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SCHOOL LEADERS' MORAL UNDERSTANDING AND MORAL REASONING

by

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL LEADERS' MORAL UNDERSTANDING AND MORAL REASONING

School leaders are faced with serious moral challenges on a daily basis at schools, which often result in them making poor moral choices. In a situation of moral decay in schools, reports in the news media create the impression that school leaders often fail to demonstrate the necessary values advocated by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. For the purposes of the study a number of possible lenses, such as cultural relativism, religious beliefs, ethical subjectivism, classical utilitarian theory, Domain theory, and the ethic of justice, ethic of care, ethic of critique and the ethic of community, were identified and used in analysing the way school leaders reason about moral dilemmas.

A design located within hermeneutic phenomenology was used in the study with the aim to understand school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques was used in a concurrent mixed method design using a single questionnaire. The sample for the study consisted of educators enrolled for a formal management training programme. This group was largely homogenous in terms of religion, language, culture and was mainly from rural areas of Mpumalanga. Seventy-three participants took part in the study.

It emerged from the data that the espoused theories used by school leaders could be related to the lenses identified in the literature. The school leaders' espoused theories were mainly based on the ethic of justice and the ethic of care and were aligned to their preferred value orientations. At the espoused theory level, school leaders revealed a strong moral orientation. Further research is indicated to study school leaders' theory in action.

Keywords

Morals, morality, values, moral dilemma, school leaders, educators, moral reasoning, moral understanding, moral decay, moral regeneration.

DECLARATION

I declare that *School Leaders' Moral Understanding and Moral Reasoning* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Richard Mishack Lusenga   October 2010

Signed: _____

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my uncle, **Mateu 'Phuleni' Nkosi**, who did not have the privilege of entering through the school door, but played a pivotal role in encouraging me to further my studies.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The *Daily Dispatch* (30 September 2008) reported that: 'A Braelyn school principal on Tuesday said he was at his wits' end after his school was hit by an unprecedented number of pregnancies among his pupils. East London Secondary School principal Ben Chetty said that fifteen girls have fallen pregnant at the school – and the number was on the increase. The school had recorded seven cases last year. The numbers also don't take abortions that were being done into account.'

In *The Mail & Guardian* (28 October 2008) it was reported that: 'a former vice-principal at the school, claimed damages for the alleged harm to his dignity after [three boys] distributed a manipulative picture of two naked, masturbating men with the faces of [him] and the school's principal … pasted on it.'

These two articles are just a small example of the moral challenges faced by school leaders. How do or should school leaders deal with these and similar incidents? How do they think and argue about these moral challenges?

A variety of factors are seen as the causes of moral decay in society. Hazlitt (1964:01) attributes the decline in morality to the decline of religious faith, which is 'seen almost throughout the world in the increase of crime, in the rise of juvenile delinquency, in the increasing resort to violence for the settlement of internal economic and political disputes, in the decline of authority and discipline.' It is also linked to 'a class of elites who themselves have wrong values, espouse relativist positions on morality, and steer others into improper directions' (Turiel, 2002:8).

The media is also blamed for the moral decay in society in that it is used by intellectuals and academics to criticise traditional values (Turiel, 2002:8). Children emulate models shown in movies and shows on television 'who display improper and destructive

behaviours and lifestyles' (Turiel, 2002:8). This challenge severely affects education and is specifically problematic in schools. Moral decay in schools is characterised by learners breaking into schools, rape, drug and alcohol abuse, assault and stealing of vehicles (Shwala, 2006:100).

The challenge of moral decay in schools is not unique to South Africa, but is receiving international attention in education. Character education was introduced in America in the early 1980s through the 1990s 'as a response to a growing perception that American society is in a state of crisis, moral decay, or serious decline' (Bebeau, Rest & Narvaez, 1999:18). Education departments internationally are concerned about the moral decay in schools and are coming up with various strategies to avert the problem. Althof and Berkowitz (2006:495) state that in the socialisation of citizens of any democratic society, schools need to focus on 'moral development, broader moral and related character development, teaching of civics and development of citizenship skills and dispositions.'

Internationally it is claimed that to address the problem of moral decay in schools, school leaders should be able to deal with the moral dilemmas they encounter on a daily basis. We continue to read in newspapers about the condemnation of school leaders who are abusing learners physically and sexually (The Citizen, 2009). School leaders are not only convicted, but they are also struck off the roll of the South African Council of Educators for such misconduct (The Citizen, 2009). The enhancement of the ability of school leaders in dealing with the variety of moral dilemmas they encounter at schools is proposed as a way of averting the problem of moral decay. From a theoretical perspective, a list of good morals to be displayed by leaders could be cited, but very little is actually known about school leaders' own understanding of morals and morality.

1.2. MORAL REGENERATION

The continuous crisis of moral decay led to the converging of South Africans from all walks of life, representing various sectors and formations 'on the Waterkloof Airforce Base in Pretoria, to seek solutions to problems of moral decay, and to commonly work to build an ethical society' (Zuma, 2004). That is where moral regeneration was officially launched. Moral regeneration is 'a nation-building programme undertaken by Government and civil society, aimed at promoting human rights, ethical behaviour and the values enshrined in the constitution of the country' (Republic of South Africa, 2004). Moral regeneration is viewed to have the capacity to drive the nation towards prosperity and success (Shwala, 2006:3).

The Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) 'was founded on the principles that South Africans are highly moral beings, know the difference between right and wrong, and are appalled by the symptoms of moral decay which sometimes occur in our country' (Zuma, 2004). The aim of the government on MRM is 'to make a concerted effort at rejuvenating the moral fibre of our society by building on the values envisioned in the Constitution' (Balindlela, 2004).

As the vision and mission of the MRM states, it is 'at the centre of collective activism for moral regeneration initiatives whose vision is to build an ethical and moral community and the mission is to promote positive values.' The MRM states that the moral regeneration initiative is a response to the breakdown in morality in South Africa 'emerging in parallel to countless other initiatives aimed at reducing crime, some of which have themselves contained explicit appeals to morals, values or ethics' (MRM, 2009). Its ultimate objective is to 'assist in the development of a caring society through revival of the spirit of botho/ubuntu and the actualisation and the realisation of the values and the ideals enshrined in the constitution, using all available resources and harnessing all initiatives in government, business and society' (MRM, 2009).

The Moral Regeneration Movement promotes the following positive values (MRM, 2009): uphold honesty, integrity, and loyalty; protect the environment through

sustainable livelihoods, respect human dignity and equality, show respect and concern for all people, improve material well-being and economic justice, ensure harmony in culture, belief and conscience; promote responsible freedom, the rule of law and democracy and strive for justice, fairness and peaceful co-existence. In another initiative launched, the Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy (2001) highlights the values of democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, ubuntu (human dignity), open society, accountability, the rule of law, respect and reconciliation as values to be promoted at schools.

Swartz (2006:556) claims that the MRM was welcomed by the media, religious, business and government leaders, but was criticised by academics. The basis of the criticism was the involvement of the government in the promotion of moral values whereas that was considered to be the domain of the religious sector (Swartz, 2006:556). Swartz (2006:556) argues against this criticism by stating that religion is not the only source of moral values but they may be derived from 'the law, human rights charters and personal and cultural belief' (Swartz, 2006:557). I also strongly support her argument because the promotion of moral values should be the responsibility of the various sectors of society.

The situation of moral decay in schools is clearly described in the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*, where the authors argue that parents, teachers, officials and students have not succeeded in making the values enshrined in the Constitution part of their lives. They give the following as some of evidence of moral decay in schools (DoE, 2001:8):

- Teachers not showing up to teach and students not showing up to learn;
- Teachers and students are abusing each other verbally, physically and sexually;
- Going to school means running the gauntlet of guns, drugs and criminality;
- Dialogue and discussion are censured in schools.

The above-mentioned acts violate the rights to basic education, personal security, dignity, freedom and security and freedom of expression respectively (DoE, 2001:8).

In far too many instances, school leaders' actions at schools do not send acceptable messages of positive values in schools as they do not set good examples to the learners. They are continually caught up in poor moral choices where they get involved in sexual relationships with learners or embezzle school funds. Such behaviour in no way upholds the values as promoted by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy.

Almost a decade has passed since these initiatives were launched, but based on the newspaper reports cited earlier, the situation does not appear to have improved.

1.3. RATIONALE

As a school leader, I have been and still am confronted with moral dilemmas that require me to take decisions. This has stimulated an interest in me to know how one should best handle moral dilemmas in a way that the consequences do not make one feel guilty for the decision taken. This revealed a need for the skill of dealing with the moral dilemmas experienced by school leaders at schools. Unless school leaders are equipped with such skills, the problem of moral decay may worsen in schools. The problem of moral decay is engulfing the entire society with its negative consequences.

School leaders are preparing the future members of the society; they therefore need to be developed so that they can play a major role in minimising this problem of moral decay in schools. There is a need to prepare educators for the moral dilemmas they face in their everyday work (Tirri, 1999:32). Unfortunately, little research has been conducted in South Africa on moral decision making in schools and it is therefore apposite to conduct research that may reveal how school leaders living and working in rural areas take moral decisions when confronted with a moral dilemma. What are the values that they consider when taking decisions and what is their sense of moral responsibility?

1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The prevalence of moral decay in schools and the failure of school leaders to demonstrate the necessary values advocated by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy have motivated the need for this study. Little is known about school leaders' understanding of morals and morality. Many school leaders and educators make poor moral choices, where they have sexual relationships with learners, neglect their duties, squander school funds, etc. The challenges of moral decay faced by school leaders in South African schools necessitate a study to explore how they deal with the moral dilemmas they experience at schools. The outcomes of the study may assist in training of school leaders in general.

The main question of the study is：
How do school leaders negotiate meaning when confronted with moral dilemmas?

To be able to answer the overarching question, three sub-questions are posed:
- What are the important values in the lives of school leaders?
- How do these values impact on school leaders' moral understanding and reasoning?
- To what extent are they willing to negotiate their moral standpoints?

1.5. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to students of the University of Pretoria enrolled for the distance education module OWB 781 (Managing Values, Human Rights & Democracy in Education) of the BEd (Hons.) in Education Management, Law and Policy in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province.

1.6. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.6.1 School leaders

Defining leadership remains a challenge. In part, effective leaders will hold individual leadership traits, and on the other hand they engage is specific practices that render them effective. Kouzes & Pousner (1995) believe that effective leaders engage in five

practices: they model the way by setting an example, they inspire a shared vision, they challenge the processes established, they enable others to act, and encourage the heart. For the purpose of our chapter, we will define effective leadership as 'the art of mobilising others to want to struggle for shared aspirations' (Kouzes & Posner, 1995:30). School leaders are not restricted to those in management positions in schools, but include educators that engage in leadership practices in their classrooms. For the purpose of this study, all educators in general and those in promotional posts, including principals will be regarded as school leaders.

1.6.2 Moral dilemmas

Morals and moral dilemmas will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2. In essence, a moral dilemma occurs when there is a 'conflict between the rightness or wrongness of the action and the goodness or badness of the consequences of the actions' (Ross, 2006). The conflict may be between our duty and obligations, our duty with moral principles or obligations with moral principles (Lemmon, 1962:150). In a moral dilemma, an agent is expected to choose one of two or more actions but cannot choose both or all of them (Stanford, 2006). No matter what action a person involved in a moral dilemma takes, s/he is condemned to moral failure for doing something wrong or for failing to do what s/he ought to do (Stanford, 2006).

1.6.3 Values

Values may be defined as 'that which is worth striving for or worth living for' (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:30). Values are the founding standards of principles that assist individuals to act in a manner consistent with what they 'regard as worth striving for or living for and that they see as worth protecting, honouring and desiring.' (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:30). The relationship between values and morals will receive attention in Chapter 2.

1.7. MORAL DILEMMAS IN EDUCATION

Research conducted in other countries has found that school leaders experience various moral dilemmas in their work. Cranston, Ehrich and Kimber (2006) found that school leaders experience moral dilemmas ranging from conflicts of interest in dealing with serious student or staff misbehaviour, the handling of staff performance, protecting a child from potential violence from a parent and attempting to change an unethical organisational culture. Wildy & Louden (2000), on the other hand, found that providing leadership that is both democratic and efficient in terms of amount and effort committed to decision making (efficiency dilemma) and being accountable for school compliance with policies set by government and generating local commitment to these policies are some of the dilemmas experienced by the school leaders. Monitoring the performance of staff has been found to be the main concern of principals (Dempster, Freakley & Parry, 2000).

Cranston *et al.*'s (2006) findings are consistent with those of Dempster, Freakley & Parry (2000). In their study, they found that principals found four categories of things troublesome to them, which are those involving students, those involving staff, those involving finance and resources and those involving external relations. The trends discovered are likely to be robust, since they were based on a population study of 552 claims.

Walker & Dimmock (2000) found that dilemmas are multifaceted in terms of their source and constituent elements, cultural values related to harmony, seniority, that relationships were prominent in interacting with other sources to cause complicated dilemmas, and that the source of dilemmas comprised a combination of structural, professional, cultural and relational 'drivers.' The study found that the coping and managing strategies of principals were most commonly related to maintaining harmony in relationships with others in the school. This is consistent with the findings of Dempster, Freakley & Parry (2000) that almost three-thirds of principals chose interpersonal skills as the most important attribute involved in their decision making.

Research into moral dilemmas of school leaders has mostly taken a qualitative approach where interviews were conducted with participants. Most of the research has been done in the cultural settings of Western countries. There is thus a need to conduct research within the South African context 'in order to generate the possibility of cross-cultural comparisons between principals' perceptions of the major challenges confronting them' (Walker & Dimmock, 2000).

In the South African context, Mabena (1999) investigated how the moral development of black adolescents is affected by the multicultural situations in which they found themselves. Collecting her data by employing observation, interviews, questionnaires and phenomenology, her study found that black adolescents are left alone, subjected to a rushed and impersonal way of life and 'consequently have difficulty in internalising the acceptable moral norms' (Mabena, 1999:284). The study also found that increasing personal and occupational interests in a multicultural situation result in a 'general lack of full commitment to and involvement in personal relationships' (Mabena, 1999:284).

This study further found that the inadequate moral encounters result in inadequate internalisation of moral values. According to Mabena (1999:284), the inadequate internalisation of moral values leads to black adolescents increasingly experiencing feelings of insecurity and uncertainty, not achieving optimal moral development, tending to forget their Afro-centric culture and not accepting who they are, (i.e. they have lost their traditional identity).

A study conducted by Swartz (2008) on the moral lives of South Africa's township youth found that they exhibit 'conventional values in areas such as substance use, violence and crime while questioning conservative values around sex, money and respect' and are living in 'a world fraught with horror, violence, crime and substance abuse…' Adult supervision, both at home and at school has been found to be in short supply, especially in impoverished contexts. The study confirms the findings of Mabena that adolescents are left alone and subjected to a rushed and impersonal way of life, which results in inadequate internalisation of moral values. Dealing with the consequences of

poverty was recommended as a way 'for nurturing young people's formation in schools and communities' (Swartz, 2008). Parents are blamed for the decline in moral values in society (Shwala, 2006:99).

Albinger (2005) conducted a study aimed at determining the values influencing the reflection of Australian Lutheran Secondary principals as they address ethical dilemmas in their work. The study suggests that the way principals perceive dilemmas is the result of a filtering process where some facts are not fully considered prior to action. The study also found that the filtering process is more strongly influenced by sub-rational and trans-rational values. The power of non-rational values is suggested to be a lens that distorts what is considered a reflective process.

Shwala (2006) conducted a study aimed at highlighting values essential for the African Renaissance and found that the following norms and values, applicable to all societies, are essential for the African Renaissance: justice, respect, for persons and property, tolerance, compassion for and sensitivity to the aged, the handicapped and the less privileged, clear-cut sex and marriage controls, unwavering obedience to adults, parents, seniors and authority, courtesy, reliability, honesty and loyalty. It emerged from the study that South Africa is experiencing moral decay.

Few studies have been conducted to study the phenomenon of morality in South Africa. No studies on the moral dilemmas of school leaders have been conducted in South Africa, only in Australia and other countries. There is a need to better understand the moral reasoning capacity of school leaders in schools so that researchers can take up further research necessary for the improvement of leaders' practices. Understanding of the school leaders' moral reasoning can lead to a better awareness of what influences school leaders' decision making 'when faced with ethical dilemmas, predictability of managerial and organisational ethical behaviour and the construction of organisational guides and incentives to aid managers toward ethical action' (Weber 1991:293).

1.8. RESEARCH DESIGN

The proposed research will be located within 'hermeneutic phenomenology', that is to say, an interpretive investigation of the phenomena of everyday life. Its emphasis is on the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality 'as something separate' from the person (Valle & Halling, 1989). For Polkinghorne (1983) this implies that the focus is on trying to understand or comprehend meanings of human experience as it is lived. Phenomenology becomes hermeneutical when its method is taken to be interpretive.

For the purposes of this study, a branch of hermeneutic phenomenology called *empirical hermeneutic phenomenology* will be used. Sixsmith & Sixsmith (1987) argue that phenomenological and empirical approaches to research are not antithetical and that as long the central principles of hermeneutic phenomenology are maintained, phenomenological enquiry could benefit from a more rigorous empirical framework. Giorgi's (1971) phenomenological approach is empirical because it bases itself on factual data collected for the purposes of examination and explication. Another reason it is viewed as an empirical research method is that it follows strict data collection and analysis processes (Sixsmith & Sixsmith, 1987). The methodological and data analysis design of the proposed research are compliant with the latter set of criteria (see Chapter 3).

True to the hermeneutic phenomenological stance, this study takes as point of departure the belief that the world is made up of people with their own intentions, values and beliefs. Their beliefs and values are reflected in the way they see and do things, and why they do things in a certain way. These beliefs and values are reflected in their actions and behaviours and in the way they express their views in social interaction. The research thus looks at human events not as isolated incidents, but in a more holistic manner that locates individual actions in their cultural contexts. Human activities are thus investigated in terms of meanings, i.e. why people say this, do this or act in this or that way (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a).

In this regard it is important to take note of Scheurich's (1997:168) dismantling of the notion of the autonomous self – or selves – by describing the self/selves as an 'event or enactment of an interactive intersection of multiple formations' occupying a particular cultural array. Although individuals are different 'enactments' within the array, all are connected within this cultural matrix and it is this interconnectivity that endows cultural knowledge with shared understanding. Individuality, then, can be seen as arising from the way in which culturally available knowledge is reflected upon, linked to previous experience, and restructured in uniquely understood ways (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a). It is accepted that this position could provide me with a lens through which to study school leaders' values and moral reasoning.

Although the proposed approach requires self-reflection and interpretation on my part as a researcher, these interpretations will emerge out of the local context of the participants and will privilege the voice of the participants. The task is to afford participants the opportunity to articulate their values, beliefs and attitudes as expressed in moral reasoning and to facilitate discussion and clarification of these intentions so as to enable me, through the process of data analysis, to identify patterns, trends, and themes. The study is aimed at understanding school leaders' moral reasoning from the point of view of the school leader. The emphasis is thus placed on the school leaders' frame of the reference, on how they see things from within, without making pronouncement on whether their views are morally right or wrong.

1.9 PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. For the purpose of the study, a broad definition of school leadership is taken. It is assumed that educators in general, and educators in promotion posts in particular, all to a greater or lesser extent occupy leadership positions and that those educators enrolled for further studies at a post-graduate level in school leadership and management have taken an active decision to fulfil an even greater leadership role in schools and would therefore constitute an ideal research group for the study. Studying their views on what they regard as important

values and analysing how they argue about a specific moral dilemma, would enable me to gain insight into school leaders' moral understanding and reasoning. This study will contribute to our knowledge by giving insight into how school leaders 'make sense of, conceptualise and approach the difficulties, contradictions and problems they face in leading schools' (Walker & Dimmock, 2000). The study is exploratory in nature and does not propose to engage in the total complexity of the issue, but to offer some preliminary indications of what school leaders regard as important and how these values influence the way they argue and construct meaning when confronted with a moral dilemma.

1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT

This research report consists of five chapters. The first chapter contextualises the study, identifies the research problem, research questions and research objectives. The significance and the limitation of the study are also stated. It further gives the general indication of the research methodology and outlines the remainder of the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework defining the concepts framing the study. It also establishes the theoretical foundations of the study.

In **Chapter 3** I describe the research methodology. A description is given of the processes I followed in data collection and capturing, the rationale for selecting the data analysis procedures and the procedures used. The sample and its characteristics will also be discussed. The chapter is concluded by the discussion of the quality of the data collected. This is done by exposing the shortcomings and limitations in the data collected.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the empirical study. In this chapter I describe and summarise the main results and discuss the main trends. The chapter is concluded by bringing to light the main findings.

Chapter 5 presents the discussion and interpretation of the main findings and conclusions of the study. Links are made between the findings of the study and the

existing body of knowledge outlined in the literature review in chapter 2. Furthermore, recommendations and suggestions for future research to improve practice are also made. This chapter also presents a summary of the research study.

CHAPTER TWO
MORAL DECISION MAKING

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Education and schooling are moral practices which are value-laden (Norberg, 2003:2; Vitton, 2009:91). Schooling is about 'moral activities that steer human conduct around what is right and wrong' (Norberg, 2003:2). The purpose of schooling is to raise young people in accordance with demands including knowledge, morals, norms and values (Norberg 2003:1). Schools should serve the high moral purpose of preparing the young to be able to take their responsible place in and for the community (Starratt, 1991:191). They are the most viable and valuable institutions for preparing South African youth for life (Swartz, 2003).

Schools have a role to help students in learning 'individual moral behaviours and also to see the need to improve the social ethic' (Molnar, 2002:74). They should work towards achieving the objective of the Moral Regeneration Movement of assisting in 'the development of a caring society through the revival of the spirit of botho/ubuntu and the actualisation and the realisation of the values and ideals enshrined in our constitution…' (MRM, 2004). Besides the nation-building values, schools should also promote values 'such as respect, honesty, responsibility and self-discipline' (De Klerk & Rens, 2003:355). Nieuwenhuis (2009:4) adds that learners should be encouraged 'to practice values such as initiative, diligence, loyalty, tact, generosity, altruism, and courage.' Learners also need to be guided to think and judge for themselves (De Klerk & Rens, 2003:355).

Schools are moral institutions which are designed to promote social norms, and school leaders must often make decisions that favour one moral value over another (Lashway, 1996). Swartz (2003) views the role of the school as being to encourage faith of different persuasions, teach tolerance and the integrity of different faiths, encourage shared moral values arising from faith in general and help learners decide on

transcendent goals, values, purposes and meaning. But morals and morality are more than just faith and religious values. Schools should also respond to the increasing and seemingly intractable social problems such as unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, child neglect and abuse, youth suicide and violence, varying in their effects in different communities but having deeply penetrating effects in many schools (Dempster, Freakley & Parry, 1999).

There is a current international emerging trend where schools are considered to best serve society when they encourage a robust exchange of ideas (Kallio, 2003). In fulfilling that, schools should be places of ideas, ceasing to be the mirrors of community values but becoming institutions reflecting national values (Kallio, 2003). School leaders are therefore expected to promote 'schools in which learners and educators are free to think and discuss a multitude of previously sensitive subjects such as homosexuality, abortion, and learners' rights' (Kallio, 2003).

Johnson (2003) cites International Educational Initiatives, that education must be able to prepare students to be able to grasp complex international realities and to know who they are and how are they expected to interact with others and the environment. Schools are also expected to contribute to the process of integration by helping 'students acquire self-knowledge, practice ethical behavior and cooperation as well as develop service mindedness and global consciousness' (Johnson, 2003). The acquisition of moral character is 'the foundation of all learning and action' (Johnson, 2003).

For schools to achieve these noble ideals, leaders in schools should set a moral example that is worth aspiring to for learners. School leaders face the danger that the choices they make are not guided by the espoused values of schooling but by 'measures of expedience born of the need to simply survive the crisis' (Dempster, Freakley & Parry, 1998). To achieve the above educational purposes, school leaders need to know and act in a morally defensible and accountable manner. The purpose of my study is to explore the manner in which potential school leaders reason about moral decisions.

2.2. WHAT ARE MORALS?

Morals are principles or standards of human conduct, derived from the Latin word *mores*, meaning customs. They are habits of conduct that concern psychological effects (Lorensen, 2007:3). They are about what is or is not considered appropriate in living life (Chippendale, 2001). Dombeck & Wells-Moran (2006) add that they define 'what the society around those people want for them.' To be moral is to be committed to right action, which also includes compliance with the law and generally accepted principles (Rhode, 2006:4-5).

The Québec Education Program (2004:467) defines morality as 'a set of norms, prohibitions, obligations, rights, laws, values, principles and ideals that make a distinction between good and evil.' Van der Bank (2000:5) adds that it refers to 'those values, norms and virtues which guide us in dealing with the conflicts of interest which arise between ourselves, God, fellow human beings and nature.' It is concerned with right or wrong actions (Bowie, 2004:5). Morality implies 'acting (obeying and taking decisions) in a way that is congruent with social moral values accepted in a specific society' (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:65). It is about 'one's concepts, reasoning, and actions which pertain to the welfare, rights and fair treatment of persons' (Nucci, 1997:127).

Morality is about the quality of an action (MacDonald, 2002; 2009), 'a principle, or a sentiment, when tried by the standard of right'. Starratt (2004:5) concludes by stating that morality is the living and the acting out of ethical beliefs and commitments. Although it is in the interest of us and the social group in doing what is right, doing the right thing is 'not primarily for the sake of self-benefit or social utility, but for the sake of the right itself' (Brennan, 1973: 40-41).

2.3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MORALS AND VALUES

Values are that which is worth striving and living for, whereas morals are normative principles dealing with the 'ought to do' (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:30). Values are related to morals in that they are the 'founding principles or standards of behaviour' (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:30). More attention is given to the relationship between the two

concepts below. The two concepts are first defined before the relationship is determined.

Morals are standards of behaviour that 'are concerned with how we live our values' (Chippendale, 1998). Morals signify 'actions and standpoints (praxis)' (Norberg, 2003:1). They are generally derived from principles passed on to us through the teachings of a particular culture or religion (Chippendale, 1998), political system or business society (Differencesbetween.net, 2009). As different societies have different ideas about what is acceptable and not acceptable, morals 'reflect local sensibilities' (Dombeck & Wells-Moran, 2006).

Morals can be 'set by one's elders or religious teachers or leaders of society who want to lead people away from immoral acts' (Differencesbetween.net, 2009). Morals are used to judge others as being moral or immoral. They are also 'taught by a social group and have to be followed' (Differencesbetween.net, 2009). Turiel (1980:71) distinguishes social convention from morality by defining social convention as the 'behavioural uniformities that coordinate interactions of individuals within social systems.' Uniformities in modes of dress, usage of forms of address and modes of greetings are examples of social conventions (Turiel, 1980:71). He further states that social conventions 'constitute shared knowledge of uniformities in social interactions and are determined by the social system in which they are formed.' On the other hand, moral prescriptions are obligatory, universally applicable (apply to everyone in similar circumstances), are not based on individual preferences or personal inclination and are determined by criteria (Turiel, 1983:38). Turiel (1980:72) concludes that convention and morality can be distinguished from each other by 'a narrow definition of morality as justice.'

Although Differencesbetween.net (2009) believes that morals are 'never changing' with time or conditions, such view is strongly contested, in that morals are considered to evolve, like social life and institutions (http://philosophy-religion.info/handouts/pdfs/ch7-ethics.pdf). It is further argued that 'society's moral practices and standards are

influenced by its stage of social development, its general level of intelligence, and knowledge (including information from the social and biological sciences available to citizens' (http://philosophy-religion.info/handouts/pdfs/ch7-ethics.pdf).

Values are the personal principles by which a person lives or the conception of the desirable that guides a person to make good choices and decisions in given situations (Clachery, 2007:3; Albinger, 2005:53). Values are used to evaluate the merits and demerits of a thing (Differencesbetween.net, 2009). A person's values 'gives a reasonable idea of what type of life-style the person is leading/or wants to lead' (Chippendale, 1998). They are 'implicit, explicit assertions of what is desirable, important, useful or worthy. They are standards against which plans, actions and motives can be evaluated' (Lazaridou, 2007:340).

Values 'may be explicit, or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group' (Albinger, 2005:53). They define 'the core of the identity of a person and they are a source of motivation of a person to improve him/herself' (Dombeck & Wells-Moran, 2006). They also guide our personal choices and perceptions of the worth of others (Chippendale, 2001). Values are considered to have a crucial function for school leaders when involved in decision making and problem solving (Albinger, 2005:53). People are said to be principle-driven when living their values according to moral standards (Chippendale, 1998).

The meaning and impact of values for people is best described by the statement below (Nieuwenhuis, 2009c:9):

> Values are the major arbiters of choice. What we value is pervasively reflected across all aspects of consciousness: in our implicit and explicit choices, philosophical orientation and rules to live by, the nature of our expectations and assumptions, decision making, means of motivation, prioritisation of goals, choices in what we attend to, how we behave.

To summarise, morals are enduring beliefs about right and wrong upheld by society, and as individuals, we decide which values to internalise as our own that would either support or contest the principles underpinning morals. Morals have a greater social element than values and have a very broad acceptance (Changing minds, 2009). Values place an imperative on a person to act in a manner consistent with what they regard as worth striving or living for, protecting, honouring and desiring (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:9). Values 'describe what is important in a person's life, while morals prescribe what is or is not considered appropriate behaviour in living one's life' (Chippendale, 2001).

Diagram 2.1: Overlapping of morality and social conventions
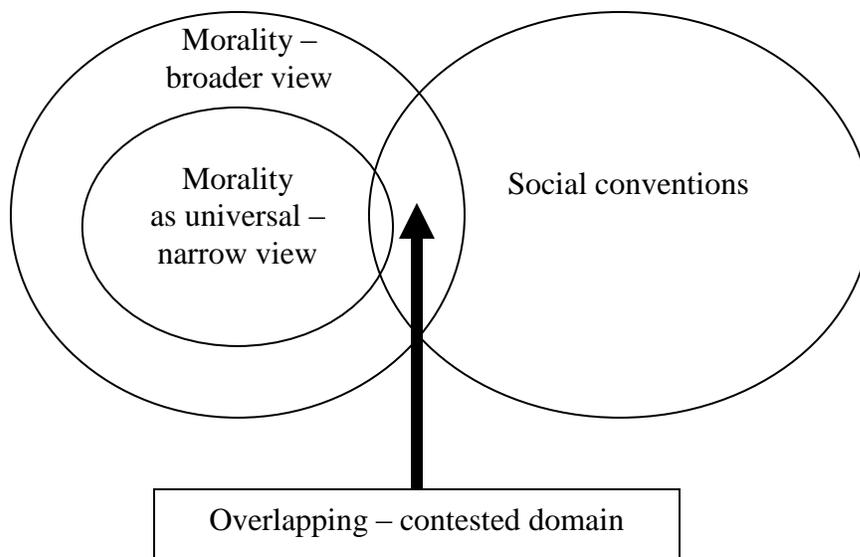
The relationship between morals and values is clearly illustrated by the distinctions below:

- Morals are obligatory and universally applicable (Turiel, 1983:38), whereas values are personal standards of behaviour (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:30).

- Morals are derived from the principles of a particular culture or religion (Chippendale, 1998), whereas values are based on individual preferences (Turiel, 1983:38).

- Morals prescribe what is or is not considered appropriate behaviour in living one's life, whereas values describe what is important in a person's life (Chippendale, 1998).

Morals and values are therefore not synonymous but related. Although the difference is not always clearly understood by some other people, they imply different things about people's behaviour. It is therefore important to know the relationship so that we can best distinguish their impact on the moral reasoning of school leaders.

2.4. LENSES THROUGH WHICH MORALS AND MORALITY COULD BE VIEWED

The claim that morals are defined by society opens the possibility that different groupings within society may take a divergent stance on morals and morality. For the researcher this implies that the lens through which morals are defined must be known, as various groups may use different lenses to argue or justify their moral stand. Rachels and Rachels (2007) propose that morality can be studied using the theories of cultural relativism, religion, ethical subjectivism and classical utilitarian theory. Each of these theories offers a different lens through which morals could be understood.

Cultural relativism proposes that different cultures have different moral codes and rejects the notion of universal truth (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:16) or universal moral standards. This theory is valuable for warning us that most of our practices are peculiar to our society and are not absolute rational standards (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:29). Cultural relativism is based on an assumption that 'many of the practices and attitudes we find natural are really only cultural products' (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:29). The danger of such a stance is that it may result in a situation where all behaviour may be justified in terms of a particular culture. What is important for my study is that certain participants in the research may use this lens to motivate their decisions when faced with a moral dilemma.

Although Rachels and Rachels (2007) view religious beliefs as having a bearing on moral issues, they argue that morality is not a matter of religious faith but of reason and conscience. Traditionally, morals are linked to religion, acting in terms of laws handed down to us by a Supreme Being. Rachels & Rachels do not support religious considerations mainly because they do 'not [provide] definitive solutions to most moral problems we face' (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:29). However, when faced with a moral dilemma, people may resort to their religious beliefs to justify a specific stance taken on the decision. In addition, it may be argued that our conscience is formed and shaped by our own religious beliefs. Because we view a particular rule as originating in the Supreme Being, we accept it as a moral standard.

Ethical subjectivism theory is based on the assumption that we do not have 'objective' right or wrong but base our moral opinions on our feelings and nothing more (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:33). This is in contrast to the classical ethical theory of Kant that asserts that knowing what is right places a moral imperative on us to act in a manner consistent with the moral right. The deontological ethic of Kant holds that 'some actions are right or obligatory, irrespective of their consequences, while other actions are wrong, irrespective of their consequences' (Tännsjön, 2002:57). Kantian-derived conceptions of the moral right are extraordinarily strict about what constitutes a mature moral viewpoint and it is argued that morality has to be completely differentiated from personal goals and desires and from social conventions (Campbell and Christopher, 1996). The subjectivist view, on the other hand, proposes that actions are to be judged right or wrong solely by virtue of their consequences, which in turn are to be assessed by the amount of happiness or unhappiness created (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:33).

Gilligan's Moral Development theory (1982) was the first to look at gender differences in the mental processes of males and females, in their moral development (http://www.psychology.sbc.edu/Gilligan.htm). She believes that the morality of care and responsibility, derived from the experience of close relationships is premised on non-violence (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html). Gilligan's moral development theory increases awareness that care is an integral part of moral

reasoning (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html). In dealing with a moral dilemma, people may also consider care and responsibility to justify their actions.

Turiel (1983) developed a Domain theory, focusing on the differences in the concepts moral values, social conventions and personal choice (Willard, 1997). The domain theory claims that the concept of morality and social convention emerge out of an 'attempt to account for qualitatively differing forms of social experience associated with these two classes of social event' (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html. Morality is viewed as structured by harm, welfare and fairness. Morality and convention are according to this theory, distinct parallel frameworks (Willard, 1997). People may respond to moral dilemmas basing their arguments on morality or social conventions.

Starrat (1991) proposed an ethical framework for making moral judgments which combines the ethic of critique, the ethic of justice and the ethic of caring. This ethical framework was later extended by Furman (2004) when he further proposed an ethic of community. This ethical framework is also important in my study in that it is one of the lenses people may use to justify their stand when confronted by moral dilemmas. Each of the four ethics is briefly discussed below.

The ethic of critique emphasises the need for the school to critique its own bureaucratic mindset, adversarial and contractual mind-set of the unions and the hierarchically structured, impersonality of the administration of the school when striving to create an ethical school (Starrat, 1991:189). The ethical challenge is to make social arrangements to be responsive to human and social rights of the learners and to enable those affected by the social arrangements to have a voice in evaluating and altering the results in the interest of the common good (Starrat, 1991:191). It calls school leaders to a social responsibility to the individuals in the school, education profession and to the society of whom and for whom they are agents (Starrat, 1991:191).

The ethic of justice, on the other hand, develops awareness of individuals in mediating their behaviour in favour of the common good of the community (Schapper, n.d.: 21).

It assists us in regulating our actions or lives in accordance with certain general moral principles (Malpas, 2002). It is about observing the law (Starrat, 1994:59) and treating others according to some standard of justice which is uniformly applied to all relationships (Starrat, 1994:49). It emphasises commitment to the dignity of the individual (Starrat, 1994:55).

The ethic of care values emotions or focuses on character traits of sympathy, empathy, compassion, friendship, sensitivity and responsiveness (French & Weis, 2000:125; Held, 2006:10). The ethic of care upholds the 'good of a concern for the welfare of others that is unmediated by principles, rules or judgments that tell us that we ought to be concerned about their welfare.' (Slote, 2002). Those who consciously care for others are primarily not seeking to further their individual interests but intertwine their interests with those of the person they care for (Held, 2006:12). This ethic promotes caring that honours the dignity of every person and desires to see all people enjoying a fully human life (Starrat, 1994:52).

Furman (2004) extended the ethical framework by introducing the ethic of community. The ethic of community simply means that school leaders, educators, school staff, learners, parents and other community members should 'feel that they are morally responsible to engage in communal processes as they pursue the moral purpose of schooling and address the ongoing challenges of daily life and work in schools' (Furman, 2004). It focuses on the communal rather than the individual as a moral agent (Furman, 2004). The ethic of community is seen as a vehicle for leadership practice aimed at achieving 'valued outcomes such as social justice, racial equity, and learning for all children at school' (Furman, 2004). As indicated above, this ethical framework may be found valuable in moral decision making by other people confronted by moral dilemmas.

Craig and Haidt (2004) developed the Moral Foundations theory aimed at understanding 'why morality varies so much across cultures yet still shows so many similarities and recurrent themes.' They believed that each culture constructs virtues, narratives and

institutions on top of five innate universally available psychological systems which are considered to be the foundations of 'intuitive ethics' (http://faculty.virginia.edu/ haidtlab/mft/index.php). The five foundations are harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect and purity/sanctity (http://faculty.virginia.edu/ haidtlab/mft/index.php).

The various lenses discussed above are used in this study to see how the participants use some of these lenses to argue or justify their moral stand when faced with a moral dilemmas.

2.5. WHAT ARE MORAL DILEMMAS?

Moral dilemmas are defined as 'situations in which an agent morally ought to (and can) perform another action, even though the agent cannot perform both actions' (Gowans, 1994:47). Mothersill (1996:67) defines a moral dilemma as 'a crisis of conscience for a particular individual, occasioned by perception first that a decision is mandated, and second that of the options available to him none is morally permissible.' In a moral dilemma two considerations clash and the clash 'weighs heavily on the heart of the agent and threatens him or her.' The agent 'experiences the feelings of helplessness and indecisiveness, a sense of being at loss to know which path of action to follow' (Statsman, 1995:5). The agent is at loss as to which course of action to pursue such that there is a feeling of anguish (Statsman, 1995:7).

Mothersill (1996:68) cites Walter Sinnott-Armstrong that a moral dilemma is any situation where at the same time:

- There is a moral requirement for an agent to adopt one of two alternatives,
- Neither moral requirement is overridden in any morally relevant way,
- The agent cannot adopt both alternatives together, and
- The agent can adopt each alternative separately.

Stanford (2006) identifies the following crucial features of moral dilemmas:

The agent is required to do each of (two or more) actions; the agent can do each of the actions; but the agent cannot do both (or all) of the actions. The agent thus seems condemned to moral failure, no matter what he/she does, he/she will do something wrong (or fail to do something that she ought to do).

Mothersill (1996:66) therefore concludes that the following requirements for moral dilemmas are widely accepted in the literature:

- An agent in a moral dilemma has to choose between conflicting obligations, each of which is supported by strong, ordinarily decisive reasons.
- The agent cannot discharge both obligations, but failure on either count would be morally wrong.

Moral dilemmas sometimes create situations which are 'uncomfortable or awkward and demand difficult decision making' (Nieuwenhuis, 2009c:1). Statsman (1995:10), however, cautions that 'subjective feelings of helplessness, guilt, reluctance, and so forth are not sufficient for the existence of a moral dilemma, unless the options are really morally unbearable.'

There may be uncertainty about resolving an apparent dilemma, but 'it is thought to be impossible that morality could actually impose upon an agent two 'oughts' when both cannot be fulfilled' (Gowans, 1987:4). When faced with a moral dilemma, one has to take a moral decision.

2.6. HOW DO WE TAKE MORAL DECISIONS?

Taking a moral decision requires that one goes beyond considering his/her rights, personal values and beliefs but should also take into account moral principles, the law, the rights and the interests of others (Kallio, 2003). It is also crucial to consider the moral codes of different cultures, moral opinions based on feelings and the nature of consequences (Rachels & Rachels, 2007: 29-33). There is a need to be aware of the 'difference between the right to hold an opinion on a matter of private concern and the

right to use the opinion as a basis of moral decision making' (Kallio, 2003). School leaders, in particular, should be able to delineate between personal preferences and moral principles and discern a balance between facts and moral judgments (Kallio, 2003).

Three approaches to making moral decisions applicable to educational leadership are deontologism, consequentialism, and mixed consequentialism. The three approaches are discussed below.

2.6.1. Deontologism

Examples of deontological ethical theories are Christian ethics, and Kantian ethics. For Christian ethics, the application of Christ's teaching of the New Testament commandment, which is 'Love thy neighbour', is essential (Warburton, 2004:41). Deontological ethical theory 'stresses that each of us has certain duties – actions that we ought or ought not to perform – and that acting morally amounts to doing our duty, whatever consequences might follow from this' (Warburton, 2004:41).

Kant developed a deontological ethic that depends on reasoning and rationality. In a deontological ethic, the focus is on moral laws, duties, obligations, responsibilities and prohibitions (http://www.ismbook.com/deontologism.html/; Mizzoni, 2010:107). It is based on what we ought to do. Kant holds that 'some actions are right or obligatory, irrespective of their consequences, while other actions are wrong, irrespective of their consequences' (Tännsjön, 2002:57). Kant views duty as 'the necessity for acting from respect for moral law.' Kant believed that reason could be used to work out a consistent, non-overridable set of moral principles (Pojman, 2006).

For Kant, a moral action is one performed out of a sense of duty 'rather than simply out of inclination or feeling or the possibility of some kind of gain for the person performing it' (Warburton, 2004:43). The sense of duty is the only acceptable motive for moral action (Warburton, 2004:43). However the 'right' choice that is blind to the consequences may not be the desired route.

2.6.2. Consequentialism

Consequentialism is the moral theory that 'assesses things – actions, persons, policies, and institutions – by value of their consequences' (Brink, 2005:1). Moral right, wrong and obligation depend solely on the value of the consequences (Hunter-Lowe, 2007). The motives and beliefs of the agent, circumstances or intrinsic nature of the act, and kinds of acts (things we do) or anything that happens before the act do not enter into determination of what is morally right (Hunter-Lowe, 2007; Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2006; Suikkanen, 2009:13).

Consequentialism views an action to be 'morally right if and only if, among the actions that the agent could perform, there is no other action, the outcome of which has greater expected value' (Shaw, 2006:12). It should result in good consequences or 'lead to at least as much good as any alternative act' (Suikkanen, 2009:13). The morally right action for an agent to perform is therefore the one that has the best consequences or results in the most good (Shaw, 2006:7). Consequentialism provides 'an account of right and wrong that is morally attractive, philosophically respectable, and viable in practice' (Shaw, 2006:19).

Utilitarianism is the best-known type of consequentialist ethical theory and is 'based on the assumption that the ultimate aim of all human activity is (in some sense) happiness' (Warburton, 2004:48). Schools entirely following consequentialism make any decision 'that augurs for the common good and has good consequences despite whether the decision is impelled by the individual or any specific concern for the individual who is making it' (Hunter-Lowe, 2007). When faced with a moral dilemma, the possibility of negative consequences for whatever choice is made exist and consequentialism may not always be the correct route to go.

2.6.3. Mixed consequentialism

Mixed consequentialism refers to moral decisions that may not depend on the consequences all of the time. It 'involves the reasons for the rightness of the actions in

all situations' (Hunter-Lowe, 2007). It is 'a combination of both consequentialism and de-ontologism and it only stands to reason that each approach has application in varying circumstances' (Hunter-Lowe, 2007). The moral decision is based on a variety of sources such as culture, religion, law, etc., depending on the situation and the complexity of the moral problem at hand.

These moral decision-making approaches are important to my study in that people faced with moral dilemmas may decide to use one or the combination of the approaches in making decisions. School leaders therefore have an option of following consequentialism, deontologism or mixed consequentialism when making a moral decision.

2.7. WHY IS MORAL DECISION MAKING CRUCIAL IN SCHOOLS?

The *Cape Argus* of 3 March 2010 published a story in which a principal was investigated by the Western Cape Department of Education on allegations of sexual misconduct. Learners accused the principal of having a sexual relationship with a learner. The learners alleged that the principal promoted a Grade 11 learner who had failed because she was sleeping with him. This is an example of stories of moral decay that tarnish the image of school leaders at our schools. The dignity of our school leaders may be protected by enhancing their moral decision-making skills so that they can be good examples to both the learners and the society. Besides the moral decay in schools, moral decision is essential for school leaders to play their roles effectively.

School leaders' daily schedule is filled with a variety of moral dilemmas that require moral decision making (Denig & Quinn, 2001). They are under pressure to 'confront and resolve conflicting interests as they endeavour to balance a variety of values and expectations in their decision making' (Cranston, Ehrich & Kimber, 2003:136). With regards to themselves, school leaders' duties may be in conflict with their obligations or moral principles and/or their obligations may be in conflict with their moral principles (Lemmon, 1962:60). Again, as public officials, school leaders, have moral obligations to

many people, the society, the profession, the governing bodies and students. This makes it 'difficult for them to distinguish from what is wrong or right or what they ought to do or which perspectives are right in moral terms' (Lashway, 1996).

School leaders also have the twin obligations of supporting the efforts of educators and remaining sensitive to their needs while at the same time they have a broad obligation to promote adherence to school goals. Sometimes these obligations of being sensitive to the needs of educators and compliance to school goals pose a conflict for them (Dennig & Quinn, 2001:43). They also have a moral obligation of considering the rights of staff members and learners when making a decision which may be in conflict with legal mandates (Dockery, 2009:4). This results in competing values and interests that can be addressed by moral decision making.

School leaders are also morally challenged by the fact that educators at schools do not always share the same morals of what is right, good or wrong and their values impact on what occurs in schools (Vitton, 2009:92-93). They are also confronted by the manifestation of different cultures in a multicultural context, which they must permit to co-exist (Robbins & Trabichet, 2009:52). Society is becoming more and more demographically diverse, which requires that school leaders 'develop, foster and lead tolerant and demographic schools' (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001:4). Moreover, they are also looked upon in advising and guiding learners, educators and parents regarding ethical issues (Dockery, 2009:14; Mills, 2006:1).

The fact that school leaders regulate human interaction according to prevailing norms necessitates effective moral decision making (Noberg, 2003:2). As role-models, school leaders should be able to make good moral choices that can send a positive note to the learners they are teaching rather than what is taking place now, where they make poor moral choices. School leaders are to provide experiences for learners that will help transform them into adults capable of living good lives (Dempster, Freakley & Parry, 1998). The behaviour of school leaders may increase or decrease the quality of life of

learners (Paul & Elder, 2006:2). Their action 'sends messages of right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable, just or unjust to learners' (Nieuwenhuis, 2006:212).

Besides all the factors mentioned above, moral decision making is crucial because 'ethical dilemmas are commonplace in today's world of hurried decision making' (Dennig & Quinn, 2001:43). School leaders 'confront daily challenges fraught with a variety of ethical dilemmas and moral decisions' (Denig & Quinn, 2001:43). Shapiro and Stefkovich (2001:3) cite Foster (1986) that 'Each administrative decision carries with it a restructuring of human life: that is why administration at its heart is the resolution of moral dilemmas.' School leaders therefore need criteria for decision making when faced with moral dilemmas (Robbins & Trabichet, 2009:52).

Moral decision making in schools will enable school leaders to deal effectively with the moral dilemmas they encounter on a daily basis, which will consequently avert the problem of moral decay. It will also ensure that school leaders make good moral choices. Moral decision making is crucial in schools, in that it is essential to highlight acts that enhance the well-being of learners and criticise those that harm or diminish their well-being (Paul & Elder, 2006:2).

2.8. CONCLUSION

One may conclude that schools have a moral responsibility of raising the young according to morals, norms and values, prepare them to take a responsible place in the community, promote social norms, revive the spirit of ubuntu and encourage faith of different persuasions. Such activities may be of great help in minimising the impact of moral decay in schools. What lenses and approaches do school leaders use in taking moral decisions? In a time where we are faced with moral degeneration, it is important to understand how school leaders deal with and argue about moral dilemmas.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research design and the methodology used. The design of the study focused on an exploration of school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. Studying their views on what they regard as important values and analysing how they argue about a specific moral dilemma enabled me to gain insight into their moral understanding and reasoning. The main argument that informed the research design is that our values and value orientations are pertinent when confronted with a moral dilemma as they inform the way in which we argue and decide on a course of action in resolving the dilemma.

The research is located mainly within a qualitative (interpretivist/constructivist) paradigm and is focused on producing a reconstructed understanding of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It is thus located within hermeneutic phenomenology, as it aims to understand school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a relevant approach, as it is used to study 'the life world or human experience as it is lived' (Laverty, 2003).

3.2. INTERPRETIVISM OR CONSTRUCTIVISM

The interpretive research paradigm fits this study well, as its purpose was to explore school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. The goal of the study was to access the meanings of the participants' experiences rather than predicting their behaviour (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007). Constructivism is synonymous with interpretivism, in that they both aim at 'understanding the complex world from the lived experience from the point of view of those who live it.' (Schwandt, 1994:118).

The interpretive research paradigm views knowledge as a social construction (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007). It proposes that there are multiple realities of phenomena that are constructed and can be altered by the knower and that differ across time and space

(Laverty, 2003; Neil, 2006). By this claim, it intends to acknowledge that 'humans are incapable of total objectivity because they are situated in a reality constructed by subjective experiences' (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007:614).

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research is located within hermeneutic phenomenology, that is to say, an interpretive investigation of the phenomena of everyday life. Its emphasis is on the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality 'as something separate' from the person (Valle & Halling, 1989). For Polkinghorne (1983), this implies that the focus is on trying to understand or comprehend meanings of human experience as it is lived. Phenomenology becomes hermeneutical when its method is taken to be interpretive (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a).

Gadamer (1976:389) viewed interpretation as a fusion of horizons, a dialectical interaction between the expectation of the interpreter and the meaning of the text (Polkinghorne, 1983). In terms of Gadamer's view, understanding and interpretation are bound together and interpretation is always an evolving process (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a).

For the purposes of this study, a branch of hermeneutic phenomenology called empirical hermeneutic phenomenology will be used. Sixsmith and Sixsmith (1987) argue that phenomenological and empirical approaches to research are not antithetical and as long as the central principles of hermeneutic phenomenology are maintained, phenomenological enquiry could benefit from a more rigorous empirical framework. Giorgi's (1971) phenomenological approach is empirical because it bases itself on factual data that are collected for the purpose of examination and explication. Another reason it is viewed as an empirical research method is that it follows strict data collection and analysis processes (Sixsmith & Sixsmith, 1987). The methodological and data analysis design of the proposed research are compliant with the latter set of criteria (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a).

True to the hermeneutic phenomenological stance, this study takes as its point of departure the belief that the world is made up of people with their own intentions, values and beliefs. Their beliefs and values are reflected in the way they see and do things, and why they do things in a certain way. These beliefs and values are reflected in their actions and behaviour and in the way they express their views in social interaction. The research thus looks at human events not as isolated incidents, but in a more holistic manner that locates individual actions in their socio-cultural contexts. Human activities are thus investigated in terms of meanings, i.e. why people say this, do this or act in this or that way (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a).

In this regard it is important to take note of Scheurich's (1997:168) dismantling of the notion of the autonomous self – or selves – by describing the self/selves as an 'event or enactment of an interactive intersection of multiple formations' occupying a particular cultural array. Although individuals are different 'enactments' within the array, all are connected within this cultural matrix and it is this interconnectivity that endows cultural knowledge with shared understanding. Individuality, then, can be seen as arising from the way in which culturally available knowledge is reflected upon, linked to previous experience, and restructured in uniquely understood ways (Nieuwenhuis, 2009a). It is accepted that this position could provide me with a lens through which to study educators' values and moral reasoning.

Although the proposed approach requires self-reflection and interpretation on my part as a researcher, these interpretations will emerge out of the local context of the participants and will privilege the voice of the participants. The task is to afford participants the opportunity to articulate their values, beliefs and attitudes as expressed in moral reasoning and to facilitate discussion and clarification of these intentions so as to enable me, through the process of data analysis, to identify patterns, trends, and themes. The study is aimed at understanding educators' moral reasoning from the point of view of the educator. The emphasis is thus placed on the educators' frame of reference, on how they see things from within, without making pronouncements on whether their views are morally right or wrong.

3.4. METHODOLOGY

The theoretical framework presented is aimed at understanding the interplay between values and moral reasoning and the contestations in the overlap between morality and social conventions (culture). A combination of quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques was used in a concurrent mixed method design, using a single data gathering instrument. A mixed method design is 'an approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that attempts to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints (always including the standpoints of qualitative and quantitative research)' (Johnson, Onwuegbuzzie & Turner, 2007:113). It is concurrent, in that closed-ended items, comprising of multiple-choice and ranking questions were used and combined with open-ended questions on moral dilemmas in a single questionnaire. The open-ended questions on moral dilemmas are qualitative, while the closed-ended questions are quantitative. In addition, group discussions on the moral dilemmas were conducted after the questionnaire was completed, where viewpoints could be argued and debated, allowing for greater depth in the understanding of specific views held by participants. Johnson *et al*. (2007:115-116) cite Greene, Caracelli & Graham that the mixed method design is used for '*triangulation* (i.e. seeking for convergence and corroboration of the results from the different methods) and *complementarity* (i.e. seeking for elaboration, enhancement, illustration, clarification of the results from one method with the result of the other method).'

The aim is to establish the possible value orientations and personal value structure of educators and based on this, to explore how they reason about moral dilemmas. To do this, participants were required to complete a section containing multiple choice and ranking questions that should provide me not only with an individualised value structure per participant, but also through the use of quantitative data analysis provide a broad overall preferred values structure.

A separate section of the questionnaire required that participants complete open-ended questions in which they were confronted with two moral dilemmas. The purpose of the

dilemmas is to create some form of cognitive dissonance (see Blatt and Kohlberg, 1975) requiring inward reflection and reasoning to restore and argue through the dilemma. Blatt and Kohlberg's method of Moral Dilemma Discussion (MDD) is suitable for collecting data in this study because it rests on the following three assumptions, which are essential in this study (Lind, 2002:1):

- Moral and democratic behaviour is largely determined by a person's ability to apply his or her moral ideals in a conflict situation, that is, on his or her competence to make moral judgments and to enter into a moral discourse with opponents.
- The moral competencies can (and need to) be fostered throughout the life-span, that is from early age through childhood, youth and adulthood, in families, schools, universities and at the workplace.
- Moral competence and other desired outcomes are best fostered through providing a learning environment in which the individual is challenged by a moral task and in which he or she feels safe to freely express his/her moral ideals and arguments and in which he/she respects others' right to their own opinion.

This reasoning process was captured in text in the questionnaire and was subjected to an empirical hermeneutic phenomenological analysis. Further clarification on the stance taken emerges from the moral dilemma discussions that followed the completion of the questionnaire.

In order to verify the possible influence that group norming might have, students were given the opportunity to discuss the moral dilemmas after they had completed the questionnaire. A moderator facilitated the flow of the discussion without pronouncing any moral judgment, but could ask questions for clarification and probing purposes. The moderator took field-notes capturing the main arguments raised and discussed. After discussions, students were given the opportunity to add to or change any aspect pertaining to a specific moral dilemma if they so wished. A space was provided in the questionnaire where these after-thoughts could be added.

3.5. SAMPLING

The study forms part of a larger study conducted by the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies of the University of Pretoria under the project leadership of Prof. Nieuwenhuis. My study is unique in the sense that it only focuses on two moral dilemmas included in the survey and is limited to a single province where students attend contact sessions.

All students enrolled for the distance education Module OWB781 of the B.Ed. (Hons.) in Education Management attending the January 2010 contact sessions were invited to participate. A total of approximately 800 students from across all nine provinces normally attend the sessions, which are conducted at twenty sites. Given the vast amount of data to be captured and analysed, only students attending contact sessions held in the Mpumalanga Province, at Nelspruit, were sampled. This group was sampled because it is a homogenous group in terms of religion, language, culture and is mainly from rural areas of Mpumalanga. The participants are Swazis, with Christianity as their religious orientation.

The number of educators who attended this session was 73. The existing contact teaching programme makes provision for a discussion of values and morals on the second day of the contact session and the questionnaire and ensuing discussion simply replaced that lecture. The only difference was that the questionnaire provided a specific moral dilemma structure to the session.

3.6. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.6.1. Questionnaires

The data gathering instruments used in this research are questionnaires and field notes.

Questionnaires were selected because they provide irreplaceable ways of ascertaining 'attitudes, opinions, perceptions and reports of individual behavior' (Booysen, 2003:129). They have the added advantage of being completed without any direct assistance or influence from the researcher (Salkind, 2006:138), and the open-ended

sections provided participants with the opportunity to clearly articulate their own views on a dilemma.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts, biographical information, values orientation (**Section A**) and moral dilemma scenarios (**Section B**).

The biographical information included data on participants' gender, age, home language and religious orientation. These variables were used to select a homogeneous participant group from Mpumalanga. The purpose was to curb the possible influences that other variables such as language, religion, or urbanisation might have had on the emerging trends.

Participants were expected to complete Section A by reading statements and ranking four possible choices for each question according to their preference from 1 to 4. The scale of 1 represents the highest preference whilst 4 represents the lowest preference. They were also required to use a numerical numbering of 1 to 8 to rank eight values in their personal order of priority. The scale of 1 represents the highest priority whilst 8 represents the lowest priority on the list. This was done to determine the possible value orientation and individual value structure of the school leaders.

Participants were required to complete Section B by responding to open-ended questions after reading two moral dilemmas. They had to make certain moral choices and motivate why they had made such choices. The purpose of this section was to see how they argue about moral dilemmas.

3.6.2. Field-notes

I acted as moderator for the completion of the questionnaires and ensuing discussions. During the discussions of the moral dilemmas, I made a written record of pertinent information on the main arguments raised and discussed. The field notes added to the data collected by the questionnaires to corroborate the evidence and to provide further clarification on the reasoning of participants.

3.7. PILOTING OF THE DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire used forms part of a larger project researching values and moral reasoning. The first data collection was run in June 2009 as a pilot phase of the research. Based on the analysis of the data, the questionnaire was revised and refined. Item testing and validation of the questionnaire forms part of another research study and will not be discussed here. The moral dilemmas used in the January data collection phase were specifically developed for my research study, while the values section of the questionnaire formed part of the larger research study. The data obtained from the values section of the questionnaire will be used in this research only in so far as they provide additional information on the values structures of the participants and will enhance the analysis of the moral dilemma discussions.

3.8. DATA ANALYSIS

In terms of the data gathered in the quantitative section of the questionnaire, basic statistical analysis was undertaken to determine educators' value preferences, from which a tentative value structure could be inferred. This step in the research process was needed to establish a provisional framework of educators' value orientations. For the purposes of this exercise, participants' value orientation towards a set of eight values was measured (see Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1 VALUES

Aesthetic (to value imagination and innovation as expressed in art, drama and music)	
Caring (to be deeply involved with a group that has a greater purpose beyond one's self)	
Education (to learn and to do work that will allow me to utilise my best talents)	
Family and friends (to experience intimacy and close companionship with others)	
Health (to be physically and mentally fit and healthy)	

Justice (to live and work in abidance with the human rights enshrined in the Constitution)	
Respect (to work with people I respect and to be respected by others)	
Wealth (to have enough money to do the things I want)	

(See Nieuwenhuis, 2010)

In the questionnaire, twelve multiple choice questions were posed. In each question, the relative weight of a value was gauged in terms of other values. The participants were requested to rank the four values in each question, thus weighing the relative weight of a value compared to the others. For example:

1.   If I could have just one wish to come true, I would wish for:

• the end of world famine	
• a R1,000,000 Lottery win	
• to live an extra 10 years	
• to have what my heart desires	

In this way, the relative weight of each value was tested six times, each time weighing it against other values. In the last question, the eight values were listed and participants had to rank them in order of importance. A total of 12 multiple choice questions was given to the students. By analysing the responses to these questions, a profile of most preferred values was developed. The two emerging patterns revealed the degree of consistency and the emerging value structure. This emerging value structure was used to see how these values influence participants' moral reasoning and if their moral reasoning was consistent with what they proclaim to be their values (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

The main focus of the research was on the moral reasoning of students. This is contained in Section B of the questionnaire, which forms the basis of the hermeneutic phenomenological analysis of the data.

Ajjawi & Higgs (2007), citing van Manen, state that the aim of phenomenological data analysis is to 'transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful'. Giorgi (1985) outlines four key steps in the data analysis process that will be used in this study, namely (i) reading the entire description to get a sense of the whole statement; (ii) discriminating meaning units within a philosophical perspective; (iii) transforming the participant's everyday expressions into moral language; and (iv) synthesising transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of the phenomenon.

In using Giorgi's steps for data analysis, a systematic method of thematic data analysis was used. This method allowed for systematic identification of participants' interpretations and constructs (first-order constructs, which were phenomenologically based), which was then layered with the researchers' own understandings, interpretations, and constructs (second-order constructs, which are hermeneutic in nature). The aim was to construct an animating, rich description (text) of participants' moral reasoning in terms of the specific moral themes of moral right and moral wrong that emerged from the data and relate that to their purported value structure. In doing this, the aim was to produce phenomenological descriptions that are rich and evocative, invoking in readers the *phenomenological nod* in recognition of a phenomenon so richly described that they too might have experienced it (van Manen, 1997: 27).

The analysis was further enhanced by analysing the discussion that followed the completion of the questionnaire. From the field notes taken, I was able to verify whether the meaning distilled from the text was supported by what materialises during the discussions.

Diagram 3.2: The basic form of the hermeneutic circle (Bontekoe, 1996: 4)
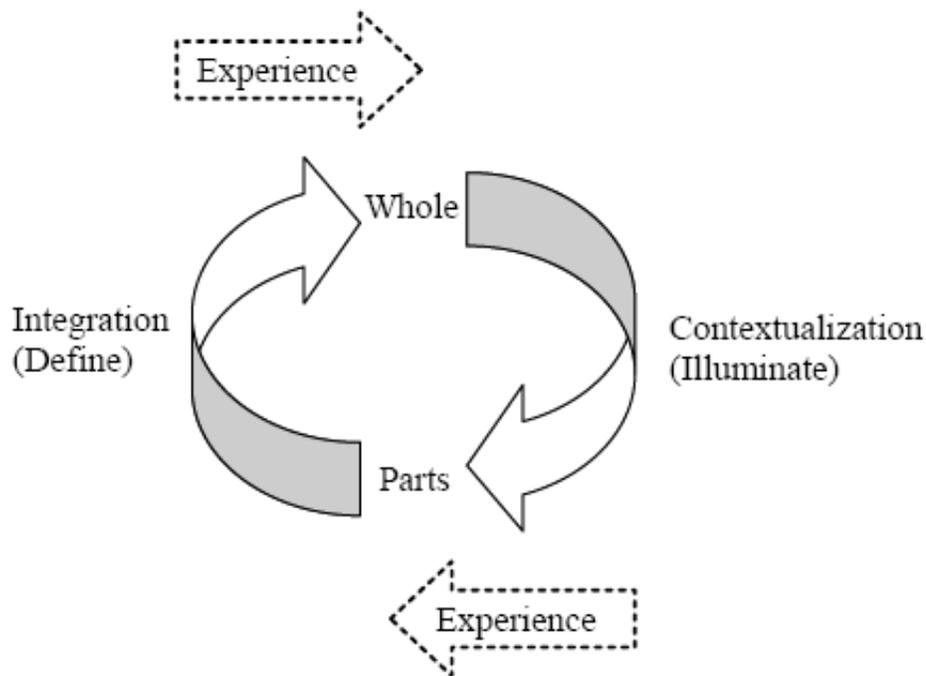
The texts constructed for analysis consisted of the responses of participants to the moral dilemmas posed and the field notes of the moderator. These texts have been read to get a sense of the whole statement regarding the moral dilemma (*immersion* in van Manen's terms). The process involved engaging with the meaning of the texts, where the aim was to get a 'sense' or preliminary interpretation of the texts, which then facilitated coding. The field notes written during the discussion phase assisted in the recreation of the context in which reasoning occurred, which was an important part of text interpretation. For the purposes of the study it was not important how many educators held a specific view, but what was important was their reasons for holding that view and whether it resonated with their value structure.

Based on the reading of the texts, meaning units within the text were identified. These first-order constructs refer to participants' ideas expressed in their own words or phrases, which capture the precise detail of what the person is saying in terms of a moral argument. The Weft QDA software programme was used to capture and code the

data in terms of meaningful categories. The meaning units were then transformed into moral language regarding what is held to be morally right or wrong. This was an iterative process to verify whether the understanding of educators' notions of morally right or wrong was well grasped. This enabled me to synthesise transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of the moral reasoning, taking the value orientations of students into account.

3.9. TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

The research was located mainly within a qualitative (interpretivist/constructivist) paradigm and focused on producing a reconstructed understanding of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity were thus employed. Lincoln and Guba (1985:991) include credibility, applicability, dependability and confirmability, as key criteria of trustworthiness. It is generally accepted that engaging multiple methods of data collection, such as was implemented in this research, enhance trustworthiness.

The aim of this research was to probe for a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and not to search for causal relationships. Rather than examining or measuring the observable features of a phenomenon, the research sets out to penetrate the human understandings and constructions about the phenomenon 'morality'. In addition, looking at it from the constructivist perspective holds that reality is changing, whether the observer wishes it or not, and that there exist multiple realities that people have in their minds. The different insights gained describe different perspectives that all reflect the unique reality and identity of respondents. What I was dealing with was therefore not so much an exact, measurable finding, but an emerging reality that I am describing and analysing (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). What I was therefore focusing on was a crystallisation that provided me with a complex, deep, but only partial understanding of the topic (Richardson, 2000:934). The emergent reality is not in the first place a result of some form of measuring, but a reality that emerged from the various data gathering techniques and data analyses employed and that represents my own reinterpreted understanding of the phenomenon. What I describe as my findings is that which is

crystallised from the data. This crystallised reality is credible in as far as those reading my data and analysis are able to see the same emerging pattern and this adds to the trustworthiness of my research.

3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It should be noted that ethical clearance for undertaking this study has already been obtained by the project leader. A separate application was made to allow me to access the data for the purposes of this study. I thus focused mainly on what I as a researcher did to ensure that the ethical requirements for the project are adhered too.

Research participants were students attending the distance education contact sessions for the Module *Managing Values and Human Rights in Education.* The curriculum of this module expects students to participate in discussions about values, morals and moral dilemmas. Thus far, these discussions have not been recorded in any way or form. The research used this opportunity to generate research data for this study. This implied that the sample constituted a captive audience and measures were taken to ensure that educators' participation was voluntary. Students who wished to refrain from completing the questionnaire or who wished to withdraw from the research at any time were informed of this right and were allowed to do so.

It was essential for the purposes of the research that participants' identity remained anonymous. The instructions in the questionnaire made it explicit that anonymity was guaranteed. Students were thus informed that by accepting and completing the questionnaire they gave *informed consent* that the data gathered through the questionnaire survey would only be used for research purposes and would not be taken into account as part of any assessment or marks towards the completion of the module. In order to honour this guarantee, no names were recorded of any person completing a questionnaire. The questionnaire stated explicitly what the purpose and intent of the research was.

The moral dilemmas presented to the students may or may not resonate with their previous personal experiences. In this sense it may be regarded as intrusive. However, the questionnaire presents each moral dilemma as a hypothetical case, thus reducing the possibly intrusive nature of the dilemma. It was explained to the students that they could withdraw from the research if they experienced a moral dilemma as too personal.

I acknowledge and accept that I am privy to the questionnaires completed by the educators and the field notes made by the moderator. For this reason, I have committed myself to using recognised standards of scientific competence and ethical research to report the research (Bak, 2004:28), to treat all data in a way that protects the confidentiality and anonymity of the students involved in the study and ensure that all records pertaining to the research project are kept in case of any queries and disputes.

3.11. SUMMARY

This chapter presents the research design and the methodology of the study. The qualitative research and the questionnaires were chosen for the study as they enabled the researcher to explore the school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. The next chapter, Chapter 4, presents the data analysis and the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

As stated in Chapter 1, the study explored school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality. Separate quantitative and qualitative questionnaire data were gathered and analysed. In this study, reference will be made to the quantitative analysis in so far as it will assist in the interpretation of the qualitative data, but the chapter focuses on the analysis of the qualitative data. The analysis of the quantitative data is comprehensively reported on in another study (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). The chapter therefore focus on the analysis of the qualitative section of the questionnaire that dealt specifically with the moral reasoning of participants. As a way of orientation, some key aspects regarding the participants as a sample group will be discussed.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The gender, age, language and religious orientation of the participants are presented in Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4.

4.2. 1 Distribution according to gender

Table 4.1:

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	30	41.1
Female	43	58.9
Total	73	100

Of the 73 participants, 41,1% were male and 58,9% female. This is typical of the teaching profession, where there are more females teaching at school, and also reflective of the larger student group enrolled for the B.Ed. Honours degree. It coincides with the findings of Arends (2007:14) in a study on the employment status of educators in South Africa that '66 percent of the total number of educators are female and 34

percent are male.' This trend was found to be 'reflected in all the population groups, where female teachers constitute the vast majority of educators' (Arends, 2007:14).

4.2.2. Distribution according to age

Table 4.2:

Age	Frequency	%
<30 years	0	0
31-40	20	27.0
41-50	42	56.8
>50	12	16.2
Total	74	100

Overall, 56,8 percent of the participants were between 41 and 50 years of age, while 27,0 percent were between 31 and 40 years of age. Only 16,2 percent of the respondents were above 50 years. This is consistent with Arends' (2007) claim that the 'majority of heads of departments, deputy principals and principals, by virtue of their experience fall within 41 to 50 years of age.' Although participants were not requested to indicate their positions in schools, it is possible that some of the participants may already hold management positions. The fact that they were enrolled for a management-specific qualification is indicative of an aspiration to advance to these positions.

4.2.3. Distribution according to language

For the purposes of this study, an attempt was made to use a homogeneous group in terms of language and culture to allow cultural aspects that may be specific to the group to emerge. Of the total number of participants, 74,5 percent were SiSwati, followed by Zulu with 15,3 percent (a closely related language and cultural grouping) (see Table 4.3). Homogeneity in terms of language and culture was thus ensured. The dominance of the SiSwati language also implies that the group is mostly from a common cultural background.

Table 4.3:

Language	Frequency	%
Afrikaans	0	0
English	2	3.4
Sepedi	3	5.1
Setswana	0	0
Zulu	9	15.3
Xhosa	0	0
Sesotho	0	0
Is Ndebele	0	0
Tsonga	1	1.7
Venda	0	0
SiSwati	44	74.5
Total	59	100

4.2.4. Distribution according to religious orientation

Another important requirement in terms of homogeneity is religious affiliation. In Chapter 2 the possible role of religion in terms of morals and values were presented. The composition of the group in terms of religion is presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4:

Religious orientation	Frequency	%
Atheist	0	0
Traditional African	4	5.6
Christianity	68	94.4
Hindu	0	0
Islam/Moslem	0	0
Total	72	100

The vast majority of the group (94,4%) were from a Christian religious orientation. Only a small number had a different religious orientation (Traditional African belief, rating 5,6 percent).

The group of the participants was highly representative of the SiSwati language, with Christian religious orientation in a rural educator community. Their views could possibly reflect the general view of other educators meeting these criteria.

4.3 VALUE ORIENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS

One of the sub-questions asked in this study dealt with the value orientation of the sample group. It was argued in Chapter 2 that values may have a strong influence on the moral reasoning of people. It was thus important to determine the value orientation of the participants. Although the study of the value orientation formed part of another study, it is important to provide an overview of the data regarding the value orientation of the participants.

Section A of the questionnaire explored the values of school leaders. The first part of this section was comprised of a multiple choice questions where the school leaders were to respond to a question with four alternative values and choose the one that they preferred. The four alternatives in the question represented four different values and the participant had to weigh the four values and select the most preferred value. A value key index for weighing the values of the school leaders was thus developed (Nieuwenhuis, 2009b). Eight values were selected for this purpose (see Table 4.5)

TABLE 4.5 VALUES KEYS

Value	Description
Wealth	Materialistic values and the importance of money and material possessions
Caring	Concern about others and their welfare
Aesthetic	Valuing things of beauty, art and music
Family and friends	Importance of family and family relations
Education	Valuing education and continuing education and training
Health	To be physically and mentally fit and healthy
Respect	To work with people I respect and to be respected by others
Justice (fairness/justice)	A strong sense of justice and concern for the rights of others and self

The consistency in the response pattern was verified by weighing various values against one another. The pattern distilled from the responses provides a possible value orientation of participants. The second part of section A had eight values listed in alphabetical order which participants were asked to rank in terms of their personal preference. The ranked values were then compared to the value orientation identified in the first part. The results are represented by figure 4.1.

FIGURE 4.1: RANKING OF VALUES
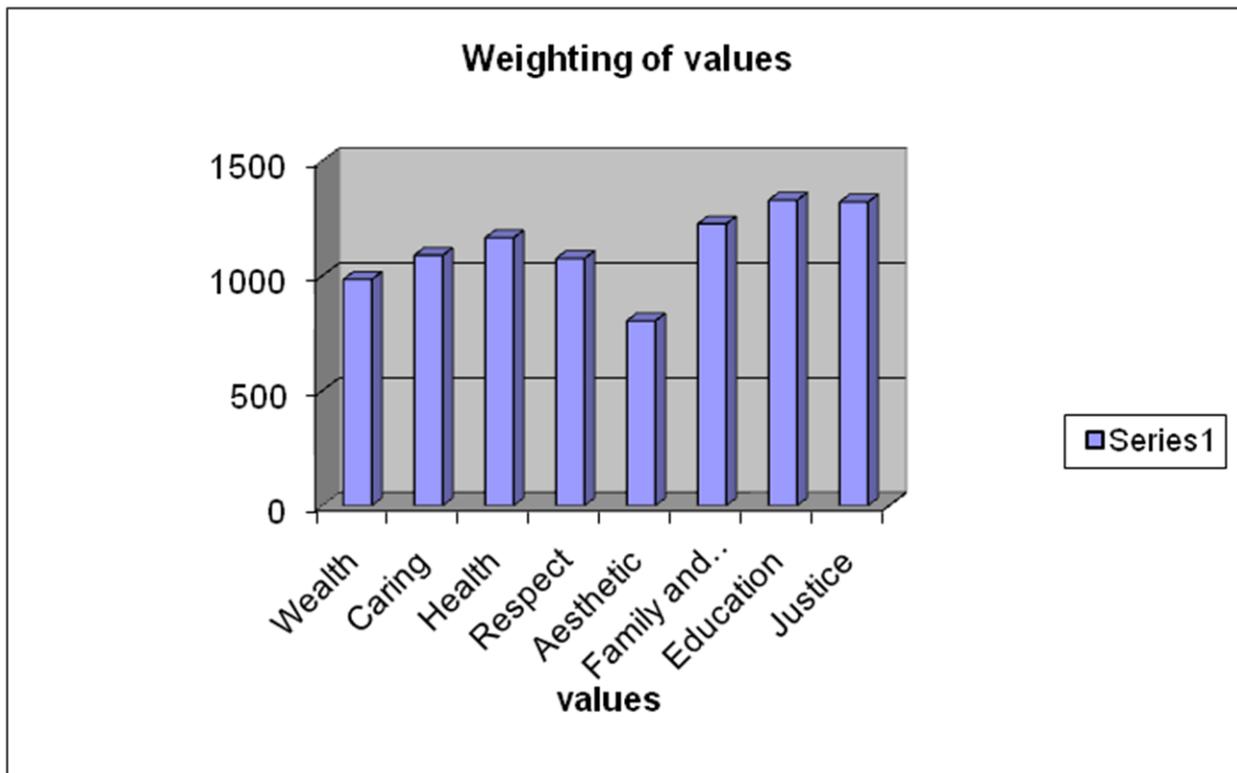
In terms of the data analysed (see Figure 4.1.), justice and education were ranked first. Caring was ranked fourth after family and friends and health. Based on the discussion in Chapter 2, it could be assumed that if justice, education, family and friends, health and caring are strong values as indicated, then these would strongly feature as lenses through which a moral dilemma would be argued. In the next paragraph I will analyse the lenses through which school leaders argued about a moral dilemma, to establish whether this assumption is valid.

4.4. LENSES USED BY PARTICIPANTS IN MAKING MORAL CHOICES

In Chapter 2 I discussed three approaches used in moral decision making which are deontologism, consequentialism and mixed consequentialism. Different lenses through which a moral dilemma could be approached have also been discussed in Chapter 2. From the data it seem that the participants have used the ethic of justice, ethic of care/moral development theory, classical ethical theory, cultural relativism and ethical subjectivism to argue or justify their moral stands in these dilemmas. Each possible lens will be discussed separately below in each moral dilemma.

4.5. MORAL REASONING

4.5.1. Moral dilemma 1

Stephen Mabe was recently appointed as a school principal at Achievement Secondary school. After taking up the position he noticed that George Mollo, the Grade 12 Mathematics teacher, was having an affair with Sarah, a grade 9 learner. According to George's record he is an excellent Mathematics teacher and has obtained a more than 80% pass rate for his Gr 12 students over the last five years. Yesterday, Sarah came to your office and told you that she wants to leave the school. When you discussed the matter with her, you discovered that she was pregnant with George's child. You have also learnt that she is fifteen years old, meaning that her pregnancy constitutes statutory rape. Apart from the fact that George may be criminally prosecuted, the education department regulations make it clear that an educator may not have an affair with a learner. Such a relationship would constitute serious misconduct. But George is an excellent teacher and Steven Mabe wants to get good Grade 12 results in the upcoming exams to show that his appointment was the right one.

In this dilemma, Stephen Mabe, the school principal is faced with a moral choice to decide whether or not to institute disciplinary proceedings against the Grade 12 Mathematics teacher (George Mollo) who is having an affair with a Grade 9 learner who later becomes pregnant. For the principal, George Mollo teaches a key subject and has a good work record as he has obtained a more than 80% pass rate over the last five years, which is something good for the school. On the other hand, the principal also has

the responsibility to correct his unacceptable conduct by implementing departmental policies as well as to protect the rights of the learner. The moral choice that the principal has to face is whether to protect the educator or to prosecute him. By instituting disciplinary proceedings against the teacher he would be sacrificing the good Mathematics results of the school. But protecting the Mathematics teacher to maintain these results would imply that he has failed to protect the rights of the learner and condoned the teacher's unacceptable behaviour.

From the data, four possible lenses through which the dilemma has been approached could be identified: the ethic of justice, the ethic of care/Moral development theory, Classical ethical theory and cultural relativism. The possible evidence of each lens that emerged from the data is presented below:

a) The ethic of justice

In using the ethic of justice, a school leader will follow the rule of law and all applicable regulations from the education department to ensure that justice is served. It emerged from the data that justice should be applied when rights of others are infringed. Two participants in particular used the word justice:

'Justice has to prevail.' (Participant 1049)

'…..justice should take its course' (Participant 1014)

The following quotes from the participants indicate that they have used the law (which implies justice) to argue their case:

'…..the law should take its course' (Participant 1003)

'….. that will be immoral of the educator to break the law.' (Participant 1005). It is important to note that in this case morality was linked to the law, implying that for this participant the law may serve as a moral lens.

'….. it does not change the law.' (Participant 1007)

'…..the law states it clearly that no teacher should involve a love affair with a learner.' (Participant 1012)

'…..he had transgress the law….' (Participant 1014)

'…..no one is above the law….' (Participant 1018)

'…..the law must take its course to anyone' (Participant 1020)

'…..law it's law and we must obey the law….' (Participant 1026)

'…..George did not follow the law….' (Participant 1029)

'Law is law and must be kept' (Participant 1030)

'…..misconduct in the eyes of the law….' (Participant 1047)

'…..the law should have taken its course' (Participant 1048)

'…..George has acted out of the law' (Participant 1067)

'The law must take its own course irregardless of competency or incompetency' (Participant 1080)

Reference was also made to the Constitution, the acts, regulations, code of conduct, departmental and school policies as statutes used to ensure the justice. Participants referred to the Constitution in the following manner:

'… [it is against]…the constitution of the country' (Participant 1005)

'…..not forgetting the learners about their rights in the constitution….' (Participant 1007)

'…..her right to education is consistent with the section 29 of the constitution' (Participant 1033).

'Every child has a right to education entrenched in the constitution' (Participant 1058)

'…..constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that every child has the right to basic education….' (Participants 1081, 1007)

'it will not work because the police states that no educator is allowed to have an affair with the school child' (Participant 1005)

'…..it is stated clearly in SASA how educators should behave towards learners' (Participant 1007)

'…..the education department regulation make it clear that an educator may not have an affair with a learner.' (Participant 1009)

In referring to the Constitution, it is inferred that the participants' line of reasoning is that the action of the educator (having a sexual affair with a learner and the resultant pregnancy) has placed the learner in a situation where her right to education has been compromised and that the action of the educator is therefore unconstitutional. He has thus acted against the best interests of the child (see Section 29 of the Constitution).

b) The ethic of care/Moral development theory

The ethic of care (see Chapter 2) would imply that the interests of a specific party (be it the girl or the educator in our case) would serve as the basis for the argument about the dilemma. It is important to emphasise that the dilemma is not only about what is legally right, but about what may be considered as morally right and on what basis. In this case, there may be a close association with the cultural idea of harmonising the group by restoring the injustice caused by the act.

The ethic of care as a lens emerges in the data in the form of empathy. This is how the participants expressed their care:

'…..try other means of avoiding the punishment from the department to give him a second chance' (Participant 1001)

'…..the sacrifice has to be made to save the school results from declining….' (Participant 1012). The concern here is about learners who are affected when results are dropping. The participant therefore implies that somehow the rights of the affected learner are to be sacrificed for the benefit of the school and the other learners.

'…..he should have advise him to resign' (Participant 1065). The participant notes the penalty for being found guilty and be dismissed as it is the possible outcome for having an affair with a learner. The participant is concerned about the future of the accused educator and sees it being better to be given an opportunity to resign rather than be dismissed.

c) Classical ethical theory

In applying Classical ethical theory, the school leader would judge the morality of an action based on its adherence to rules and duties (see Chapter 2).

'…..my [sic] value of respect is not good and does not act as a reasonable man' (Participant 1048). The participant refers to 'act[ing] as a reasonable man', but not in the strict legal term. (S)he is rather implying that there is a moral rule (not getting sexually involved with a learner) and that a person needs to do all that is possible to ensure that (s)he has fulfilled his/her role in executing a particular duty.

d) Cultural relativism

A school leader using this lens would be considering what is socially approved in a particular culture. Reference to cultural beliefs is made by two of the participants:

'….. took a risk of falling in love with an old man taken as her father according to African culture' (Participant 1016). The Swazi people strongly believe in respect for anyone in a higher age-class or for elders (Booth, 2004:17); let alone to have a relationship with a person considered to be of the age of your elders. The participant suggests that this learner was aware of this rule but took a risk in breaking it. When a girl engages in sexual acts outside marriage, it is assumed that she made herself accessible irrespective of the difference of age or power between herself and the man involved (Fontes, 2005:140). It is the responsibility of girls to guard their sexuality from older men, including their fathers (Fontes, 2005:141). When a girl engages in sexual activity, even against her own will, she is perceived as having lost her virginity, and that makes her of lesser value as a bride or not suitable for marriage (Fontes, 2005:141).

'…..if the parents approve, the relationship is fine….' (Participant 1067). The participant may be referring to the Swazi custom in which parents have the authority of arranging a marriage 'without consulting the wishes of the persons actually entering into the relationship of man and wife' (Marwick, 1940:95). This custom of arranging marriages, which does not allow freedom of choice of a mate, is called *ukwendisa* (Marwick, 1940:95). The participant suggests that this parental authority could work in this situation even if the rights of the girl have been violated.

4.5.2. Moral dilemma 2

You and Ivor Josephs have been friends since high school. After completing your studies at university, you took up an appointment at the same school where Ivor was the administrative clerk. You were later promoted to Head of Department, while Ivor remained a clerk at the school. One of your responsibilities as HOD is to control the school's financial records. Recently you have noticed that something is wrong with the records. On closer inspection you have realised that three thousand rand was missing. You know that Ivor receive school fees from learners and must deposit all monies received into the school's bank account. It now seems as if Ivor was taking money from the school funds. You know that if you report the matter to the SGB, Ivor will probably lose his job, but he is your lifelong friend.

In this moral dilemma, the HOD is faced with a moral choice to decide whether or not to report the matter of the missing three thousand rand to the SGB. The HOD has the responsibility of ensuring that all monies received are deposited into the school's bank account while on the other hand the administrative clerk doing this work is his lifelong friend. When reporting the matter to the SGB he will be sacrificing the lifelong friendship he is having with Ivor, while on the other hand not reporting the matter will imply that he is neglecting his duties. In identifying the lenses used, I will be looking as to whether the HOD will be guided by ensuring the effective execution of his duties or his friendship with Ivor. Corruption and stealing of school funds are common problems in South Africa, thus participants should be able to formulate a moral stance.

Five possible lenses through which the dilemma has been approached could be identified from the data: the ethic of justice, the ethic of care/Moral development theory, Classical ethical theory, ethical subjectivism and cultural relativism. The possible evidence of each lens that emerged from the data is presented below:

a) Ethic of justice

The rule of law and all applicable legislation and departmental policies are used to ensure justice is practiced by school leaders. One participant directly used the word justice:

'…..he must also be charged with defeating the ends of justice' (Participant 1080). This is a strong anti-corruption statement implying that the participant reasons that what happened is in legal terms unacceptable.

In the following examples the participants used law to imply to justice:

'…..the law must take it cause [sic]….' (Participant 1080)

'…..because he break the law' (Participant 1074)

'…..everyone is equal before the law….' (Participant 1048)

'…..even in the court of law that is considered' (Participant 1006)

The following reference to departmental policies and regulations has been made:

'…..SASA prohibits any mismanagement of school funds' (Participants 1011 &1058)
'…..there are policies and rules that must be followed….' (Participants 1055, 1031, 1002).

This participant made reference to both laws and policies:

'…..that laws and policies are meant to be obeyed….' (Participant 1017)

b) Ethic of care/Moral development theory

School leaders using the lens of the ethic of care emphasise relationships in moral decision making. The character traits of friendship, sympathy, empathy emerged from the data. This is also very close to the ideas of *ubuntu* and restoring group harmony.

'A lifelong friend is like a family, you treat her like you treat your sister' (Participants 1006, 1007, 1013, 1060, 1049, 1051, 1054)

Many of the participants also showed some sympathy towards Ivor by stating that:

'…..because of loyalty, give him a chance to repay the money back' (Participant 1021)

'…..to save my friends job I will talk to him privately before reporting to the SGB' (Participant 1022)

Five participants showed empathy by referring to what will happen when the Ivor loses the job:

'…..if he loose his job a number of people will suffer' (Participants 1012, 1029, 1038, 1046, 1054, 1056)

c) Classical ethical theory

School leaders using this lens to judge morality rely on rules and duties to make moral decisions.

'If you do wrong, you are probably wrong, the truth should be spelled out' (Participants 1004, 1032)

'…..stealing is wrong' (Participants 1014, 1032)

'Professional matters have nothing to do with friendship, but impartiality, accountability, honesty, integrity and moral uprightness' (Participants 1017, 1030, 1035, 1043)

In these cases, the moral code of society served as a basis for moral reasoning. From a Kantian perspective it could be argued that the participants argued that knowing what is right places an imperative on a person to do what is right.

d) Cultural relativism

The school leader using this lens would decide right or wrong by referring to the cultural perspective of the person. The emerging cultural belief is that of ubuntu. Ubuntu is 'an ancient African worldview based on the values of intense humanness, caring, respect, compassion, and associated values ensuring a happy and qualitative human community life in a spirit of family' (Olinger, Britz & Oliver, 2007). Reference to cultural beliefs has been made by the participants below:

'That will be the most important reason for me for not telling the SGB. I will be applying the value of ubuntu' (Participant 1082, 1007, 1069). In traditional African culture it is important to restore the harmony of the group by findings means not to expose the person but to find alternative means to restore justice. This action coincides with Desmond Tutu's definition of ubuntu which emphasises that a person with ubuntu knows that he/she is part of 'a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished when others are tortured or oppressed´ (http://www.yourlifemanual.com/ubuntu.htm).

'Ivor should have made some means to borrow money – as 'ubuntu' and 'to error [sic] is human" (Participant 1016). The participant implies that in societies with ubuntu there is interdependence and support. Ivor should have taken advantage of this principle rather than stealing the school's money. The participant further shows compassion by acknowledging that anyone can make a mistake at any given time.

e) Ethical subjectivism

School leaders using this lens focus on their personal feelings to make a moral decision. Actions are assessed by virtue of their consequences measured by the amount of

happiness and unhappiness created (see Chapter 2). Again, this line of reasoning may be closely associated with the cultural lens.

The participant below referred to the consequences of saving Ivor from wrong-doing:

'…..I will advise Ivor to pay back the money before the SGB could realise the missing amount and that will make the difference because he will secure his job and will continue supporting his family' (Participant 1022). The participant shows that he/she is prepared to do anything that will 'secure the job' and so that family may be supported.

4.6 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VALUES AND MORAL REASONING

From the data presented in Figure 4.1, it emerge that justice, education and caring are strong values in the participant group. It was argued in Chapter 2 that values are used to support or contest the principles underpinning morals. Values did play a role in how they reasoned about a dilemma. The ethic of justice relates to justice being seen as a strong value; the ethic of care to caring. Education is a double-bind problem in that participants did not strongly use pedagogic arguments; but the interest of the school and the learners did play an important role in how they argued a dilemma. There was however a discrepancy between how the values were ranked by the participants and the results of their moral decision making. Based on the dilemmas that they were confronted with, caring became a highly ranked value after justice and education.

According to the data analysed, most of the participants were not prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints. They insisted that 'Justice has to prevail' (Participant 1049, 1014, 1055, 1031, 1002, 1080). One participant indicated that justice should be done at whatever cost when stating that 'The law must take its own course irregardless of competency or incompetency' (Participant 1080). The wrongdoing of stealing was openly condemned by some participants by indicating that '… stealing is wrong' (Participant 1014, 1032). Moral uprightness was put into perspective by clarifying the expectations in the statement below:

'Professional matters have nothing to do with friendship, but impartiality, accountability, honesty, integrity and moral uprightness' (Participant 1017, 1030, 1035, 1043).

However, some participants were prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints when arguing their moral choices. This is evident in the two statements below:

'… try other means of avoiding the punishment from the department to give him a second chance' (Participant 1001).

'… the sacrifice has to be made to save the school results from declining…' (Participant 1012).

It has emerged from the data that most participants were not prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints.

4.7. SUMMARY

The following values emerged from the study as strong values: justice, education and caring. The qualitative data revealed that school leaders use different lenses in their reasoning and that the lenses of the ethic of justice and the ethic of care were the preferred lenses. These decisions were influenced by the values indicated above. This shows that participants were not prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints.

In Chapter 5 the discussion and interpretation of the main findings and conclusions of the study are presented. Links are made between the findings of the study with the existing body of knowledge outlined in the literature review in chapter 2. Furthermore, recommendations and suggestions for future research to improve practice are also made.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

As indicated in Chapters One and Three, school leaders are faced with serious moral challenges on a daily basis at schools, which often results in them making poor moral choices. In a situation of moral decay in schools, they fail to demonstrate the necessary values advocated by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy. This necessitated a study to reveal how school leaders working and living in rural areas make moral decisions when faced with dilemmas. For the purpose of this study, all educators in general and those in promotional posts, including principals are regarded as school leaders. The aim of this study was to establish the possible value orientations and personal value structure of school leaders and based on this, explore how they reason about moral dilemmas.

In recording and analysing the data collected, I believe that the data revealed what is being referred to by Clandinin & Connelly (2000) as living a 'split existence'. Within the context of this study, this implies that what is reported here is the espoused theory (Agyris & Schon, 1984) held by educators. Looking at the reported cases of corruption, child abuse and other poor moral examples set by educators, it is possible that the study did not penetrate the 'theory in action' (Agyris & Schon, 1984) of school leaders. Be that as it may, the study nevertheless is a first attempt to enter the complex world of school leaders and how they reason about moral issues. Living a 'split existence' as well as the notion of a 'theory in action' may explain the reason for some of the participants who, in order to survive professionally, were prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints when arguing their moral choices. In presenting the findings of my inquiry I do not claim representativeness nor that the findings could be generalised to all school leaders, but it does provide insight into a specific group of school leaders from a largely homogeneous cultural, religious and language background living and working in a rural area in South Africa. Moreover, data were collected from a sample of

B.Ed. (Honours) students of the University of Pretoria only, hence the opinions of school leaders from other schools remain unheard.

5.2 RESEARCH FOCUS, PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

As indicated in Chapter One (see Chapter 1.4), my interest in conducting this inquiry came as a result of the failure of school leaders to demonstrate the necessary values advocated by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy (MRM, 2009; DoE, 2001). The main focus of my inquiry was on the challenges of moral decay faced by school leaders in South African schools. I wanted to explore the way in which school leaders negotiate meaning when confronted with moral dilemmas. More specifically, my exploration of school leaders' experiences was aimed at their understanding of morals and morality, and at determining whether or not their values have an effect on school leaders' views of themselves, their learners and education in general.

To assist me in retaining my focus throughout my inquiry, I reformulated my research purpose as a single research question, namely:

How do school leaders negotiate meaning when confronted with moral dilemmas?

With a view to locating and collecting the data I needed to answer this question, I split the main question up into the following subsidiary questions:

- What are the important values in the lives of school leaders?
- How do these values impact on school leaders' moral understanding and reasoning?
- To what extent are they willing to negotiate their moral standpoints?

In collecting and analysing data that would help me answer these questions, I adopted a design that was located within hermeneutic phenomenology, as the study aims to understand school leaders' understanding and reasoning regarding values and morality.

This approach was used in this study as its focus is to understand human experience as lived by participants in a particular socio-cultural context. The point of departure of this study has been that people have intentions, values and beliefs that are reflected in the way in which they see and do things. As a result, I therefore selected knowledgeable informants – school leaders who are educators in general and those educators in promotional posts – and in my case I prepared the open-ended questionnaire, identified and discussed the emerging themes and finally related the outcomes of my inquiry to my original research purpose and research questions.

A mixed method design was used to ensure that the researcher gets multiple view points, perspectives, positions and standpoints so that the researcher can come to a reliable conclusion (Johnson, Onwuegbuzzie & Turner, 2007:113). A combination of quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques was used in a concurrent mixed method design using a single questionnaire (see Chapter 3). Section A of the questionnaire explored the values preferred by the school leaders in two parts. The first part of this section comprised multiple-choice questions where the school leaders were to respond to a question with four alternatives from which they had to choose the one that they preferred. The second part of Section A had eight values listed in alphabetical order which participants were requested to rank in terms of their personal preferences. Section B of the questionnaire dealt with moral dilemmas and had open-ended questions where the participants were to make certain moral choices and motivate why they made such choices. After the questionnaire was completed, I acted as moderator in a discussion of the dilemmas, where participants could debate and argue the reasons why they would act in a certain manner. On conclusion of the discussion, they had the opportunity to add to the open-ended questions any other opinions that were brought to the fore during the discussion. Very few made use of this opportunity.

5.3 THE MAIN ARGUMENT OF THE STUDY

The main argument that informed the research design is that our values and value orientations are highly pertinent when confronted with a moral dilemma and thus

inform the way in which we argue and decide on a course of action in resolving a moral dilemma. In this study, it was assumed that the world is made up of people with their own intentions, values and beliefs. Their beliefs and values are reflected in the way in which they see and do things, and why they do things a certain way. The emphasis was thus placed on the school leaders' frame of reference, on how they see things from within, without making pronouncement on whether their views are morally right or wrong.

The research was located mainly within a qualitative (interpretivist/constructivist) paradigm and focused on producing a reconstructed understanding of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

5.4. VALUES AND MORAL REASONING

Morals are standards of behaviour concerned with how we are living our values (Chippendale, 1998). The sources of morals are culture, religion, political systems and business. Morals are set by leaders of society, and elders or religious teachers with an aim of leading people away from immoral acts (Differencesbetween.net, 2009). Moral prescriptions are obligatory, universally applicable and not based on individual preferences. They are used to judge others as being moral or immoral.

Values on the other hand are personal principles by which a person lives or what guides a person in making good choices and decisions in given situations (Clachery, 2007:3; Albinger, 2005:53). They are based on individual preferences (Turiel, 1983:38). Values are used to evaluate plans, actions and motives (Lazaridou, 2007:340). They guide our personal choices and perceptions of the worth of others. Morals are enduring beliefs about right and wrong upheld by society, while values either support or contest the principles underpinning morals.

In this study, the enhancement of the ability of school leaders in dealing with a variety of moral dilemmas they encounter at schools is proposed as a way of averting the

problem of moral decay. A moral dilemma is a conflict occurring between what is right and wrong about an action and what is good and bad about the consequences of the actions (Ross, 2006). An agent caught in a moral dilemma cannot avoid a choice between two moral imperatives each underpinned by a specific moral principle, thus meaning that whatever choice is made could imply in some way or another committing a wrong act (Jackson, 2009:01).

The claim that morals are defined by society opens the possibility that different groupings within society may take a divergent stance on morals and morality. For the researcher, this implies that the lens through which morals are defined must be known, as various groups may use different lenses to argue or justify their moral stand. Morals and morality could be viewed by the lenses of cultural relativism, religious beliefs, ethical subjectivism, classical utilitarian theory, domain theory, and ethic of justice, ethic of care, ethic of critique and the ethic of community.

Cultural relativism is a theory that claims that different societies have different moral codes that determine what is right or wrong (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:16). Cultural relativism rejects the notion of universal truth or universal moral standards (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:16). Religious beliefs on the other hand views acting morally as being dependent on acting in terms of laws handed down to us by a Supreme Being. The theory of ethical subjectivism claims that our moral opinions are based on our feelings, rejecting the notion of objective right or wrong (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:33). The classical utilitarian theory asserts that knowing what is right places a moral imperative on us to act in a manner consistent with the moral right.

Moral development theory claims that morality of care and responsibility, derived from the experience of close relationships is premised on non-violence (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html). The theory claims that care is an integral part of moral reasoning (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html). Domain theory claims that morality is structured by harm, welfare and fairness (Willard,

1997). Morality and convention are viewed as distinct parallel frameworks (Willard, 1997).

The ethic of justice is about mediating our behaviour in terms of the common good of the community (Schapper, 1986:21). The ethic of critique claims that striving for an ethical school could be achieved by critiquing the school's bureaucratic mindset, the adversarial and contractual mind-set of the unions and the hierarchically structured, impersonality of the administration of the school (Starrat, 1991:189). The ethic of care is based on emotions and is focused on the character traits of sympathy, empathy, compassion, friendship, sensitivity and responsiveness (French & Weis, 2000:125; Held, 2006:10). The ethic of community is built on the belief that school leaders, educators, school staffs, learners, parents and other community members are morally responsible in engaging in communal processes in pursuing the moral purposes of the school (Furman, 2004).

5.5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Data collected and analysed in Chapter Four, revealed that participants used a variety of lenses through which they reasoned about a moral dilemma. They used variously the ethic of justice, ethic of care/moral development theory, classical ethical theory, cultural relativism and ethical subjectivism to argue or justify their moral stands in these dilemmas. The overall impression gained was that two preferred lenses emerged in the two dilemmas analysed: the ethic of justice and the ethic of care.

In order to determine the extent to which these research findings enabled me to answer my initial research questions, I will devote this section of Chapter Five to a discussion of these findings as they relate to the research questions and the original research purpose and focus. In doing so, I also merge insights gained from the review of literature on how school leaders negotiate meaning when confronted with moral dilemmas with insights gained from my inquiry.

In Chapter 2 deontological, consequentialist and mixed consequentialist reasoning were discussed. On reflecting on the research findings it would appear that participants' first reaction to a moral dilemma was to revert to deontological reasoning. In other words, the ethic of justice was rooted in the notion that to know what is right places an imperative on you to act in accordance to what is right (Kant,1785). As the participants were contemplating the other questions that arose from the moral dilemma posed, they began to bring in elements of consequential thinking thus creating an impression that they were using mixed consequentialist thinking. This fact should be borne in mind when looking at the lenses through which moral reasoning appeared.

5.5.1. Lenses used by school leaders in moral decision making

The participants preferred to use the lens of the ethic of justice as it is about using uniformly applied standards of justice to all relationships. Justice is considered to be one of the essential values for the African Renaissance applicable to all societies (Shwala, 2006). The use of the lens of justice is evident in the reference made to the law, citing the Constitution of South Africa and the other forms of legislation which are acts, regulations and policies which are derived from these laws. This is consistent with Section 2 of the Constitution, which provides that 'This Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic; law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and the obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled.'

An analysis of the research findings indicates that most participants used the lens of the ethic of care when the focus is on friendship, sympathy and empathy. It corroborates the study of Walker and Dimmock (2000) and Freakly and Parry (2000) that the maintenance of harmony and the usage of interpersonal skills in decision making is preferred by most principals. This lens also links to the moral development theory, which emphasises the importance of close relationships and avoidance of violence. It is also close to the idea of ubuntu, which also values group harmony. The preference of care as one of the most preferred lenses and the linking of the character traits of care in the various lens coincides with the claim of Gilligan's moral development theory that

care is an integral part of moral reasoning (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html). Typical statements made by participants that are directly related to the ethic of care are:

'…...try other means of avoiding the punishment from the department to give him a second chance' (Participant 1001)

'…...the sacrifice has to be made to save the school results from declining….' (Participant 1012).

'…...he should have advise him to resign' (Participant 1065)

The idea of ubuntu came out in the lens of cultural relativism. It coincides with the claim of the Domain Theory that people may base the arguments of their moral stance on morality or social convention (http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html). The following typical statements were made by participants:

'Ivor should have made some means to borrow money-as 'ubuntu' and 'to error (sic) is human' ' (Participant 1016).

'…... took a risk of falling in love with an old man taken as her father according to African culture' (Participant 1016). Very few of the participants argued their moral stance using the classical ethical theory of Kant. Some of the participants made the following statement:

'Professional matters have nothing to do with friendship, but impartiality, accountability, honesty, integrity and moral uprightness' (Participant 1017, 1030, 1035, 1043).

Religious beliefs were not used by all the participants in both the dilemmas in justifying their moral stance. This coincides with the claim of Rachels and Rachels that religious consideration is 'not providing definitive solutions to most moral problems we face' (Rachels & Rachels, 2007:29).

The analyses of data and the responses of the participants are to a large extent consistent with the literature, in that they employ most of the lenses identified in the literature to argue or justify their moral stands in each dilemma. The responses further support the influence of justice, care, moral duty, culture and feelings in moral decision making.

5.5.2. Important values in the lives of the school leaders

Values are seen to be having a crucial function in decision making and problem solving (Albinger, 2005:53). The values of justice, education and caring emerged as strong values in the participant group. These values also served as lenses for decision making as they were also in line with the preferred lenses discussed above. The value of justice indicates the commitment of the participants in respecting the rights and welfare of others. Their moral conviction is shown by their compliance with the law.

The participants not only valued education but also showed that justice should be used in defending the rights related to education of every citizen, especially of learners. They demonstrated this when they condemned a situation where an educator is having a sexual relationship with a learner and cite this as a violation of the rights of the learner, as this is prohibited by law. The participants went further to indicate that even when a learner is pregnant, she should be given a chance to exercise her right to education. Furthermore, caring as a value emerged from the study in the form of character traits such as friendship, sympathy and empathy. The participants showed a high consideration for maintaining relationships when taking moral decisions.

This shows not only a commitment to right actions and principles (Rhode, 2006:4-5) by participants but also that they are conversant with the values promoted by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy. In addition, this shows that values play an important role in their moral decision making.

5.5.3. The impact of values in moral reasoning

The values of justice, education and caring featured strongly as lenses in the ethic of justice and the ethic of care. These values influenced the decisions made by the school leaders. The value of education featured when they used the lens of the ethic of justice in defending the right to education in solving the dilemma. This corroborates the theory that values guide a person in making good choices and decisions in a given situation (Clachery, 2007:3; Albinger, 2005:53).

5.5.4. The negotiation of moral standpoints

The study revealed that most of the participants were not prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints. However, some participants were prepared to sacrifice their moral standpoints in order to survive professionally, to show sympathy and to maintain good relationships with others.

These findings suggest that the school leaders have a strong moral orientation, while on the other hand, they act in ways that contradict their moral convictions. This is congruent with Argyris and Schön's (1974) argument that people have mental maps with regard to how they act in particular situations, involving the way they plan, implement and review actions. They assert that it is these maps that guide people's actions than rather than the theories they espouse, although few of them are aware of the maps or the theories they use (Argyris, 1980). This suggests that the school leaders are giving their espoused theories of action for the situations (Argyris, 1974) represented by the moral dilemmas but not necessarily what they would do when faced with such a situation.

Although it was not the purpose or intent of the research to develop recommendations, but rather to explore the moral reasoning of educators, it may be apposite to formulate a number of recommendations based on my findings.

- School leaders are the link between the Education Department and the school communities they serve and are charged with the responsibility of developing

young lives in making sound moral choices (see HIV/AIDS Policy, 1999). It is thus important that school leaders should be provided with on-going support for their endeavours in this regard. This could easily be done by means of on-going workshops where they are allowed to voice their concerns without fear about issues surrounding morals and morality. In this regard, such workshops could serve as a forum for the discussion and clarification of morals, new roles, processes and procedures rather than as an information session.

- As regards recommendations for further research, I believe that this study has added value in terms of the development of a critical understanding of how school leaders negotiate meaning when confronted with moral dilemmas. I also believe that this study cannot be concluded because it is not an end in itself; rather, it offers multiple opportunities to be replicated, which could result in the generalisation of my research findings to other contexts and situations.

- Finally, given the limitations of the study, the outcomes of my research also suggest a need to complement the findings of this inquiry by research that focuses on other aspects of moral regeneration. One aspect that comes to mind is that of theory in action, on why the school leaders act in ways that seem to contradict their moral convictions. Another is on school leaders' moral understanding and reasoning in order to expand the study to practicing school leaders in urban areas.

5.7. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

I have attempted, in this research to sketch the ever-changing epistemological and moral world in which school leaders live and work. In doing so, I intended to contribute to existing insights regarding the way school leaders in general and in South Africa in particular negotiate meaning when confronted with moral dilemmas; what the important values are in the lives of the school leaders and the impact that values have on their moral understanding and reasoning. In conducting this inquiry, I believe that I have uncovered new insights regarding the responsibilities that schools, in particular school leaders, have in preparing the younger generation to live responsibly within their

communities. In analysing data collected from the selected school leaders across their social and cultural divides, I also believe that this inquiry has managed to paint a richly textured landscape that reflects not only the current lives of the selected school leaders but also the personal, communal and professional influences of their different histories on the way they have dealt with and still deal with the role they have to play as agents of moral regeneration and of preparing South African youth to be able to stand and practice good morals, norms and values.

'We have, in fact, two kinds of morality side by side; one which we preach but do not practice, and another which we practice but seldom preach.'

<div align="right">(Bertrand Russell, 1872-1970).</div>

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APPENDICES

Appendix one: Ethical Clearance Certificate

Appendix two: Values Questionnaire

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Faculty of Education/Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
School of Educational Studies/Skool van Opvoedkundige Studies
Department of Education Management and Policy
Studies/Departement Onderwysbestuur en Beleidstudies
Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis
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VALUES QUESTIONNAIRE

BACKGROUND

This questionnaire forms part of a study that the Department: Education Management and Policy Studies of the Faculty of Education is conducting into students' understanding of values and moral issues. The Module on Managing Values and Human Rights in Education (OWB781) of the B Ed (Hons.) define values as that which is desirable or worth striving for. From your studies of this Module you will know that each person develops his or her own value structure. We are not born with a ready made set of values but develop our own set of values through experience and our upbringing in a particular community. From experience we also know that we are often confronted with a choice between competing values or are faced with a moral dilemma and we have to sometimes sacrifice a particular value to achieve a higher goal. A moral dilemma simply means that we have to choose between two or more difficult and competing outcomes.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMED CONSENT

You are only required to provide details about your gender, age category and language used in your home. These variables will be used to determine whether they have any influence on students' choices when it comes to values or moral dilemmas. There is no way in which you could be identified and anonymity and confidentiality is guaranteed. For this reason you will not be asked to sign a separate informed consent letter, but by completing this questionnaire you agree that:

1. The data obtained may be used for research purposes only. This implies that the analysed data will be used in a number of publications in which summative data will be discussed.

2. Your willingness to complete the questionnaire or decision not to participate will have no implication in terms of your studies in this module. It is essential that you understand that

completing this questionnaire will not be taken into account in any assessment for promotion purposes in this module or any other module and participation is voluntary.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part looks at values and the second at moral dilemmas. In the first part the questionnaire makes a statement and asks you to select one from a list of possible choices the value that closely correlates with your own choice. In selecting a specific value depends solely on your own understanding and insight and there is no preferred answer, or a right or wrong answer. It is simply a matter of your own preference. The second part of the questionnaire provides you with a certain scenario that would necessitate a moral choice. Again there is no preferred or right or wrong answer. In the second part you are given the opportunity to motivate your choice.

After you have completed the questionnaire, time will be given for you to discuss some of the moral dilemmas in class.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of two parts.

Section A is completed by ranking the choices in order of preference from 1 to 4. For example:

1. *If I had the opportunity to change just one fundamental event or decision in my life so far, I would change:*

a)	*My*	*4*
	childhood	*2*
b)	*My life*	*1*
	partner	*3*
c)	*My career*	
d)	*My*	
	car/house	

By ranking c) as 1 the person indicated that he/she would prefer to change his/her decision regarding the career that he/she had choose and secondly b) his/her life partner. Thirdly his/her car and fourthly his/her childhood. Note that there is no correct order and people will always differ on

their choices and the ranking they allocate. Do not spend to much time weighing up the choices. Rank them in terms of your first reaction to the options.

Section B deals with moral dilemmas. A moral dilemma means that you are confronted with a difficult moral choice. You have to make certain choices and motivate why you have made the choice. In other words, Section B consists of open-ended questions that you have to fill in your answers. The purpose of this is to see how you argue about moral dilemmas and there are no right or wrong choices. For example:

> *In Europe, a woman was dying from cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid R400 for the radium and charged R4,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money and tried every legal means, but he could only get together about R2,000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from if." So, having tried every legal means, Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.*
>
> *1. Should Heinz steal the drug? _____*

The choice is between refraining from stealing the drug (to remain a law abiding citizen) or to commit the crime in order to safe his wife.

After you have completed Section B some of the moral dilemmas will be debated in class. After the group has debated the dilemmas you will be given the opportunity to revisit your answers and make any changes that you feel is required. Thereafter the questionnaire will be collected for processing

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the research!

BIORAPHICAL INFORMATION

Your gender

Male	a
Female	b

Age category

Younger than 30	a
31 to 40	b
41-50	c
Older than 50	d

What language do you usually speak at home?

_____

What is your religious orientation?

Atheist	a
Traditional African	b
Christianity	c
Hindu	d
Islam/Moslem	e
Other (Specify_____)	f

SECTION A
VALUES QUESTIONNAIRE

In the following twelve questions a number of statements are made. Please read through the statement and possible choices provided and rank them according to your own preference. The choices are random and people normally rank them differently because of their own preferences. For each of the following items, rank the four alternatives (a-d) as follows:

1 = your highest preference

2 = your second preference

3 = your third preference

4 = your lowest preference

1. If I could have just one wish to come true, I would wish for: | | [for office use only] |

a.	the end of world famine		
b.	a R1,000,000 Lottery win		
c.	to live an extra 10 years		
d.	to have what my heart desires		

2. If I could choose one precious memory to stay with you forever, that memory would be:

a.	of a beautiful sunset or scenery		
b.	of my life partner		
c.	of my graduation day		
d.	the day that justice was restored to me		

3. The one thing that makes my life worth living is:

a.	Money		
b.	Family		
c.	Beautiful music		
d.	Education		

4. The most important attribute (characteristic) that I look for in people is: **[for office use only]**

a.	They must be of my own people		
b.	They must be rich		
c.	They must be just and fair		
d.	They must be in a position to help me		

5. I will be a happy and satisfied teacher if:

a.	my school had enough resources		
b.	I experienced less stress in my work		
c.	I have more time to do the things I want to do		
d.	Opportunities for educators to study further		

6. Success for me means:

a.	to be a fair and just (a virtuous) person		
b.	to have many friends		
c.	to life a very long life.		
d.	to have a good family with strong relationships		

7. When I die, I would like people to remember me:

a.	as a rich or successful person		
b.	as a virtuous (honourable) person		
c.	as a generous person		
d.	a person who appreciated beauty and great art		

8. If I have one dream to come true, it will be:

a.	to be of good health		
b.	to be rich		
c.	to improve the lives of others.		
d.	to be able to see famous old building and painting across the world		

9. I belief a good government should aim at...

a.	providing more aid for the poor, sick, and old.		
b.	ensuring a good justice system		
c.	providing quality education for all		
d.	improving my own situation by paying teachers better		

10. I am someone who works all week and feel that I would best spend the weekend...

a.	studying further		
b.	entertaining friends		
c.	going to a classical music concert or art museum.		
d.	taking care of sick people.		

11. If I could influence the educational policies of public schools I would try to...

a.	ensure that all educators and learners are treated fairly and justly		
b.	expect teachers to work less		
c.	provide library and laboratory facilities.		
d.	make schools more safe for educators and learners.		

12. One of the key priorities in my community is:

a.	to improve the safety of my family and friends		
b.	ensure that the police acts without corruption		
c.	provide better health services to my family and others		
d.	build parks where children can play and public libraries		

Rank the following values in your personal order of priority. Use a numerical numbering where 1 represents the highest priority and 8 the lowest on your priority list. Note that the ten items are listed in alphabetical order and does not suggest any ranking of priority.

Aesthetic (to value imagination and innovation as expressed in art, drama and music)	
Caring (to be deeply involved with a group that has a greater purpose beyond one's self)	
Education (to learn and to do work that will allow me to utilize my best talents)	
Family and friends (to experience intimacy and close companionship with others)	
Health (to be physically and mentally fit and healthy)	
Justice (to live and work in abidance with the human rights enshrined in the Constitution)	
Respect (to work with people I respect and to be respected by others)	
Wealth (to have enough money to do the things I want)	

END OF SECTION A

SECTION B

MORAL DILEMMAS

1. The Grade 10 class at your school wanted to go to Maropeng (Cradle of Humankind) very much. The school principal promised them that they could go if they collected enough money to pay for the trip. The class worked very hard selling sweets and food at the school and collecting money from the community. In the end they collected R4000 which would pay for the trip, and a little more besides. But a few days before the planned trip, one of the Grade 12 learners passed away. The school principal started to arrange the funeral and decided to use the money collected by the Grade 10's for the funeral. So he told the Grade 10's that he will use the money for the funeral and that they will not be going to Maropeng anymore. The Grade 10's was very disappointed, thinking of how hard they had to work to get the money.

a.   Should the Grade 10's refuse that the principal use the money for the funeral? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

b.   The school principal promised the Grade 10's that they could go on the trip if they collect the money. Is the fact that the principal made this promise important in the situation? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

c.   What do you think is the most important thing a school principal should be concerned about in his relationship the learners? Why is that the most important thing?

_____

_____

_____

d.   What do you think is the most important thing the learners should be concerned about in their relationship to the principal? Why is that the most important thing?

_____

_____

_____

e.   In thinking back over the dilemma, what is the most responsible thing for the Grade 10 learners to do in this situation? Why?

_____

_____

After discussing the dilemma in class, is there any changes or additions that you would like to make? Please write it down in the space below.

_____

_____

2. Stephen Mabe was recently appointed as a school principal at Achievement Secondary School. After taking up the position he noticed that George Mollo, the Grade 12 Mathematics teacher, was having an affair with Sarah, a grade 9 learner. According to George's record he is an excellent Mathematics teacher and has obtained a more than 80% pass rate for his Gr12 students over the last five years. Yesterday, Sarah came to your office and told you that she wants to leave the school. When you discussed the matter with her, you discovered that she was pregnant with George's child. You have also learned that she is fifteen years old, meaning that her pregnancy constitutes statutory rape. Apart from the fact that George may be criminally prosecuted, the education department regulations make it clear that an educator may not have an affair with a learner. Such a relationship would constitute serious misconduct. But George is a good teacher and Stephen wants to get good Grade 12 results in the upcoming exams to show that his appointment was the right one.

a. Should Stephen, the school principal report the case to the department and start a disciplinary process to get George dismissed? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

b. If Sarah's parents approved of the relationship between George and Sarah, should that make a difference in the decision? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

c. Should Sarah's right to education be considered in this case? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

d. If you were in love with a learner should you expect people to respect your choice? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

After discussing the dilemma in class, is there any changes or additions that you would like to make? Please write it down in the space below.

_____

3. You and Ivor have been friends since high school. After completing your studies at university, you took up an appointment at the same school where Ivor was the administrative clerk. You were later promoted to Head of Department while Ivor remained a clerk at the school. One of your responsibilities as HOD is to control the school's financial records Recently you have noticed that something is wrong with the records. On closer inspection you have realised that three thousand rand was missing. You know that Ivor receive school fees from learners and must deposit all monies received into the school's bank account. It now seems as if Ivor was taking money from the school funds. You know that if you report the matter to the SGB, Ivor will probably loose his job.

a. Should you report the matter to the SGB? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

b. Should the fact that you are friends since high school be consider in the matter? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

c. Should the fact that Ivor is supporting his mother and the children of his brother who passed away last year make any difference in your decision? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

After discussing the dilemma in class, is there any changes or additions that you would like to make? Please write it down in the space below.

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Faculty of Education/Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
School of Educational Studies/Skool van Opvoedkundige Studies
Department of Education Management and Policy
Studies/Departement Onderwysbestuur en Beleidstudies
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The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part looks at values and the second at moral dilemmas. In the first part the questionnaire makes a statement and asks you to select one from a list of possible choices the value that closely correlates with your own choice. In selecting a specific value depends solely on your own understanding and insight and there is no preferred answer, or a right or wrong answer. It is simply a matter of your own preference. The second part of the questionnaire provides you with a certain scenario that would necessitate a moral choice. Again there is no preferred or right or wrong answer. In the second part you are given the opportunity to motivate your choice.

After you have completed the questionnaire, time will be given for you to discuss some of the moral dilemmas in class.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of two parts.

Section A is completed by ranking the choices in order of preference from 1 to 4. For example:

1. *If I had the opportunity to change just one fundamental event or decision in my life so far, I would change:*

a)	*My childhood*	*4*
		2
b)	*My life partner*	*1*
		3
c)	*My career*	
d)	*My car/house*	

By ranking c) as 1 the person indicated that he/she would prefer to change his/her decision regarding the career that he/she had choose and secondly b) his/her life partner. Thirdly his/her car and fourthly his/her childhood. Note that there is no correct order and people will always differ on

their choices and the ranking they allocate. Do not spend to much time weighing up the choices. Rank them in terms of your first reaction to the options.

Section B deals with moral dilemmas. A moral dilemma means that you are confronted with a difficult moral choice. You have to make certain choices and motivate why you have made the choice. In other words, Section B consists of open-ended questions that you have to fill in your answers. The purpose of this is to see how you argue about moral dilemmas and there are no right or wrong choices. For example:

> *In Europe, a woman was dying from cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid R400 for the radium and charged R4,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money and tried every legal means, but he could only get together about R2,000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from if." So, having tried every legal means, Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.*
>
> *1. Should Heinz steal the drug? _____*

The choice is between refraining from stealing the drug (to remain a law abiding citizen) or to commit the crime in order to safe his wife.

After you have completed Section B some of the moral dilemmas will be debated in class. After the group has debated the dilemmas you will be given the opportunity to revisit your answers and make any changes that you feel is required. Thereafter the questionnaire will be collected for processing

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the research!

BIORAPHICAL INFORMATION

Your gender

Male	a
Female	b

Age category

Younger than 30	a
31 to 40	b
41-50	c
Older than 50	d

What language do you usually speak at home?

_____

What is your religious orientation?

Atheist	a
Traditional African	b
Christianity	c
Hindu	d
Islam/Moslem	e
Other (Specify_____)	f

SECTION A

VALUES QUESTIONNAIRE

In the following twelve questions a number of statements are made. Please read through the statement and possible choices provided and rank them according to your own preference. The choices are random and people normally rank them differently because of their own preferences. For each of the following items, rank the four alternatives (a-d) as follows:

1 = your highest preference

2 = your second preference

3 = your third preference

4 = your lowest preference

1.   If I could have just one wish to come true, I would wish for: [for office use only]

a.	the end of world famine		
b.	a R1,000,000 Lottery win		
c.	to live an extra 10 years		
d.	to have what my heart desires		

2.   If I could choose one precious memory to stay with you forever, that memory would be:

a.	of a beautiful sunset or scenery		
b.	of my life partner		
c.	of my graduation day		
d.	the day that justice was restored to me		

3.   The one thing that makes my life worth living is:

a.	Money		
b.	Family		
c.	Beautiful music		
d.	Education		

4. The most important attribute (characteristic) that I look for in people is:

a.	They must be of my own people		
b.	They must be rich		
c.	They must be just and fair		
d.	They must be in a position to help me		

5. I will be a happy and satisfied teacher if:

a.	my school had enough resources		
b.	I experienced less stress in my work		
c.	I have more time to do the things I want to do		
d.	Opportunities for educators to study further		

6. Success for me means:

a.	to be a fair and just (a virtuous) person		
b.	to have many friends		
c.	to life a very long life.		
d.	to have a good family with strong relationships		

7. When I die, I would like people to remember me:

a.	as a rich or successful person		
b.	as a virtuous (honourable) person		
c.	as a generous person		
d.	a person who appreciated beauty and great art		

8. If I have one dream to come true, it will be:

a.	to be of good health		
b.	to be rich		
c.	to improve the lives of others.		
d.	to be able to see famous old building and painting across the world		

9. I belief a good government should aim at...

a.	providing more aid for the poor, sick, and old.		
b.	ensuring a good justice system		
c.	providing quality education for all		
d.	improving my own situation by paying teachers better		

10. I am someone who works all week and feel that I would best spend the weekend...

a.	studying further		
b.	entertaining friends		
c.	going to a classical music concert or art museum.		
d.	taking care of sick people.		

11. If I could influence the educational policies of public schools I would try to...

a.	ensure that all educators and learners are treated fairly and justly		
b.	expect teachers to work less		
c.	provide library and laboratory facilities.		
d.	make schools more safe for educators and learners.		

12. One of the key priorities in my community is:

a.	to improve the safety of my family and friends		
b.	ensure that the police acts without corruption		
c.	provide better health services to my family and others		
d.	build parks where children can play and public libraries		

Rank the following values in your personal order of priority. Use a numerical numbering where 1 represents the highest priority and 8 the lowest on your priority list. Note that the ten items are listed in alphabetical order and does not suggest any ranking of priority.

Aesthetic (to value imagination and innovation as expressed in art, drama and music)	
Caring (to be deeply involved with a group that has a greater purpose beyond one's self)	
Education (to learn and to do work that will allow me to utilize my best talents)	
Family and friends (to experience intimacy and close companionship with others)	
Health (to be physically and mentally fit and healthy)	
Justice (to live and work in abidance with the human rights enshrined in the Constitution)	
Respect (to work with people I respect and to be respected by others)	
Wealth (to have enough money to do the things I want)	

END OF SECTION A

SECTION B
MORAL DILEMMAS

1. The Grade 10 class at your school wanted to go to Maropeng (Cradle of Humankind) very much. The school principal promised them that they could go if they collected enough money to pay for the trip. The class worked very hard selling sweets and food at the school and collecting money from the community. In the end they collected R4000 which would pay for the trip, and a little more besides. But a few days before the planned trip, one of the Grade 12 learners passed away. The school principal started to arrange the funeral and decided to use the money collected by the Grade 10's for the funeral. So he told the Grade 10's that he will use the money for the funeral and that they will not be going to Maropeng anymore. The Grade 10's was very disappointed, thinking of how hard they had to work to get the money.

a. Should the Grade 10's refuse that the principal use the money for the funeral? Why or why not?

b. The school principal promised the Grade 10's that they could go on the trip if they collect the money. Is the fact that the principal made this promise important in the situation? Why or why not?

c. What do you think is the most important thing a school principal should be concerned about in his relationship the learners? Why is that the most important thing?

d. What do you think is the most important thing the learners should be concerned about in their relationship to the principal? Why is that the most important thing?

e. In thinking back over the dilemma, what is the most responsible thing for the Grade 10 learners to do in this situation? Why?

After discussing the dilemma in class, is there any changes or additions that you would like to make? Please write it down in the space below.

2. Stephen Mabe was recently appointed as a school principal at Achievement Secondary School. After taking up the position he noticed that George Mollo, the Grade 12 Mathematics teacher, was having an affair with Sarah, a grade 9 learner. According to George's record he is an excellent Mathematics teacher and has obtained a more than 80% pass rate for his Gr12 students over the last five years. Yesterday, Sarah came to your office and told you that she wants to leave the school. When you discussed the matter with her, you discovered that she was pregnant with George's child. You have also learned that she is fifteen years old, meaning that her pregnancy constitutes statutory rape. Apart from the fact that George may be criminally prosecuted, the education department regulations make it clear that an educator may not have an affair with a learner. Such a relationship would constitute serious misconduct. But George is a good teacher and Stephen wants to get good Grade 12 results in the upcoming exams to show that his appointment was the right one.

   a. Should Stephen, the school principal report the case to the department and start a disciplinary process to get George dismissed? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

   b. If Sarah's parents approved of the relationship between George and Sarah, should that make a difference in the decision? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

   c. Should Sarah's right to education be considered in this case? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

   d. If you were in love with a learner should you expect people to respect your choice? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

After discussing the dilemma in class, is there any changes or additions that you would like to make? Please write it down in the space below.

_____

3. You and Ivor have been friends since high school. After completing your studies at university, you took up an appointment at the same school where Ivor was the administrative clerk. You were later promoted to Head of Department while Ivor remained a clerk at the school. One of your responsibilities as HOD is to control the school's financial records Recently you have noticed that something is wrong with the records. On closer inspection you have realised that three thousand rand was missing. You know that Ivor receive school fees from learners and must deposit all monies received into the school's bank account. It now seems as if Ivor was taking money from the school funds. You know that if you report the matter to the SGB, Ivor will probably loose his job.

    a.   Should you report the matter to the SGB? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

    b.   Should the fact that you are friends since high school be consider in the matter? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

    c.   Should the fact that Ivor is supporting his mother and the children of his brother who passed away last year make any difference in your decision? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

After discussing the dilemma in class, is there any changes or additions that you would like to make? Please write it down in the space below.

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!