The Perception of Highschool Teachers' about Developing Moral Character through the Curriculum and the Schools' Culture in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This article considers the perception and teachers' idea relating to developing the character of students through the curriculum in the context of the South African schooling system. Literature covering value education, moral education, and what other researchers perceived as good values that are necessary for a country with a diverse population such as South Africa has been outlined. Mixed method approach was used as a research method. A total of 64 survey respondents and individual volunteer interviews with ten teachers were recruited for the study. Findings from the study indicated that majority of the survey respondent identified the need and opportunity for moral education to be integrated within each subject. The current study also identified an inadequate prior knowledge in the minds of participants. The need to provide workshops for teachers on how to integrate the moral education within the curriculum is identified.

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Introduction

Education throughout generations has two major goals; to make people smart and also to make them good (Lickona, 1991). South Africa's education system has these similar aims but teachers, parents and curriculum designers only aim at achieving learner smartness. Seider (2015), in his book Character Compass, explained performance character as "The qualities such as effort, diligence, perseverance, a strong work ethic, a positive attitude, ingenuity and self-discipline needed to realize one's potential for excellence in academics" (p.110). Without moral character, performance character loses its value. Various educational institutions and various stakeholders have the responsibility of building the character of their students. Looking at the number of hours spent on children in schools, one will agree that the educator, as a major stakeholder of education, has a huge responsibility in building the character of students. If character education is properly integrated into the curriculum, it can address the cognitive, affective and the behavioral aspects of education while using all aspects of school life to assist in character development (Stedje, 2010). "Whether we like it or not, schooling is a moral enterprise. Values issues abound in the content and process of teaching" (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977, p.53; Stedje, 2010, p.4). One would, therefore, conclude that children learn character every day through interaction with teachers and the school administrators as well as their classmates. Due to this, it is important for schools to educate students on aspects of moral character, as this will go a long way to help children become responsible citizens in the community.

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The current paper examines the perception of a group of teachers in integrating moral education in high schools' curricula in South Africa and the role of the school in the moral development of the children. The number of crimes in South African communities can be blamed in part on the diminished level and low attention paid to issues of moral education in the school system. South Africa is a country with a diverse population, with many different languages, culture, and religious affiliations. The South African National Policy on Religion and Education (2003) emphasized the importance of equity in religion and education. The policy place emphasis on the need for schools to respect the religious affiliations of each student and such no religion should dominate each other. It is important to note that, teachers and all other stakeholders of education can teach moral values such as respect, empathy responsibility irrespective of religious affiliations. With regards to this, Stedje (2010) contended that character education occurs every minute in our schools and classrooms so teachers have a responsibility for teaching students the moral values. Lickona (1991) remarked that academic achievement means nothing if character education is not incorporated with it. The idea of developing students' character in the school has been in existence throughout generations; this is because the concept of education has its definition to more than just transferring knowledge (Freeks, 2015). Based on this idea, character education has elicited a great deal of interest in most countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America (USA), New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Australia (Freeks, 2015). In these and many other countries that hold character dear in their curriculum, use value education as the main tool for character development and character building (Freeks, 2015). South Africa, as a developing country that had undergone different educational reforms since the political transformation in 1994 (Kasa and Ersoz, 2016) should think of integrating the character education through the curricula to serve as a tool for achieving academic success while instilling ethical behavior in the students.

Statement of the problem

In the context of a school setting, teachers are the major role-players or role models in character education. Youth in South Africa and the world as a whole are posed with challenges, which ranges from violence, bullying, gang rape, drugs, promiscuous sex, lack of respect for themselves and the elderly (Freeks, 2015). Based on this, it is high time curriculum designers realize the significance of implementing the character education through the curriculum so that students might not be influence by these problems. The role of the family in building the character of children is great and cannot be underestimated as Berkowitz (2011) emphasized that positive parenting towards the molding of child's character promote greater academic achievement. However, Gleeson and O'Flaherty (2016) ascertained, "The moral role of the teacher has been recognized ever since Plato in the Republic identified education as the foundation of the just society" (p.46). Gleeson and O'Flaherty (2016) explained further that teachers decision regarding the curriculum content, their choice of teaching methodology, learner differentiation strategies, subject improvement policy plans as well as discipline intervention programs invariably impact on the moral behavior and moral values of students. Evidence from research revealed that there is minimal professional development for teachers' in the implementation of character education in schools. "Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reported that all 33 character education programs that had scientific evidence of effectiveness had at least optional professional development for those who would be implementing the programs, typically classroom teachers" (as cited in Berkowitz, 2011, p.157). This could possibly suggest that most teachers would have low and mix perception in the context of teaching the character through the curricula. Many researches in the field of social sciences highlight the need for proper implementation of character education as well as value education in the context of South African schooling systems (Solomon and Fataar, 2011; Freeks 2015) to cater for the social problems such violence, lack empathy and lack of respect. In the face of this call, assessing the perception of teachers in the implementation of character education through the curriculum could lead to a success and proper integration through the school's disciplinary plans.

Purposes of the Research

The study is intended to determine the perception and intention of towards integrating character education into the curriculum and what teachers perceived as their role in the character development of students.

Research Objective

Specific objective of the study are

(i) to determine the perception of teachers with regards to integrating character through the curriculum and

(ii) to determine the perceived role of teachers in the moral character development of students.

Research Questions

The following questions will be investigated

(i) what is the perception of teachers towards implementation of character education (Moral character) through the curriculum?

(ii) what is the perceived role of teachers in the moral character development of students?

Literature Review

Over the years the number of researches in the field of character education has increased with many targeting on the best possible ways to integrate the teaching of character through the curriculum. The area of moral character development has gained a lot of attention probably due to the high volume of the family break, teen pregnancy, increase in drug use, and gang violence. Character development is shared responsibility where we all have a role to play for the younger generation (Evans, 2006).

Character Definition

One problem faced by scholar and researchers in the field of character education is how character conceptualized in a variety of ways (Seider, 2015). Some scholars conceived character as possession or improvement of the particular qualities such as patience, humility or respectfulness whiles others define character as a set of behavior found in a particular type of prosocial behavior, which may include sharing or helping (Seider, 2015). Developmental psychologist and character educator, Berkowitz (2011), in APA Educational Psychology Handbook, also defines character as " A set of psychological characteristics that motivate and enable individuals to function as competent moral agents" cited by (Seider, 2015, p. 21). The two folds definition by Berkowitz draws attention to the fact that individuals are not just motivated to do what is expected of them but needs to develop skills to enable them to do the right thing. The psychological characteristics aspect of the definition also explains that schools or other institution can choose to strengthen a particular character type and develop it (Seider, 2015). Berkowitz (2011), explained the moral identity of one's character as consisting of three parts as cognitive, affective and behavioral. In connection with this, Seider (2015) stated, "Effective character education needs to influence not only students' heads (the cognitive) but also their hearts (affective) and hands (behavioral) (p. 22). Lawrence Kohlberg asserted that our ability to deepening one's moral identity leads to increase in moral capacity, which enables individual to reason as perfect moral agents.

Research on the stages of Moral Development

The moral formation of children is one of the significant goals of socialization (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006). It is, therefore, relevant for character education teacher to study the formation of child's character (moral) due to its implication on the society. Crain (1985) recognized and recounts Kohlberg's six stages of moral development. These stages of moral development give an idea that morality starts from early stages of our lives and therefore important to develop it in schools so children will become moral agents. The outlined of Kohlberg's theory of moral development include; (a) Stage 1: Obedience and punishment orientation. Children's feels that there are set of rules set by authorities, which need to be obeyed without questioning and failure to do so would attractive punishment; (b) Stage 2: Individualism and exchange. Children feel that no there is no one correct viewpoint but each person is free to follow their own interest; (c) Stage 3: Good interpersonal relationships; which Kohlberg and Hersh (1977) "good boy - nice girl" orientation (p.55). The stage consists of children mainly in their teens, they uphold good behavior and think been nice to people in the community as well as the family is what is approved, hence act accordingly. (d) Stage 4: Law and order or maintaining the social order. Children lay much emphasis on law and order, showing respect for authority and acting as an agent to maintain social order. (e) Stage 5: Social contract and Individual rights. Individuals perceived one's action as right when it measures up to what the whole society considers acceptable. People normally focus on democratic and dialogue as the main tool for reaching consensus. (f) Stage 6: Universal Principles. Individuals focus on how to respect the human dignity, been fair to each person while carrying out daily responsibility. These are generally universal principle of justice. Through independent thinking, Kohlberg contends that children move through these stages of moral development. This growth in moral stages reinforces the main aim of the education as being development in both intellect and moral (Kohlberg and Hersh, 1977).

The moral role of the teacher

Even with the ever growing concern that our classrooms are now occupied by screen Agers (Rushkoff & Rushkoff, 2006), whose hitherto, used to learn lifestyle, values, and point of view through adult filtering (Jolls, 2008), many still believe these digital learners cannot successfully be equipped with moral character education without the teacher's purposefully exhibiting examples of what learners are taught.

Bennete (1993) believes there is nothing more influential and more detrimental in a child's life than the moral power of quiet example. This has necessitated the need for the character educator's role to shift from delivering a curriculum content to becoming a moral model, who will demonstrate a high level of respect and responsibility inside and outside the classroom for children to emulate (Lickona, 1991). Firmly supporting the above belief, Heafford (1967), who argues that students should be given concrete examples through the exemplary behaviors of teachers because it is only through example and practice that the language of morality could be taught and not by word of mouth, preaching, or lecture. With this, attempts by teachers to inculcate moral character into students should be complemented by they also becoming symbols of the very qualities and virtues they expect their learners to acquire.

Pritchards (1988), even puts it more succinctly by explaining that school goes beyond the content of its curriculum and in delivering moral education, hidden or implicit curriculum which includes how teachers and students act toward one another may have a great effect on the development of character in the school. The above discussions have been summed, Falkenberg (2007), who believed that teaching is a moral project, which is inherently moral, has a moral purpose and emphasizes moral responsibility. Consequently, the educator's role in character education cannot be complete without the demonstration of the very morals being taught by the educator

Perception

Research has shown that most teachers have mixed feelings when it comes to implementation of character education (moral) programs in schools' curricula. In a research by Tuff (2009) in Alberta, Canada, it is reported that most teachers believe that character development programs should not be added to the curricula as it provides teachers with additional responsibility. Other teachers contended that any character development program should first be approved to enable all staff to participate in it (Tuff, 2009). A similar research by Gleeson and O'Flaherty (2016), in Australia and Ireland, revealed that most teachers in Australia perceived themselves as nurturers who are interested not only in making students' smart but focus on the moral development of students as well. On the other hand, the majority of Irish teachers were less positive about their responsibility to provide moral education and training for students. Wood and Roach (1999), research on school administrators' idea about character education also revealed that 99% of them agreed that character through the curriculum is necessary but emphasized that most teachers lack formal training. Recommendation such as; proper training of teachers to integrate character through the curriculum, organizing workshops to broaden and increase knowledge of teachers, parents and administrators, and effective practices that are supported by enough scientific research. A study on high school students to ascertain their perspective on character education also revealed that most students see character education as an important factor in their lives but most argued that it's too late for its implementation at high school level. They, therefore, recommended an early start at an elementary level (Romanowski, 2003). These findings revealed that various stakeholders of education perceived some responsible role by acting as moral agents to help in the development of students' character.

Research Methods

Design

The research design employed a mixed method approach involving administering a survey to ten public senior high school teachers in the 5 districts of KwaZulu-Natal and interview with ten volunteers respondents. The study was conducted in mixed-gender educational schools. All the schools are community day government schools with majority of students' population consist of black South Africans. The community members are regarded as the major stakeholders in these schools. Due to resources such time and funds, only 5 districts in KwaZulu-Natal were recruited for this study hence convenience sampling procedure was used in selecting the participating schools. The survey would assist curriculum designers and administrators comprehend how teachers think and feel about the implementation of moral character while

interview would bring out what teachers perceived as the barriers or resistance to the implementation in the school. This allows for a thick description, which goes beyond statistics and measurement (Gleeson & O'Flaherty, 2016; Duma & Anderson, 2014). The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section I dealt with demographic information, section II with teachers' prior knowledge or training in moral education and section III covered specifically on what teachers perceived as their responsibility or the role of schools in the moral character development of students. The demographic information included aspects such as gender, age, subjects taught, and years of teaching of the teacher. Teachers' knowledge on character education in terms of training when at teacher training colleges, the number of workshops received on character education when started working covered section II. Section III introduced teachers' to three Likert-type response questions, which assessed teachers' knowledge perception of the school and teachers' responsibility in the moral character development of students. The semi-structured interviews conducted with volunteer teachers to explore and enhance main survey findings.

The questionnaire and the interview questions were adapted from Tuff (2009) with reliability and the validity scale reported as 72% and 90%. Ethical approval was sought and granted by relevant district education offices where the research took place, which is in compliance with ethical committees for the protection of human subjects for research.

Data Collection

The survey questionnaire and the interview were sent to the teachers in their respective schools by one of the researchers. Initially, letters were sent to all the principals of the ten secondary schools to seek for permission to carry out the research and to explain how allowing teachers to participate will help the study. Individual teachers were also given letters explaining the purpose of the research study and how their voluntary participation would interest the study. Teachers were advised that participation is voluntary and their response would be treated confidential and anonymous. Both the questionnaire and the interview were filled under the supervision of the researcher who went to the various schools. Each interview lasts approximately 25 minutes and was recorded using a digital recorder, with the consent of the interviewee. Much attention was paid to what teachers perceived as their role as well as the school in shaping the character of students.

Participants

A total of 64 classroom teachers of whom 56% were females and 44% males responded to the survey. The larger proportion of female teachers respondent is an indicative of the relatively higher number of female teachers in the various schools use to compare to male teachers. Survey respondents were effectively spread across the age range with up to 90% below the age of 45. More than half of the respondents have been teaching for than 10years. Respondents teach a wide variety of subject's disciplines with languages and science being particularly represented. The volunteer interviewees (n=10, 6 Females and 4 male teachers) varied in subject discipline, experienced, and age.

Data Analysis

The analysis was designed to effectively assist in answering the research questions, which this study attempts to find answers to. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data. Themes that emerge from the interview (qualitative data) were analyzed using the theme coding approach (McMillan, 2016). Transcripts were studied in full by one of the authors in order to identify themes while assigning a code to the repeated concepts. An inductive approach to data analysis (Veitch, Arundell, Hume & Ball, 2013) and thematic analysis were used to ascertain themes. Allowing another author to review each interview transcript, which allows for the coding to be compared, further maximized the validity and the interpretation of the data.

Result and Findings

Result

Table 1. Survey of teachers' perception and prior knowledge about developing

Table1. Survey of teachers perception and prior knowledge about developing character through the curriculum

Prior knowledge	SA %(n)	A %(n)	N %(n)	D %(n)	SD %(n)
1. Teachers receive training on moral education in high school	3.1(2)	9.4(6)	4.7(3)	32.8(21)	50.0(32)
2. Teachers receive training on moral education in teacher education institutions	1.6(1)	6.3(4)	3.1(2)	31.3(20)	57.8(37)
3. Teachers receive training on moral education in workshops and seminars	3.1(2)	10.9(7)	3.1(2)	28.1(18)	54.7(35)
Perception					
4. Schools have responsibility of moral education	42.2(27)	40.6(26)	3.1(2)	7.8(5)	6.3(4)
5. Teachers are willing to integrate moral education in their daily practices	48.4(31)	42.2(27)	1.6(1)	1.6(1)	6.3(4)
6. Teachers have role in developing moral character	45.2(29)	42.2(27)	3.1(2)	6.3(4)	3.1(2)

Rating Scale: Strongly Agree (SA = 5), Agree (A = 4), Neutral (N = 3), Disagree (D = 2), Strongly Disagree (SD=1)

Findings

Findings from the survey and the interview data are presented under the following categories: Knowledge of moral education; Role of the teacher; Moral education and the curriculum.

Knowledge of moral education. The result from both the survey and the interview show inadequate knowledge of teachers towards moral education and its development. For instance, 89.1% and 82.2% of the survey respondent agreed that they did not receive any training from the university or high school respectively. Despite this scanty knowledge exhibited by the majority of the teachers, most interviewees accepted that moral character should be incorporated into the school-wide program and into the curriculum. Extract from some of their responses genuinely reflected this claim:

> Character development and education should be done at all levels of education (Ngcobo).

> …. teaching of content subjects or languages should incorporate character development as well (Dlamini)

> Students in South Africa today need more moral guidance than ever needed (Asandah).

Those interviewees who teach Life orientation (LO) revealed that they had some form of training on moral education at some point in their university education but it was not enough to give them the confidence to integrate moral education into the subject they teach. The majority of the respondents who teach other subjects agreed that they did not receive much training on moral character either at a high school or since they started working. For example, only 14% of the survey respondents agreed that they had receive training on moral education through workshops and seminars since they started working as against 82.8% who had not received any training. These were reflected in the interview data:

> Though I did life orientation at high school but it was not much on moral education (Nene)
> I received some little training on moral education when at university but it is not enough to give
> the skills needed to teach moral character. …If the Department wants teachers to teach,
> workshops are needed. (Thobile)
> Moral education is not done in most South Africans schools so most teachers do not have
> strategies for teaching them right now in schools (Patrick)

Role of the teacher. Survey respondents and interviewees in all the five districts agreed that the teacher should be a moral leader and educator in schools. As high as 82.2% of the survey respondent agreed that schools have a role to play in the moral character development of students compare to 14.1% of the survey respondent who disagreed. Similarly, 87.4% of the teachers agreed that teachers have a huge role to play in developing moral character of the student as against 9.42% who did not agree. Their responses reflected in the subsequent interviews:

> The length of time spent by students' in schools is fairly long so teachers should take part in
> developing the character of students (Thobile)

The staff should inculcate character development in all lessons they teach (John)

Parents and teachers should work together to identify those character traits that are most lacking in their teaching environments as well as homes and plan strategically to incorporate those moral character traits into the curriculum. (Nene).

Through the interview, it was noticed that a large number of the respondents particularly those who have more 10 years of teaching experienced and LO teachers feels their role is more than just preparing students for examination. Those with more than 10 years of teaching experienced and LO teachers are more likely to see themselves as moral agents as well as role models for character development compare to colleagues with less than 10 years of teaching experienced. These differences in perception were seen in the interviews. Below are some extracts from teachers with more than 10years of teaching experienced and life orientation teachers.

I think there should be time dedicated to the teaching of morals. … schools can invite pastors to preach to students (Dlamini)

If schools do not teach morals, then we are failing our children since certificate along is virtually nothing (John)

Extracts from those colleagues with less than 10 years of teaching experienced are below

Getting my subjects done and strategies to help students pass is my core responsibility (James)

The Department of Basic Education always needs the result and so moral upbringing should be the primary responsibility of parents, not schools only (Zama).

Moral Education and the Curriculum. 90.6% of the survey respondent identified the need and opportunity for moral education to be integrated within their subjects. They disagreed with statement such as moral education should be taught by teachers teaching LO only'. More female teachers (interviewees) were open to the opportunities to integrate moral education into their subjects' area with some females' interviewees coming up with comments such as below:

Every staff member has to plan their lessons around certain moral character trait to ensure that the learners are used to and exposed students to those moral traits frequently (Ngcobo).

Life orientation time is too small to contain the kind of moral development we want our children to portray. All teachers should, therefore, have a hand in the moral development of children (Asandah).

When asked if integrating moral education can have an impact on students' academic performances, the majority of the interview respondent strongly agreed. The majority of LO teachers and those over 40 years think that students with proper morals upbringing are likely to excel in exams while teachers teaching other subjects think it much depends on the teaching strategies use by a teacher. This difference in opinion was reflected in the interview data.

Without good morals, our work as teachers will be meaningless because students will perform poorly in exams and exhibit bad behavior at various workplaces (John)

Through moral education, our children will learn to be responsible and this will lead to hard work, which can bring success in academics (Zama).

Respect and other moral traits are important in schooling but teachers strategy as well as method of teaching is much effective in passing students (James)

In a summary, the majority of the participants both the survey and interview respondent agreed that all schools have a key role to play when it comes to moral character development. Some interviewees were also of the view that character development is a shared responsibility of both schools and homes. Interviewees were again more open on this issue:

Character formation should be a collective effort from both school and home (Nene)

Producing graduates who will make a meaningful contribution to the society is our main focus, as a school integrating morals within the curriculum will make this dream a reality (Ngcobo)

> *Character formation starts very early so parents should take up their responsibility and not to burden teachers in schools (Zama).*

Discussions and Conclusion

Discussion

The focus of education has always been a holistic approach; values issues abound in the content and process of teaching (Stedje, 2010). These values together with cognitive and social emotions are universal, which drive a person including students towards good or bad. From the findings above, both survey and interview respondent generally agreed that; the teacher has a role to play as a moral educator, the school has a responsibility in terms of providing character education to help a country and parents, and the possibility of introducing character education in each subject. It also came up that younger colleagues with few years of teaching experienced do not embrace the idea of character education in schools compare to older colleagues with a lot experienced.

The current study attests to the fact that all the people do not have the same perspective on introducing a moral character in the school curriculum. The survey data and the interview confirmed these statistical differences in terms of teaching experienced, age and subject discipline. To answer the research question effectively these differences would be discussed under the subheading; Moral education and the curriculum and the role of the teacher in the moral development of students.

Moral education and the curriculum. As evident from the survey and the interview data, a high number of respondent agreed that integrating moral education through the curriculum has numerous significances. A large number of interviewees who are old and has a lot teaching experienced agreed that schools cultures have powerful implication towards students academic success. When character education programs are well planned and properly integrated into the school culture, it is effective as any academic initiative program. As McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield (2001) ascertained that just as schools and districts have effective academic integrity initiative, a school can similarly plan an effective character education program that will assist students academic success (Berkowitz, 2011).

The differences in perceptions between the older teachers and the younger colleagues could be attributed to the different educational reform, which South Africa has witnessed over the past few years. The current educational reforms are designed to be result oriented which places much pressure on teachers. This situation put teachers in a state of emergency where extracurricular activities are all aim at finishing the demanding syllabus of, especially content subject. This could be the main reason why some of the respondent teaching content subjects objected to the integration of moral character within the curriculum. Such type of educational system causes the majority of teachers to resort to rote learning and focus primarily on books without taking into consideration the holistic development of learners. McCormack and O'Flahery (2010) research on the attitude and perception of pre-service teachers on the integration of moral development in Irish schools. Participants reported on challenges such curriculum constraints, inadequate time, and the high expectation to cover certain length topic. This is similar to the situation in South Africa educational system. When such happens, teachers rate themselves as lower on constructivist approach and higher on the transmission of ideas (Gleeson & O'Flahery, 2016). A research conducted by Van Veen, Sleegers, Bergen & Klaassen (2001) with teachers forming the major population in Netherland revealed a negative correlation between teachers who dwell much on transmission and moral attitude to teaching. Counting on all these challenges, the survey, and the interview data reveals that majority of teachers have a positive attitude towards integration of moral character into the curriculum. However, challenges such as inadequate training and skills needed to effectively integrate moral education into the curriculum should be dealt with.

Role of the teacher in moral development. Bennete (1993) emphasized that the moral upbringing of a child is much important than anything that the child can be offered. With this, Lickona (1991) ascertained that teachers especially have the power to affect value and character of learners in diverse ways. The high number of the survey respondent and the interviewee agreeing that schools and teachers have a crucial role to play in the character development of students is an indicative that most teachers know their responsibility as moral leaders both in the school and the community. Sanger and Osguthorpe (2011) pointed out that the

main hindrance to the lack of moral work of teaching is the lack of proper attention paid to moral education in the field of teacher education. Most of the respondent interviewed expressed a lack of knowledge, training, and confidence to teach or integrate moral character in their daily plan. Berkowitz (2011) reported a number of effective character education programs normally outline strategies necessary for teaching those skills. This means schools need to support learning and development necessary to support proper functioning moral character program (Berkowitz, 2011; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

There were some respondents in both survey and interview with a mixed view that character development should be a sole responsibility of the parents. This resonates with the research by Freeks (2015) on the influence of role-playing on the character development of South Africa student. In concluded, Freeks (2015) reported that majority of the respondent agreed that parents have a major role in the character development of children. Even with this, Lickona (1991) claimed that teachers still have a major role to play in the moral orientation of children. Throughout the South Africa and the World education system at large, teachers serve as ethical mentors and the instrument for moral character development. Those respondents who view moral development, as a sole responsibility of the parents may be to blame in part due to a lack confidence and skills on the side of the teacher to effectively integrate moral education within the subject. With this Berkowitz (2011) explicitly stated that schools that wish to provide moral character development should first aim at professional development.

Conclusion

As Heenan (2009) wrote that education had two primary aims; firstly to help students master literacy and numerals, and secondly to build quality character. Teachers should, therefore, note that value addition and development are indispensable to every educational system. It is, therefore, important for the South African Department Education and other education systems around the world to consider these two aims in order to achieve a holistic education. As a recommendation Freeks (2015), indicated that character development and character building programs that have scientific bases should be introduced into the various school programs to stop the decline in values. Integrating moral character within the curriculum has the potential to increase students' academic performance, respect for human dignity, and sense of responsibility. Moving away from the common ideology of virtues and focus much on moral virtue as a way to knowledge will be an ideal (Narvaez, 2013). Based on the study findings, it is important for the district and provincial education department to educate teachers on strategies needed before integrating moral character in the various schools around South Africa. This will help bridge the gap in the knowledge of most teachers concerning moral education. Moreover, because the community members are seen as the major stakeholders in most South African highschools, parents should be educated to team up with the teachers to implement character-building program that are capable of developing students' character. Character training and character development should be incorporated into the curriculum of teacher training institutions across South Africans to make teachers aware of their basic responsibility of been a character mentor in their schools and community at large.

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