areas in which crime prevention should be developed (South Africa, 1996) Pillar 3 - National Crime Prevention Strategy (South Africa, 1996) – Public Values and Education concerns

Developing meaningful strategies for moral regeneration necessitated the inclusion of one of the four pillars referred to by Rauch (2005:9) according to the summary document of the National Crime Prevention Strategy (South Africa, 1996). Chapter One highlighted the challenges of moral degeneration in every sphere of life in South Africa and how social disorganisation has infiltrated secondary schools, creating a landscape for drug trafficking, crime, violence, and abuse. Pillar 3 addresses crime prevention and the need for Public Values and Education concern initiatives to aim at changing the way that communities react to crime and violence. Objectives involve programmes which utilise public education to facilitate meaningful participation in crime prevention.

(iv) Moral prototypes (Oswald et al., 2010:1079)

Within the context of fostering moral regeneration among secondary school learners, moral prototypes are valuable in the strategies to achieve this objective. Oswald et. al. (2010:1093) propose that moral prototypes have the potential to influence behaviour which is 'good', 'moral', or 'right'. The main objective of moral regeneration of secondary school learners is to renew behaviour patterns. The caring prototype has the capability to develop sympathy, empathy, concern, and a helpful attitude. The just prototype potentially influences fairness, morality, truthfulness, and honesty. The brave prototypes aim to nurture courage and an adventurous nature for the heroic (Oswald et al., 2010:1079).

(v) Principles of human morality (Ellemers et al., 2019:332)

- Social anchoring of right and wrong

In accordance with Ellemers *et al.* (2019:334), strategies for the optimisation of moral regeneration have the potential to become compelling mandates, indicating what learners 'ought' to or 'should' do. The behaviour of learners can be impacted through an attachment to the social norms of others and what they deem important (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:334). Therefore the importance of role modelling as a strategy cannot be undermined. Learners' judgements about 'right' and 'wrong' have a connection to their social and cultural identity, and therefore the fostering of moral regeneration needs to acknowledge the scope of religious and cultural diversity (Greene, 2013; Haidt & Graham, 2007).

- Conceptions of the moral self

Strategies for the optimisation of moral regeneration need to develop an awareness of self that accepts responsibility for unacceptable behaviour and how it impacts on others (Ellemers *et al.* (2019). By adopting restorative measures learners are encouraged to engage in moral behaviour, employing moral reasoning, and avoiding self-justification of unacceptable behaviour (Haidt, 2001). Through the development of a moral self-concept, reasoning is implicitly influenced as the motivation for moral behaviour is associated with the self (Perugini & Leone, 2009).

- The interplay between thoughts and experiences

Strategies for the optimisation of moral regeneration aim to connect the thought processes regarding what is 'right' into behavioural realities. The rationale for strategies for moral regeneration supports the notion that morality influences the way learners think about themselves, interact with other learners, work together in groups, and relate to other groups within the school environment (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019). Therefore the purpose of moral standards aim to foster

communication relevant to what is considered as good, virtuous, or just behaviour (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:878). Parents and teachers are significant role players in fostering character development and nurturing moral values (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1160). The moral stance of learners, and their views on destructive behaviour can be greatly impacted by teachers and parents (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1161).

(vi) Moral Foundation Theory (Haidt, 2007)

The Moral Foundation Theory is valuable in the development of strategies for the optimisation of moral regeneration of secondary learners. It potentially influences moral reasoning and moral judgement within the five clusters of moral domains which mainly focuses on sanctity, harm, fairness, loyalty, and authority (Zhang *et al.*, 2017:56). Haidt (2007) proposes that a process of moral understanding is necessary to challenge unacceptable behaviour. Five basic moral foundations are each able to assist in the development of the moral identity of secondary school learners. *Harm/care* promotes a caring behaviour toward other learners who are in need of protection, thereby potentially impacting aggressive behaviour amongst learners. As *fairness/reciprocity* supports a sensitivity to recognise inequality, motivating justice within the group, a concern for the well-being of fellow learners is fostered. Understanding *in-group/loyalty* as a moral domain nurtures an awareness to protect the interests of other learners within the group. *Authority/respect* is fundamental in the fostering of respect for those who are in authority within the school structure. *Purity/sanctity* plays an important role within a value-based education framework to motivate learners towards a lifestyle that encourages moral behaviour.

(vii) Moral reasoning (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1991, 1999:193; Blasi, 1980:1)

Moral regeneration needs to challenge the Social Learning Theory and the extent to which learners have been exposed to a particular lifestyle and how their environment and peer group influenced their cognition and resultant behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:702). Transgressive behaviour needs to be controlled through moral action and to achieve this objective moral reasoning is needed to develop a cognitive/developmental approach to morality (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1991, 1999:193; Blasi, 1980:1).

(viii) Model of moral motives (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013)

Developing strategies for moral regeneration required further consideration of the Model of Moral Motives (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013) which argues that the proscriptive versus prescriptive morality has the potential to create a comprehensive moral landscape. Within the mapping of moral principles it is meaningful to include domains that suppress bad behaviour and promotes good behaviour.

- Proscriptive regulation: Self restraint/ not harming/ social order/ communal solidarity
- Prescriptive regulation: Industriousness/ helping/ fairness/ social justice/ communal responsibility

In view of this conceptual model in a value landscape and the objective of developing strategies for moral regeneration, it is important to remember that while values are recognised as motivators of attitudes and behaviour, there is no “[g]enerally accepted theory of values, and values are notoriously elusive” (Kaiser, 2024:1-2).

Diagram 5.2 encapsulates strategy development for moral regeneration of secondary schools in South Africa which include the following – Strategy 1: Building partnerships for moral development; Strategy 2: Foster ethical awareness and values; Strategy 3: Establish a framework for moral development; Strategy 4: Develop learners to become moral agents; Strategy 5: Adoption of restorative measures; Strategy 6: Creating a moral foundation through role modelling; Strategy 7: Fostering moral awareness. The recommended strategies are grounded in a value-based education framework and includes the rationale for the strategy, the role players responsible for the implementation of the strategy, the method of implementation, and the aimed outcome of the strategy.

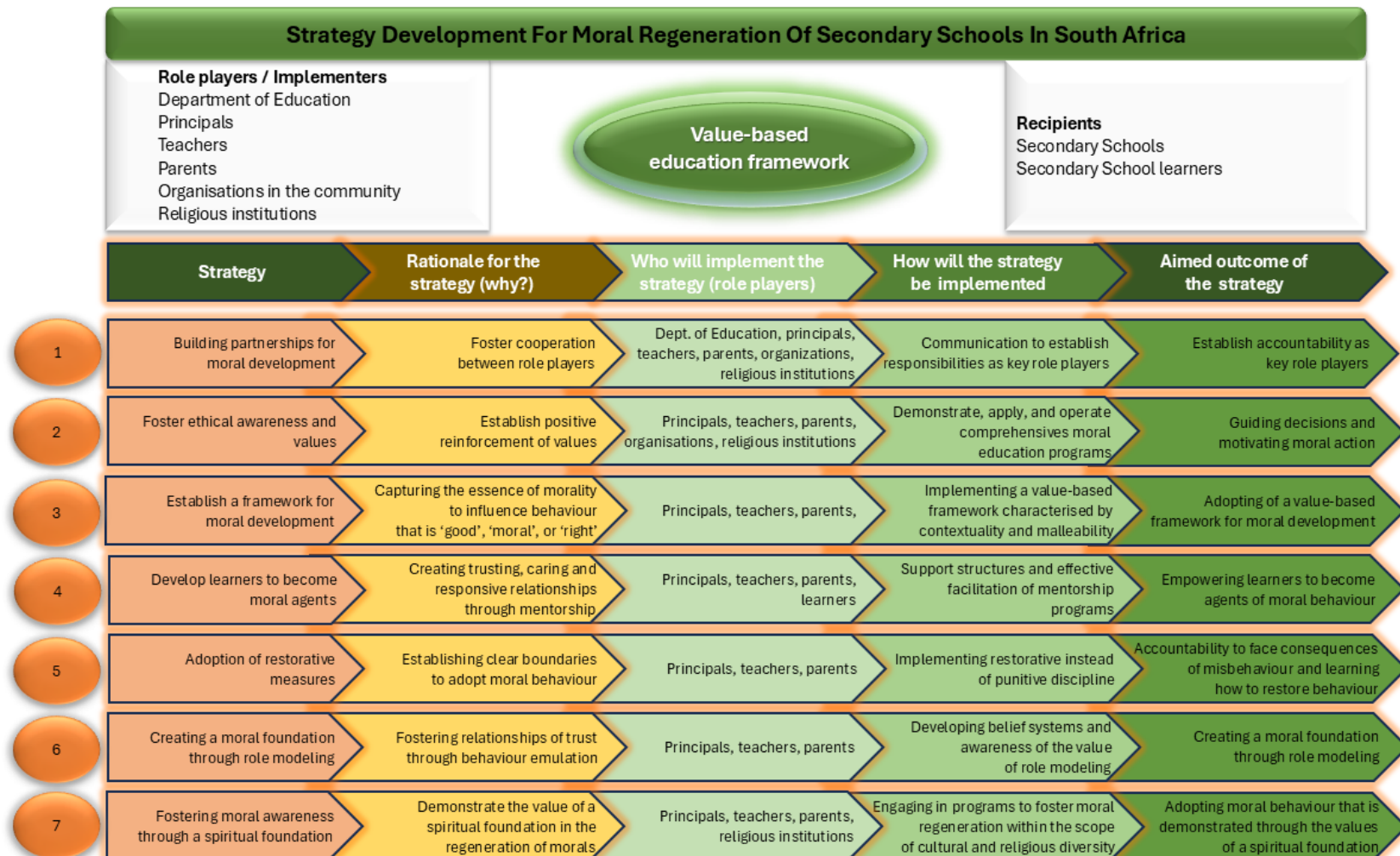


Diagram 5.2 Strategy development for moral regeneration

5.2.1 Role players / implementers

In the context of the strategy implementation process, role players refer to the individuals, organisations, institutions, and departments who are responsible to implement the recommended strategies with the clear objectives of addressing the phenomenon of moral degeneration in secondary schools in South Africa. It requires collaboration from role players for the goals of each strategy to be achieved successfully.

5.2.2 Department of Education

South Africa has a centralised, highly structured education system where power is concentrated on provincial and national level. The Department of Education in South Africa provides the structural parameters and this is evident in the administration of provincial offices, circuits, and districts. The main role of the department of education is to provide public schools with subsidised funding, policy documents, and curriculum structures. In addition the department is responsible for school related factors such as the school infrastructure and teacher related aspects such as teacher competency, authority, independence and the morale of teachers in the system (Zulu, 2019:203). Due to the fact that the department is run by the state, public schools are viewed as state-owned and therefore little freedom is given to teachers to implement innovative strategies in their classrooms. In context of this study, the co-operation of the Department of Education is essential in assisting teachers to foster a school climate where moral regeneration can be achieved.

5.2.3 Principals

Principals are appointed by the Department of Education and take responsibility for the leadership of the school that they have been appointed to. According to the Government Gazette (2014) principals must [e]ffectively promote, record, manage and support the best quality teaching and learning; the purpose of which is to enable learners to attain the highest levels of achievement for their own good, the good of their community and of the country as a whole.” The Department of Education is meant to deal with poor leadership but this is often neglected and as described by teachers in Chapter Four. The role of the principal drives the quality of outcomes in every sector of the school. It is therefore important for the principal as a leading professional in the school to support teachers in their initiatives for moral regeneration. Good leadership will therefore not act in isolation but lead and manage the school in such a way that integrated leadership benefits teachers, learners, and the desired outcome of the education process. The personal and professional attributes of a principal will influence the way in which leadership and management practices are carried out. Good leadership will require of principals to draw on a positive value

system to carry out the core purpose of principalship, and to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning can be achieved (Government Gazette, 2014).

5.2.4 Teachers

A teacher is a professional agent of instruction and in the context of this study, teachers are responsible for the transfer of knowledge to learners in schools in South Africa. Teachers have usually undergone formal training at a University or teachers' college where they have specialized to teach specific grades a specific body of knowledge. Teachers of public schools in South Africa are members of a teaching body called SACE and they are required to adhere to a set of standards regarding their professional, intellectual, practical, and ethical performance. Teachers should display "[l]ove, care, compassion, and moral imagination towards all others, irrespective of the prevailing conditions" (Zulu, 2019:25). When teachers neglect their moral responsibilities, it negatively impacts learners' knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. The Department of Education should ensure that teachers are adequately trained before they are appointed as they fulfil an important role in fostering knowledge, competence, and values of a diverse group of learners. Teachers play a significant role in the upliftment and transformation of our society as they nurture young minds and develop vital skills. They bear the weight and responsibility of teaching, and apart from parents, are the main source of knowledge and values for children. In the context of this study, teachers are important role players in the development of value-based education with the objective of moral regeneration of learners.

5.2.5 Parents

Parents are the biological agents responsible for facilitating the primary caretaking of their children. Their relationship with their children has a profound impact on their physical, mental, social and emotional development. Parents are accountable for meeting the needs of their children as defined by Maslow (1970:23). This includes biological or physiological needs, needs for safety and security, needs for affiliation and love, needs for self esteem, and the need for self-actualisation (Maslow, 1970:23). The optimal development of children is embedded in the fulfilment of these needs. As referred to in Chapter Four, section 4.2.1.3.2, teachers reported that a lack of parental guidance occurred when parents were misguided in nurturing these needs, compromising the moral development of their children. Teachers observed that parents are absent and uninvolved in guiding and nurturing their children's needs and value systems. Parents are either physically or emotionally absent and uninvolved in nurturing needs, or they become permissive and lack the necessary authority in guiding the moral development of their children. Adler (1969:97) believed that parents are the main role players in fostering structure and a sense

of responsibility for their children to grow into responsible, contributing citizens of their community. Parents play an important role in detecting, defining, and developing values and principles in their children's lives and therefore their direction is significant (Adler, 1969:97).

5.2.6 Organisations in the community

Reflecting on the perceptions of teachers in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.1, organizations in the community are important role players in the transfer of values. Regeneration programmes are nurtured through the intentional involvement of community-based organizations that assist in creating a positive mindset towards value-based behaviour. Programmes that are expedited by external organizations where facilitators become involved with learners, nurture the building of positive relationships, assisting the development of learners' moral awareness. Teachers reported that organizations have the potential for a moral impetus as they are not seen by learners on a daily basis and therefore they often have greater leverage to motivate learners towards moral action. One of the organizations mentioned by teachers in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.1, namely Woman Paying it Forward, specifically focuses on empowering learners through mentorship and values-based leadership. The investment of such an organization has value in the regeneration of morality as a platform is created for learners to become moral agents through the implementation of mentorship programmes. Community-based organisations assist in creating group dynamics in the process of moral regeneration as they facilitate non-judgemental, value-based educational programmes to learners.

5.2.7 Religious institutions

In view of the current moral dilemma facing our education system, there is a real need for religious institutions to play a role in the restoration of morality in our schools. Resonating with the Finnish experience (Zulu, 2019:226), teachers argued for the inclusion of religion rather than banning religion (see Chapter Four, section 4.2.3.1.2). Increasing a spiritual imperative in an environment that is morally dysfunctional, could assist in establishing a moral awareness. Various institutions that engage in programmes to foster moral regeneration strengthens the potential for learners to adopt moral behaviour. Due to the multicultural nature of South African schools, it is important to nurture the values of a spiritual foundation within the scope of cultural and religious diversity. As discussed in Chapter Four, section 4.2.3.1.2, teachers believed that the lack of a spiritual foundation and religious partnerships, contributed to the degeneration of values and expressed the need for programmes to support the challenges that teachers currently face. Teachers proposed that the input of religious institutions could nurture some form of guidance when it comes to morals, and distinguishing 'right' from 'wrong'. Regardless of cultural or religious diversity, teachers reported that religion needs to be given a space in the schools as the

prohibition of a spiritual foundation inculcates an ungovernable attitude. Chapter Four, section 4.2.3.1.2 highlighted that removing religion from the education system has led to a generation who has increasingly become directionless due to the absence of a moral foundation. Nurturing a spiritual foundation could influence belief systems, ethical foundations, discipline and behavior in significant ways.

5.3 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT FOR MORAL REGENERATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

5.3.1 Strategy 1: Building partnerships for moral development

- Rationale for the strategy (why?)

The rationale for building partnerships for moral development is to foster cooperation between different role players (see Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.1). The objective of moral development needs the collaboration from different entities who each has a fundamental and unique role in the positive reinforcement of a value-based education framework. Effective partnerships can build a school climate where learners as well as teachers feel respected and safe. The validity for the rationale of this strategy is supported by Ellemers *et al.* (2019:340) who proposes that moral mechanisms influence the way that people think about themselves, interact with others, and relate to other groups. The collaboration of different role players therefore emphasizes that groups respond to and endorse the moral guidelines of other groups. Intergroup mechanisms highlights the importance of different role players endorsing shared moral values to establish and define moral identities (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). For moral regeneration initiatives to be strengthened, it greatly depends on the commitment and accountability of partnerships as the complex task of developing value-based education can only be realized through intergroup processes (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340).

- Who will implement the strategy (role players)?

This strategy emphasises that dedicated cooperation between the Department of Education, principals, teachers, parents, community-based organisations, and religious institutions could assist the fostering of moral development. In accordance with Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.1, the strategy emphasises that the coalition of all the different role players could significantly impact moral regeneration initiatives.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

Communication between all the role players is essential to establish the responsibilities of each in the vision for moral regeneration. A cooperative strategy involves all role players to endorse shared moral values, thereby collaboratively embracing the vision for moral regeneration. This can be achieved through intentional communication from the Department by means of policies, regular meetings between principals and teachers, and parent evenings where the value of strategies are shared. As highlighted in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.1, partnership is required from the Department of Education to be actively involved in the regeneration process, ensuring that policies concerning the preservation of values are developed. The Department of Education needs to remain an accountable innovator in the development of a value-based education framework. Pillar 3 in the Four pillar approach advocates that public education should be utilised for the implementation of meaningful education initiatives (South Africa, 1996). For moral development to be nurtured, parents need to support principals and teachers by adhering to schools' policies and supporting the implementation of programmes to foster morality in schools. The committed involvement of parents have the potential to strengthen the hand of principals and teachers in the regeneration of values as there is unity in communication and the establishment of responsibilities. As outlined in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.1, organisations and religious institutions that form part of the community have potential leverage as they integrate into a collaborative moral tradition which cultivates norms and values. The value of organisations and institutions endorsing a partnership for moral regeneration is that there is a continuous effort for the process to be ongoing in the community. For learners to adopt a moral life, countless morally relevant behaviours needs to be assimilated by learners daily, and this is only possible if all parties are collectively involved in nurturing morally significant behaviour.

It is of importance to monitor the effective collaboration of all roleplayers on a regular basis. This can be achieved through regular meetings, evaluating the contribution of different roleplayers.

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

One of the main objectives of this strategy remains the anchoring of moral awareness as all role players collectively embrace moral character traits that reinforces the embodiment of morality within the education system (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Strategies for moral regeneration need to be endorsed by all role players, challenging the Social Learning Theory, and the extent to which learners have been exposed to a particular lifestyle and behaviour patterns. It is important for role players to collectively support moral reasoning to develop a cognitive approach to the controlling of transgressive behaviour through moral actions (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1999:193;

Blasi, 1980:1). Through a collaborative effort to invest into the process that involves a social anchoring of what learners 'ought' to or 'should' do, learners could potentially develop a new mindset towards morality. When all the role players are consistent in their support towards this objective, it becomes attainable for learners to adopt a value based education framework. As the Department of Education, principals, teachers, parents, organizations in the community, and religious institutions create a synergy for proscriptive and prescriptive behaviour regulation, the foundation for moral behaviour is underpinned (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). Role players need to be united in adopting motives for self restraint, social order, and communal solidarity to strengthen behaviour regulation. Synergism between the Department of Education, principals, teachers, parents, organizations in the community, and religious institutions is required to adopt a mindset of helpfulness, fairness, social justice, and communal responsibility (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). Within the context of this strategy, moral regeneration could only be realised if an educational space was created where teachers, learners and parents collaboratively foster moral behaviour patterns which nurture respect, love, care, compassion, and fairness (Zulu *et al.*, 2019:25). In accordance with Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012:880) morality functions within intrapersonal and interpersonal mechanisms. It is therefore important how the learner observes and relates to the moral behaviours of their parents and their teachers (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880). Learners also respond to intragroup and intergroup mechanisms and therefore the community plays a pivotal role in the collaboration for behavioural regulation (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880-881).

5.3.2 Strategy 2: Foster ethical awareness and values

- Rationale for the strategy (why?)

The main rationale for this strategy is rooted in establishing a positive reinforcement of values as teachers reported a need for the nurturing of ethical awareness and values amongst the learners (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.2). Findings in Chapter Four expressed the need for programmes to foster ethical awareness, inspire good behavior, and to emphasize the benefits of value-based living. The exigency exists to nurture a pedagogy of care and create a spirit of giving to strengthen values. Teachers indicated (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.2) that they nurtured a pedagogy of care and created a spirit of giving or Ubuntu by means of feeding schemes. Teachers also noted (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.2) that exposing learners to disadvantaged communities, and especially learners with special needs, instills the essential values of respect, gratitude, and empathy. Intentional development of value-based programmes is indispensable in the aim of fostering empathy and compassion amongst fellow learners, with the objective of eradicating for example bullying within the schooling system. By organizing projects where an 'ethos of care' is

embodied, the value of care and avoiding harm to others could be developed (Haidt, 2007). Within an educational context, value education plays a leading role in emphasizing particular morals, and as the fostering of discipline was expressed as a need, the nurturing of values such as tolerance, respect, and self-discipline aims to motivate moral action (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.2). Reasoning for the fostering of ethical awareness and value education is aimed at the moral 'socialization' of learners through the nurturing of values, virtues, beliefs, and attitudes. Current challenges that teachers face in secondary schools necessitates value education to provide learners with knowledge and skills to guide informed decisions and address moral decadence (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.2). Education remains a significant means of inculcating values and therefore the strategy should be considered as an integral part of any curriculum.

- Who will implement the strategy (roleplayers)?

In order to establish the positive reinforcement of values, collaboration is required from principals, teachers, parents, organizations in the community, and religious institutions. Teachers are often the main role players in the implementation of policies and programmes to address issues around moral values but support by all role players is needed to effectively foster ethical awareness, address dysfunctional behavior, and emphasize value-based decisions.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

Establishing a positive reinforcement of values requires a demonstration, application, and implementation of comprehensive moral education programmes. Value-based education is a process that needs to immerse every sphere of school life and therefore the input of every role player is important. Principals, teachers, and parents need to jointly own the responsibility to foster values in learners, encouraging them to integrate morals into their character development. This can partly be achieved through programmes and workshops which addresses current issues around moral values, emphasizing value-based behavior. However, for values to be comprehensively reinforced they need to be visible and applicable on every level.

This strategy proposes that values need to be visible on the school grounds, incorporated into the school's ethos, and implemented within the classroom as part of the curriculum. Aquino and Reed (2002) lists moral character traits which are each helpful to shape individual's moral concerns and judgements. Encouraging learners to become caring, compassionate, conscientious, dependable, ethical, fair, forgiving, friendly, generous, giving, hardworking, helpful, honest, kind, loyal, religious, trustworthy, and understanding underpins the development of moral behaviour (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Nurturing the values of appreciation, honour, humility, integrity, courtesy,

commitment, excellence, and inclusion are additional values proposed to promote moral behaviour in this strategy.

There needs to be sufficient nurturing towards a prescriptive behaviour of industriousness, helpfulness, fairness, and a communal responsibility to enable learners' decisions to positively transform their behaviour. Values can be cultivated by employing programmes where the focus is on doing 'good', doing the 'right thing', and what 'should be done' (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013:220). Attitudes need to be developed for learners to be engaged in behaviours with positive outcomes for decision making and moral action. Evaluation of the successful implementation of the strategy is necessary to measure the degree that ethical awareness and values have been fostered. Monitoring provides opportunities for growth and further development.

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

The motivation for a strategy where the rationale points at the fostering of ethical awareness and values, aims at guiding the decisions of secondary learners towards moral action. The main objective of encompassing moral education programmes is to facilitate a reflection on belief systems and to cultivate an awareness on the significance of morality. Reinforcing values nurtures a moral regeneration where ethical foundations are strengthened within the secondary schooling environment. The purpose of the strategy is for teachers to own the responsibility to foster values in learners, thereby encouraging learners to assimilate morals into the development of their character. Emphasizing the reinforcement of values aims at creating an awareness with learners that the values and principles that they choose daily, influences their decisions and the forging of their future. Incorporating a programme within education that nurtures values, highlights the importance of knowledge and skills to make informed decisions that are of moral importance. Fundamental values assist in the moulding of learners' character, preparing them to become useful, accountable, conscientious, honorable, and just citizens of society. The value of the strategy lies in how moral degeneration can be addressed through the impetus of value-based education for the teaching of moral values.

5.3.3 Strategy 3: Establish a framework for moral development

- Rationale for the study (why?)

The objective of establishing a framework for moral development is grounded in cultivating the essence of morality to influence the behaviour of secondary school learners. Moral regeneration is possible through the demonstration of a framework where moral motives are motivated towards industriousness, fairness, helpfulness, social justice, and communal responsibilities (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). Moral decadence in the education system has caused a deterioration in the educational culture of South African schools. For the Moral Regeneration Movement that was launched in 2000 to become integrated into our educational system, the assimilation of moral values need to be prioritized. This strategy proposes that there is a need for the school system to address moral degeneration through the integration of value-based education in the curriculum which encourages value-based behaviour and guidance for moral action. The impetus for this rationale is for secondary schools to raise morally aware and responsible learners.

- Who will implement the strategy (roleplayers)?

A collaboration between the principals, teachers, and parents create a strong foundation for the implementation of a framework nurturing the development of learners' moral judgement and reasoning. Every role player has a fundamental part in the goal of assisting learners to assimilate moral principles into their character, ultimately guiding moral action and responsible behaviour.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

Implementation of a value-based framework needs to be characterized by proximity, intensity, contextuality and malleability as there is no generally accepted theory of values (Kaiser, 2024). Within the context of the objective for moral regeneration, a value-based framework needs to be powerful enough to guide decisions and motivate moral action. Learners have been exposed to a particular lifestyle where their peer group and environment have influenced their cognition and behaviour presenting the need for moral development to challenge the Social Learning Theory (Kouchaki, 2011:702). A value-based framework needs to develop a cognitive/developmental approach to morality, where prescriptive and proscriptive regulation guides transgressive behaviour through moral action (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1991, 1999:193; Blasi, 1980:1). Secondary learners have assimilated moral values from others and therefore a need exists for the cognitive impartation of values by teachers in the school system. These values need to be supported by parents in order for moral development to be integrated into the behaviour of secondary learners. Moral development needs to be embraced by every sphere of the schooling

system. The environment is of importance in the moral development of secondary school learners and a framework needs to emphasize the significance of a moral atmosphere. The school's ethos needs to reflect the embodiment of the values of care, compassion, conscientiousness, consideration, dependability, ethics, fairness, forgiveness, friendliness, generosity, altruism, helpfulness, honesty, diligence, kindness, loyalty, religiosity, trustworthiness, and concern (Aquino & Reed, 2002). This can partly be achieved through a multifaceted visual reinforcement. Names of different values can be painted on columns, walls, in front of tuckshop area, and classrooms. Flags with different values can be displayed in the hall, and posters signifying the impact of values can be designed by learners. A framework can include the visible nurturing of additional values within the character of the school, namely appreciation, honour, humility, respect, integrity, courtesy, commitment, excellence, and inclusion to promote the development of moral maturity. The embracement of values within a structure for moral regeneration is corroborated by moral prototypes where caring prototypes, just prototypes, and brave prototypes assists in the integration of moral values (Oswald *et al.*, 2010). Incorporating the prototypes intentionally aims at learners adopting attitudes of sympathy, empathy, concern, helpfulness, fairness, truthfulness, honesty, and courage (Oswald *et al.*, 2010). Moral prototypes can be incorporated into the curriculum by choosing value-based themes, allowing learners to become involved in debate and roleplay activities. By allowing learners to witness scenarios where moral dilemmas are role played, they are encouraged to adopt moral prototypes that will intentionally challenge transgressive behaviour. Learners who have been selected as mentors can also be given opportunities to prepare presentations on different values to address fellow learners during assemblies.

The framework advocates for the adoption of strategies that stresses the importance of moral regeneration on every level of schooling. Fostering a cognitive/developmental approach towards the enactment of values need to encourage moral reasoning about moral action and avoiding transgressive behaviour. Within this context structural guidance for moral motives need to include proscriptive and prescriptive regulation. A value-based framework need to incorporate meaningful aspects for the development of a harmonious co-existence between learners, highlighting the value of self control, not harming other learners, social order, and communal solidarity (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). Development of moral maturity needs the fostering of communal responsibility and therefore the input of every role player augments the impact of cultivation. The value of role models in the community should not be undermined in terms of their ability to impact the mindset of learners. They can be invited to address and encourage learners on the value of adopting a value-based lifestyle. The promotion of a value-based school atmosphere enhances moral reasoning, as learners are daily challenged by values displayed on the school grounds and

classrooms, communicated during assemblies and classroom discussions, and engaged in during curriculum activities. Value-based themes can be incorporated into every subject, and specific months or weeks could be allocated to the fostering of key values. As an example the month of May could be dedicated to integrity, where every activity in the school curriculum, on the sports field, as well as cultural endeavours, could be immersed in the value of integrity. As teachers commented in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3, the values need to *“be in their face”*. Sports teams and house teams could be given opportunities to embrace specific values, fostering the harmonious co-existence between learners.

Moral regeneration in secondary schools is a process of evolvement to establish the positive reinforcement of values, and moral mechanisms play a pivotal role in affecting the way learners think about themselves, interact with other learners, co-exist in groups, and relate to other groups within the school (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Intrapersonal mechanisms are useful for learners to reason about morally ‘right’ behaviour and to process moral decision making (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Interpersonal mechanisms effectively address the Social Learning Theory and the way learners respond to the moral behaviour of their peers. Moral development needs to develop moral accountability and intragroup mechanisms are able to guide learners in the conforming or resisting of group norms (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). As moral education is significant in guiding relationships with fellow learners, intergroup mechanisms effectively influence how learners identify with groups whose identity and values connects with theirs (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340).

A framework for moral development needs to be implemented in such a way that the learning and reasoning becomes part of learners’ lifestyles. As one teacher reflected in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3, *“I need it in their faces, I need them to live and breathe it, because I need them to carry it. I need it to be their life”*. Moral awareness is inculcated through a unanimous commitment to moral development which permeates every section of teaching and learning. This could only be possible if principals, teachers, and parents, make a coherent effort to rebuild a moral climate where a value-based education impacts behavioral morality.

Monitoring and evaluation of the framework is necessary to measure the degree that moral regeneration has been adopted on every level of schooling. The views of different roleplayers are necessary for an objective evaluation of how the framework for moral development impacted the school’s ethos.

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

The objective for the rationale of this strategy remains the importance of a value-based framework that needs to be adopted for moral development to be inculcated into every section of the schooling system. Adopting a value-based framework into the school curriculum will promote the moral judgement and reasoning of learners. Moral reasoning further has the impetus to assist learners to respond responsibly to their academic future instead of allowing dysfunctional behaviour to distract them from realizing their academic dreams. Value education is necessary for the adoption of values, virtues, beliefs, and attitudes, having the potential to morally socialize learners and equipping them with skills to make informed decisions that are of moral importance. influencing behaviour. Values comprise the worth of norms and principles, and have the potential to define social interactions, value-based behaviour and positive attitudes of learners.

Even though the Department of Education (2000:24) supported the nurturing of values such as tolerance, respect, and self-discipline, a moral code is greatly lacking within the secondary schooling system. It is the objective of this strategy to create a moral climate which fosters virtues such as integrity, courage, responsibility, and respect for others, advancing an ethos of discipline. The strategy is intent that values should guide learners' ethical perspective and needs to be integrated into their self-image, becoming a part of every learner's moral psychology. Encouraging the intentional fostering of a value-based school climate has the capability to influence learners' disposition, their character, identity, and self-image, influencing the purpose of moral regeneration. The strategy has the potential to challenge the Social Disorganisation Theory, where moral behaviour can be encouraged amongst socially disorganised learners through the purposeful facilitation of moral mechanisms, values, moral prototypes, moral reasoning, and moral motivation, promoting behaviour that abstains from the violation of moral standards.

5.3.4 Strategy 4: Develop learners to become moral agents

- Rationale for the strategy (why?)

One of the most effective ways of creating a positive moral climate where moral values are imparted to learners within the school system, is to empower learners to partake in the process of moral regeneration as moral agents. The effective facilitation of mentorship programmes creates relationships of trust where learners are more responsive to adopt belief systems, values, and attitudes which positively influence decision-making and guides moral action. Learners who become role models in the embodiment of moral regeneration are able to influence dysfunctional behaviour in the school environment. Mentorship has the added advantage of supporting learners needs. The rationale for mentorship is embedded in the guidance of moral values within the peer

group. Mentorship creates opportunities for the development of Interpersonal Mechanisms as individual learners relate to the guidance of other learners and respond to their moral behaviours. Learners are able to encourage one another for moral growth and spreading positive messages about moral prototypes.

- Who will implement the strategy (roleplayers)?

Principals, teachers, and parents need to become intentional about fostering mentorship and establishing positive relationships where learners are given responsibilities to create trust, to care about fellow learners, and become role players for moral prototypes. The emphasis is placed on role modelling in terms of moral values within the peer group. Mentorship creates opportunities for the development of Interpersonal Mechanisms as individual learners relate to the guidance of other learners and respond to their moral behaviours. Learners are able to encourage one another to adopt moral prototypes and to avoid transgressive behaviour, thereby advancing a moral climate in the schooling environment.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

Learners need to be identified who choose to abstain from delinquent behaviour, with a strong conviction of 'right' and 'wrong', supporting the value landscape as depicted in Diagram 5.1. Learners who support moral mechanisms, moral character traits, moral prototypes, principles of human morality, moral foundations, moral reasoning, and moral motives are suitable candidates to become moral agents. Their support towards a value-based education framework qualifies them to become involved in support structures, and the facilitation of mentorship programmes. Learners' viewpoints of morality can be transformed by defining moral prototypes of their peer group, impacting their moral reasoning, moral emotions, moral self-views, moral judgements, and moral behaviour (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015:189-190). This strategy proposes that learners who become moral agents are able to influence their peer group and motivate the enactment of moral values. The grade eight mentorship programme is significant as this creates opportunities for the needs of new secondary school learners to be addressed, minimising their potential to be influenced by transgressive behaviour (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3.3). As interpersonal mechanisms are implemented, individual learners are able to relate to the positive moral behaviour of moral agents, leading to trust, respect, and acceptance of moral norms (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:880). The peer group often regard their social identity as a greater influence on their behaviour than aspects of personal identity (Bettencourt & Hume, 1999; Pagliaro *et al.*, 2011:1117-1118). Empowering learners as role models of moral behaviour therefore has impetus in the endorsement of shared moral values which impacts the behavioural regulation within the

group (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:881). Individual learners who become mentors of moral prototypes are able to contribute to the goals of value-based behaviour as they emulate caring, just and brave prototypes. Mentors who challenge the Social Learning Theory will implicitly challenge the group's norms and standards, influence their cognition, and resultant behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:702).

Monitoring the effectiveness of mentorship programmes and the impact on creating a positive moral behaviour within the peer group, needs to be evaluated by moral agents as well as teachers. This ensures trustworthiness and credibility of mentorship programmes.

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

This strategy proposes that learners' moral self-concept can be influenced by observing the chosen moral actions of others, challenging them to engage in moral behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:702). Learners are prone to model the behaviour of intragroup mechanisms, conforming their behaviour according to the behavioural regulation of the group. Empowering a group of moral agents will therefore create a moral accountability to the group (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:881). Feelings of being connected to a dynamic moral group can create a sense of belonging, causing a shift in individual learner's moral identity, challenging the choice to partake in morally questionable behaviour (Kouchaki, 2011:712). This view is corroborated by Ellemers and Van Den Bos (2012:882-883) who state that individuals are prone to seek information from their peer group regarding views on what is 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour, regardless whether society or the broader social community is in disagreement with the group's perspective on conduct. Mentors are valuable in creating a moral ethos where fellow learners feel supported, allowing them to be influenced by the moral guidelines embodied by their behaviour. This strategy has value in the sustainability of moral regeneration as new mentors can continuously be trained and empowered to become moral agents and to challenge learners conventional reasoning on morality, encouraging an awareness of right values and attitudes.

5.3.5 Strategy 5: Adoption of restorative measures

- Rationale for the strategy (why?)

The impetus for this strategy pertains to the establishment of clear boundaries for the adoption of moral behaviour by learners. This strategy challenges the nurturing of morality in a 'consequence-less' society. Boundaries are either shifted or non-existent and therefore learners need to develop an understanding of the consequences of bad behavior. The school's punitive system needs reviewing as teachers are currently battling to maintain discipline in the classroom. A restorative

system is proposed as this allows for moral reasoning following transgressive behaviour. The support for restorative measures in the adoption of moral behaviour is mindful about the need for learners to reason about the salience of moral behaviour, allowing their conduct to be guided by internal moral motives. Guiding learners to reason about transgressive behaviour and the consequences, allows them to gain understanding about the motive for choosing to abstain from delinquent behaviour. Restorative measures necessitate a process of reasoning, whereas punitive measures in isolation potentially impedes internalized reasoning. Learners need to be guided when faced with a situation where choices need to be made, that reasoning needs to be begin, leading to moral judgement of their behaviour. The rationale for adopting restorative measures in the nurturing of discipline, is anchored in self-sanctions where intrapersonal mechanisms govern moral conduct.

- Who will implement the strategy (roleplayers)?

A collaborative input is required from principals, teachers, and parents for restorative measures to be implemented and for learners to adopt self-sanctions in the accountability of their behaviour. Teachers are experiencing the direct results of a moral collapse due the rapid growth of moral degeneration amongst learners who are displaying unhealthy behaviour, negatively impacting the school environment. Behavioural issues display a complete disconnect between 'right' and 'wrong' and teachers need the assistance of parents for restorative measures to be adopted by learners. Teachers are having to deal with learners using illegal substances, absence from school, disrespect to authority, criminal activity, increasing bullying and victimisation, and pregnancy, necessitating a partnership in establishing clear boundaries to adopt moral behaviour.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

Within the context of this study, restorative measures would aim at creating an educational space where a value-based landscape fosters moral behaviour patterns combatting ill-discipline and antisocial behaviour. Restorative measures assert the importance of nurturing moral behaviour in the classroom that is conducive for teaching and learning. Moral mechanisms are valuable in establishing restorative measures as the purpose affects the way learners think about themselves, their interaction with their peers, their co-existence in groups, and how they relate to other groups in the school environment. Peer mediation could potentially assist in establishing clear boundaries and the adoption of a behaviour of accountability. Intrapersonal mechanisms are needed to cultivate moral reasoning about the consequences of decision-making and engaging learners in a process of moral development. Interpersonal mechanisms are useful to develop identity definition in the way that individual learners respond to the choices of their peers,

enhancing responsible choices as learners are guided to rethink the consequences of antisocial behaviour. Intragroup mechanisms are effective in guiding learners to conform to groups who emulate moral values. This is where mentorship programmes are able to collaborate with restorative measures for moral development to be nurtured. Intergroup mechanisms are valuable in endorsing the moral guidelines of mentorship groups who support moral values, helping to establish group-based identities that conform to restorative measures. Restorative measures seek a process of moral reasoning following transgressive behaviour where proscriptive and prescriptive regulation is guided by internal moral motives. The moral domains of Haidt (2007) are relevant in establishing clear boundaries with the aim of learners adopting moral behaviour. Nurturing the domains of care/harm, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity enhances emotional regulation and moral sanctioning. The strategy is strengthened by the principles of human morality (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:334) which endorses a social anchoring of 'right' and 'wrong'. Learners are prompted to develop conceptions of a moral self where reasoning is required to evaluate the interplay between thoughts and experiences. Punitive measures often hinder internalized moral reasoning as the punishment does not always require a process of restoration. Restorative measures seek to transform the punitive system where rules are merely obeyed to avoid punishment, and fostering reasoning about antisocial behaviour and the importance for self regulatory processes to guide value-based decisions. Restorative measures explore the value of nurturing self discipline, anchored in self-sanctions where moral mechanisms and moral motives govern moral conduct.

Continuous monitoring of restorative measures remains ongoing to ensure sustainability. The accountability of learners, and the measure with which they face the consequences of transgressive behaviour, endorsing the restoration of behaviour, needs to be consistently evaluated. This ensures credibility and trustworthiness of the strategy.

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

The main objective of this strategy is anchored in the fostering of learners' accountability to face the consequences of misbehaviour and learning how to restore antisocial behaviour patterns. The strategy aims at engaging learners in moral reasoning about goal-directed behaviour and the avoidance of transgressive behaviour. Restorative measures focuses on engagement with learners for an awareness of harmful conduct and how destructive behaviour affects the harmonious co-existence with other learners through the corruption of morality. The rationale of restorative measures aims to develop the moral reasoning of learners, creating a moral ethos where the moral socialization of learners strengthens their accountability to make informed decisions that are of moral importance. Through the implementation of a value landscape,

restorative measures becomes purpose driven towards an accountability for a general social good. Learners are guided in accepting responsibility for aberrant conduct while fostering measures to restore transgressive behaviour. Restorative measures are directed towards the maturity of the moral emotion of self discipline, developing the domains that are linked to the welfare of others, and protecting self and others from harm. As learners evolve in their accountability to face the consequence of their behaviour, maturing in internalized moral standards, they develop a resilience to withstand social pressures. Restorative action aims to direct learners to avoid reprehensible conduct and to engage in goal directed behaviour, thereby maturing in moral judgement of the moral domains according to the Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt, 2007). Accountability and self sanctions aims to disengage learners from detrimental behaviour and the process of moral justification, indirect labelling, comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, distortion of consequences, and attribution of blame (Bandura, 1999:194).

The strategy aims to ensure the long-term sustainability of restorative measures, continuous monitoring, and an ongoing professional development for all stakeholders involved.

5.3.6 Strategy 6: Creating a moral foundation through role modelling

- Rationale for the strategy (why?)

The reason for a strategy that creates a moral foundation through role modelling is motivated by the fostering of relationships of trust through behaviour emulation. Role modelling strong moral standards helps learners build belief systems that discourages delinquent behaviour (Brezina & Piquero, 2007:440). Developing a moral foundation through role modelling challenges the Social Norms Theory, motivating learners to avoid unhealthy behaviours. Learners who have been exposed to role models emulating moral behaviour are more likely to choose strong moral standards to guide their behaviour, developing a compliant, well-behaved, well-adjusted, high achieving, and committed character. Role modelling plays an important role in the development of a moral identity as the cognitive process is impacted by the moral behaviour of mentors. A moral identity has two dimensions – internalization and symbolisation, which are identified by the impact that mentors have on others. The importance of role modelling cannot be underestimated in the objective of moral regeneration and the moralization of learners. Giner-Sorolla, (2012) indicates that implicit or explicit behavioural codes of conduct have the potential to become “identity-defining indicators” as learners develop relationships of trust through behaviour emulation.

- Who will implement the strategy (roleplayers)?

A collaborative effort is required from principals, teachers and parents to endorse strong moral values for learners to develop healthy belief systems. The mentorship of learners also has a complimentary responsibility in the inculcation of a moral foundation. The role modelling of principals, teachers, parents, and learners are individually and collectively salient in endorsing moral values to be adopted by learners. The example set by role models need to be prioritized as learners watch the lives of mentors. Teachers have a strong platform for role modelling moral behaviour and therefore have the potential to regenerate learners' values. Boundaries and expectations could only become non-negotiable if role modelling fosters relationships of trust through consistency and credibility.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

The strategy highlights the importance of role models to embrace a value landscape in the development of a moral foundation. Secondary school learners will be more prone to 'walk the moral walk than to walk the moral talk'. It is therefore important for mentors to embody moral character traits on a daily basis. Workshops for teachers to understand the value of role modelling, and the impact that this has on behaviour, could assist in fostering the role modelling of value-based behaviour. Teachers' own morals are reflected in the learners and therefore it remains the responsibility of every teacher to role model the values that they expect the learners to exhibit. Role modelling has the greatest influence on the values of respect and discipline which becomes intrinsic values as they are imitated. Teachers and parents need to be cognisant that their behaviour, their verbal communication, and even their style of dress impacts learners' views of values. It was noted during my findings of the lived experiences of teachers, that certain a principal totally prohibited smoking on the school grounds, creating a belief system that it is not a good example to set (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3.2). Incorporated into the belief system of negative behaviour within a moral foundation, was having a bar inside or outside the school. Teachers were asked not to be seen by learners drinking in this tavern as the principal was concerned about the role modelling of behaviour and the need to encourage learners to abstain from alcohol consumption (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3.2).

Learners need to be encouraged by the role modelling of coaches who display traits of caring, compassion, consideration, conscientiousness, dependability, fairness, forgiveness, friendliness, generosity, altruism, commitment, helpfulness, honesty, kindness, loyalty, trustworthiness, and understanding (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Role models are effective in guiding behaviour when they embody moral prototypes of caring, justice, and bravery. Learners need to witness sympathy,

empathy, helpfulness, fairness, morality, truthfulness, honesty, and courage for their belief systems to adopt moral values (Oswald *et al.*, 2010). Learners' moral reasoning, moral emotions, moral self-views, moral judgements, and moral behaviour is impacted by the emulation of moral motives. Proscriptive regulation could be fostered through the evidence of self restraint, withholding harm, social order, and communal solidarity amongst role models. Learners need to consistently observe industriousness, helpfulness, fairness, social justice, and communal responsibility for prescriptive regulation to be adopted within their moral reasoning.

Unless learners are able to trust and respect the behaviour of role models, secondary school learners will rebel against instead of adopting a particular lifestyle. When learners have been exposed to a trustworthy enactment of strong moral standards, they will develop a cognitive approach to morality, controlling transgressive behaviour through moral action (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Bandura, 1991).

Principals, teachers, parents, and young mentors need to be cognisant of the importance of their own principles, values and rules to become effective role models to learners. To revive the values in schools, "(s)chool principals as leaders need to establish, develop and maintain a core of shared values in their schools" (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017:1). The emulation of moral behaviour requires the development of a moral consciousness in the hearts and minds of all role models, promoting responsible norms and habits in their own lives as a vital form of moral pedagogy. Learners often spend more time at school than at home and therefore, teachers have the potential to be pivotal agents of moralisation, facilitating the moral development of learners through intentional, value-based role modelling (Turnbull, 2002). The Social Learning Theory supports the view that behaviour is learned through interaction and observation, therefore underpinning the impact of role modelling (Payne, 2005). Specific behaviour, attitudes, and emotional responses can be transmitted in different circumstances, thereby indicating the value of role modelling (Balogun & Okurame, 2011). The impact of role modelling on behaviour is further emphasized by Siegel (2011:136) who argues that behaviour is assimilated and imitated when continuously observed. It is therefore evident that the value of role modelling and the impact on the behaviour of learners cannot be underestimated.

Belief systems regarding role modelling need to be consistently monitored to ensure trustworthiness of a "(c)ore of shared values in the school" (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017:1).

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

Creating a moral foundation through role modelling aims at challenging the Social Norms Theory within the purpose of moral regeneration of secondary school learners. Perceiving normative behaviour influences actual behaviour patterns, moral development, moral identity, and a mindset of 'doing the right thing'. The purpose of role modelling aligns with the vision of late former president Nelson Mandela who envisaged that the moral regeneration initiative needs to be characterized by an emulation of social justice, communal solidarity, social order, self restraint, and withholding harm from others (Rauch, 2006). Positive role models plays a pivotal role in the objective for moral regeneration of secondary school learners (Sonnentag & McDaniel, 2013:444). Moral regeneration focuses on the reformation, development, and nurturing of a moral character. Witnessing the behaviour of mentors who refuse to compromise their internalized beliefs and values, taking an ethical stand, and rejecting silence to compromise 'doing the right thing', influences the character development of learners. Moral regeneration is stimulated by a moral consciousness, and positive role modelling advances the awareness of a value-based landscape. Education plays a significant role in the inculcation of values amongst learners. Integration of a value-based education requires the incorporation of moral prototypes, moral motives, moral foundations, moral character traits, principles of human morality, and moral reasoning, endorsed through positive role modelling.

5.3.7 Strategy 7: Fostering moral awareness

- Rationale for the strategy (why?)

The main reason for the implementation of this strategy is to demonstrate the value of a moral foundation in the process of regeneration. Reflecting on the evidence of moral degeneration which negatively affects the school environment and the fostering of a sound value system, moral awareness aims at impacting the conduct and behaviour of learners. Our education system is facing a disintegration of value systems where dysfunctional behaviour and ill-discipline are the order of the day. The nurturing of moral awareness creates a moral climate where learners can be protected from influences and behaviours that corrupt their morality (Eibach *et al.*, 2009:1162). Teachers agree that the development of a moral understanding is needed in an education system that is challenged by transgressive behaviour, compromised value systems, and corrupted views of fellow learners (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3.1). Schools have become unsafe and are experiencing a scenario of degenerative values and morals where teachers find it almost impossible to cope with the complex issues present in the classroom. It is therefore important to

develop moral behaviour with the aim of creating an environment that is conducive for teaching and learning.

The reformation of a moral character can only be achieved through the nurturing of a moral cognizance. Moral behaviour could not be developed without the fostering of a moral consciousness by developing and maintaining a “[c]ore of shared values” within the schooling environment (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017:1). Nurturing a moral perception allows moral reasoning and an understanding of morality to take place. Moral regeneration could only become a reality through the fostering of moral awareness within the schooling system and needs to permeate every sphere of school life, becoming ingrained into learners’ moral psychology (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.3.1). Programmes of empowerment are necessary for the nurturing of moral understanding, developing learners’ moral cognition, and allowing them to be more aware of their moral identity and their responsibility to avoid transgressive behaviour.

- Who will implement the strategy (roleplayers)?

Once again a collaborative effort is required from principals, teachers, parents, organizations in the community, and religious institutions to endorse a moral awareness for learners to develop healthy belief systems. All roleplayers need to become intentional about the development of a moral consciousness, supporting each other in the transferral of values for the motivation of moral behaviour.

- How will the strategy be implemented?

Moral awareness could be fostered through a collaborated commitment from all the roleplayers to rebuild a moral climate that impacts moral behavior. A moral consciousness is inculcated through an all-encompassing ethos that permeates every section of learning and teaching. Employing different programmes could be a valuable means of fostering moral awareness, and assisting learners to develop an understanding of what is considered value-based behaviour, becoming committed to enact accepted principles. The value of creating a moral awareness is grounded in influencing learners’ judgement and decisions, ultimately helping to shape their future. Moral understanding leads to the development of self-regulatory skills which positively influences behaviour. It requires the collaboration of all roleplayers to ensure that programmes foster moral regeneration through the intentional development of moral prototypes, moral motives, moral character traits, moral reasoning, moral foundations, and principles of human morality.

Religious institutions are able to invest into the educational system, fostering a sense of 'right' from 'wrong'. Programmes can demonstrate the value of a moral foundation within the scope of cultural and religious diversity. Regardless of which faith is followed, religion needs to be given a space in the schools as the prohibition of a spiritual foundation has inculcated a nihilistic attitude (Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.2.2). Teachers stated that removing (G)od from the education system has led to a rudderless generation who has ultimately become insecure due to the absence of a moral foundation. Nurturing a spiritual foundation influences belief systems, ethical foundations, discipline and behavior in significant ways. The value of a spiritual input is supported by Aquino and Reed (2002:1424) who highlight that a moral identity is adopted in terms of the moral characteristics represented by the social group of choice. Religious institutions as roleplayers have merit in that they encourage support of norms and standards, therefore maximising the deterrence of any deviance from moral standards (Abrams *et al.*, 2000:906). Principles of morality are distinctive features within a religious context and therefore enables the development of defining norms within the education system (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015:190). This viewpoint is supported by Haidt (2001:817) who states that people within a religious group endorse moral values. Moral regeneration needs the inclusion of multi-dimensional morals which are not culturally or religiously exclusive (Ellemers & Van Den Bos, 2012:878), with the characteristics of proximity, intensity, contextuality, and malleability (Kaiser, 2024). A value-based landscape needs to consider how values relate to each other in terms of proximity, how different values exhibit a difference in intensity, how values acquire different meanings depending on the context, and how values have an *inertia* but are malleable over time in how they interact with belief systems (Kaiser, 2024:7).

Employing comprehensive moral education programmes could potentially assist learners in reflecting on their belief systems and developing an awareness on the importance of morality. A pedagogy of care needs to be nurtured, creating a spirit of giving by means of feeding schemes and outreach programmes. Learners need to be exposed to disadvantaged communities and learners with special needs, allowing the values of respect, gratitude, care, compassion, generosity, altruism, helpfulness, kindness, and empathy to be fostered (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Outreach programmes are able to nurture the model for moral motives as prescriptive regulation is developed through an awareness of helpfulness, fairness, social justice, and communal responsibility (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). Cultivating an awareness of altruism influences the adoption of moral prototypes as the values of sympathy, empathy, concern, helpfulness, fairness, and courage is advanced (Oswald *et al.*, 2010). Comprehensive programmes are helpful in shaping learners' moral concerns, impacting their emotions, their mindset, their self-views, and essentially their moral behaviour. Outreach programmes have the potential to develop gratitude

as a positive moral emotion which benefits relationships and adaptive behaviour (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Social welfare further nurtures the development of one of the most important moral emotions, namely empathy. The development of empathy leads to a concern for others and a focus on the needs of others rather than self, which is central in the awareness of the damage that bullying and victimisation causes (Tangney *et al.*, 2007:18).

Moral regeneration and the development of moral values can be nurtured through programmes where the intentional dedication of coaches create a positive mindset and a sense of belonging. Programmes could either be facilitated by teachers who need help and training, or by community organizations who can become involved with learners, building relationships, and assisting the development of their moral awareness. Programmes are valuable for the development of moral mechanisms and for morality to become functional within the schooling system (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). Learners' moral understanding is affected by the way they view themselves, interact with others, work together in groups, and relate to other groups. (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340). For learners to develop a mutual understanding of individual differences and the value of being selfless, it is necessary to nurture 'tolerance' (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017:8). The ways in which learners think and reason by themselves, can be nurtured through different programmes, developing moral decision-making and moral behaviour (Ellemers *et al.*, 2019:340).

Sports teams have a strong influence in the fostering of moral understanding and behaviour regulation. Learners can be convinced to abstain from delinquency because of their affiliation to a sports team, where coaches place an emphasis on the moral standards internalized by the subculture of the team (Brezina & Piquero, 2007:437). Coaches need to guide learners to choose the strong moral standards of the sports teams' subculture to guide their behaviour, developing a profile of compliant, well-behaved students who are well-adjusted, and academically motivated (Piquero *et al.*, 2005:47).

Fostering moral awareness cannot be achieved in isolation but rather needs to become part of a comprehensive moral tradition, pivotal to the importance of impacting behaviour. It requires all roleplayers to become intentional, consistently evaluating their involvement for this strategy to be instrumental in the role of the character development and moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

- Aimed outcome of the strategy

In the context of this study and the aim of developing strategies for moral regeneration, the fostering of moral awareness was found to be of pivotal importance in the objective of character development of secondary school learners. The main objective of this strategy is to connect secondary learners to moral standards and to foster positive patterns of moral behaviour. Through a process of nurturing, moral convictions are anchored and becomes a compelling directive for behaviour. A process of a collaborative strengthening of a moral understanding, aims at the advancement of moral reasoning, a moral judgement clearly distinguishing 'right' from 'wrong', Strengthening a moral consciousness aims for morals to become embedded in learners' personal moral identity, eventually expressed in their behaviour. The objective of this strategy is corroborated by Veugelers (2010:650) who states that moral development is the driving force behind concrete attitudes and behaviour. Moral development cannot take place without the nurturing of a moral consciousness and this strategy aims at the strengthening of a moral understanding to underpin the development of secondary school learners' cognitive, social, and emotional skills to become morally mature in their behaviour (Mariaye, 2006:23). In this objective, the strategy is cognizant that values are notoriously elusive, and therefore the characteristics of proximity, intensity, contextuality, and malleability needs to be incorporated in a multi-dimensional value landscape (Kaiser, 2024).

5.4 SUMMARY

The conceptual and theoretical framework and how the components of the integrated framework contributed to the development of a conceptual model in a value-based landscape was discussed. The purpose of moral mechanisms, moral character traits, the four pillar approach, moral prototypes, principles of human morality, moral foundations theory, moral reasoning, and the model for moral motives was considered for the seven strategies developed. The seven strategies that were developed was discussed for the development of a value-based education framework. The rationale for the strategy, roleplayers, method of implementation, and aimed outcome of the strategy was fully explained in the objective of moral regeneration. The conclusion, limitations, and recommendations for further study will be discussed in the following Chapter Six.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an outline of why this topic (*Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners*) was chosen and explored. I emphasize what I intended to discover through employing a qualitative research design and method and discuss boundaries that were set for this specific research. I briefly expound on the research problem, questions, and aims that directed this research and conclude with a brief discussion of how the findings of my research contribute to knowledge. I provide an outline of the preceding chapters of this thesis and then present the conclusions of this study. I highlight the contribution of this study to the body of knowledge and provide a justification to my claim. Lastly, I indicate the limitations of this study and provide recommendations for future research to be considered. Table 6.1 below provides an overview of this chapter.

Table 6.1 Overview of Chapter Six

6.1	INTRODUCTION
6.1.1	Why was this topic selected? Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners.
6.1.2	What was intended to be discovered through a qualitative interpretive ontology employed during this research?
6.1.3	Boundaries that were set for this specific research and why these were chosen
6.2	A BRIEF REFLECTION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AND AIMS OF THE STUDY
6.3	OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS IN THIS STUDY
6.4	CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY
6.5	LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY
6.6	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
6.7	SUMMARY

6.1.1 Why was this topic selected? Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners

The background of South African schools experiencing a scenario of moral decadence and degenerative values was explained in the background and rationale for the study (Chapter One, section 1.3). I expounded on how secondary school teachers are challenged by moral degeneration in the problem statement (Chapter One, section 1.4). It became evident that South African schools face a challenge of moral deterioration responsible for a regression in behaviour and academic performance. As our education system is facing a moral crisis, there is a need to implement programmes for the fostering of moral awareness, allowing moral regeneration to address the value crisis. This need created the impetus for a qualitative study to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

6.1.2 What was intended to be discovered through a qualitative interpretive research design employed during the research?

Taking the background, the chosen topic, the rationale, the research problem, the research questions, and the research aims into account, I adopted a phenomenological study. The rationale for choosing a phenomenological study approach was my aim of exploring, describing, and explaining how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. Exploring how secondary school teachers experienced and engaged with moral degeneration at school, informed and motivated the development of seven strategies for a value-based education framework (see Diagram 5.2: Strategy development for moral regeneration).

6.1.3 Boundaries that were set for this specific research and why these were chosen

Specific boundaries that were set for this study entailed the selecting of specific sites where the research was conducted. I purposefully selected secondary schools within the Gauteng province which included five districts with the aim of obtaining information-rich data from diverse contexts (see Chapter One, section 1.8.2). Selection criteria enabled me to choose a specific sample of secondary school teachers for this study (see Chapter One, section 1.8.2). I made use of purposive sampling of specific individual secondary school teachers as they would be the best to provide information related to their lived experiences of the phenomenon of moral degeneration, and how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

6.2 A BRIEF REFLECTION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

It was evident that South African schools face a moral dilemma and that learners lack positive guidance from teachers. The erosion of values has reached a level where huge sectors of the teaching profession is under threat of collapse. In particular, valuable teaching hours are lost as teachers spend a lot of time on disciplining children who lack moral responsibility, displaying disobedient behaviour in the classroom. It is important that secondary school teachers overcome moral degeneration by implementing a value-based education framework that will create safe schools, aiming at the moral development of learners who take pride in their responsibility as citizens.

In order to address the research problem, the study explored, described, and explained how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools. For the purpose of this objective, I developed the research question and sub-research questions as well as the aims of the research (see Chapter One, section 1.5, 1.5.1, and 1.6). At the onset of the research study the questions and aims were formulated to guide the qualitative research endeavour. The questions and aims directed the research endeavour on how moral regeneration at school was understood and experienced by secondary school teachers. The research went on to explore strategies (often provided provided by teachers) for the optimisation of the moral regeneration of secondary school learners (see Chapter Five).

6.3 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS IN THIS STUDY

This study was divided into six chapters (see Chapter One, section 1.11)

Chapter One provided an introduction and the scope of the research study that highlighted the research problem, providing and expounding on the complexities that South African schools currently face, motivating the rationale for the aims of the study. Concept clarification emphasised the conceptualisation and contextualisation of the study as relevant concepts and perspectives were discussed and defined (see Chapter One, section 1.2). A detailed investigation was done on morals, morality, values, norms, ethics, and virtues, by analysing selected data sources on morals (see Appendix F: Tables 1 & 2 – Selected data sources on morals). A discussion of the background of our current school climate provided the necessary understanding for the formulation of the problem statement. A detailed description of the challenges that South African schools are experiencing with moral degeneration and the social crisis that it poses to teachers and learners, formed the necessary background for the formulation of the research questions and aims of the study. A theoretical framework provided a way in which I viewed various definitions of

'morals' from various disciplines and perspectives, identifying and naming concepts related to 'morals', as well as deconstructing and categorising concepts related to 'moral degeneration'. The research design and method were outlined, highlighting the research paradigm necessary for the interpretation of experiences, and understanding of the phenomenon that was being studied. The site, sample, and data generation process of the research conducted was outlined. Ethical considerations and trustworthiness of findings for the validity and accuracy of the research process were described.

Chapter Two expounded on the conceptual and theoretical framework of the phenomenon '*morals*' within the context of moral regeneration within secondary schools. The framework organised concepts around moral development, self evaluation/moral reasoning, moral behaviour, and morality (Diagram 2.1). Attention was given to the social learning theory, moral development theory, social norms theory, social disorganisation theory, and their relevance to moral behaviour, moral development, and moral reasoning. Within the context of this study it was important to conceptualise moral de/regeneration which supports the whole study. The trustworthiness of findings in Chapter Four and the development of strategies for moral regeneration were underpinned by the detailed conceptualisation of the phenomenon in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three outlined the research design and method that guided this qualitative research and described the various processes employed. These included the interpretive phenomenological paradigm of inquiry, the nature of the research, the methodological approach, site, sample (*secondary school teachers*), sampling (*purposeful*), data generation process (*semi-structured individual interviews*), and data analysis (*thematic analysis*), a process that consists of six phases were employed and resulted in themes, categories and sub-categories – Table 4.1. Ethical considerations were highlighted and trustworthiness measures were discussed.

Chapter Four presented and discussed the findings of secondary school teachers' lived experiences on the phenomenon of moral degeneration. Four broad themes emerged from the findings:

- Teachers' views on morals and moral degeneration
- Challenges in facilitating value-based education
- Evolving discourses on morality
- Strategies for moral regeneration

Teachers identified the root causes of a moral decline and indicated that the main influences were connected to the societal impact on morality, parental and familial factors, and the effect of social media and technology. Teachers expounded on the moral collapse within schools and how this impacted their efforts towards facilitating a value-based education. They lacked motivation, experiencing frustration having to deal with a range of external pressures and influences causing an exponential increase in moral degeneration amongst learners. Socio-economic circumstances such as poverty, and the lack or absence of a strong religious foundation at schools were identified as contributing factors to the decline of values. Participants expounded on the struggles and constraints that teachers face to balance curriculum demands with moral education. Teachers expressed how the new voice for moral democracy is becoming a hurdle for proactive measures to ensure that value systems within South African schools do not further degenerate. They communicated their concerns that the current discourses on a 'new morality' is threatening a healthy school climate and the fostering of a sound value system that needs to be embedded in learners' social and academic lives. Theme 4 embodied teachers' understanding of fostering a vision for moral regeneration and formed part of the seven strategies developed for moral regeneration of secondary school learners in South Africa (Diagram 5.2).

The main focus of this Chapter Five was to provide a value-based education framework for strategy development for moral regeneration of secondary schools in South Africa (Diagram 5.2). This chapter reflected on the findings of the data analysis, and recommended seven possible strategies for the fostering of moral regeneration amongst secondary school learners. While being interviewed, secondary school teachers explored the phenomenon being studied, and provided the necessary information for the development of such strategies. This chapter provided a framework for the development of strategies, describing the rationale for each strategy, the roleplayers, methods of implementation, and the aimed outcome of every strategy.

6.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study contributed to the existing body of knowledge on the moral dilemma within the education system and the importance of integrating moral values into secondary schools in South Africa.

6.4.1 Contribution to knowledge

There is much literature about the moral complexities within the education system and how moral deterioration is mainly responsible for the regression of behaviour. Literature cautions that South African schools face a challenge of moral emergency and emphasises that there is an urgent need to find solutions to the crisis. Many scholars have highlighted the need for positive moral guidance from teachers to avoid the possible collapse of the teaching profession. Most research studies have focused on the problem, and how unruly, disrespectful, disobedient behaviour negatively affects the teaching environment. Very few studies have concentrated on intervention, providing moral education programmes or strategies to promote moral regeneration of secondary school learners in South Africa.

- **Research questions**

This study contributes to the body of knowledge in terms of how I explored teachers' lived experiences on the phenomenon of moral de/regeneration, and how their depictions could assist me in the development of strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners. My main research question and sub-research questions (see Chapter One, section 1.5) steered the exploration of teachers' lived experiences. During my exploration it became evident that teachers felt a desperate need for moral regeneration, depicting a scenario strewn with student delinquency and expressing their concern about the inherent dangers it posed to the teaching process. Teachers understood moral regeneration within school contexts in South Africa and reflected on their methods of engaging with the phenomenon at school. It was during the exploration of the fostering of moral development, that possible strategies were examined for the optimisation of moral regeneration of secondary school learners. Teachers provided suggestions on how to develop a value-based education framework for the purpose of moral regeneration. Participants suggested innovative approaches that were explored and described in Chapter Four, section 4.2.5.

- Justification of claim to the contribution of knowledge

The exploration of teachers' lived experiences appear to have been overlooked in research on the perceptions of moral degeneration and the establishment of frameworks for moral development. The qualitative interpretive research paradigm that I adopted for this research, allowed for an in-depth exploration and understanding of teachers' lived experiences and how they were able to contribute to the development of strategies to foster ethical awareness and values. The seven strategies developed for the moral regeneration of secondary schools in South Africa (see Diagram 5.2 and Section 5.3) is a contribution to the body of knowledge as it was based on the need for moral regeneration that emerged from the qualitative data generation and thematic analysis. These seven strategies developed during this research study (section 5.3) individually and collectively addresses moral degeneration, not only aims at optimising moral regeneration through the intentional implementation of each, but provided ways in which these could be realised, taking note of specific contexts. Every strategy has its own specific rationale for implementation, roleplayers who need to be involved, methods of implementation, and aimed outcomes. The seven strategies developed are grounded in the conceptual model in value landscapes (Diagram 5.1) and uniquely innovative in the purpose of integrating moral values into the South African education system.

National discourses on the breakdown of morality can be traced back to moral regeneration policy initiatives of 1996 (Rauch, 2005:9). Discourses on the Moral Regeneration Movement were initiated by the late State president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela (Rauch, 2005:9). Even though moral regeneration aimed at the establishment of proactive measures to prevent the degeneration of South Africa into a 'moral slum', there has been no development of specific strategies to address this issue. Hadi (2015) suggested that an example is required whereby encouraging the incorporation of moral values into classroom sessions. The value-based education framework, comprising of seven strategies developed in this study, is a meaningful model to encourage the integration of moral values into the entire schooling environment, including the classroom. Even though moral regeneration aimed at influencing society by seeking commitment to the principles of integrity, incorruptibility, good faith, impartiality, openness, accountability, justice, respect, generosity, and good leadership, mobilisation remained a challenge (Richardson, 2003:7). Richardson (2003:7) proposed that the moral fibre of the South African nation need to be rebuilt and highlighted that policies have immense power and authority in shaping the mindset of society.

It is within this context that the claim for the contribution of new knowledge is justified. The seven strategies contributes to reigniting the Moral Regeneration initiative of Nelson Mandela which was never effectively addressed due to apathy and a lack of political will. A moral vacuum remained and eventually lead to an unacceptable level of moral degeneration in South Africa (Richardson, 2003). The seven strategies contributes to a value-based education framework where important aspects are addressed, encouraging core values to become embedded within the education system. The strategies creates opportunities for training and involvement by several role players, allowing individuals to learn from one another and to engage in the fostering of moral development. This study not only addresses the moral crisis within our education system, but provides a value-based education framework where seven strategies aims to contribute to learners' long-term moral reasoning, moral judgement, social interactions, positive attitudes, and value-based behaviour.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY

- Teachers may have avoided sharing certain information while answering questions due to confidentiality issues at school. This may have impinged the objectivity of information shared due to fear of jeopardising their jobs.
- Due to time constraints to complete the individual semi-structured interviews with teachers who are inundated with commitments, deeper exploration of the research questions was sometimes compromised.
- Data generation occurred through 20 individual, semi-structured interviews with teachers from ten schools in five districts of the Gauteng Province. This could have contributed to a degree of bias as no data was generated from any of the other ten districts in Gauteng or eight provinces in South Africa.
- Data generation depended on teachers sharing their lived experiences of moral regeneration at school. South African schools are experiencing a moral crisis affecting discipline and learners' behaviour, causing teachers to burn out and leave the profession. Consequently teachers' views may have been compromised by a degree of bias.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Moral degeneration remains a challenge in the education system in South Africa and the question continues to arise as how to address the complexities of our moral crisis. Due to the limitations of this study in terms of the restricted number of provinces, districts, and secondary schools involved, the study has the potential for further research in the future.

- As this study was a qualitative one it can be recommended that a quantitative study could be useful in order to be able to generalise the findings.
- It is recommended that additional data be generated from other provinces in South Africa to compare results, which can be done through a comparative study.
- It is crucial for the Department of Education to evaluate the fundamental efficacy of any policies addressing moral degeneration. Further research on: What policies need to be put in place to address the current moral climate, and allow the fostering of moral development to be realised?
- Could efficient teacher training programmes be developed to adequately prepare teachers to cope with a moral crisis within the scope of cultural and religious diversity? It is not only crucial to develop effective programmes but also to provide ongoing in-service support as this study has revealed the high levels of stress and burnout that teachers experience.
- It is recommended that the value-based framework comprising of seven strategies be piloted to effectively analyse the validity of the strategies in addressing the moral degeneration. As this study was conducted in ten schools within five districts of Gauteng, the sample for pilot schools can comprise of the same number within any five districts. The trial of a pilot study is valuable in confirming the justifiability of the strategies developed for the purpose of moral regeneration of secondary school learners.
- As a result of the findings of this study, it is recommended that the value-based framework be adopted by the education system in South Africa for the purpose of regenerating the initiatives that was launched by our late State president, Nelson Mandela in 1997. Nelson Mandela called on various roleplayers to partake in the Moral Regeneration initiative, but moral apathy prevented the recognition of the moral assault on our society and specifically our education system. The Department of Education needs to effectively implement proactive measures to prevent any further degeneration of our classrooms into a 'moral slum'. The seven strategies developed provides a framework for moral regeneration of secondary schools, and is valuable

for the fostering of moral awareness. Much reviewing has been done on the problem of moral degeneration, but researchers need to rethink the integration of moral values into secondary schools in South Africa to address this issue.

6.7 SUMMARY

The findings of this study challenged the education system to acknowledge the need for moral regeneration, allowing for the development of a value-based education framework. The current school climate poses a social crisis to teachers and learners, necessitating intervention. The development of seven strategies to address this issue, needed to be cognisant of our culturally diverse student and teacher population. Every school has a unique culture, but creating an ethos of shared values where a collective value system is encouraged, will strengthen the positive functioning of the school (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017:7). Consequently, creating a moral foundation within secondary schools in South Africa should be characterized by proximity, intensity, contextuality, and malleability. Values will relate to each other in terms of their proximity, differing in intensity, their meaning dependent on the context, and even with a tendency to remain unchanged, values are malleable over time. The value-based education framework needs to be part of a multidisciplinary effort to eliminate moral degeneration and support moral regeneration.

I agree with Rauch (2005:9) that our social responsibility requires involvement and support at all levels. This will assist to foster a value-based education framework that optimises moral regeneration, positively impacts the moral climate, and encourages core values to become embedded within the education system, strengthening the overall educational environment for secondary school learners.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

-



Proposed Interview Schedule

Probing will be used during the interviews as to elicit communication – inquiring closely into the participants' experiences

Semi-structured individual interview

The following questions during each semi-structured interview:

- What do you view as moral degeneration in South African schools?
- What do you think contributes to moral degeneration in South African Schools?
- In your opinion how do current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools?
- How do you understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa?
- How do you engage with moral regeneration at your school?
- What strategies can you provide to optimise the moral regeneration of learners at your school?
- In your own opinion - How could moral regeneration be fostered by secondary schools?

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE (EDUREC)



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Senate Committee for Research Ethics
Tel: 016 103 4440
Email: Feziwe.Mseleni@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the Education Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EduREC) on 23 February 2023, the Education Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SCRE) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners														
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof AJ Botha														
Student / Team: M Janeke (PhD student - 33366462), Dr C Twine														
Ethics number:														
N	W	U	-	0	1	0	3	3	-	2	1	-	A	2
Institution				Study Number				Year				Status		
<u>Status:</u> S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation														
Application Type: Single study														
Commencement date: 23/02/2023										Risk: Low risk				
Expiry date: 23/02/2024														
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.														

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions: <i>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:</i> • The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the ES-REC: - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study. • The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the ES-REC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited. • Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit. • The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started. • In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRC and ES-REC reserves the right to: - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study; - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;

- *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
 - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
 - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the ES-REC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
 - *submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or*
 - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*

The ES-REC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the ES-REC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof CP van der Vyver
Chairperson NWU Education Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22951930) C:\Users\22951930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

Current details: (22951930) M:\DSS1\8533\Monitoring and Reporting Cluster\Ethics\Certificates\Templates\Research Ethics Approval Letter\9.1.5.4.1 ES-REC Ethical Approval Letter.docm
5 December 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

APPENDIX C: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (GAUTENG)



Department of Education
17 Simmonds Street
Marshalltown
Johannesburg, 2107

PrivateBagX6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education

(Research entity details)

Tel: 018 1111111
Email: Name.Surname@nwu.ac.za

Date: 21/03/2023

PERMISSION LETTER: GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

I herewith wish to request your permission for public school secondary teachers to participate in this research, which involves teachers sharing their experiences of moral degeneration in public schools. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa

ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER

NWU-01033-21-A2

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Prof. A. J. Botha

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr C. Twine

ADDRESS: Building B6 Room G08, Potchefstroom Campus, North West University.

CONTACT NUMBER: 018 285 2265

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM PhD Student: Mrs Margaret Janeke

ADDRESS: 691 Sparrowhawk Link, Aspen Hills, Mulbarton

CONTACT NUMBER: 0829238407

FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za, Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education/other relevant body.

What is this research about?

The main research aim of this study is to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

The following sub-research aims were to:

- determine how current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools;
- determine how secondary school teachers understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa;
- engage with, explore, and describe how secondary school teachers engage with moral regeneration at school;
- engage with, explore, and describe what strategies can secondary school teachers provide to optimise the moral regeneration of secondary school learners; and
- explain how moral regeneration could be fostered by secondary schools.

Participants

As my research is a qualitative study, I therefore, opted to purposefully select secondary schools and secondary school teachers as participants to voluntarily take part in this study, with the aim of gaining information-rich data which addresses the topic of moral de/regeneration of secondary school learners.

What is expected of the participants?

Semi-structured interviews of approximately 30 minutes will be conducted with individual secondary school teachers at the selected secondary schools. I will make use of an interview schedule which will entail a series of open-ended questions based on the phenomenon being investigated. Interviews will create a platform for flexibility as open-ended questions allow you freedom of expression. I will make use of interview techniques such as probing, paraphrasing, summarising, and clarification to obtain rich data which will be recorded and to ensure that rapport will be established with the selected participants. Permission will be obtained for interviews to be audio recorded, enabling me to capture reliable data which I can listen to with the purpose of compiling transcripts for data analysis. Participants can be ensured of the confidentiality of all information on the transcripts.

In adhering to the Covid-19 regulations, protocol will be followed: My hands, table and chairs will be sanitized prior to participant's hands sanitized upon their arrival for the interviews. Both the participant and I will be wearing a face mask. There will be a social distance of about 2m between me and the participant. After each interview, I will sanitize the tables and chairs.

Benefits to the participants

Previous research on moral degeneration and the decline of values in the education system has been done, but research on secondary school teachers' lived experiences on the phenomenon of moral degeneration has not been explored. To explore the identified gap in research on moral degeneration in secondary schools, this study will contribute by adding knowledge and insight with regards to the lived experiences of secondary school teachers. Being aware of the current moral dilemma in secondary schools as a major concern within the education system, the proposed study will enable teachers to contribute in assisting teachers and learners with the challenges they face and to develop meaningful strategies to impact the moral decision-making of secondary school learners. The study will provide knowledge and insight in the field of education that can be used as a valuable tool for challenging moral degeneration in secondary schools.

Risks involved for participants

There are no risks for the participants involved but a degree of mild discomfort may be experienced as their time (about 30 minutes) has to be sacrificed after school hours for the interview to be conducted.

Confidentiality and protection of identity

I will seek to ensure confidentiality of the participants by assigning each secondary school teacher with a number or pseudonym to ensure that the reader and I cannot identify the participants after the interviews have been transcribed. Using pseudonyms for the teachers will allow me to publish details of the research findings while protecting the anonymity of teachers and avoiding the risk of revealing the identities of those who contributed to data generation.

The proposed study will not expose any identifiable information of your lived experiences gathered during the study. Audio-recordings will be deleted after completion of the transcription of audio-

recorded interviews. Any other personal identifiable information that was audio-recorded and transcribed will be omitted.

Dissemination of findings

In terms of ethical considerations, all audio-recordings will be deleted after the process of transcription has been completed. Generated data in the form of electronic transcripts will be used only for the purposes for which it will be collected.

Transcripts of interviews will be stored safely in an electronic file which will only be accessible by myself and my supervisor. Upon request, data will be made available to other research members in the form of copies.

Initial audio-recordings will be stored for the purpose of transcribing the data. Following completion of transcription, audio recordings will be deleted. Electronic transcripts will be stored in a file and stored for 5 years. Hard copy versions of the data will be filed and locked in a cabinet for 5 years. After this period, all transcripts will be shredded, and electronic files will be deleted.

If you have any further questions or enquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researchers for more information.

DECLARATION BY GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION:

By signing below, I agree to give permission for the research to take place with the identified participants in the study entitled: Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of the participants in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and participants will not be pressurised to take part.
- Participants may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- Participants may be asked to leave the research process before it is completed, if the researcher feels it is in their best interests, or if they do not follow the research procedures, as agreed to.

Signed at (place)_____on (date) ____/____/20____

Signature of Relevant person concerned at the Gauteng Department of Basic Education



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	31 March 2023
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2023– 30 September 2023 2023/120
Name of Researcher:	Janeke ME
Address of Researcher:	691 Sparrow Hawk Link, Aspen Hills Johannesburg
Telephone Number:	082 923 8407
Email address:	reachforlifenoiregrets@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Strategies for the moral regeneration of Secondary School learners
Type of qualification	PhD
Number and type of schools:	10 Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg East, Johannesburg South, Ekurhuleni South, Johannesburg Central , Johannesburg North

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

[Signature] 31/03/2023
The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below are met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Falth.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. The letter would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. **Because of the relaxation of COVID 19 regulations researchers can collect data online, telephonically, physically access schools, or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate.**
4. **The Researchers are advised to wear a mask at all times, Social distance at all times, Provide a vaccination certificate or negative COVID-19 test, not older than 72 hours, and Sanitise frequently.**
5. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s has been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
6. A letter/document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs, and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
7. The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and cooperation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers, and learners involved. Persons who offer their cooperation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
8. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school program is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
9. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
10. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
11. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes, and telephones, and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
13. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers, and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
14. On completion of the study, the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
15. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings, and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
16. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a summary of the purpose, findings, and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



Dr. Gurnani Mukatuni

Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 31/03/2023

2

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

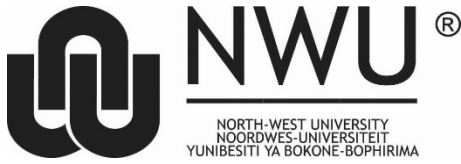
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE GOVERNING BODY



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

(Recipient name)

(Recipient address)

(Recipient address)

(Recipient address)

Faculty of Education

(Research entity details)

Tel: 018 111 1111

Email: Name.Surname@nwu.ac.za

Date

GOODWILL PERMISSION: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

I herewith wish to request your permission for teachers in your school to participate in this research, which involves the teachers sharing their experiences of moral degeneration in public schools. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa

ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER

(Will be inserted)

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Prof. A. J. Botha

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr C. Twine

ADDRESS: Building B6 Room G08, Potchefstroom Campus, North West University

CONTACT NUMBER: 018 285 2265

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM PhD Student: Mrs Margaret Janeke

ADDRESS: 691 Sparrowhawk Link, Aspen Hills, Mulbarton

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 923 8407

FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za, Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education.

What is this research about?

The main research aim of this study is to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

The following sub-research aims were to:

- determine how current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools;
- determine how secondary school teachers understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa;
- engage with, explore, and describe how secondary school teachers engage with moral regeneration at school;
- engage with, explore, and describe what strategies can secondary school teachers provide to optimise the moral regeneration of secondary school learners; and
- explain how moral regeneration could be fostered by secondary schools.

Participants

As my research is a qualitative study, I therefore, opted to purposefully select secondary schools and secondary school teachers as participants to voluntarily take part in this study, with the aim of gaining information-rich data which addresses the topic of moral de/regeneration of secondary school learners.

What is expected of the participants?

Semi-structured interviews of approximately 30 minutes will be conducted with individual secondary school teachers at the selected secondary schools. I will make use of an interview schedule which will entail a series of open-ended questions based on the phenomenon being investigated. Interviews will create a platform for flexibility as open-ended questions allow you freedom of expression. I will make use of interview techniques such as probing, paraphrasing, summarising, and clarification to obtain rich data which will be recorded and to ensure that rapport will be established with the selected participants. Permission will be obtained for interviews to be audio recorded, enabling me to capture reliable data which I can listen to with the purpose of compiling transcripts for data analysis. Participants can be ensured of the confidentiality of all information on the transcripts.

In adhering to the Covid-19 regulations, protocol will be followed: My hands, table and chairs will be sanitized prior to participant's hands sanitized upon their arrival for the interviews. Both the participant and I will be wearing a face mask. There will be a social distance of about 2m between me and the participant. After each interview, I will sanitize the tables and chairs.

Benefits to the participants

Previous research on moral degeneration and the decline of values in the education system has been done, but research on secondary school teachers' lived experiences on the phenomenon of moral degeneration has not been explored. To explore the identified gap in research on moral degeneration in secondary schools, this study will contribute by adding knowledge and insight with regards to the lived experiences of secondary school teachers. Being aware of the current moral dilemma in secondary schools as a major concern within the education system, the proposed study will enable teachers to contribute in assisting teachers and learners with the challenges they face and to develop meaningful strategies to impact the moral decision-making of secondary school learners. The study will provide knowledge and insight in the field of

education that can be used as a valuable tool for challenging moral degeneration in secondary schools.

Risks involved for participants

There are no risks for the participants involved but a degree of mild discomfort may be experienced as their time (about 30 minutes) has to be sacrificed after school hours for the interview to be conducted.

Confidentiality and protection of identity

I will seek to ensure confidentiality of the participants by assigning each secondary school teacher with a number or pseudonym to ensure that the reader and I cannot identify the participants after the interviews have been transcribed. Using pseudonyms for the teachers will allow me to publish details of the research findings while protecting the anonymity of teachers and avoiding the risk of revealing the identities of those who contributed to data generation.

The proposed study will not expose any identifiable information of your lived experiences gathered during the study. Audio-recordings will be deleted after completion of the transcription of audio-recorded interviews. Any other personal identifiable information that was audio-recorded and transcribed will be omitted.

Dissemination of findings

In terms of ethical considerations, all audio-recordings will be deleted after the process of transcription has been completed. Generated data in the form of electronic transcripts will be used only for the purposes for which it will be collected.

Transcripts of interviews will be stored safely in an electronic file which will only be accessible by myself and my supervisor. Upon request, data will be made available to other research members in the form of copies.

Initial audio-recordings will be stored for the purpose of transcribing the data. Following completion of transcription, audio recordings will be deleted. Electronic transcripts will be stored in a file and stored for 5 years. Hard copy versions of the data will be filed and locked in a cabinet for 5 years. After this period, all transcripts will be shredded, and electronic files will be deleted.

If you have any further questions or enquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researchers for more information.

DECLARATION BY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND SGB CHAIRPERSON

By signing below, I agree to give permission for the research to take place with the identified participants in the study entitled: Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of the participants in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and participants will not be pressurised to take part.
- Participants may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- Participants may be asked to leave the research process before it is completed, if the researcher feels it is in their best interests, or if they do not follow the research procedures, as agreed to.

Signed at (place)_____ on (date) ____/____/20____

Signature of School Principal and SGB Chairperson

APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM - TEACHERS



PrivateBagX6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

(Recipient name)

(Recipient address)

(Recipient address)

(Recipient address)

Faculty of Education

(Research entity details)

Tel: 018 1111111

Email: Name.Surname@nwu.ac.za

Date

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

I herewith wish to request your consent to participate in this research, which involves teachers sharing their experiences of moral degeneration in public schools. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER

(Will be inserted)

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Prof. A. J. Botha

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr C. Twine

ADDRESS: Building B6 Room G08, Potchefstroom Campus, North West University.

CONTACT NUMBER: 018 285 2265

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM: PhD Student: Mrs Margaret Janeke

ADDRESS: 691 Sparrow Hawk Link, Aspen Hills, Mulbarton

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 923 8407

FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za, Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also asked from the provincial Department of Basic Education/other relevant body (please describe) as well as the school principal (if relevant).

What is this research about?

The main research aim of this study is to explore, describe, and explain how strategy development for moral regeneration could be optimised in South African secondary schools.

The following sub-research aims were to:

- determine how current international and national discourses initiate moral regeneration in schools;
- determine how secondary school teachers understand moral regeneration in school contexts in South Africa;
- engage with, explore, and describe how secondary school teachers engage with moral regeneration at school;
- engage with, explore, and describe what strategies can secondary school teachers provide to optimise the moral regeneration of secondary school learners; and
- explain how moral regeneration could be fostered by secondary schools.

Participants

As my research is a qualitative study, I therefore, opted to purposefully select you as a secondary school teacher to participate voluntarily in this study, with the aim of gaining information-rich data which addresses the topic of moral degeneration of secondary school learners. This is a phenomenon that you are exposed to on a daily basis. I believe that your understanding of the current moral dilemma in the classroom will assist me in the investigation of possible strategies to optimize moral regeneration of secondary school learners.

What is expected of you as participant?

You will be expected to participate in a semi-structured interview of approximately 30 minutes which will be conducted at your school after school hours. I will make use of an interview schedule which will entail a series of open-ended questions based on the phenomenon being investigated. Interviews will create a platform for flexibility as open-ended questions allow you freedom of expression. I will make use of interview techniques such as probing, paraphrasing, summarising, and clarification to obtain rich data which will be recorded and ensure that I establish a rapport with you. Permission is hereby obtained from you for interviews to be audio recorded, enabling me to capture reliable data which I can listen to with the purpose of compiling transcripts for data analysis. You can be ensured of the confidentiality of all information on the transcripts.

In adhering to the Covid-19 regulations, protocol will be followed: My hands, table and chairs will be sanitized prior to your hands also being sanitized, before the interviews. Both you and I will be wearing a face mask. There will be a social distance of about 2m between myself and you, the participant. After the interview, I will sanitize the tables and chairs.

Benefits to you as participant

Previous research on moral degeneration and the decline of values in the education system has been done, but research on secondary school teachers' lived experiences on the phenomenon of moral degeneration has not been explored. To explore the identified gap in research on moral degeneration in secondary schools, this study will contribute by adding knowledge and insight with regards to your lived experiences as secondary school teachers. Being aware of the current moral dilemma in secondary schools as a major concern within the education system, the proposed study will enable you as a teacher to contribute in assisting teachers and learners with the challenges they face and to develop meaningful strategies to impact the moral decision-making of secondary school learners. The study will provide knowledge and insight in the field of education that can be used as a valuable tool for challenging moral degeneration in secondary schools.

Risks involved for participants

There are no risks for you as a participant but a degree of mild discomfort may be experienced as your time (about 30 minutes) has to be sacrificed after school hours for the interview to be conducted.

Confidentiality and protection of identity

I will seek to ensure confidentiality of the data generated by you as a participant by assigning you with a number or pseudonym, to ensure that the reader and I cannot identify the participants after the interviews have been transcribed. Using pseudonyms for you as a teacher will allow me to publish details of the research findings while protecting the confidentiality of the information contributed by you to the data generation.

The proposed study will not expose any identifiable information of your lived experiences gathered during the study. Audio-recordings will be deleted after completion of the transcription of audio-recorded interviews. Any other personal identifiable information that was audio-recorded and transcribed will be omitted.

Dissemination of findings

In terms of ethical considerations, all audio-recordings will be deleted after the process of transcription has been completed. Generated data in the form of electronic transcripts will be used only for the purposes for which it will be collected.

Transcripts of interviews will be stored safely in an electronic file which will only be accessible by myself and my supervisor. Upon request, data will be made available to other research members in the form of copies.

Initial audio-recordings will be stored for the purpose of transcribing the data. Following completion of transcription, audio recordings will be deleted. Electronic transcripts will be stored in a file and stored for 5 years. Hard copy versions of the data will be filed and locked in a cabinet for 5 years. After this period, all transcripts will be shredded, and electronic files will be deleted.

If you have any further questions or enquiries regarding your participation in this research, please contact the researcher for more information.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Janeke

DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT:

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled: Teachers' perspectives on strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

I declare that:

- I have read this information and consent form and understand what is expected of me in the research.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to the researcher and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the research process before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the research procedures, as agreed to.

Signed at (place)_____ on (date) ____/____/20____

Signature of participant

Researcher

APPENDIX F: TABLE 1 & TABLE 2

- **TABLE 1 SELECTED DATA SOURCES ON MORALS**

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Abbott	2020	Abbott (2020) indicates that Zygmunt Baumann challenges morality within the context of sociology and philosophy, critiquing the view that moral fragility is mainly caused by the disintegration of societal norms. Baumann is of the view that individual moral impulse is rather threatened by the totalising domination of modern society. Bauman challenges the obligated social conformity and obedience to the norms observed by the majority as a hallmark of morality. Bauman argues against a 'socially injected morality', revealing how following the moral code of a society can become synonymous with the most morally depraved human actions as in the case of the holocaust. Bauman strongly argues that morality exists as an autonomous assumption of every individual's responsibility irrespective of the social prescriptions of conduct (Abbott, 2020).	Philosophy / Sociology
Abbott	2020	Abbott (2020) explores morality within sociology and conceptualizes morality as an ordinary facet of everyday intersubjective life where the social world is formed and sustained. This view looks at the phenomena of morality through the social lens of conduct and decency, terms of evaluation, justifications of behaviour and how each is experienced by the individual, embedded in the orthodoxies of expectations that pervade interactional practice (Abbott, 2020).	Sociology
Constitution of the Republic of South Africa	1996	According to the Constitution of RSA (1996), the Ministry of Education conducted research within the context of education and stated that the moral degeneration in schools is greatly due to a lack of respect and communication between learners as well as educators and learners. This motivates the theory that morality is not so much about upholding the 'higher good' of the environment but rather the upholding of a 'higher good' in citizen's relationship with one another (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:7).	Education / Ethics

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Deigh	1999	Deigh (1999) argues that law violation is connected to morality and that moral guilt can be viewed as a self-critical feeling, occasioned by disobedience to requirements set by a governing moral authority. He sees moral guilt as an appropriate feeling when the requirements of a 'higher good' that governs the laws of society has been ignored or disobeyed. According to Deigh, moral guilt is grounded in a sense of responsibility for damage caused and a disposition for repair (Deigh, 1999).	Law
Devlin	1965	Devlin challenged many with his views of legal moralism because of his belief that one legitimate use of the criminal law is to enforce the moral values of the community by prohibiting acts of moral evil. Legal moralism should prevent harm and protect the rights and interests of others (Devlin, 1965).	Law
Dunne	2002	Dunne (2002) argues that teachers need to claim morality within the classroom, striving for an 'internal good' as an ethical imperative where teachers act in the best interest of the learners and their wellbeing, setting an example of normative behaviour (Dunne, 2002).	Education
Edridge	2020	Edridge investigates moral 'distress' within the health sciences and describes the phenomenon of moral 'injury' where physicians are acutely aware of their conduct and evaluating the correct treatment of patients but where health system constraints make it impossible to pursue an ethical course of action. Moral 'injury' leads to burnout where physicians feel ineffective to provide good care due to system dysfunction. This necessitates a reconfiguring of the healthcare system with its focus on the healing of patients while rebuilding a sense of community and respect amongst physicians and aligning doctors' goals with patient's needs (Edridge, 2020: 13-14).	Health Sciences / General Medicine / Ethics

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Eppel and Eppel	2003	Eppel and Eppel (2003) highlights that Longland (Director of Education, Derbyshire) noted the root causes of moral degeneration amongst the youth sixty-one years ago, and we seem to face the very same issues in 2021. Longland stressed that young people are desperate for tasks that are purpose driven whilst providing opportunities for growth and development. Longland reported that moral degeneration is partly caused by a conflict of values, traditions, beliefs, and disciplines between education and society (Eppel & Eppel, 2003).	Education
Eppel and Eppel	2003	Eppel and Eppel (2003) emphasises Butler's concept of moral degeneration as a direct result of a complete void of moral convictions and boundaries, where little moral guidance is given to young people by their primary educators (parents) in the aim for a 'higher good' (Eppel & Eppel, 2003).	Education
Eppel and Eppel	2003	Eppel and Eppel (2003) are of the viewpoint that moral standards are timeless and that moral standards are applicable to every environment within any time frame. The sexual, religious, social, humanitarian, and psychological concept of morality remains valid within every system and children need a standard of absolute, unchanging values (Eppel & Eppel, 2003).	Religion
Ge	2020	Ge (2020) describes Confucius as one of the first teachers in China who advocated ethical, moral, and social standards within the context of education, philosophy, and politics. Confucius believed that all people from different societies would benefit from a lifetime of learning with a moral outlook. The Confucian moral thought is largely ideological, containing the fields of heaven and earth, man, and society. The Confucian moral perspective unifies morality to heaven and earth, pursuing the ideal character where the emphasis is placed on the importance of knowledge, benevolence, loyalty, and virtue. The social value principle of righteousness preceding any benefit, and unifying benefit to righteousness is the most concentrated embodiment of the moral thought in Confucian moral philosophy (Ge, 2020)	Education/ Philosophy / Politics / Ethics / Religion

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Haidt Graham <i>et al.</i> Graham and Haidt	2007 2009 2010	Graham and Haidt (2010); Graham <i>et al.</i> (2009); Haidt (2007), criticizes the moral foundation of psychology within a political orientation as they are of the viewpoint that morality cannot exclude a social context and related group-level moral values such as loyalty, duty, or obedience to the law. Haidt and Graham developed a moral foundations theory within a political orientation which include five innate foundations such as <i>harm/care</i> , <i>fairness/reciprocity</i> , <i>in-group/loyalty</i> , <i>authority/respect</i> , and <i>purity/sanctity</i> . They concluded that different political orientations would differ in terms of which morality foundation is prioritized. Liberal political parties are more concerned about harm and fairness, whereas right-wing political parties seem to be allied with all five moral foundations (Graham & Haidt, 2010; Graham <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Haidt, 2007).	Politics / Health Sciences / Law
Jansen	2009	Jansen (2009) argues that morality is a 'perfectible skill' within education and should be purifiable to the highest level of decorum. Religion carries an infrastructure of moral standards and incorporated within the education system serves to reinforce morality as it increases moral self-restraint (Jansen, 2009).	Education / Religion
Joseph	2011	Joseph (2011) contradicts the theory of emotional numbing within psychology by noting that exposure to traumatic events may lead to positive changes and heightened personal growth in moral functioning. Joseph reveals that post traumatic growth can often be attributed to forgiveness, leading to normative growth processes (Joseph, 2011).	Health Sciences
Katilmis	2017	Katilmis (2017) states that morality can only be achieved in education through the implementation of value-based education which will assist in the development of students' character, fostering values such as caring, citizenship, courage, patience, perseverance, respect, responsibility, accountability, trustworthiness, honesty, solidarity, tolerance, and peace (Katilmis, 2017).	Education
Khanam	2008	Khanam (2008) points out that education remains a moral 'enterprise' where the character building of students remains a pivotal goal within education worldwide, regardless of the contentious issues of 'whose' or 'which' values need to be transferred (Khanam, 2008).	Education

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Louw	2021	Louw (2021) reflects on the concept of morality within business and emphasizes that morality is vital for any business to survive in any country. He maintains that every company is desperate for a team that operates on the higher ground of a moral 'compass' where a work ethic eliminates the major problem of criminality and corruption. He further questions the cause of the moral pandemic in many businesses and whether this can truly be ascribed to broken family structures or merely an ideology of immorality (Louw, 2021).	Business / Ethics
Lusenga	2010	Lusenga (2010) views morals as standards of behaviour within the classroom, referring to the conduct of pupils that would be regarded as appropriate behaviour (Lusenga, 2010).	Education
Maphalala and Mpofu	2018	Maphalala and Mpofu (2018) emphasizes the view within education that morality is a result of the inculcation of values from the moment we are born, as children learn by observing adults who become the role models for behaviour patterns. They support the view that parents and teachers have the greatest influence on a child's upbringing and a concurrent responsibility to teach core values with the aim of becoming responsible citizens upholding morality (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018:1).	Education
Mohlake	2015	Mohlake (2015) approaches morality within education and points out that we need to consider the African context where values inclusive of ethics and morals come together under the term of 'ubuntu' (Mohlake, 2015).	Education
Motshekga	2011	Motshekga (2011) studied the moral degeneration of communities within the political context. He concluded that there is a dire need to revive morals amongst our communities and especially our youth. He observed that this required serious national intervention that goes beyond a change of lifestyle (Motshekga, 2011).	Politics

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Hamalainen	2016	Hamalainen (2016) argues for a moral philosophy within narrative literature and emphasizes a normative point of view which he terms Aristotelian. This view includes the moral importance of perception and imagination and how the narrative arts can contribute to the making of a just society. Hamalainen explains that narrative works of art concern a lively engagement with real-life moralities and the issues involved in each ethical problem as they are helpful in eliciting nuanced moral reflections (Hamalainen, 2016:17-18).	Literature / Ethics
Olds and Papalia	1986	Olds and Papalia (1986) highlights Kohlberg's theory which recognizes morality as the highest level of moral development. Kohlberg viewed moral development as the internalising of self-accepted moral principles (Olds & Papalia, 1986).	Health Sciences / Education
Olds and Papalia Aiken	1986 2004	Olds and Papalia (1986) is supported by Aiken (2004) in highlighting Freud's theory that the source of a person's morality is found in the development of a part of our personality known as the 'super-ego'. Freud identified the 'super-ego' as a person's conscience which incorporates the morals of society, mainly through identification with a parent of the same sex. Freud further theorizes that the 'super-ego' functions according to the 'morality principle' which greatly influences a person's behaviour through feelings of guilt (Aiken, 2004:31; Olds & Papalia, 1986).	Health Sciences / General Medicine
Olds and Papalia Louw Mariaye	1986 1987 2006	According to Louw (1987), Mariaye (2006), Olds and Papalia (1986), Piaget's theoretical assumption on moral development emphasizes the cognitive maturity of the child. Piaget reasons that for a child to be capable of proper judgement, a child must be able to distinguish between right and wrong. Piaget observed that cognitive development takes place indifferent stages which in turn influences moral development. It is therefore only until adolescents attain the formal-operational stage (between twelve to fifteen years) that they can reach the advanced stages of moral development (Louw, 1987:203; Mariaye, 2006:75; Olds & Papalia, 1986: 328).	Health Sciences

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Palmer Mariaye	2001 2006	Mariaye (2006) and Palmer (2001) supports Durkheim's theory which focuses on the relationship between religion and morality. Durkheim theorized that religion encouraged human beings to live exemplary lives and therefore any society needs a religious driving force to become moral. Durkheim viewed morality as having the task of directing behaviour with a religious basis together with the accountability for moral change (Mariaye, 2006:83; Palmer, 2001:166).	Sociology /Religion
Palmer Stevenson Aiken	2001 2001 2004	Aiken (2004), Palmer (2001) and Stevenson (2001) considers Aristotle as a pioneer and the most influential scholar to support character education in the pursuit of a 'higher good'. Aristotle asserts that virtue and moral reasoning are acquired by imitating 'good' role models, obeying 'good' laws, and particularly by means of supervised practices in desirable conduct. As virtue is acquired through a process of habituation, becoming by doing, Aristotle emphasized the importance of the correct moral guidance by parents and teachers from a young age. Aristotle was of the view that actions could only become fully 'moral' if we acted with knowledge, choosing the act for its own sake, and that the act must originate from a fixed disposition of character. He believed that internal control is possible and morally mandatory. Aristotle believed that everything has its own particular purpose that is part of a larger purpose, and that people should keep their purpose in mind as they live their lives. Aristotle is of the viewpoint that our moral reasoning is connected to other interrelated purposes. (Aiken, 2004:69; Palmer, 2001:18; Stevenson, 2001:63).	Philosophy / Education / Ethics

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Prinsloo and Du Plessis	2006	Prinsloo and Du Plessis (2006) describes Kant's approach to morality known as Kantian Ethics. Kant emphasized the values of respect and duty and indicated that a person should never be treated as a means, but always as an end-in-themselves. Kant believed that the value of respect entails that we have a moral duty to behave towards others in the very same way that we would want others to behave towards us. With regards to the value of duty, Kant was of the viewpoint that moral behaviour would mean obedience to a sense of duty and immoral behaviour would entail the neglect of any sense of duty. Kant connected morality to duty and the need for humanity to cultivate a spirit of forgiveness, compassion, and empathy, growing our characters to become concerned with a broken, suffering world (Prinsloo & Du Plessis, 2006:194).	Philosophy / Ethics
Pyszczyński	2016	Pyszczyński (2016) strongly argues that religion influences morality as those who follow a religion, feel compelled to abide by a divinely enforced moral code. He states that the concept of God effectively promotes adherence to social and ethical rules. Pyszczyński theorizes that the moral guidelines of religious teachings can influence standards of moral conduct and practice, causing religious people to be more prone to live according to the standards of ethical behaviour and religious practice as defined by their internalised religious beliefs (Pyszczyński, 2016).	Religion / Ethics
Raths, Harmin and Simon	1966	Raths <i>et al.</i> (1966) explain values as three processes which mainly involves the freedom of choice following the considerations of consequences of each alternative, affirmation of the choice publicly, and involving the choice within the rhythm of life (Raths, Harmin & Simon, 1966:30).	Education / Ethics
Segalo and Rambuda	2018	Segalo and Rambuda (2018) express the view that morality lies at the core of education. The lack of parental involvement and discipline is a major cause for the decline in morality amongst the youth. The morality of discipline seems to be handicapped causing a dichotomy in the classroom between learner's behaviour and core values. The lack of values underpinning learner's moral development is contributing to the erosion of social capital and a culture of discipline and hard work in the achievement of goals (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018).	Education
Solomons <i>et al.</i>	2011	Solomons <i>et al.</i> (2011) theorized that moral functioning can be greatly impaired within a psychological context due to emotional numbing following traumatic events (Solomon <i>et al.</i> , 2011).	Health Sciences

Source	Year	Morals/ Morality/ Values/ Norms/ Ethics/ Virtues	Discipline/ Context
Sooliman	2021	Sooliman (2021) views moral regeneration as moral reorientation within the health sciences and expresses that it's all about resetting our values that seek goodness and embodies the principles of honesty, integrity, righteousness, loyalty, service, humility, and every other principle that seeks the 'higher good' for humanity (Sooliman, 2021).	Health Sciences
Sutton	2016	Sutton (2016) expresses the view that morality is easily 'married' to Christianity as Christian spirituality is pervasive and interacts with our thoughts, feelings, habitual ways of acting, and social factors to influence our moral conduct. Christianity emphasizes the six moral dimensions of: care, fairness, loyalty, respect for authority, purity, and liberty (Sutton, 2016).	Religion
Swati	2005	Swati (2005) upholds that value education is significant in the sense that values are universally accepted as the most critical, non-monetary factor in the transformation of a society. Values in education is not only about changing behaviour but about transforming the mindset behind behaviour (Swati, 2005).	Education
Van der Walt, De Klerk and Rens	1994 2003	De Klerk and Rens (2003) and Van der Walt (1994) supports the view that morality needs to be studied within the context of religion as all religions intrinsically teaches the difference between what is right and what is wrong. For Christians morality is part of their everyday lives and the origin of their morality is based on the teachings in Scripture where the Ten Commandments and other Biblical principles directs morality and ethics. Religion is a powerful moral directive in determining behaviour as those who are believers in God seek to adhere to laws and principles that seek to "do the right thing" in their relationship with other people. The emphasis is on religion being a strong moral directive in a person's life- and worldview, influencing the choices made in a day-to-day reality (De Klerk & Rens, 2003:355; Van der Walt, 1994:44).	Religion
Yilmaz and Saribay	2018	Yilmaz and Saribay (2018) support the view of Haidt and Graham that morality within politics is greatly influenced by the orientation of a political party. They report a strong correlation between right-wing political parties and a conservative morality. On the contrary Yilmaz and Saribay indicate that left-wing political parties are more likely to support a liberal morality which supports sexual freedom, secularity, socialism, and anti-religion (Yilmaz & Saribay, 2018).	Politics

• **TABLE 2** **CONCEPTS OF MORALS ON A MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEVEL**

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Two Main Problems in the Sociology of Morality. <i>Theory and Society</i>	“In fact, most if not all sociologists – be their interest the family, organizations, social movements, inequality, etc. – have asked why particular groups of people have the moral views that they do, and what are the effects of these views on behaviour, interaction, structure, change, and institutions” (Abend, 2008:87).	Moral views on: Behaviour Interaction Structure Change Institutions Family Organisations Social movements Inequality
Social Construction and Moral Action. In D.N. Robinson (Ed), <i>Social Discourse and Moral Judgement</i>	“From the present perspective, accounts such as “I feel this is right”, “That would violate my principles”, or “I think this is immoral” are in their very saying constitutive features of everyday life. Such sentences are used by people in carrying out various social rituals, patterns of interchange, or cultural projects... They operate within relationships to prevent, to admonish, to praise, and to invite various forms of action; they may also establish one’s public identity, furnish others with a guide to one’s future conduct, and achieve unity within a group. In effect, moral and ethical languages are among the resources available for playing the games and participating in the dances of cultural life” (Gergen, 1992:17).	Moral action Right Violate principles Immoral Social rituals Patterns of interchange Public identity Guide future conduct Moral and ethical languages

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Effect of religious education on the moral development of children	“Character-building and learning of ethical and moral values have been regarded as the first and foremost goal of education, and many educationists have emphasised it” (Khanam, 2008).	Character building Ethical and moral values
Riglyne vir waarde-opvoeding in Suid-Afrikaanse skole	(“Values and education have been inseparable since ancient times, and are inseparably bound to one another, and the school as an educational institution has the task of providing values education... character-development and character-building programmes should be the ideal solution to stop the decline in values”) (Rens, 2005).	Values Institutions Values education Character development Character building Decline in values
Eleven principles of effective character education	“Character-building and character education have the same meaning, that is, make a student a better member of society by instilling values, and by way of mentoring” (Lickona, 1996).	Character building Character education Instilling values
Riglyne vir die implementering van ‘n karakteropvoedingsprogram in sekondere skole	(“... character education is of cardinal importance for instruction and education, because it offers a possible solution where it guides learners to realise the difference between right and wrong, ... as well as to say no to aspects such as drugs, alcohol, sex, gangs, and other social problems...”) (Challens, 2008).	Character education Guide – right/wrong Social problems (drugs, alcohol, sex, gangs)
Stemme uit die Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysunie-geledere oor dissipline	(“Values that promote moral behaviour, values about work ethics, and values aimed at realising people’s full potential, must receive urgent attention”) (Lessing & De Witt, 2011).	Values Promote moral behaviour Work ethics

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Teenage pregnancy and parenting at school in contemporary South African contexts: Deconstructing school narratives and understanding policy implementation	"The state and its new policies, which are supportive of the rights of young people, was criticized for actively encouraging moral degeneration... government policy is undermining public moral standards" (Shefer <i>et al.</i> , 2013).	Public moral standards
Implementation of value education in the foundation phase	"In the light of declining moral values in the South African society, ... it is important that value education is taught both informally and formally. Therefore, the school is regarded as one of the most relevant stakeholders in the teaching of values for the moral development of the younger generation in particular and the broader society in general" (Masote <i>et al.</i> , 2017).	Moral values Value education Moral development
Values education as perceived by social studies teachers in objective and practice dimensions	"Values education fosters and raises a generation for a liveable world. It aims to cultivate learners' comprehension of basic humanitarian values and solve ethically the challenges and social ills of the society to which they belong" (Katilmis, 2017).	Values education Humanitarian values Ethical solving: social ills
Embedding values in the South African curriculum: by design or default?	"Researchers agree that in the light of the current need to regenerate morals and re-norm the nation, values are critical. Parents and teachers have the greatest influence on a child's upbringing and therefore have a responsibility to teach them about the core values that help them become well-rounded citizens" (Maphalala & Mpofu, 2018).	Regenerate morals Re-norm Values Core values Well-rounded citizens

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Moral Values in Teacher Education	“Moral values are values that express ideas about the good life. Moral development can be seen as more fundamental, as driving the concrete attitudes and behaviour” (Veugeliers, 2010).	Values Express ideas/good life Moral development Concrete attitudes and behaviour
The Role of the School on Providing Moral Education in a Multicultural Society: The Case of Mauritius	“The term morality can be used descriptively to refer to a code of conduct put forward by a society or an individual, and normatively, to refer to a code of conduct that, under specific conditions, would be put forward by all rational-thinking persons” (Mariaye, 2006).	Morality Code of conduct Society Individual
Moral action as social capital, moral thought as cultural capital	“Morality and ethics are part of a way of life and cannot be separated from all other aspects of life experiences” (Kang & Glassman, 2010).	Morality Ethics Way of life
The teaching of ethics and moral values in teaching: Some contemporary confusions	“Moral refer to human behaviour where morality is the practical activity and, ethics describes the theoretical, systematic, and rational reflection upon that human behaviour” (Churchill, 1982).	Moral:human behaviour Morality:practical activity Ethics:theoretical/systematic/ Rational reflection – human behaviour
A conceptual exploration of values education in the context of schooling in South Africa	“Values have been described in everyday language as ‘guides to action’ or the moral compasses by which to navigate our interaction with members of society... values education has much to offer to a country that is struggling to overcome a fractured moral landscape” (Solomons & Fataar, 2011).	Guides to action Navigate interaction Members in society

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Christian Love and Criminal Punishment	"To achieve the 'good life', morality needs to be upheld in a justice system" (Murphy, 2014).	Achieve – good life
The Enforcement of Morals	"Legal moralism is the legitimate use of the criminal law to enforce the moral values of the community" (Devlin, 1965).	Legal moralism Enforce moral values
How You Can Be Both a Liberal and a Retributivist: Comments on 'Legal Moralism and Liberalism' by Jeffrie Murphy	"Criminal law should be grounded in 'grievance morality', a morality solely concerned with protecting the rights and interests of others, rights that give rise to a legitimate grievance on the part of those who find them violated. What makes a state liberal is the rejection of the idea that any enforcement of moral behaviour should include punishment of immoral behaviour" (Hampton, 1985).	Morality protecting rights/interests Immoral behaviour
All Kinds of Guilt	"Guilt is the principal moral feeling expressing a conscience. Moral guilt is a self-critical feeling occasioned by disobedience to requirements set by a governing moral authority" (Deigh, 1999).	Guilt Moral feeling
On Guilt and Innocence	"Morally mature guilt essentially involves our relations with other people, our concern with them as fellow human sufferers, and our placing high value on their welfare or at least their freedom from injury. This is an important part of the moral phenomenology of guilt, and an aspect of guilt that we miss if we analyse guilt too heavily in terms of the violation of authoritative commands. We feel our most intense guilt when we see vividly the harm that we have caused by our violations of the 'higher good of society', leading to injury" (Morris, 1976).	Morality Mature guilt

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
On Guilt and Innocence	“Rule violation is connected to morality: the rules’ connection to certain values, the value of human beings specifically, the rights and welfare of human beings, and the relationships among human beings” (Morris, 1976).	Rule violation Values Rights Welfare (human beings) Relationship (human beings)
Substance abuse in South Africa: The growing disconnect between moral regeneration and moral degeneration	“The report identifies several common overt manifestations of moral degeneration as: murder, robbery and theft, rape, woman and child abuse, domestic violence, drug trafficking, fraud and embezzlement of public funds, and questionable business dealings. At another level, it identifies manifestations that are more subtle than the above, but yet more damaging to the country’s social stability: devaluation of people, racism, undermining or abuse of the Bill of Rights, breakdown of family as a fundamental social institution, the gap between the haves and have-nots, laziness, individualism and selfishness, lack of will to resist evil, lack of moral guidance and role models in the teaching profession and corruption in police and other civil services, dishonesty of some religious leaders, slow delivery to the poor, perverted religious beliefs” (Singh & Bhoola, 2017).	Moral degeneration Overt manifestations Subtle manifestations Damage social stability Devaluate people Breakdown of family Lack of moral guidance Role models Corruption Perverted beliefs

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Substance abuse in South Africa: The growing disconnect between moral regeneration and moral degeneration	“Moral regeneration is not just about putting a stop to Moral degeneration, but it is also about role modelling that should begin from the highest echelons of political leadership. When politicians fail to lead by example, the loss of trust among the greater populace only entices anti-social behaviour. Even people in positions of authority such as school managements and parent teacher associations, feel a lack of security in reporting drug peddling and consumption within school boundaries during school times. Complicity between members of the police and drug lords’ control over school goers and local adolescents and youth, provide a picture of an ever-increasing menace. In South Africa that can only worsen against growing unemployment and immoral politicians with questionable commitment to the national interest. The case of Moral regeneration in South Africa can only truly improve when politicians include themselves in the category of ‘subtle manifestations’ of degeneration and take the bold initiative to introspect and transform themselves from within” (Singh & Bhoola, 2017).	Moral regeneration Role models
Political Orientations and Morality Judgments in the Turkish Context: Considering the Roles of the Needs for Cognition and Recognition	“People with different political orientations differ in terms of the importance given to the different morality foundations. Conservative political parties are more likely to endorse Social Order morality which emphasizes the importance of group conformity, strict adherence to norms, and constraining individual-level expressions for the sake of group interests. Liberals tend to endorse a Social Justice morality, orienting towards the advancement of the group’s welfare which focuses on equality-based distributional justice, communal responsibility, and collective efforts” (Tekes <i>et al.</i> , 2021).	Differing morality foundations Conservative: social order morality Liberal: social justice morality

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Governing Morality Issues through Procedural Policies	“First, morality issues are highly salient to the public. Morality politics address issues with which a broader part of the public is directly confronted, such as the beginning and the end of life. Second, morality issues are technically simple or at least their level of complexity may be lowered with the use of symbols such as the ‘sinful gambler’, the ‘mad scientist’, or the ‘irresponsible smoker’. Third, and most important feature is the way in which morality issues address the fundamental moral and social values on which compromise is usually not possible” (Engeli & Varone, 2011).	Morality issues Morality politics Moral and social values
Governing Morality Issues through Procedural Policies	“According to morality politics scholars, the conjunction of these three features leads to the public debate of moral values and to lively political conflict. Policy-makers are exhorted to take into account the distribution of values among citizens, and to be responsive to their constituents in particular and to public opinion in general. Re-election calculus is a powerful motive for elected politicians to legitimize a morality policy that is in agreement with the predominant moral values of their constituency. As such, the core assumption developed in morality politics studies states that the level of values consensus among the constituents determines a government’s response to morality issues” (Engeli & Varone, 2011).	Morality politics Moral values Distribution of values Morality policy
A moral consciousness: A leadership approach for Africa	“There needs to be a visionary, yet thoughtful and practical leadership whose core is a moral consciousness that we belong to despite our differences” (Munwang’o, 2014).	Moral consciousness
Running While Others Walk: The Challenge of African Development	“The idea of ‘catching up’ entails learning not only about ideas from abroad but also about one’s capacities and weaknesses. The real issue about ‘catching up’ is not that of simply taking on every wretched instrument used by pioneers to get what they have – wars, slave labour, child labour, colonialism, Gulags, concentration camps – but to finding more efficacious and morally acceptable ways of improving the life chances of millions of poor people” (Mkandawire, 2010).	Morally acceptable ways – improving life

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Moral ethnicity, Ethnic Nationalism and Political Tribalism	“Violent conflicts emerge out of the lack of consideration of the other. Ethnicity is fostered by interaction. It is a theory of social and political relations, conceptualized as moral ethnicity. The idea of moral ethnicity emphasizes renegotiated relations with our-selves as much as with others. Moral ethnicity also leaves open the issue of boundaries, their formation and maintenance between a dichotomous ‘we’ and ‘you’” (Lonsdale, 1995).	Moral ethnicity Renegotiated relations
The invisibility of richness: A critique of Vice’s strange place	“The Leitmotiv is care. I dare posit that a caring disposition cannot be nurtured without building a moral consciousness that recognises unity in diversity” (Villet, 2012).	Moral consciousness
Thought leadership, thought liberation, and critical consciousness for Africa’s development and a just world	“Leadership depends on thought leadership, thought liberation, and critical consciousness, a process and an outcome of a deliberate programme of action to unlearn, relearn, unthink, and rethink dominant thought patterns which leaders have acquired” (Gumede, 2014).	Thought liberation Critical consciousness Unlearn/ relearn/ unthink/ rethink
An evolutionary perspective on Kohlberg’s theory of moral development	“Behaviour is a product of motivation and cognition. Hence, reasons for behaving morally without a concern for the welfare of others (motivation) should not result in moral behaviour. However, it may be that the development of a concern for others and reasons for behaving morally develop together. The individual who cares about others thinks about the implications of his or her behaviour for others and the individual who analyses the impact he or she has on others may develop a concern for others” (Mathes, 2019)	Behaviour: motivation and cognition
The roots of modern justice: Cognitive and neural foundations of social norms and their enforcement	“In the domain of moral judgement and decision-making the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex has been associated with the ability to facilitate abstract reasoning and provide cognitive control to override strong emotional responses elicited by the aversive nature of moral dilemmas” (Buckholtz & Marais, 2012).	Moral judgement Abstract reasoning Cognitive control Moral dilemmas

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Cortical thickness of the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex predicts strategic choices in economic games	"Individuals with higher cortical thickness or grey matter volume at the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex are better at strategic moral reasoning" (Yamagishi <i>et al.</i> , 2016).	Prefrontal cortex Moral reasoning
Consequences, norms, and generalized inaction in moral dilemmas Do psychopathic individuals possess a misaligned moral compass? Killing for the greater good: Action aversion and the emotional inhibition of harm in moral dilemmas	"Several studies convincingly argue that individuals with cold-hearted attitudes towards others' wellbeing, psychopathic traits, and antisocial tendencies tend to favour utilitarian actions on moral dilemmas" (Gawronski <i>et al.</i> , 2017; Marshall, Watts, & Lilienfeld, 2018; McDonald, Defever, & Navarrete, 2017).	Utilitarian actions
The moral cosmology of cancer: Making disease meaningful	"Illness and affliction reveal the moral social order in ways that the patients, professionals, and carers respond when the established order is unsettled. Living with cancer requires virtue and the effects will conceal or reveal a moral fibre" (Broom & Kenny, 2021).	Moral social order Moral fibre
Marital adjustment, parental functioning, and emotional sharing in war veterans	"Emotional numbing due to combat-related post-traumatic stress related trauma, often impairs moral functioning" (Solomon <i>et al.</i> , 2011).	Post-traumatic stress Impaired moral functioning
An exploration of the viability and usefulness of the construct of moral injury in war veterans	"Moral injury, defined as a disruption in an individual's sense of personal morality and capacity to behave in a just manner, is a relatively new construct that is now known to impact many survivors of war" (Drescher <i>et al.</i> , 2011). "Those suffering from moral injury experienced repeated insults to their morality and questioned whether they were still at their core, moral beings. They had been forced, in some way, to act contrary to what their beliefs dictated was right" (Edridge, 2020).	Moral injury Disruption of personal morality

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Shame: The veiled companion of narcissism A lone journey of psychological growth in ageing Vietnam veterans: Redefining shame and betrayal	“Self-destructive behaviours that disguise feelings of shame due to moral injury are often a smokescreen for the psychological distress of the extremes of war” (Wurmser, 1987). “Without support to reclaim moral integrity, poor adjustment may continue for years contributing to long term psychopathology” (McCormack & Joseph, 2014).	Moral injury Reclaiming moral integrity
How young children come to view harming others as wrong: A developmental analysis Origins and development of morality	“In their daily lives, young children encounter events that bear on social evaluations. Evaluations of right and wrong - how people should act. Harm events inform the development of children’s moral concerns with welfare. By age three, most children make distinctions between moral violations affecting others’ welfare and nonmoral violations, such as violations of social conventions” (Dahl & Freda, 2017; Killen & Smetana, 2015).	Social evaluations: right/ wrong Moral concerns Moral violations
Sociological Foundations of Christian Morality	“A Christian orientation to morality can benefit by paying attention to sociological questions, data, and analysis on numerous topics of mutual concern that include economics, gender, sexuality, education, race and ethnicity, and politics. Sociology strengthens a Christian response to morality by providing empirical data to reveal the differences between what people want to believe is happening in society and what is actually going on” (Thiessen, 2016).	Christianity: Morality orientation
Punishment and the Moral Emotions: Essays in Law, Morality, and Religion	“According to Joseph Butler’s 1726 sermon, forgiveness is a moral virtue that is essentially a matter of the heart, the inner self, and involves a change in inner feeling more than a change in external action. The change in feeling is the overcoming, on moral grounds, of the intensely negative and reactive attitudes that occur when one has been wronged by another - the passions of resentment, anger, hatred, and the desire for revenge. If these negative passions dominate the life of a victimized person, it poses a danger to the very moral and legal order that rightly identifies the victims of immorality” (Murphy, 2014).	Moral virtue Endangering moral order Victims of immorality

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Adolescents and Morality: A Study of some Moral Values and Dilemmas of Working Adolescents	“For Christians the Christian ethic, dependence on divine inspiration, on an awareness of duty to God, neighbour, and oneself, is the complete answer to all moral problems. Among the virtues most emphasized by this group are faith, hope, and charity, obeying the Ten Commandments, and willingness to accept a code dictated by religion” (Eppel & Eppel, 2003).	Christian ethic Divine inspiration: answer to moral problems Virtues: faith, hope, charity, obedience
Adolescents and Morality: A Study of some Moral Values and Dilemmas of Working Adolescents	“The moral code that springs from the acceptance of Christian faith. More specifically a striving towards standards based on a recognition of honour, truth, beauty, courtesy, temperateness, and charity... the recognition of absolute moral standards... willingness and ability to be loyal to ideals stemming from personal faith and conviction. A balanced sense of personal responsibility to God and to Society. Personal integrity, cleanness of thought and behaviour, an honest approach to the challenge of right and wrong, a deep regard for one's own character and value, and to apply this to all other relationships in life” (Eppel & Eppel, 2003).	Moral code Recognition of moral standards Personal responsibility Personal integrity Right and wrong Character and value
Adolescent Morals – The Climate of Opinion	“The Anglican priest, Canon D. Rhymes emphasizes a higher morality, based on a personal relationship of responsibility and of love which will pervade all human relationships: a relationship which will be based not upon the observance of laws, but upon concern for the person in the situation of the person, and for those who are Christians, is rooted in Christ and His relationship to us. Rhymes acknowledges that we live in a secular society but feels that this view of morality can bring Christians and Humanists closer together in agreement on fundamental moral issues” (Eppel & Eppel, 2003).	Higher morality Responsibility and love pervading all relationships Morality promotes agreement on moral issues
Breaking the spell	“All religions provide social infrastructures for creating and maintaining moral teamwork. Originally, religion reinforced morality by virtue of increasing social scrutiny, creating a mystical inhibition against norm violations. To this day, religion continues to serve as an important reinforcement mechanism for morality. Religion strengthens self-control, thus increasing the likelihood that individual followers of a particular faith will practice moral self-restraint” (Dennett, 2007).	Religion: social infrastructure Moral teamwork Morality vs norm violations Religion strengthens moral self-restraint

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Knowledge in the Blood: Confronting Race and the Apartheid Past	"Morality is a perfectible skill. Since religion provides a venue for intentional, purposeful moral practice, it makes sense to argue that moral skills should be purifiable to the highest level of decorum" (Jansen, 2009).	Perfecting and purifying moral skills
Theme 10: Religious and Moral Education: Exploring Students' Understanding of Values and Moral Reasoning	"Religion's evolutionary role in moral development has always been as a reinforcer of within group morality (either individually or collectively" (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).	Moral development Reinforcing group morality
Policy on Religion and Education: The South African Case in International Perspective	"The current Policy on religion and education in South Africa has banned all religious dialogue, depriving learners and educators from valuable opportunities to explore the relationship between religion, morality, and social justice" (Wolhuter <i>et al.</i> , 2008).	Relationship: religion, morality, social justice
Access and Values	"This is pedagogically unjustifiable as future generations are denied of epistemological access to religious knowledge (its various forms, how it is organized, its moral and value bases, its politics, and its power)" (Jansen, 2001).	Moral and value foundation
Christian Morality: An Interdisciplinary Framework for Thinking about Contemporary Moral Issues	"People are influenced in their moral actions by their Spiritual traditions and beliefs, Cognition (or thoughts) and long-term patterns of Observable behaviour, also known as personality traits. They are also influenced by their Physical state, Emotional state, and the Social context, which includes people and even the time of day or day of the week. Spirituality is pervasive and regarded as a core factor in human nature which can be connected to moral conduct" (Sutton, 2016).	Spiritual traditions pervade human nature Spirituality is connected to moral conduct

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
God save us: A terror management perspective on morality Thirty years of terror management theory: From genesis to revelation	“Religion most definitely influences morality as people often depend on the perception that they are abiding by divinely enforced moral codes. There is often the perception that violation of moral codes might result in the removal of supernatural protection and an elimination from being considered for afterlife” (Pyszczynski, 2016). “Therefore, we hypothesized that more frequent engagement in immoral behaviour as well failure to live up to ideal expectations of religious practice would be associated with greater death anxiety” (Pyszczynski <i>et al.</i>, 2015).	Religion influences morality Divinely enforced moral codes
But could they tell right from wrong? Evolution, moral responsibility, and human distinctiveness	“John Wesley argues that God’s grace is present in all human beings. It is this presence of God’s grace that gives all human beings moral awareness and moral ability – God inscribes deep within the human personality an understanding of morality that is summed up in the golden rule” (Field, 2017).	Moral awareness Moral ability
But could they tell right from wrong? Evolution, moral responsibility, and human distinctiveness	“Bonhoeffer proposed rather that God encounters human beings through their encounter with other human beings. In each encounter with another human being the other places an ethical demand challenging the encountered one to act in responsible love. It was God who constituted the human other as an ethical demand and therefore God is present behind and in the ethical demand of the other” (Field, 2017).	Ethical demands on human encounters
But could they tell right from wrong? Evolution, moral responsibility, and human distinctiveness	“Human moral consciousness includes at least five factors. The first is moral intentionality. The second is communicable norms or rules. The third is a self-conscious moral awareness and evaluation. The fourth is morally responsible decision-making. The fifth is the development of genuine altruism” (Field, 2017).	Moral consciousness Moral intentionality Norms and rules Moral awareness Responsible moral decision-making Altruism

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
Church, State, and Sex Crimes: What Place for Traditional Sexual Morality in Modern Liberal Societies	“Liberal societies should encourage its citizens and churches to pursue a higher morality of aspiration that views sex and the sexual body as a special gift for oneself and others. Many churches have been deeply challenged, and some have become sharply divided over pressing new legal and moral issues about abortion, contraception, artificial reproductive technology, woman’s rights, children’s rights, same-sex marriage, no-fault divorce, remarriage, and more” (Witte, 2019).	Pursuing a higher morality Division on moral issues
Church, State, and Sex Crimes: What Place for Traditional Sexual Morality in Modern Liberal Societies	“Aquinas was aware that nature creates a wobbly normative framework, given our perennial human sex drives and temptations. Both church and state need to enact firm and clear positive laws to guide and govern its members. The church must offer comprehensive spiritual direction about sexual vices and virtues, drawing not only on natural law but also on sacramental, moral, and biblical teachings” (Witte, 2019).	Normative framework Vices and virtues Moral teachings
Philosophical Foundations of Christian Morality	“If morality is about conventionalism, then moral stalwarts like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Jesus could be regarded as immoral. On the contrary, they stood against conventional laws which challenged the higher good of man and society” (Sutton & Schmidly, 2016).	Morality Conventionalism Challenging the higher good of man and society
Natural Moralities: A Defence of Pluralistic Relativism	“Ethical relativists deny that there is any universal normative morality and claim that actual moralities of societies or individuals are the only moralities there are. It is a mistake to take morality to refer to a universal code of conduct that, under certain conditions, would be endorsed by all rational persons” (Wong, 2006).	Universal normative morality Universal code of conduct

Research studies on Morals	Definition/Description of Morals / Morality	Concepts
The Language of Morals Freedom and Reason	“Moral judgments are regarded as those judgments that override all nonmoral judgments and which would be universalized by the person making the judgment. This leads to a view of morality as being concerned with behaviour that a person regards as most important and as a guide to conduct that he wants everyone to adopt. This view of morality as concerning that which is most important to a person or group allows matters related to religious practices and precepts, or matters related to customs and traditions, e.g., purity and sanctity, to be more important than avoiding and preventing harm” (Hare, 1952, 1963).	Moral judgements Morality: behaviour/ conduct
Methods of Ethics	“Moral rules are regarded as any rational rules of conduct. It is rational to take one’s self-interest as primary, even if others are seriously harmed and therefore ‘ethical egoism’ is an ethical theory” (Sidgwick, 1874).	Moral rules - conduct
Morality: Its Nature and Justification	“Morality is an informal public system applying to all rational persons, governing behaviour that affects others, and has the lessening of evil or harm as its goal. This results in morality being a universal guide to behaviour that all rational persons would put forward for governing the behaviour of all moral agents” (Gert, 2005).	Morality: universal guide to behaviour
What We Owe to Each Other	“Morality is a system of rules for the regulation of behaviour that is not reasonably rejectable based on a desire for informed, unforced general agreement” (Scanlon, 1998).	Morality: regulating behaviour
The Second-person Standpoint: Morality, Respect, and Accountability	“Morality is a matter of equal accountability among free and rational beings. We behave morally towards others to the degree that we respect the claims of authority that they have on us. The morality of obligation is a scheme of accountability that all rational people will endorse” (Darwall, 2005).	Morality: equal accountability Moral behaviour Morality of obligation

APPENDIX G: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

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Dr. C Twine, Co-supervisor
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Student: Margaret Janeke
Thesis: Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners
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North West University
Date: December 2024

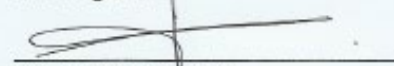
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The initial work had been completed and then redone to comply with the template of the NWU to monitor plagiarism and other technical concerns.

The following issues of the thesis came under scrutiny:

- Contents page
- In-text and post-text references to bibliography
- Language, spelling, grammar, spelling
- Compliance with in-house academic writing styles and conventions of the NWU.

Kind regards



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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby declare that the (incomplete) thesis titled:

Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners

by

M Janeke

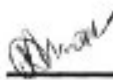
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has been technically edited by myself, including all tables and figures and the layout of the document's contents.

E Oosthuizen

December 2024

APPENDIX I: CODING CERTIFICATE

<i>Certificate</i>	
This is to certify that independent coding was done by	
Dr Douline Minnaar	
For the research study of	
Margaret Janeke:	
<i>Strategies for the moral regeneration of secondary school learners</i>	
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