Using action research in staff development: the case of moral education

By

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submitted in fulfillment of the degree

MASTER'S DEGREE

in

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, - LAW AND – POLICY STUDIES

in the

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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January 2015

In memory of

Kobus (JPJ) Ungerer

1954 -1994

and

Baby (LA) Lourens

1934 - 1999

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not have been a success without the guidance, wisdom, strength, perseverance and resilience that I received from God my Creator.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following people who contributed immensely in various ways towards the accomplishment of this study:

- My parents for always being there for me and supporting me in all the ways possible during this challenging time. Thank you for all your love and support.
- Erik, my love, thank you so very much for your love and support.
- My supervisor and co-supervisor Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis and Dr Ina Joubert for your insight and mentorship.
- Dr Izak Prinsloo and Mr Eric Eberlein for your encouragement during the difficult stages of the project.
- The members of the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies for your support and encouragement when it was needed.
- Mrs Ailsa Williams for editing this study.
- My friend and classmate Marianne Truter for always being there to lift me up in times of need when the road ahead seemed murky.
- My friends who are stimulating, interesting and amusing. Thank you for your support, encouragement and shoulders to cry on.
- My participants – thank you, without you this study would not have been possible.

DECLARATION

I, Andria Ungerer the undersigned, hereby declare that the thesis for the MEd degree in Education Management, -law and –policy studies or any version of it was not previously submitted for assessment to the University of Pretoria or any other university or institution of higher education. I declare that this is my own work and all sources have been properly acknowledged and referenced.

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DEPARTMENT	Education Management and Policy Studies	
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ABSTRACT

This study explored the phenomenon of training educators using Participatory Action Research (PAR) in using moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy to teach values in their Life Orientation lessons. The research was located within the specific context of a qualitative interpretivist study. A Participatory Action Research design was used to explore this design's potential as a method for the interactive training of educators to implement moral dilemma discussions in primary schools specifically.

The criteria used to select the participants included using Grades 4 -7 primary school learners of diverse cultures in a single-religion independent school. Within this school the study focused on the 3 Life Orientation educators teaching these pre-determined grades. Data on how the educators experienced the training, the implementation of moral dilemma discussions and the participation of the learners was collected using a group interview, non-participatory observations and semi-structured interviews. The aim of the non-participatory observations and semi-structured interviews was to determine how the educators and learners responded to moral dilemma discussions and to focus on the learners' ability to participate in moral reasoning as Kohlberg intended as well as whether any moral action was implemented as a result of the discussions.

The findings of the study revealed that educators are very set in their ways of teaching and find it difficult to explore new ideas. A reason for the resistance to change could be supported by the fact that the educators experience pressure from the management of the school to comply with the curriculum and have therefore become curriculum-bound in their teaching approach. The curriculum dominates educators' approach to teaching. This study also revealed that effective training opportunities and the implementation of teaching strategies is only successful with the support and encouragement of the management team of the school. Finally this study showed that primary school learners do have the potential cognitive ability to participate in moral reasoning. This deviates from Kohlberg's theory and requires further research with more primary school cohorts. However, moral action leading from moral dilemma discussions remains a challenge.

Since this study aimed to explore the possibilities of using moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy for values education, the preliminary findings suggest the need for more research to promote moral action to flow from these moral dilemma discussions. These discussions would be enhanced by first creating new knowledge based on the moral dilemma presented.

Keywords: moral development, values, morals, ethics, moral reasoning, moral action, moral dilemma discussions, values education, diversity

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS   - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CAPS   - Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

C2005   - Curriculum 2005

DoBE   - Department of Basic Education

DoE   - Department of Education

MRM   - Moral Regeneration Movement

NRCS   - National Revised Curriculum Statement

OBE   - Outcomes Based Education

PAR   - Participatory Action Research

RE periods   - Religion Education periods

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Chapter 1

Introduction and orientation to research

1.1.   Introduction

Internationally there is a renewed interest in and realization of the importance of values in education. Whether it is termed values education, character education, citizenship education or moral education, a renewed awareness of the importance of introducing some form of education based on values. This type of education is aimed at teaching children values to curb the increasing violent juvenile crime, drug abuse, bullying, cyber-harassment, teen pregnancy, teen suicide and other forms of deviant behaviour. These global trends have caused many to declare an international moral crisis (Nucci, 1997; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Richardson, 2003; Murray, 2001; Straughan, 1988). In our own country Asmal (in Siebörger & Dean, 2005), Prinsloo (2007) and Richardson (2003) in particular, have voiced their concern in this regard. While not all of these social concerns are moral in nature and most have complex origins, there is a growing trend towards linking the solutions to these and related social problems to the teaching of moral and social values in public schools (Nucci, 2008).

As indicated, numerous concepts or terms are used to describe the teaching of values in schools. Often the title used for a programme is indicative of the focus of the programme. Citizenship education will focus on aspects related to good citizenship while character education will focus on good character aspects. The problem is that often terms are used interchangeably; however, the terms are not synonyms. A good example is values versus moral education. Lawrence Kohlberg (in Solomons & Fataar, 2011) explained that the understanding of the values that underpin moral decision-making processes will enhance moral behaviour and could be termed values education. If the aim is rather improve moral decision making by means of moral reasoning that will evolve into moral actions it could then logically be referred to as moral education. In this research the focus is on promoting moral reasoning and moral decision-making processes that will lead to moral actions and thus preference will be given to the term moral education, rather than values education or any other term.

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It is, however, acknowledged that some authors may refer to moral education without pertinently linking the teaching of morals to moral action. Moral education has gained prominence in the field of education over the last number of years (Murray, 2001). Authors such as Haydon (1997), Halstead and Taylor (1996) and De Vries (1988) seem to agree that it is necessary for schools to teach children morals and the difference between "right" and "wrong". Straughan (1988) argues that the need for this type of education has gradually been placed on the shoulders of educators by religious leaders, parents and also society. It is now expected that educators promote moral education in schools in order to try and rectify the poor moral behaviour that has resulted in, among other things, poor academic performance among learners in schools (Haydon, 1997; Halstead & Taylor, 1996). Moral decline is a universal phenomenon (Richardson, 2003; Prinsloo, 2007; Haydon, 1997; Nucci, 2008; Straughan, 1988) that is also evident in South Africa. It might be true to say that moral education is partly in response to the poor moral behaviour and poor academic achievement in South African schools, but the question is how it should be taught in schools.

In this regard Nucci (1997) claims that moral development and values education should not be limited to specific academic subject areas, but that good social and moral values should infuse every aspect of school life. Nucci (2008) contends that such learning should never be limited to one specific subject area only. Educators need to realize that many elements of moral education are already part of typical academic programmes, especially in the teaching of Literature, Social Science and Life Orientation lessons.

Schools should realize that values permeate everything in which they involve themselves and this highlights the opportunities available to schools to teach components which will encourage learners to practice good moral behaviour such as initiative, diligence, loyalty, tact, generosity, altruism and courage (Wynne, 1989). Every action of educators as role models and authority figures is value-laden and sends messages of right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable, just or unjust, to learners. Even if one were to claim that schools are to be value-neutral, that too portrays an image of how one deals with values, moral issues and ethical principles (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a).

The fact that many aspects of values are already part of existing academic programmes does not mean that one can simply leave the teaching of morals to chance. For moral education to become effective, schools need to approach it in a planned and systematic manner. In this study, I will look at one possible way of teaching moral education by using a moral dilemma discussion approach that could lead to moral action.

1.2.   Rationale of the study

In analysing the discourse about moral education, two important questions emerge; firstly the question of whose values should be taught, and secondly the question of how these values should be taught (Kohn, 1997; Straughan, 1988).

In answering the first question, we may refer to the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996), the Manifesto on Values, Human Rights and Democracy (Republic of South Africa, 2001) (hereafter referred to as the Manifesto), the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) of 2000 (Swartz, 2006), Democracy and Human Rights in the Curriculum (DoE, 1996) and also Values and Human Rights in the Curriculum (DoE, 2001) as possible frameworks that could inform and advise schools of the values to be inculcated. However, the answer to the second question, the "how it should be taught", is not obvious.

The Democracy and Human Rights in the Curriculum (DoE, 1996) and Values and Human Rights in the Curriculum (DoE, 2002) documents (DoE, 2002; DoE, 1996) make provision for values and human rights education to be taught in the child's early years at school. Among the aims of these documents are the aims to promote the crucial aspect of social and personal moral development as the responsibility of the Department of Basic Education (DoBE).

A further aim is the attainment of the ideals of peace, freedom and justice and in principle to assist with the establishment of deeper and more harmonious human relations in order to try and reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance etc. in the country. Indeed, the Human Rights and Values in the Curriculum document acknowledges the critical role that education needs to play in the transformation towards a more moral citizenry (DoE, 2002).

The Manifesto (Republic of South Africa, 2001) indicates the range of areas in which values education could be taught, but offers very little advice on the didactic approach to be taken when teaching values. The only reference to a possible didactic approach made in this document is the cursory reference to the possible use of value clarification – an approach originally developed by Lawrence Kohlberg in 1958.

Similar "silence" on how values should be taught is found in other documents like Curriculum 2005 (C2005), and the National Revised Curriculum Statement (NRCS) (DoE, 2002). Both of these documents provided educators with guidelines on the conceptualisation of outcomes-based education, the outcomes themselves, assessment strategies, etc., but little advice on didactic approaches to the teaching of values.

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In the above mentioned documents, values are included in a critical cross-field outcome, which should provide evidence of life-long learning taking place in the classrooms.

The critical outcomes in C2005 (DoE, 2002) indicated may include some of the following skills: problem-solving, the ability to work with others, the ability to access information and, most importantly for this study, the ability to understand the consequences of one's actions and the decisions one makes (South African Qualifications Act, 2006). However, this critical cross-field outcome is not highlighted in any way as an aspect that requires special engagement or consideration.

The final draft of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DoBE, 2010) document takes a different stance. The CAPS document makes special reference to moral education as part of religious studies in the intermediate and senior phases. In the section of the subject Life Orientation dealing with religious studies, the educator is required to deal with aspects such as acts of compassion towards the environment, caring for others' feelings, being aware of one's own rights and feelings and acts of compassion towards fellow humans and animals.

It is also further expected of the educator to teach the learners the difference between right and wrong. This implies how to make informed decisions regarding good or bad influences (including sexual activities, substance abuse etc.), how to be active citizens, how to address social problems such as bullying etc., how to solve problems and how to reason in order to find effective solutions to problems. In addition, how to deal with discrimination and inequalities is highlighted in this document (DoBE, 2010).

The inclusion of values in CAPS as part of the curriculum is a positive step towards creating values-driven schools but, as in the past, CAPS as the national curriculum document, provides very little guidance on how values should actually be taught. In addition, the Department of Basic Education has made little provision for the training of educators on the detailed implementation of CAPS. This is in stark contrast to even the failed cascaded training workshop approach used during the implementation of C2005 (Chisholm, 2003; Jansen & Christie, 1999; Spady, 1994; Van Deventer, 2008).The cascaded training was described as a totally ineffective way of building educator capacity in Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and this training approach is in fact often cited by these authors as one of the reasons for the failure of C2005.

What little training is foreseen for CAPS appears to be focused on more intensive workshops, starting with the Foundation Phase and Grade 10 educators in 2011.

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Alarmingly however, other grades will only be engaged in training at a later stage, even though CAPS is set to be implemented in 2012 as was conveyed to me during an informal discussion with an official of the Department of Basic Education of Mpumalanga, Mrs Faber (2011).

It is in fact this scenario that created the window of opportunity for this research project. It allowed the researcher to involve a number of educators in a participative action research project aimed at preparing them for the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in the teaching of values that will meet the requirements of CAPS.

1.3. The problem statement:

The purpose of this study is to determine the possibility of using participative action research as a staff development strategy in preparing educators to teach moral education through the use of moral dilemma discussions. In other words, moral dilemma discussions are proposed as a teaching strategy and in this study educators will be trained in and prepared for the use of this teaching strategy. Action research as a staff development strategy has been used in a number of overseas studies (Whitehead, 2010; Ferguson, 2011; Tynan, Stewart, Adlington, Littledyke & Swinsburg, 2008) but little is known about its potential within the primary education context in South Africa.

Based on the purpose of this study, I have formulated the following primary research question to guide the study:

What difference does the training of teachers in moral dilemma discussions make on the teachers' approach to the teaching of morals in primary school?

1.3.1. Sub-questions

- How do educators experience training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in order to teach morals in primary schools?

- How does training in moral dilemma discussions assist educators with the development of sensitivity towards reflecting upon their own values and moral behaviour?

- What difference does the training in moral dilemma discussions make to the classroom practice of educators?

- How do primary school learners respond to moral dilemma discussions?

- What moral actions flowed from the discussion and how was it experienced by both educators and learners?

1.4. Theoretical underpinning for the use of moral dilemma discussions

I have been a primary school teacher for seven years and have often wondered how I could best introduce and teach primary school learners values and good moral behaviour. As part of my honours degree studies, I was introduced to the idea of moral dilemma discussions, but have noted that Kohlberg, who originated this approach, used it with adolescent boys.

I decided to introduce values education in some of my Grade 5 and 6 lessons and was surprised at how well my learners responded to this strategy. I asked myself the question whether, if other primary school teachers were trained in this approach, the reaction from their learners would be similar to that of mine.

From the literature that I have consulted on moral education I have noted that internationally, many different approaches or strategies are used, including character-building, citizenship education, value clarification, etc. For the purpose of this research the focus will be on value clarification as a method of moral education, a method chosen for the strong support it has garnered among researchers in the field (Baer, 1982; Kirschenbaum, 1992; Ryan, 1986). It is accepted that other strategies such as character- building etc. may co-exist with this strategy, but that this will fall beyond the scope of the current study.

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One of the major reasons for supporting this method of moral education stems from the dilemma of Life Orientation educators in South Africa, possibly being poor moral exemplars (Prinsloo, 2007). Value clarification guards against this issue because it guides learners not only to clarify their own existing values and in taking on new values, but also encourages them to act morally based on both their new and their newly clarified values (Baer, 1982).

Although this approach will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2, a few cursory comments at this stage seem necessary. As Kohlberg wanted to do research on morality, he did so by using a controversial technique called moral dilemma discussions. The aim was to study the participant's reasoning behind their judgements in solving a moral dilemma. Kohlberg used the reasoning of the different participants to develop his moral developmental stages. These stages showed that individuals progress through the different stages to reach moral maturity at their own pace (Boeree, 2009; Duska et al, 1975). Some of the criticisms related to Kohlberg's moral developmental stages were firstly based on his findings stating that this technique could only be used on older learners during the adolescent phase of development as young children do not have the cognitive ability to reason in such a manner as expected during moral dilemma discussions.

Many researchers (Gilligan, 1982; Berkowitz, 1998) disagreed and recommended moral reasoning to take place at an earlier stage of the learner's development. Gilligan rejected the close link between developmental stage and moral reasoning and thus developed her own classification of moral development. It is significant to note that her study was based on girls and women. Her study of moral reasoning indicated that stages of development do not need to be linked to age in order for progress to be made towards the next stage of moral reasoning and ultimately to the reaching of moral maturity.

Gilligan's (1982) classification is significant as it should be read in conjunction with other authors like Berkowitz (1998) who have suggested that it could be used with younger children in the ten to thirteen year .age group This is of great importance to the proposed research project as this research will be focused on primary schools learners, and specifically at promoting moral education at a younger age than was originally done by Kohlberg himself (Duska et al, 1975).

For the purposes of this study, the researcher will deviate from Kohlberg's original intention of focusing on adolescents only by focusing rather on moral education in the intermediate phase, in other words in Grades 4 to 6. Firstly the aim of this deviation, as suggested and supported by Gilligan (1982), is to intervene to improve learners' morality at an earlier stage of their development in order to prevent a lack of moral development in the later stages of their lives.

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This stance is supported by Berkowtiz (1998) who states that learners' moral development has long been the responsibility of the parents. In his work he established ways to assist parents to have a positive influence on their children's moral development. What is very interesting from Berkowitz's findings based on this research is that he also implies that learners at a young age could already participate effectively in moral reasoning. However, what is of utmost importance and significance is that Berkowitz did not attach any specific ages to moral reasoning as it is possible to use this as a strategy for moral development throughout the phases of childhood. This idea from Berkowitz (1998) supports my argument to start moral reasoning during the intermediate phase, deviating from Kohlberg's initial findings as indicated in Berkowitz's (1998) proposed parenting variables. It might be possible to consider these variables as suitable for moral education purposes in schools and not only for parenting purposes.

Secondly, Kohlberg was also criticised as he did not consider female (Gilligan, 1982) and diversity participation in his study. Taking the diversity of learners into consideration became a necessary requirement for future studies, as diversity in various ways does play an important role in the moral development of learners, especially within a diverse society such as that of South Africa (Ferns, 2007).

Finally, Kohlberg was also criticized for the judgement-action gap that emanated from the moral dilemma discussions. No action resulted from the moral dilemma discussions which were presented by Kohlberg during his research. In this regard Burger, Gouws and Kruger (2008) posit that Kohlberg's value clarification cannot evolve into moral action without a specific intervention.

Researchers such as Gibbs, Moshman, Berkowitz, Basinger & Grime, (2009) and Firmer and Walker (2008) support this opinion when they state that the judgment-action gap in Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions requires urgent attention.

The proposed research project will attempt to overcome these criticisms by using the moral dilemma discussions as a specific intervention to allow Kohlberg's value clarification to evolve into moral action. It is important to make sure that moral action does flow from moral reasoning to be able to ensure effective moral development (Gibbs et al, 2009 and Firmer et al, 2008).

Deciding on a teaching approach is only part of the problem. At another level, the educator is also confronted with the problem of which values will be taught in schools. Many rightly criticize and are fearful of the fact that educators might force their own values on the learners (Baer, 1982) and this may open education to indoctrination.

For the purposes of this study, it was decided not to enter into this debate but to take those values expounded and promoted in the CAPS document as it pertains to the subject of Life Orientation as a starting point and then to focus on the moral education proposed in this study. Values are central to both the theory of education and the practical activities of schools.

Schools and individual educators within those schools are the major influences, alongside the family, the media and peer groups, on the moral development of learners and thus on that of society at large (Halstead, 1996). Halstead (1996) posits that schools reflect and embody the morals of the society and seek to exert influence on the pattern of the learners' future development through education. This is just one of the many reasons why it is important for moral education to take place in schools.

The aim of this research will therefore be to provide staff development and empowerment to educators in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy for moral education and to assess qualitatively the potential this teaching strategy has in teaching learners about personal and social values. The study will therefore be rooted within a participatory action research paradigm.

In conclusion therefore, the proposed intervention will be to encourage Life Orientation educators to present and conduct moral dilemma discussions in their classrooms through participatory action research as part of the CAPS document in such a way that educators might be able to reach the learners' innerself, and that learners will be motivated to act and conduct themselves in a more moral manner.

1.5. Moral education in the intermediate phase

Dorothy Nolte (1972) said "Children learn what they live":

"If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.
If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.
If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.
If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.
If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.
If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envy.
If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.
If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.
If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.
If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.
If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.
If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.
If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.
If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.
If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.
If children live with fairness, they learn justice.
If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.
If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those about them.
If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to live."

This is especially true for the pre-adolescent child. The intermediate phase is a time of marked change in the experiences, capacities and typical behaviour of children, with lasting results and impacts for later adolescence and, in the long term, for adulthood. Hutson and Ripke (2006) view the immense impact that the intermediate phase – those years from Grade 4 to 6 - has on the moral development of individuals and on their futures as a great concern.

One hears frequently about the importance of the early phases of a child's development as it is then that   children have to master certain basic skills in order to optimise their contribution to our societies in the future. One is also often confronted with the concerns and troubles of the adolescent phase when learners are more likely to participate in activities such as drug abuse, juvenile crime and underage sex (Hutson *et al*, 2006).

One possible reason for the occurrence of such behaviour in the adolescent phase might be the absence of moral development and education in the intermediate phase, partly due to the fact that during this phase learners are perceived as experiencing very few moral hazards and that they therefore require less moral guidance.

Hutson *et al* (2006) and Bergin and Bergin (2012) agree that this 'gap' should therefore be seized as a window of opportunity and as an ideal period for moral growth and development.

It is therefore necessary to consider increased opportunities for moral education during the intermediate phase of the learner's development. Learners during this phase of development already possess certain basic cognitive abilities and are continually developing further multiple cognitive capabilities together with a heightened self-awareness and are therefore able to take part effectively in moral dilemma discussions. During this phase too, learners' social worlds start to expand as they participate more frequently in out-of-school activities and are therefore exposed to and experience much more of life. It is thus in this phase that learners need to be confronted with moral dilemma discussions as a tool to guide them to act or react in a moral way to real-life dilemmas when they occur (Hutson *et al*, 2006; Bergin *et al*, 2012).

1.6. Staff development as a possible intervention

The Department of Basic Education compiled the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000). This government document presented the seven roles which educators were expected to play during their service as an educator. The seven roles include that of learning mediator (it is expected that the educator should mediate learning in the classroom which is sensitive to the diversity of learners in the class including learning barriers etc.); interpreter and designer of learning programmes and learning materials (the educator should be able to construct and design learning programmes and materials, both textual and visual, that meet the requirements of the specific learning area); leader, administrator and manager (the educator is expected to be able to conduct effective classroom and administrative management); scholar, researcher and life-long learner; the community, citizenship and pastoral role; assessor (the educator is requested to keep a detailed record of assessments conducted and should be able to understand and analyse these assessments in order to improve teaching and learning) and finally that of teacher of area/subject/discipline and a phase specialist (the educator should possess the appropriate knowledge, skills, values principles, methods and procedures necessary to effectively teach a specialised subject, phase or professional or occupational field of study) (DoE, 2000).

When referring to these roles for educators, it is necessary for the purpose of this research to pay special attention to two roles in particular namely that of scholar, researcher and life-long learner (this entails educators participating in on-going personal, academic, occupational and professional growth by means of reflective research in their learning areas and broader areas of interest and fields of study) and the community, citizenship and pastoral role (educators are expected to practice and promote an ethical attitude towards promoting a sense of respect for and responsibility to individuals in a community. The educator will have to value, live and advance democratic values in schools and society. Lastly within the school and classroom, the educator will demonstrate an ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner to respect and care for others). This research will support and motivate the participating educators to portray these two roles as expected by the Department of Basic Education (DoE, 2000).

Although educators appear in principle to be willing to accept these roles, it is very clear that they still feel that they are not properly equipped and that they have not received adequate training to fulfil these important roles in schools (Haydon, 1997). In fact, the notion that educators should undergo specific and effective training as part of their professional training to prepare them for their role in moral education hardly exists. In practice it is expected of educators to just transmit their own personal values and to continue with what is expected academically from the values as it is presented within the curriculum (Haydon, 1997).

Traditionally, values have been transferred in two main ways: setting an example and the direct teaching of values. Setting the example is generally accepted as one of the best ways of teaching children values. In this regard Huxley (1944) once said, "If only people would realize that moral principles are like measles...They have to be caught. And only the people who've got them can pass on the contagion." Jung (1941) said: "An understanding heart is everything in a teacher, and cannot be esteemed highly enough.

One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feeling. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child." But what if the moral example of the educator is not desirable?

The second avenue has often been more problematic as the direct teaching of values can often be nothing more than mere moralising. Simon claimed in 1975 that it may help to understand the use of values clarification in schools to place it against a backdrop of the traditional way of teaching values, which is by "moralising".

"*Moralizing" teachers tell children what they should think and believe and what they should value*" (Simon, 1975). Much of the writing in the 1970s and 1980s heavily criticised such an approach to the teaching of values in schools and it is generally agreed that this is not the route to follow.

This research is therefore aimed at refraining from simple value transmission (values from the educator simply being transferred to the learners in the class) because, as is the case with knowledge transmission, this method of teaching has for a number of years now been regarded as inadequate for the teaching of learners (Kazempour, 2009; Haydon, 1997; Prinsloo, 2007).

To expect educators to successfully move from one mode of delivery or one set of teaching strategies such as transmission to incorporating other teaching strategies on which they have not received any training, is wishful thinking. To be effective, educators should be involved in a structured staff development initiative aimed at helping them to explore and implement new strategies and to reflect on and assess the success of the new strategy as a means of broadening their own repertoire of teaching methods. The best way of achieving this is to involve them in a programme where they can be trained on using such a strategy and to assess its success within their own school situation (Kazempour, 2009).

The Content-based Inquiry (CBI) staff development model will be used to train these educators. The main aim will be to empower educators in such a way that they are able to assist in the development of fulfilled and responsible adults and citizens for the future. This model provides opportunities for both the learners and the educators to take part in the learning, and also moves away from the knowledge transmission method of teaching (Kazempour, 2009).

The educators will be given training in the construction of and the opportunity to actually construct moral dilemmas that are familiar to the learners - dilemmas that conceivably the learners might be confronted with on a daily basis. These familiar and relevant scenarios will then be used by the educators to allow learners to react to and discuss the moral dilemmas they present and, very importantly, to then act on these clarified or newly established values.

1.7. Methodology for this research

It is necessary to consider a research design that is applicable to this research that will enable me as the researcher to answer my proposed research questions.

Therefore I will be making use of action research within the qualitative research paradigm. Action research is also addressing and solving an identified practical problem (Creswell, 2007 Maree, 2010). Action research has an applied focus, such as this research study's focus on the possibility of implementing Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions as a possible teaching strategy in primary schools (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) presents two types of action research namely practical and participatory action research. For the purpose of this research study I will make use of the participatory action research as this type of action research is focused on solving problems with a social and community orientation and emphasises the improvement of the quality of people, communities and family lives (Creswell, 2007).

This research study is aimed at solving the problem of educators being confronted with having to teach learners values in the school and to promote moral education but they are not trained and assisted in doing so. This is the practical problem (identified in this chapter already) to be solved in collaboration with the researcher and Life Orientation educators involved in this study, as participatory action research is collaborative in nature (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2010; Creswell, 2007). Participatory action research also consists of an intervention (Creswell, 2007; Maree, 2010). The researcher will use an intervention in order to try and solve the practical problem presented.

The intervention will be based on a staff development opportunity where the participants are trained in the use and drawing up of moral dilemma discussions using the curriculum when selecting the values to be taught. The intervention will be presented to the participants as training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy using the Life Orientation CAPS document in their respective classrooms.

In this participatory action research is a systematic process done by the Life Orientation educators themselves or in collaboration with other educators on how to improve their current educational settings (Creswell, 2007). During the presented research study the researcher will make use of three cycles during the data collection phase. The educators participating will have to prepare three moral dilemma discussions each for their Life Orientation classes. Each of these lessons will be seen as a cycle in the participatory action research process.

Also, it will provide the educator and participants with the opportunity to reflect and discuss possible actions to improve the implementation of the new teaching strategy during an interview after each of the proposed cycles.

It is therefore appropriate and effective to make use of a participatory action research design in order to answer the research questions stated earlier due to the fact that a social problem will be solved collaboratively involving the researcher and participants. The participants will be introduced to a new teaching strategy (intervention) to improve their classroom practice continuously for three cycles.

The trustworthiness of this research study is enhanced by making use of multiple data collection methods to gain a clear and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Member checking will be used by presenting the participants with the final report to ensure it is a true reflection of what happened during the data collection process. Also, in collaboration with my supervisors, the data will be analysed and reported on to ensure that it is also a true reflection of the raw data collected (Creswell, 2007; Manion *et al,* 2010).

1.8. Ethical considerations

In this research many ethical considerations will be taken into account, including the informed consent from the school governing body, principal, participants and the parents of the learners in the classroom.

The researcher will also consider ethical principles related to the participation of the learners as a captive audience during this research study (De Vries, 2010). The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants will be valued, but all the ethical considerations will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 3.

1.9. Further development of the study

During the progression of this research paper I will present the reader with various chapters showing how the research developed and progressed. This first chapter presented the problem to the reader by means of stating the main research question to be answered, the proposed research methodology and the rationale behind the proposed research.

Chapter 2 is the literature review. In this chapter I will present the body of literature which discusses the phenomena to be research.

This chapter will introduce the reader to the international and national body of knowledge and identify the gap identified to be researched in this study. Also, the researcher will use the literature to gain and present a clear understanding of the different concepts used.

Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology. This includes the research paradigm and research design that will be used in this research to answer the research questions posed. This chapter also gives a clear presentation of the sample, data collection plan, how the data will be analysed, how the study's trustworthiness will be ensured as well as the ethical considerations to be considered.

Chapter 4 presents the data analyses chapter. In this chapter I will give a detailed description of all the data to be analysed, by making use of content analyses. The data will be presented here and will be related to the theoretical framework as set out in chapter 2.

Chapter 5 is the final chapter of this study. This chapter is based on the final conclusions and further recommendations that surfaced from the data collected. I will answer the research questions in this chapter and/or give recommendations for future study in this field.

Chapter 2

Literature review

2.1. Introduction

In Chapter 1 I indicated that educators are tasked with the responsibility of teaching moral education in primary schools. However, limited staff development opportunities are made available to prepare educators for this role. Although some educators and researchers (Straughan, 1988; Haydon, 1997 & Halstead *et* al, 1996) may argue that the initial teacher (pre-service) training prepares educators to deal with any new curriculum, this is problematic as a new curriculum often requires new innovative approaches to the teaching of the curriculum content. Based on this rationale and the problem outlined in Chapter 1, the main purpose of this chapter is to establish the theoretical framework that underpins my research and to develop the theoretical tools to be used during the data analysis phase of this research.

This chapter will focus on an overview of the literature pertinent to the study to assist in the development of a conceptual understanding of what moral education entails. Some of the issues to be addressed in this will be, firstly, a conceptualisation of values and morals from a philosophical perspective. This will lead to the problem and necessity of teaching values and morals in education, as well as considering whose values and what morals should be taught in schools. Secondly, I will briefly look at the Department of Basic Education's (from here on referred to as DoBE) stance on and initiatives to introduce moral education in South African schools and how the new Life Orientation Curriculum and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document may be used as a basis from which values could be taught in schools. Thirdly, this chapter will explore the possible use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy by focussing on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg (1969), Carol Gilligan (1982) and the critique against the use of moral dilemma discussions. This will be done with specific reference to moral dilemma discussions as a possible method of teaching morals and values in primary schools. Fourthly, I will discuss the possibility of starting moral education at an earlier stage in the learner's development than stated by Kohlberg (1969).

Finally, the possibility of elaborating on Kohlberg's moral developmental theory to promote and intervene in a way that will establish effective strategies for promoting moral action by learners in schools will be discussed.

2.2. Philosophical conceptualization of morals and values

It is often assumed that individuals, groups and even societies understand the meaning of values, ethics and morals. However, when they are requested to explain their understanding of these concepts, most people respond by stating the obvious definition: that which is right or good versus bad or evil (Kidder, 2003; Narvan, 2010). When they are asked to give more detail in defining what is good, bad, evil, moral and ethical, they become hesitant. A possible reason for the lack of clarity about defining features of morals, values and ethics might be that these concepts are being used interchangeably. Another reason might be that these terms have lost their relevancy due to their overuse in different contexts, and that they are not frequently thought about by individuals as it is assumed that everybody knows what they mean (Kidder, 2003; Narvan, 2010 and Nieuwenhuis, 2009). In terms of their overuse, it is evident that for thousands of years these concepts have been debated and philosophers still grapple with deeper lying constructs as they try to define morals, values and ethics. However, there is still no clear definition or conceptualization of these concepts (Narvan, 2010). As values, morals and ethics are central to my study, and it is essential that I clarify these concepts and explain their use within the context of my research. I will commence defining the terms based on their etymological origins before looking at the concepts in terms of their conceptual use by a number of philosophers. The purpose is not to provide an exhaustive discussion of these theoretical distinctions, but to present a broad outline of the concepts of values, morals and ethics on which I can build my understanding within the context of my study.

The word 'ethics' comes from the Greek word *"ethos"* meaning character or custom. In Greek the word *"ethika"* refers to "principles" or "standards of human conduct" referring to the way individuals should behave in moral philosophy, "the ought to do" which includes the normative principles such as "*to act in an honest manner"*, etc. In Latin the word "*mores*" refers to "principles" or "standards of human conduct" which became known as morals. The study of these "principles" or "standards of human conduct" is called moral philosophy.

The focus here is not placed on the normative principle of how an individual should behave, but rather on acting in such a way that they act in a morally acceptable manner. Therefore moral education implies educating learners to act in morally acceptable ways (Nieuwenhuis, 2009).

When considering the word 'value' in its French (*valior)* and Latin *(valere)* origin or context, it is clear that the concept "*value"* refers to "what is worth living for". This is important for an individual and/or a social group. When we value honesty, we act in an honest manner (the ought to do – ethics) that will result in our behaviour being morally acceptable (Nieuwenhuis, 2009). It is important to note that values and morals are related to ethics. Ethics guides us in how we act in a given situation. So having "good" values will then lead to moral behaviour. Further analysis, however, reveals a long standing history of these concepts being variously interpreted.

It is important to start by differentiating between action based and virtue based ethical theories. Since both teleological (moral actions in human behaviour that is inherited) and deontological ethical theories focus entirely on the actions of people they are regarded as action based (deontic in nature) theories of morality. Contrary to this, virtue-based ethical theories place less emphasis on which action people should perform and instead focus on helping people develop good character traits, such as kindness and generosity. Virtue theorists argue that these character traits will result in people making good moral judgements. Virtue theorists also argue that people should be taught how to counter negative character traits called vices. A good example of the theory of virtues was presented by Aristotle.

Aristotle used the word virtue which comes from the Greek word "*arête"* meaning excellence or goodness. He stated that virtues are habits and ways of acting in a specific situation (Athanassoulis, 2010; Parry, 2009; Bagnoli, 2011). Also, he based his theory on the fact that the good and excellent behaviour of individuals results in happiness. Virtuous individuals act in a virtuous way to achieve personal happiness without considering the consequences or relationships affected by these actions. Just individuals act in this manner all the time according to their personal virtues, which links virtues to moral character. Character comes from the Greek word *charackter* meaning that individuals have certain traits that make them different from one another and includes the moral dimensions of individuals.

Each individual considers different virtues important and relevant, which gives each person a unique moral character. Moral character is also considered as human excellence or excellence of the soul (Timpe, 2008; Bagnoli, 2011; Payne and Cameron, 2012). These excellences of character include a person's emotions and feelings and not only their actions.

There is a distinction between acting virtuously and doing a virtuous action. One must not only act in a virtuous manner but must also be the right person with the right sort of character. This was the problem with Aristotle's theory of virtues. Virtues focus on the actions and not on the character of an individual. A 'bad' person can act in a good way, but it does not make them good individuals (Timpe, 2008; Bagnoli, 2011; Payne *et al*, 2012; Rosati, 2006).

In modern times virtue theory has lost its popularity. It is argued that although many moral decisions may indeed come more readily to people of the "right" moral character, many moral dilemmas require a great deal of careful reasoning and thinking and even people with the right moral character may be on the side of what is wrong. Simply having good virtues cannot be enough to even make the right decision likely. Another problem with virtue-based ethical theories is the question of what the "right" sort of character is which a person should have. Kohlberg rejected the focus on values and virtues because of the lack of agreement of what these virtues should include and also because of the complex nature of practising such virtues when confronted with moral dilemmas (Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, 1989).

Contrary to the virtue theorists, the deontological philosophers focus more on the duty of acting morally. Kant's theory, for example, focuses on what moral action should be conducted. It means that all individuals should always do what is right, even if it causes unhappiness (termed the moral imperative). For Kant this is the moral law that needs to be obeyed by all without any exceptions. Kant argues, therefore, that consequences are not morally significant. Kant also acknowledged that the main feature that gives an action moral worth is the motive behind the action, rather than the action itself (Martin, Cuilla & Solomon, 2011; Tyler, 2008).

The question is then asked whether ethics should be dealing with what is morally good. It is obvious that we need to identify what is universally considered to be morally good. What is morally good should be related to moral action without any other qualifications. The only morally good thing in Kant's opinion is good will as it focuses on the intention to do what is right only for the sake of doing what is right and for no other reason.

This is not always possible as people do things with ulterior motives or hidden agendas (Martin *et al*, 2011; Tyler, 2008).

Doing the "right thing" might be for more personal gain, including the way it makes us feel, or even because it is expected of us. Kant asserts that morality and moral action should be universal in nature. This makes his theory absolute and leaves little scope for any other actions. By implication, this means that a person should not ever tell a lie, no exceptions, no matter the circumstances. This is known as Kant's categorical imperative (Martin *et al*, 2011; Tyler, 2008). *"In summary Kant believes that moral behaviour requires that we do the right thing because it is the right thing to do and for no other reason, and that we hold ourselves up to do the same standards the way we require of everyone else"* (Martin *et al*, 2011).

Kant's theory of the categorical imperative has been widely criticised. Some of the critique includes the opinion that Kant's theory is overly absolute as there is no room for exceptions of any nature. Secondly, no consequences or relationships are taken into account. Finally this theory of Kant does not cater for moral dilemmas. Moral dilemmas deal with two duties where you need to make a choice as to which one is going to be executed and why. No fixed universal rule can be applied to a moral dilemma (Martin *et al*, 2011).

Kant was forced to consider alternatives to his categorical imperative. He then stated that we should "*act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means"* (Martin *et al*, 2011). This places more emphasis on the unique value of human life as deserving moral respect which is the purpose of a personal view of morality. Therefore this idea of Kant supports the 'Golden Rule' as considered by the Christian religion namely "treat others the way you would like to be treated". This is considered a universal moral law that is more possible for individuals to maintain (Martin *et al*, 2011; Tyler, 2008; Kidder, 2003).

Contrary to Kant, Bentham and Mill, both utilitarian philosophers, claimed (Martin *et al*, 2011; Tyler, 2008; Kidder, 2003) that an action is right if it tends to promote happiness and wrong if it provokes the opposite. This theory is not only focused on happiness but also on the happiness of everyone affected by the action. It is also in contrast with other ethical theories as it implies that good actions could stem from bad motives. These theorists, Bentham and Mill want to answer the practical question namely: "what ought man to do?"

The answer to this question is simply that he ought to act in such a manner that will produce the best consequences for all individuals involved or affected (Gregor & Timmermann, 2014; Kay, 1997). This is also known as the teleological theory. For Mill, not all pleasure is equally acceptable in terms of well-being or happiness.

This theory allows for different rights and wrongs for each situation. These choices are not clear-cut, as the choice with the greatest utility should be considered in the given situation (Kay, 1997; Mill, 1863). This makes moral actions relative. If moral actions were allowed to become relative, society would be a dangerous place to live in as no principles could be applied to guide and direct human interaction. Such relativism can thus not be accepted as permissible.

Mill (1863) criticised Kant's categorical imperative based on the fact that it is similar to utilitarianism since neither consider the consequences of various actions. These consequences determine the morality of the actions taken. Mill made it clear that utility in itself involves the consequences of the action and not the motive or character of the moral agent. He also states that we need to take utility into account when dealing with moral dilemmas as these dilemmas focus on two secondary principles (Mill, 1863; Kay, 1997). He further argues that there are two motivations for promoting happiness. First to please God and other human beings and secondly internal motivation, which is the feeling of duty. Duty is considered to be subjective and promoted through experience (Mill, 1863; Kay, 1997; Gregor *et al*, 2014).

Critics of deontic theories argue that morality cannot only be based on deontological thinking but also on the consequences of actions. The consequences of actions are the foundation of justice. For Mill and Bentham all notions of justice are determined by social utility that governs moral elements. This includes punishment and violation of other's rights. Secondly, if justice were to be evident then it would not be ambiguous in nature. Mill concludes by stating that justice is a true concept, but that it must be considered together with utility (Kay, 1997). An important principle to be distilled from these ideas is that morals and in particular morality could be associated with the idea of social justice or the ethic of justice.

Plato forwarded the fundamental argument that in ensuring justice, reason governs emotions or the affective disposition of a person. This rationalist perspective is also the basis of Rawls' (1971) influential *A Theory of Justice*. For Rawls (1971) social justice provides a moral framework for modern democracy to come to full expression. It governs the conduct of people in relation to each other.

Rawls (1971) further argues that not only does it bring out the idea that justice is a primitive moral notion in that it arises once the concept of morality is imposed on mutually self-interested agents similarly circumstanced, but it emphasizes that fundamental to justice is the concept of fairness, which relates to right dealing between persons who are cooperating with or competing against one another. Central to Rawls' argument is the idea that justice is concerned with establishing the priority of that which is right over that which is good – the latter being then the virtue concept. While goodness can be determined in different kinds of ways, the principles of what is right and just place limitations on the individual's ability to favour his or her own best interests. Rawls argues that a well-ordered society requires individuals with highly developed moral sensibilities (Rawls, 1971). However, rooting justice purely in rationalist thinking brings us back to the problem with deontological thinking where the consequences of a decision are side-lined.

Gilligan (1982) introduced us to the notion of the ethic of care. The ethic of caring for and connection with others represents a different style of moral thinking from that of the voice of justice and principle. In "the ethic of care" the moral problem arises from conflicting responsibilities rather than from competing rights and requires for its resolution a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract (Slote, 2010). Gilligan's understanding of morality as concerned with the activity of care is based on the understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the concept of morality as fairness [the ethic of justice] ties moral development to the understanding of rights and rules (Gilligan, 1982: 19). In similar vein, Joan Tronto (1999) asserts that: "…*care requires that humans pay attention to one another, take responsibility for one another, engage in physical processes of care giving, and respond to those who have received care*".

The ethic of care gives positive recognition to emotions or focuses on the character traits of sympathy, empathy, compassion, friendship, sensitivity and responsiveness (French & Weis, 2000; Held, 1997). Those who consciously care for others are primarily not seeking to further their individual interests but to intertwine their interests with those of the person they care for (Held, 1997). This ethic promotes caring that honours the dignity of every person and desires to see all people enjoying a fully human life (Starratt, 1994:52).

Bridging the gap from a philosophical understanding of the ethic of justice and the ethic of care Starratt (1991) proposed a multi-dimensional model for ethical decision-making (Ethic of Critique, Ethic of Care, and Ethic of Justice). Within Starratt's Ethic of Critique, people are encouraged to think independently rather than accept the ethics of those in power.

They are encouraged to challenge the status quo that deals with societal inconsistencies, and to formulate the hard questions pertaining to challenging issues. Through the Ethic of Critique, we are encouraged to make decisions based on "what should be".

The "ought to be" presupposes a moral right or wrong based on either a perceived universal principle of rightness (Ethic of Justice) or on an ethic that would promote caring. Critical questions for persons using this ethical philosophy are: "Who will benefit?" "Who will be hurt by my actions?" and "What can I do to make the situation better?" (Katz, Noddings, & Strike, 1999).

Nieuwenhuis (2011) asserts that to be able to answer whether something is right, ought to be, just, and fair one must first know what that something is intended to accomplish or what the intended outcome of a decision is. The outcome may, for example, be to ensure group solidarity, or social justice or harmony between members. The outcome to be achieved largely depends on the decision-maker's own personal morals and his/her understanding of social morals.

In other words, the individual's own personal moral stance is vital in moral reasoning and depends on the person's own morality (Nieuwenhuis, 2011). Personal morality defines how we personally respond to life from or within our own integrity, and within our own personal values. Social morality defines how we respond to our environment, our immediate community and the world community. We are all personally guided by our own sense of what is right and wrong (King, 2010).

For the purpose of my study I accept that morality and moral behaviour straddles three important dimensions: firstly, it is rooted in a rational conceptualisation of what is right, based on universal principles of what is socially just; secondly, morality is sensitive to the consequences of our decisions and thus implores affective considerations such as empathy, compassion, friendship, sensitivity and responsiveness when making moral decisions; and thirdly, it is critical of the decision taken to reflect on how the decision may affect others. Teaching learners moral decision-making should therefore be based on these three principles. To talk of a moral decision, Strike, Haller, & Soltis (1988) argue that there must be a moral dilemma. For Rushworth Kidder (1995) an "ethical" or moral dilemma is not a choice between right and wrong, but a choice between two rights. For example, considering a bribe would be a "moral temptation"; deciding whether I should use my pocket money to go to the movies or give it to charity would constitute a dilemma. Nieuwenhuis (2011) therefore argues that a moral dilemma invokes the imposition of values to resolve conflicting outcomes. It concerns issues that raise questions about the rights and welfare of sentient beings.

A moral dilemma calls forth an answer to issues that raise questions about what is right, ought to be, just, and fair. This is even more evident if we consider the following two challenges of the moral educator.

It is often argued that morality and religion are inseparable. Individuals commonly consider morality to be better understood within the religious context. So the conclusion is that what is relevant to morality is relevant to religion as well (Rachels, 2007; Hume, 1975). There are, however, also those who do not accept the interrelatedness of religion and morality as a given. The theory of morality presented by Irons (1996), for example, is a composite of ideas suggested by a number of theorists (Alexander 1987; Boyd and Richerson 1991; Frank 1988; Irons 1991, McShea 1990; Ruse 1986, 1990; Wilson 1978). According to Irons (1996) these theories and ideas are very similar at their core and all derive from the assumption that moral sentiments and the propensity to make moral judgments are part of human nature.

Similarly, the theory of Natural law implies that doing the right thing is therefore whatever course of conduct has the best reasons. This indicates that a religious believer has no special access to moral truth. It suggests that both the believer and the non-believer are in the same position. Both the believers and non-believers function in the same way as moral agents. This then leaves morality independent of religion. At the same time, linking religion to morality may be permitted but not as a prerequisite for moral action. Religious beliefs do not affect the decision of what is the best conduct; therefore it is considered that moral inquiry is religiously independent (Rachels, 2007). Therefore even though believers and non-believers disagree about religion, they do share the same moral universe (Rachels, 2007).

For this study, I will assume that morality and moral principles can exist as human principles without necessarily being predetermined by religion and that linking it to religion is permissible but not a prerequisite. Moral education should therefore not apriori be determined by religion but by acceptable moral principles that apply to all human beings irrespective of their religious orientation. Trust between an educator and a child for example, is essential irrespective of their particular religious orientation.

Secondly, it should be noted that the ideas presented thus far originated within a particular Western cultural and religious context. As countries and communities became more diverse and the diversity of cultural groups became foregrounded, theorists realised that members from different cultural groups have different perspectives of what is right or wrong in the same situation (Harman, 1999).

This leads Harman (1999) to argue that there can be no single truth when dealing with morality. Diversity is also of great concern when dealing with values and values education in the schooling context of South Africa (Solomons et al, 2011).

The caveat of making morality a highly relative issue has already been flagged by Rachels (2007), and I accept that although diverse groups may have a very different understanding of right and wrong within a particular context, there should exist at least some common principles on which morality is based. A person may show respect in a different way, but it does not nullify the importance of respect as the principle on which education should be based. The possible diversity of interpretations also highlights the importance of an aspect such as values clarification and moral discussion so that the principles that should apply are clarified and reinforced.

2.3. Values prescriptions in official documents

In recent years the moral decay within nation states has spurred a new awaking of the need for moral education in schools (Nucci, 1997; Likona, 2004; Kohn, 1997; Brezinka, 1994; Haydon, 1997; Straughan, 1988; Murray, 2001; Halstead *et al*, 1996; Devine, 2006). The challenge of introducing moral education as part of the curriculum is confronted with numerous complexities, such as how it should be introduced (as subject or infused across the curriculum), at what stage it should be introduced (pre-school, primary school or secondary school level) and how it should be taught. Finally which values should be taught?

When considering the values that should be taught in schools, it is necessary to take into consideration the values presented in both the Constitution of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 and relevant government documents such as the White Paper 1 on Education and Training of 1995. The Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996) focuses its attention on four main constitutional values. These constitutional values include human dignity, non-racism and non-sexism, the rule of law and finally universal adult suffrage that should be valued and realised by all citizens of this country. In turn the White Paper 1 (Republic of South Africa, 1995) stated that the realisation of democracy, liberty, equality, justice and peace are necessary for individuals to enjoy lifelong learning within the South African context. Therefore it expects education and training institutions to enable a democratic, free, equal, just and peaceful society to take the lead and prosper our country on the basis that all citizens without exception share the same human rights and citizenship (Republic of South Africa, 1995).

Furthermore it is expected that education and training should encourage mutual respect for diversity (language, religion, race etc.) to promote a united nation (Republic of South Africa, 1995).

The Manifesto (Republic of South Africa, 2001) elaborates on the constitutional values and the values foregrounded in the White Paper 1 (1995), and emphasizes the values to be taught in schools that will not only enrich the individual but also be extended to society. Asmal (2000) acknowledged the importance of teaching values in schools, more specifically so because of the decline of values in this country. The Manifesto (Republic of South Africa, 2001) was drawn up as a discussion document for possible implementation in schools. This document was seen as a Values Statement and Values Action Plan that would encourage creating a shared commitment among citizens. There was no intention of imposing values on learners or any individual.

The aim was to promote the values identified in this document by generating debate and discussions (Republic of South Africa, 2001). The Manifesto also recognised that values make life meaningful (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The inculcation of values at school level is intended to help young learners to achieve high levels of moral reasoning (Republic of South Africa, 2001). The Manifesto suggested that the following values be taught in schools, namely: *democracy, social justice and equity, non-racism and sexism, Ubuntu (human dignity), openness and transparency, accountability (responsibility)* and finally *rule of law* (Nieuwenhuis, 2007 and Republic of South Africa, 2001).

In the Life Orientation section of the CAPS document (DoBE, 2010) it states clearly that the Life Skill section is put into place to deal with the holistic development of the learners throughout their childhood. It will equip learners with the necessary knowledge, skills and values to assist them in achieving their full emotional, physical, intellectual and social potential (DoBE, 2010).

Furthermore, this curriculum document is aimed at encouraging learners to acquire practical life skills to assist them in becoming independent and effective in dealing with life's challenges and dilemmas and in playing an active and responsible role in society. It is envisaged that they will learn values such as respect for the rights of others and tolerance for cultural and religious differences in order to build a democratic society and country (DoBE, 2010).

Given the guidelines in the White Paper, Manifesto and in the CAPS document, one can infer that the type of moral behaviour to be inculcated by schools should be aimed at equipping learners with the necessary skills, knowledge and values that will assist them to achieve their full personal, emotional and social potential (Republic of South Africa, 2001; DoBE, 2010). These documents (Republic of South Africa, 1995, 2001; DoBE, 2010) encourage learners to acquire and practice values and life skills that will assist them in playing a responsible and contributing role in society. These documents prescribe that educators should teach learners values, including respect for the rights of others and tolerance towards diversity (including race, language, religion etc.) in order to build a democratic society (Republic of South Africa, 1995, 2001; DoBE, 2010). Therefore, moral education is important and the importance thereof should be taught to learners during an early stage of their development to ensure a democratic society.

It is clear that South African schools should know which values should be taught. All these values are clearly stated in both the Constitution and the Manifesto. It is also very clear in the Manifesto and the Life Orientation CAPS document that value education should take place in schools, and that the responsibility for this teaching is placed on the educators and schools as was mentioned earlier in this chapter (Straughan, 1988). What is not always clear from these documents is how values should be taught.

2.4.   A critique of previous initiatives of moral education within the South African context

Prior to 1994 education was based on the idea of Christian National Education. Although such a system is prescriptive of a particular set of norms and values, it did not take the diversity of the population into account, thus marginalising the majority of the population who may not have agreed with the particular set of values and morals portrayed. Secondly, it required that the state align itself with a specific religious orientation, thereby not separating religion and the state. This is not democratic in the true sense of the word. However in the new CAPS (DoE, 2010) document Life Skills focuses on the following components namely religion education (i.e. teaching children about religious diversity and introducing them to the various religions), physical education and creative arts.

The religion education section focuses on learning about the different religions and beliefs within the South African context. It also accommodates the moral and ethical development of the learner although these values are not linked to any specific religious orientation.

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It promotes the learners' own identity and guides them in understanding and respecting the religious identities of others (DoE, 2010). It is also expected that the educators be sensitive to the diverse religious interests (DoE, 2010).

While it is desirable to establish morality as both a universal and a national initiative, doing so effectively is not really possible when one considers the role cultural diversity plays in the process. A few suggestions for addressing the morality and diversity issue come from Ferns (2007). She (Ferns, 2007) suggests making use of moral reasoning to increase moral development which in turn might develop into a universal or national morality. She also suggests focusing on parents, peers, the media, religious leaders, political leaders etc. and the role they play in promoting morality, and then asking whether they are indeed the moral exemplars for those who need the guidance and assistance the most (Ferns, 2007).

Asmal (2000), a former South African Minister of Education, stated his concern about the relationship between values and education as far back as 2001. He indicated that values should play a role in education as education should not aim at serving a market but rather a society. In his own words; *"…from these values evolve a new national and democratic mission to education that rests in the first instance on equitable development"* (Asmal, 2000:1). This then was also the motivation and aim of the Manifesto; to establish values relevant to all citizens of this country and to teach these values in schools, based on the strategies proposed in the Manifesto itself (Siebörger & Dean, 2005). Regrettably, the Manifesto (2001) failed to live up to expectations, mainly because of the lack of involvement of stakeholders, among them educators, in the drafting and preparation process. The only way to bring about meaningful educational engagement with difficult issues such as morals and morality in South African classrooms is actually to provide educators, with the tools to empower them to teach these issues and to explore their own understanding of the social world and the world in general (Siebörger *et al*, 2005). The Manifesto and the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) were concurrently established to focus on and analyse the moral problem with which South Africa is faced, in order to try and understand the issues at hand and to develop strategies to address these issues (Swartz, 2006).

Morality is not an issue that exits in isolation; rather it is an issue that requires collaboration and the attention of the whole community (Richardson, 2003). Richardson goes on to state that *"…for morality to be thought about, understood, learned and taught there must be a moral community first".* MRM was initiated in an attempt to resolve the issue of the moral breakdown in South Africa and was also tasked with promoting moral education and an improved moral climate within South Africa (Rauch, 2005).

The idea behind moral education was to try and educate the public about the social values as enshrined in and portrayed by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The argument so far states that it is necessary for us to teach learners values as part of an holistic process that will include all the relevant interest groups, but so far no guidance is given in these documents as to how to deal with moral decision-making in education (Republic of South Africa, 2001).

However, it is also important to understand Richardson (2003) when he says that a diversity of cultures and religions, as is present in South Africa, complicates moral transformation, moral education and moral action, much more than in mono-culture nations. Even though all the above-mentioned initiatives were established and even though attempts were made at implementing them, some concerns were raised about their chances of success. The first example of these concerns was the fact that the initiator of the MRM, then deputy president Jacob Zuma, was not considered by many as a moral exemplar to the country (Swartz, 2006). His poor moral behaviour could be supported by the corrupt relationship between Pres. Jacob Zuma and Shabir Shaik (Mail & Guardian, 2005) and his rape trial that started in 2005 (BBC news, 2006). Such concerns and perceptions weighed heavily against the MRM, militating against its success almost before it had the opportunity to be implemented. Nieuwenhuis (2009) and Tapis, Kanu, Haser & Zompieri (2010) also support this argument by stating that the government included more initiatives to try and rectify the moral crises that we face by calling for a return to traditional values, for education to 'fix the kids' and that schools were expected to rectify the problem. This could be the motivation behind the introduction of the CAPS document. CAPS includes moral education as part of the formal curriculum but fails to impact the lives of all the students. The second example of the above mentioned concerns is that the MRM in itself contained very little or no guidance on its own implementation or guidelines for its use.

Finally, it was also found to be very difficult to identify moral activities to link with and use within these initiatives in order to try and enhance morality in our society. This makes it very difficult to educate, train and/or develop individuals to use this initiative as effectively as it was intended to be used (Swartz, 2006; Siebörger *et al*, 2005).

Values are central to both the theory of education and the practical activities of schools. Schools and individual educators within those schools are the major influences, alongside the family, the media and peer groups, on the moral development of learners and thus on that of society at large (Halstead, 1996).

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Halstead (1996) posits that schools reflect and embody the morals of society; they also owe their existence to moral education and seek to exert influence on the pattern of their own future development through education.

2.5.   Dealing with moral education

Returning to the question of 'how' to engage in moral education, the researcher has found many types of moral education programmes in literature, some examples of which would be character-building, citizen-building, value clarification etc. For the purpose of this research the focus will be on value clarification using moral dilemma discussions as a method of moral education, a method chosen for the strong support it has garnered among researchers in the field (Baer, 1982; Kirschenbaum, 1992; Ryan, 1986). It is accepted that other strategies such as character- building etc. may co-exist with this strategy to be investigated, but that will fall beyond the scope of the current study.

Value clarification guards against value transmission, where the educators 'force' their own values on the learners. Therefore value clarification guides learners not only to clarify their own existing values and to take on new values, but it also encourages them to act morally based on both their existing and their newly clarified values (Baer, 1982; Lipe, 1999; Abramowitz *et al*, 1972 and Contini, 2012). Earlier in this chapter I introduced three principles that are considered the top principles when dealing with moral reasoning, namely, the rational approach, ethics of justice and ethics of care (Gilligan, 1982; Rawls, 1971). There are numerous critiques to these three principles, namely that morality could not be considered universal when considering diversity. Diversity causes different interpretations and understanding of certain values. That is why value clarification and moral reasoning can be seen as valuable strategies to clarify values and to steer away from so-called moralising taking place in education (Rachels, 2007).

Irrespective of the approach that an educator would use to inculcate values, the outcomes of the intervention should help a child along the way of becoming a moral agent. Nieuwenhuis (2011) refers to Schrag's dimensions of a moral agent as a possible indicator of moral maturity:

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(1) A moral agent must base his/her decisions on principles that apply to classes of situations, not on a whim of the moment or a predilection for one particular kind of situation. These principles must be meant for all human beings; they should not benefit or burden any group or class within society. This means that an actor must be willing to adhere to the principles even if his/her role in the moral situation were to be reversed and he/she were the one to whom the principle was being applied. In terms of what I have presented earlier, this could be regarded as the ethic of justice litmus test.

(2) A moral agent should consider the welfare and interests of all who stand to be affected by his/her decision or action, including him/herself – this I have termed the ethic of care.

(3) A moral agent has the obligation to base his/her decision on the most complete information relative to the decision that he/she can obtain. This opportunity occurs when the educator provides the learner with this information.

(4) A conscientious moral agent's moral judgments are prescriptive. He/she must acknowledge that, when he/she has fully examined a situation calling for his/her decision and reached a conclusion, he/she has thereby answered the question: What ought I to do? If he/she acts otherwise, it is through weakness of will or through failure to take the moral obligation seriously, which then relates to the ethic of critique.

In this study I will argue that value clarification offers the best possible route of attaining the goal of moral maturity which is the basis of moral education.

2.6. Value clarification in moral education

Value clarification is not a new approach to moral education. It is the most popular up to date and the most effective way in dealing with moral education within the school context (Trissler, 2000; Lipe, 1999 and Duska *et al*, 1975). Value clarification can be defined in many different ways. The general understanding of value clarification is that it is a technique used in schools specifically to encourage individuals to relate their feelings and thoughts to gain a better understanding and awareness of their own existing core values. Value clarification is also seen as an important part of an individual's personal growth as values determine every aspect of their lives (Devine, 2006; Contini, 2012 and Nieuwenhuis, 2009). Therefore the necessity of clarifying values could create a blueprint of how we ought to live.

Not only does value clarification make us aware of our core values that are important to creating personal goals and priorities, it also provides the individual with the opportunity to strengthen their own value system and to accept more values to elaborate on their existing values (Nieuwenhuis, 2009 and Baer, 1982).

In response to the above explanation of what value clarification entails and means, Trissler (2000) stated that value clarification aims at assisting young individuals especially to answer questions related to values to enable them to build a more solid value system for themselves. These solid value systems could then lead to a more just behaviour from these young individuals which are known as morals. When teaching individuals morals (acting in a morally acceptable way) it must lead to moral behaviour before it can be considered as moral education (Solomons *et al*, 2011).

Value clarification takes place through activities created by educators to encourage learners to expand and clarify their own values resulting in these learners holding certain values that should establish moral actions. Lipe (1999) in turn explains that a wide range of conflicting values are presented to individuals. This wide range of values presented to learners using value transmission just creates value confusion within learners that result in bad behaviour and poor academic achievement.

Therefore Lipe (1999) suggested that value clarification is a method of moral education that allows individuals to study themselves in-depth, from the inner-self to reflect on the confusions experienced and to try and make sense thereof. As soon as sense is made of the confusion by clarifying the values, it will create a less confused individual.

The process of value clarification shows that values are not readily transmitted. Therefore, values cannot easily be taught but can easily be learned. This means that value clarification is moving away from moralizing and the inculcating of values, towards clarifying values (Abramowitz *et al*, 1972 and Rath, Harmin & Simon, 1966). Contini (2012) and Abramowitz *et al* (1972) further explain that value clarification assists the learners in creating their own moral code, which they create themselves over a period of time, in clarifying values. Therefore the importance of value clarification is not focused on the content of the values obtained, but rather on how these learners went about acquiring these values.

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I will introduce value clarification as a method of moral education to be used in this study, as it could be a possible strategy within the South African context. In order to support my selection of this strategy it will be necessary to acknowledge the many advantages thereof (Contini, 2012; Trissler, 2000; Abramowitz *et al*, 1972; Baer, 1982 and Lipe, 1999).

Some of the advantages of value clarification include the fact that this process still ensures legitimate classroom practice, except that there are no right and wrong answers to the questions asked(Contini, 2012). This strategy of moral education establishes a warm and trusting environment in which the students feel comfortable to share their ideas, beliefs and opinions. Learners enjoy the personal attention as they are acknowledged by the educator and their peers during a period of fun with the freedom of expressing personal views without any form of judgment and condemnation (Abramowitz *et al,* 1972).

Value clarification is a process that is easy to learn and easily accessible to educators, as they are not really involved in the process of value clarification but are only acting as a facilitator in guiding the students through the process (Lipe, 1999; Nieuwenhuis, 2009 and Contini, 2012). The educators as well as the learners learn a lot from each other, by realizing that everyone has problems, confusions, conflict etc. that they need to deal with. This promotes self-investigation and awareness that will develop internal moral motivation (Lipe, 1999).

The above-mentioned behaviour could result in the increase of learners' low self-esteem which prevents the learners' basic emotional needs being met as well as the failure of value clarification (Abramowitz *et al,* 1972). The strategy proposed for implementing value clarification in South African schools using the CAPS document as a possible medium for moral education, is to make use of Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions.

These moral dilemma discussions are ideal for this purpose as they enhance the learners' ability to reason and assist in the clarifying of values. It will also be necessary to teach them how to make moral decisions in a dilemma situation that will lead to their acting on the decision made (Duska *et al*, 1975). The moral dilemmas presented to the learners in the classroom will be based on the topics in the Life Orientation CAPS document. These dilemmas will be as authentic as possible to the learners to try and assist them in clarifying values and making decisions in difficult situations that are just.

As a learning strategy, values clarification could be related to the experiential learning approach of Kolb (1984). When considering the basic rationale, it does seem that an experimental learning approach will be the best option when considering the teaching of values in the classroom. Experimental learning is seen by Kolb (1984) as "*a holistic perspective on learning that combines experience, perception, cognition and behaviour.*"

Experimental learning is viewed as a method of self-examination and critical reflection (Kolb, 1984; Sharp, 1993). Creating a safe learning environment where learners can analyse and reflect on their experiences could then offer the possibilities of core values being realised and internalised. This particular learning cycle is taken from Kolb (1984) and illustrated in diagram 2.1:

Diagram 2.1: The learning cycle
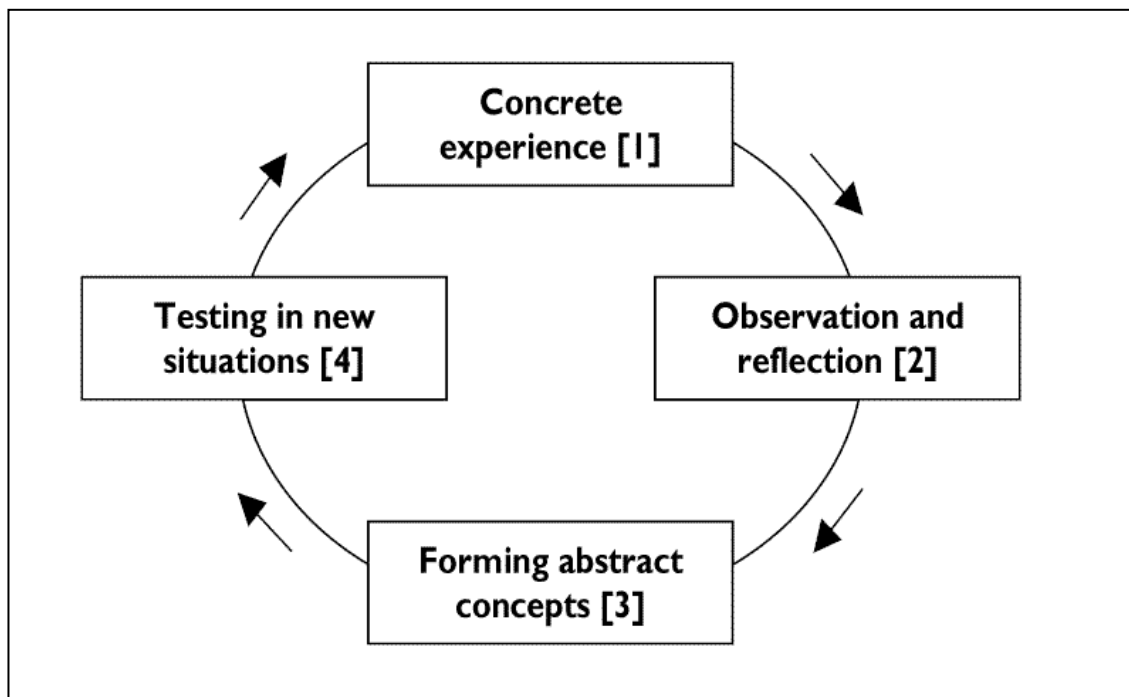
Kolb D A (1984) *Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall

Nieuwenhuis (2008) in his own research involving adolescents found that many adaptions and versions of the above-mentioned learning cycle evolved over a period of time. However, Nieuwenhuis (2001) stated that the reflection aspect thereof should be more of a guided process based on scaffolded instruction principles as presented in diagram 2.2:

Diagram 2.2: The reflective learning process

DIAGRAM: THE REFLECTIVE LEARNING PROCESS
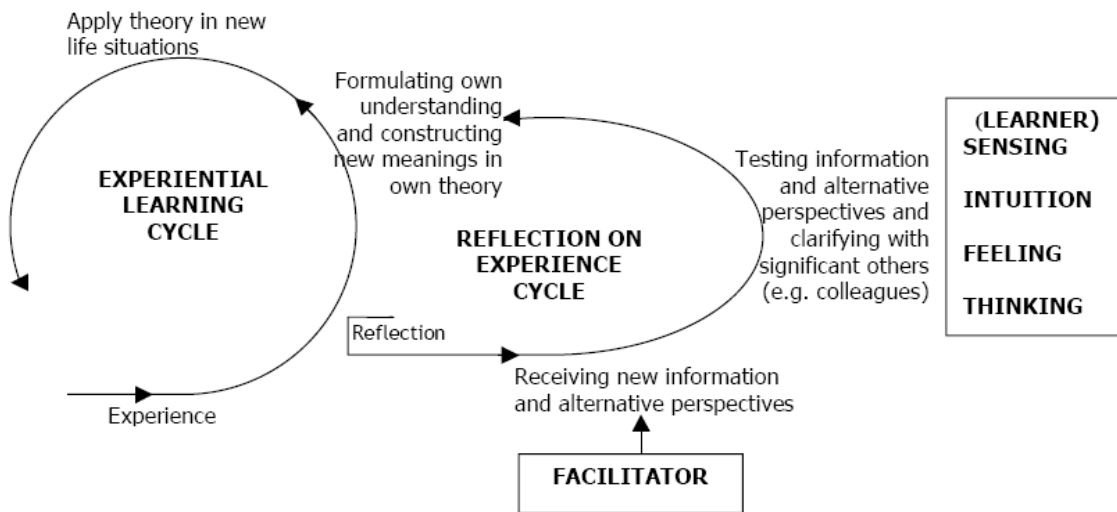
From Nieuwenhuis, F.J. and Potvin, B. Facilitator Training Manual, 2001

The following comments regarding the presented diagrams and the experimental learning approach should be considered. Subjectivity is when the educator gets involved in the process and shares personal feelings and thoughts with the learners without taking over the learning process. This means that the educator will only be a facilitator in the process by assisting and guiding the groups to generate their own ideas. The educator in this regard provides the learners with the opportunity to explore and express their own assumptions, beliefs and argue their standpoints. The educator's viewpoints are only scrutinised during the class discussion phase (Sharp, 1993). The social reality is when the educator realises that each group constitutes their own unique social reality based on their diverse dynamics and personalities. This creates a climate where all members of the group feel that they themselves and their inputs are valued and accepted within the group. During the involvement each group member should be involved in the learning process. These members should also realise that their contribution is valuable to the learning experience.

They need to remind themselves that "*as an unavoidable consequence of our unique life experiences, words mean different things to each of us… Nothing in or of itself has meaning. No thing, event, experience, situation or word is its own meaning. Meanings cannot be divorced from interpretations and interpreters… Each one of us creates our own meanings. And since each one of us has our own unique way of seeing, experiencing, and thinking about things and situations, no two of us will give the same meaning to situations we find ourselves in…*" (Dawes, 1991).

This also applies to a learner who is serious about the process of learning, creating meaning and understanding (Dawes, 1991). Finally responsibility is accepted by each member of the group for their own effective learning as they commit themselves to the learning opportunity. The educator in his/her turn becomes '*a caring, sharing, non-judgemental, non-threatening person, who is able to promote learning (and development) through group expression of life experiences'* (Rooth, 1995), using moral dilemma discussions created by Lawrence Kohlberg.

2.7. Lawrence Kohlberg's theory on moral development

Jean Piaget (1932) initiated the idea of moral development early in the 1930s in Switzerland, focusing especially on the moral lives of children. He created his own moral developmental stages reached through a specific sequence of development to moral maturity (Nucci, 2008). Piaget concluded his study by stating that schools should emphasis co-operative decision-making and problem-solving. This he felt would nurture moral development in students. Piaget believed that educators should provide learners with the opportunities for personal discovery through problem-solving, rather than just indoctrinating students with their own norms and values. Nucci calls this the start of value clarification (Nucci, 2008; Piaget, 1932).

Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) modified and elaborated on Piaget's theory of moral development. Kohlberg proposed that children's ways of thinking evolved from their experiences and their understanding of moral concepts; these concepts include aspects such as justice, rights, equality and finally human welfare. Kohlberg also suggested that moral maturity took much longer than Piaget proposed to reach because each individual progresses through stages of moral development at his or her own individual pace. In addition, each individual is expected to progress through all these developmental stages in order to reach moral maturity (Nucci, 2008; Kakkori & Huttunen, 2011; Duska *et al,* 1975 and Jensen, 2011).

Starting in the 1950s Lawrence Kohlberg formulated a cognitive developmental approach to enhance moral reasoning; this approach influenced numerous research studies and debates in the field of moral development. Kohlberg wanted to establish whether moral development occurs in a predictable sequence (Jensen, 2011).

To answer this question Kohlberg did not focus on or write about the stages of moral development, but rather on the moral thinking and reasoning of individuals (Nucci, 2008; Jensen, 2011; Kakkori *et al,* 2011 and Rich, 1978). Moral reasoning could be defined and explained as a reflection and a critical look at moral standards (ethics). This then assists individuals to define for themselves what is right and wrong according to the moral principles that they choose for themselves as more reasonable and adequate during value clarification (Langford, 1995).

Kohlberg (1969) interviewed 72 white western boys from the Chicago area aged ten to sixteen. He presented them with a moral dilemma and started posing questions based on the moral dilemma presented where there was no right or wrong answer to the questions. Moral dilemmas confront individuals with a dilemma that requires them to make a decision to solve this dilemma. A moral dilemma discussion was previously considered as having a right and wrong answer for the participating individuals to make the right and moral choice. However, it is now considered that moral dilemmas are based on two right answers rather than distinguishing between right and wrong (Kidder, 2003). Right versus right is considered a moral dilemma; whereas a right versus wrong choice is considered a moral temptation. Moral dilemmas are far more complex to solve as the choice to be made will be based firmly on our core values (Kidder, 2003 and Kidder 2006). A moral dilemma consists of actors that are the main role-players in a 'scenario' presented. Moral dilemmas also need to be authentic to the participants to create a sense of urgency to try and solve the dilemma. Solving the dilemma or finding the most appropriate resolution entails that the most appropriate choice were made for the circumstances presented, this also requires some principle from individuals for decision-making and problem-solving to take place (Kidder, 2003; Kidder, 2010 and Nieuwenhuis, 2009).

Moral dilemmas work in a way that involves all individuals in equal participation in the decision-making and problem-solving of the moral dilemma, also moral dilemma discussions limit the educator's participation to that of a facilitator during the procedure to ensure that value transmission does not take place but rather value clarification (Kidder, 2003 and Kidder, 2010). During these moral dilemma discussions, learners are presented with a short story containing a moral dilemma.

The following is one example of the dilemmas Kohlberg presented:

> **Heinz Steals the Drug**
>
> *"In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of 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 $200 for*
> *the radium and charged $2,000 for a small dose of the drug.*
>
> *The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew*
> *to borrow the money, but he could only get together about $ 1,000*
> *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 it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store*
> *to steal the drug for his wife. Should the husband have done that?"*
> *(Kohlberg, 1969).*

After presenting a moral dilemma to the learners, the educator allows learners time to think about the dilemma presented before they discuss the choices available to the character or characters facing the dilemma. During these discussions the group then decides what the character or characters ought to do, based on what they believe is right. Learners are also encouraged to discuss why they believe certain choices to be right and others to be wrong. Furthermore, the learners are required to think about and consider the consequences of each choice of the main character upon the other characters in the story. At the conclusion of the discussions and activity, learners reflect on how personal opinions and beliefs guide certain choices made by individuals.

From this, learners should be able to recognise and practice solid decision-making skills based on ethical principles and values in a positive and moral way (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Kidder, 2003 and Kidder, 2006). The role of the educator during the moral dilemma discussions is primarily that of a facilitator. The educator's participation is therefore limited. Nucci (2008) argues that the educators are only acting as a discussion and time facilitator during the moral dilemma discussions. The role of the educator as facilitator is to express the fact that people hold different values which should be respected.

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The educator's role is also to facilitate discussion in such a way that the different views of the students are expressed in order for them to clarify their values, and to add to their existing value system if need be. Kohlberg was more focused and interested in the reasoning behind the selected solutions to the moral dilemma discussions than in the solution itself (Kakkori *et al*, 2011; Gouws, Kruger & Burger and*,* 2000 and Nucci, 2008). Kohlberg in his study stated that moral development is linked to cognitive development which he divided into different levels and stages of moral development as presented in table 2.1 (Gouws *et al,* 2000; Nucci, 2008; Kakkori *et al,* 2011; Van der Horst and McDonald, 1997 and Jensen, 2011). According to Kohlberg the development of the individual's moral judgment and actions does pass through a series of fixed stages of development. It is also possible for an individual to find him/herself in two phases of moral development at the same time (Gouws *et al,* 2000).

Table 2.1: Kohlberg's Moral developmental stages

Level	Stage
Level 1: Ages (4-10 years) *Pre-conventional morality* The emphasis here is on external control. Other's standards are adopted with a view to obtaining rewards or avoiding punishment.	**Stage 1:** Obedience as a means of avoiding punishment. **Stage 2:** Instrumental objectives. Good behaviour maintained reward.
Level 2: Ages (10-13 years) *Conventional Morality* Children want to please. They observe standards maintained by others and seek to adhere to these because they want to be seen as 'good' by people they like.	**Stage 3:** Obedience aimed at securing social approval. 'Good girl/boy morality'. Conformity. **Stage 4:** Dutiful and respects social order. Still have rigid ideas about rules.
Level 3: From the 13th year, or early childhood, or never. *Post-conventional morality* This is characterised by attainment of genuine morality. Control over behaviour becomes internal at this stage. This applies maintenance of standards of right and wrong.	**Stage 5:** Law-abiding and has a sense of contractual obligation to work and family. Begins to think rationally. Behaviour calculated to promote the common good. **Stage 6:** Morality of universal as well as reasoning about ethical principles – adheres to personal principals and standards, and obedience to dictates of own conscience.

Taken from Gouws, Burger and Bester, 2000

Kohlberg (1969) argued that children of primary school age lack the cognitive ability to engage in moral reasoning. He argued that the child of primary school age, i.e. at the intermediate level, typically displays conventional thought. This means that moral development changes from concern with egocentric morality (pre-school) to consideration for the needs of working and living together. The child begins to think in terms of pleasing others and doing what is helpful (in Crosser, 2008).

Kohlberg (1984) also focused on moral reasoning with little or no attention to moral action or behaviour. This is an important aspect that correlates with the experimental learning theory that puts emphasis on the fact that the learner needs to practice what has been taught and learned in his/her personal life (Kolb, 1984).

Kohlberg's method of moral education and value clarification has been criticized by numerous authors (Murray, 2001 Gilligan, 1982; Berkowitz, 1998; Gibbs *et al*, 2009 and Firmer *et al,* 2008). Kohlberg (1969) in his original work focused on moral development during adolescence and in particular on adolescent boys. Since his research was rooted in the work of Piaget, his theory was linked to each stage of moral development and he argued that moral aspects could best be discussed and clarified during adolescence. In addition, Kohlberg was primarily interested in how children reason and not in how they use what they have learned in practical situations. The latter is an essential part of learning that cannot be ignored.

2.8.   Carol Gilligan's theory on moral development

Kohlberg's development-stage-based approach to moral development has been criticised by Carol Gilligan (1982) in her book '*In a different voice'*. Gilligan (1982) rejected the close link between the developmental stage and moral reasoning and thus developed her own classification of moral development. It is also significant to note that her study was based on girls and women. Her study of moral reasoning indicated that stages of development do not need to be linked to age in order for progress to be made towards the next stage of moral reasoning and ultimately to the reaching of moral maturity. Gilligan (1982) elaborated on Kohlberg's stages of moral development by compiling her own set of stages as presented in table 2.2:

Table 2.2 Carol Gilligan's stages of the ethic of care

Approximate age	Stage	Goal
Not listed	Pre-conventional	Goal is individual survival
Transition is from selfishness – to – responsibility to others		
Not listed	Conventional	Self-sacrifice is goodness
Transition is from goodness – to – truth that she is a person too		
Not listed	Post-conventional	Principle of non-violence: do not hurt others or self

Taken from Kakkori and Huttunen, 2011.

What is interesting about these stages is that she did not make use of fixed moral developmental stages as both Piaget and Kohlberg had. Her stages are more flexible with no ages fixed to a specific stage. She also felt that abstract reasoning can take place at an earlier age (Gilligan, 1982). These aspects of Gilligan's (1982) study are essential for the proposed study as they support the fact that value clarification could take place at primary school level because the learners at that level are capable of sufficient reasoning skills to discuss dilemmas. Her stages also provide opportunities for the female learners and for different cultures to take part in value clarification. Although these two theorists have set out a clear framework within which to implement the strategy, certain aspects of this framework will require further consideration.

2.9.   Moral reasoning as a teaching strategy

For the purposes of this study, I will deviate from Kohlberg's original intention of only focusing on adolescents by focusing rather on moral education in the intermediate phase, in other words in Grades 4 to 6. The aim of this deviation, as suggested and supported by Gilligan (1982), is to intervene to improve learners' moral reasoning skills at an earlier stage of their development in order to prevent a lack of moral development in the later stages of their lives.

The intermediate phase is a time of marked change in the experiences, capacities and typical behaviours of children, with lasting results and impacts for later adolescence and, in the long term, for adulthood. Hutson *et al* (2006) view the immense impact that the intermediate phase, has on the moral development of individuals and on their futures as a great concern. One hears frequently about the importance of the young child phase as the phase in which learners have to master certain basic skills in order to optimise their contribution to society in the future.

One is also often confronted with the concerns and troubles of the adolescent phase when learners are more likely to participate in activities such as drug abuse, juvenile crime and underage sex (Hutson *et al*, 2006). One possible reason for the occurrence of such behaviour in the adolescent phase might be the lack of moral development and education in the intermediate phase, such neglect probably being the result of the fact that during this phase learners experience very few moral hazards and therefore require less moral guidance. Hutson *et al* (2006) and Bergin *et al* (2012) agree that this 'gap' should therefore be seized as a window of opportunity and as an ideal period for moral growth and development.

It is therefore necessary to consider increased opportunities for moral education during the intermediate phase of the child's development. Learners during this phase of development already possess certain basic cognitive abilities and are continually developing further multiple cognitive capabilities together with a heightened self-awareness and are therefore able to take part effectively in moral dilemma discussions. During this phase too, learners' social worlds start to expand as they participate more frequently in out-of-school activities and are therefore exposed to and experience much more of life. It is thus in this phase that learners need to be confronted with moral dilemma discussions as a tool to guide them to act or react in a moral way to real-life dilemmas when they occur (Hutson *et al*, 2006; Bergin *et al*, 2012).

This stance is supported by Berkowitz (1998) and Kidder (2010) as they expressed the view that learners' moral development has long been the responsibility of the parents. In their work they established ways to assist parents to have a positive influence on their learners' moral development. What is very interesting from Berkowitz's (1998) findings based on this research is that he also implies that learners at a young age could already participate effectively in moral reasoning. He therefore agrees with Kidder (2010). This supports this study in starting moral reasoning during the intermediate phase, deviating from Kohlberg's initial findings as illustrated in Berkowitz's (1998) table on the moral development of learners using his proposed parenting variables as set out in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Child moral development outcomes for selected parenting variables

Parenting variable	Child outcome variable
Induction	Empathy
	Conscience
	Altruism
	Moral reasoning
Authoritative Parenting: Responsivity	Social Orientation
	Compliance
	Self-esteem
	Conscience
	Altruism
	Moral reasoning
Demandingness	Self-control
	Altruism
	Self-esteem
Modelling	Self-control
	Altruism
Democratic Family process	Compliance
	Conscience
	Altruism
	Self-esteem
	Moral reasoning

Taken from Berkowitz, 1998.

Berkowitz (1998) clearly indicated in this table that the moral development of learners is primarily the responsibility of the parents. In this table he proposed in the left-hand columns some parenting variables that should be induced by the parents during the development and growing up of the learner or their children. The right-hand columns propose ways in which the parents could make sure that the learner does develop morally. The significance here is that almost all the parenting variables are connected to moral reasoning and that there are no ages linked to these variables. Therefore it seems that Berkowitz (1998) does support the argument that moral reasoning is an effective way to promote moral development at any stage of the learner's development.

The literature also reveals more criticisms of Kohlberg's work, specifically that of Burger *et al* (2008). These authors posit that Kohlberg's moral clarification cannot evolve into moral action without a specific intervention. Researchers such as Gibbs *et al* (2009) and Firmer *et al* (2008) support this opinion when they state that the judgment-action gap in Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions requires urgent attention. This is further accentuated by the experiential learning theory discussed earlier. After reflection and the forming of abstract concepts it should lead to some action for the learning to be effective. The proposed research project will attempt to overcome these criticisms by using the moral dilemma discussions to lead to a specific intervention to allow Kohlberg's moral clarification to evolve into moral action. It needs to lead to some activity in which the value that was discussed is practically practiced by learners. In other words a moral discussion about compassion should lead to the children performing an act of compassion. Therefore, moral education must touch the hearts of the learners in such a way that they willingly want to change their actions to ones that are morally acceptable, and would therefore be able to influence positively others around them (Duska *et al*, 1975).

In conclusion, with referring to the Kolb (1984) experimental learning strategy, he proposed that the best way to teach values in the classroom is to create a safe learning atmosphere and environment where the learners will have the confidence, by means of self-examination and critical reflection, to discover and internalise values. Kohlberg (1969) also used value clarification by means of moral dilemma discussions to provide the learner with the opportunity to clarify values through reflection and reasoning in order to reach moral maturity (Duska *et al,* 1975). This research will be focussing on using Kolb's experimental learning theory by means of Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in primary school classrooms in order to teach learner's core values that they can act on in their everyday life.

2.10. Conclusion

Chapter 2 has focused on moral education and the importance thereof. The conceptualization of this chapter was set out in such a way to familiarize the reader with moral education and how it is relevant to this research. Values are driving our whole existence, including everything we think, do and live for (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Therefore it is important to nourish and promote moral development in schools. Due to the moral decline in the country and the various reasons for it which have been illustrated in this chapter, moral education then became the responsibility of education (Straughan, 1988 and Haydon, 1997).

The first two questions that are immediately asked when dealing with this type of education are 'which values should be taught' and 'how and when moral education should be introduced in schools'. The first question was answered in this chapter by referring to three documents (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, The Manifesto on Values, Human Rights and Democracy in Education and now the newly proposed Life Orientation CAPS document) within the South African context that make it very clear which values to inculcate in schools (South Africa, 1996; South Africa, 2001 and DoE, 2010).

However, the second question still remains problematic. In this chapter we referred to some methods proposed by the literature to deal with value education such as citizenship-building education, character-building education and value-clarification (Apple, Kenway & Singh, 2008).

Reading the literature on these methods and the recommendations for teaching values as set out in the Manifesto (2001) and in the Life Orientation CAPS document (2010), it does reflect value-clarification as a possible option in dealing with moral education. Both these documents state that reasoning, debating, problem-solving and decision-making opportunities should be made available to these learners when dealing with value education (South Africa, 2001 & DoE, 2010). Therefore moral dilemma discussions as developed by Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) will be used as a basis for the research conducted. This theory will however be sensibly merged with the experiential learning theory of Kolb.

 These discussions promote moral reasoning on possible dilemmas that the learner could experience to prepare them to make moral and responsible choices every day. What is significantly new in my research is the linking of these discussions to moral action to bridge the judgment-action gap. Based on the literature overview presented (Gilligan, 1982; Berkowitz, 1988; Gibbs *et al*, 2009 and Firmer *et al,* 2008) I will introduce this method of moral education much earlier than Kohlberg (1969) did. It is therefore possible to align moral dilemma discussions with the Manifesto (2001) and the Life Orientation CAPS document (2010) as both of these documents promote moral reasoning, debating etc. for the execution of the presented values to be taught.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1.   Introduction

Participatory action research is an umbrella term that includes various paradigmatic approaches and data collection strategies. It is therefore important to set out the paradigmatic approach used in this study as well as the data collection and analysis strategies employed. I have already indicated in Chapter 1, why I have opted for a qualitative approach within participatory action research. This chapter elaborates on this by locating the paradigmatic consideration of the study within qualitative research and in particular within the interpretive paradigm. Next I will explain how my sample was selected, how my structured part of the data collection phase was executed using semi-structured interviews, non-participatory observations and finally my intervention being training in using moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in Life Orientation. I will also explain the data capturing and analysis phase. Finally I will pay special attention to how I have ensured trustworthiness and credibility in the data, the limitations and the significance and ethical considerations concerning this research study.

3.2.   Paradigmatic considerations

I have indicated in Chapter 1 that this research study is located within the qualitative research approach and in particular within the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm according to Manion *et al* (2010) consists of the following characteristics, namely: research within this paradigm is small-scale research and non-statistical. This means that this paradigm is more subjective in nature, because the researcher is personally involved. When the researcher is personally and actively involved it is possible for the researcher to interpret the specifics and understand the actions and/or the meanings rather than the causes of what appeared. This paradigm is focused on practical interest (Manion *et al,* 2010).

Kelliher (2005) and Husserl (1965) mention that there are some assumptions to take into consideration when dealing with the interpretivist paradigm which believes that reality is not objectively determined but socially constructed, which relates to Manion *et al* (2010). However, the underlying assumption is that by placing people in their social contexts, there is a greater opportunity to understand their own activities.

This paradigm fits this research study. This research study is done on a small-scale, as it was conducted within one primary school involving only 3 participants. As the researcher I was personally involved in the research study as a participative-researcher as mentioned earlier. Furthermore this paradigm is focused on understanding the subjective world of human existence within the phenomenon investigated (Manion *et al*, 2010). The participation in this type of research took some time and effort to collect data and form trusting relationships with the participants in order to gain a clear understanding of the phenomenon researched (Mack, 2010).

The qualitative research approach focused on exploring the phenomenon presented through the perceptions and experiences of the participants by asking broad questions (Creswell, 2007; Maree, 2010; Manion *et al*, 2010). Since the aim of the research was to explore how educators would engage with moral dilemma discussions as a "new" teaching strategy, I employed a more qualitative manner in an attempt to understand how they constructed new knowledge and used it in their own teaching repertoire. A qualitative research design was thus apposite. This research approach also focused on the ideas, understanding and opinions of the participants on the phenomenon researched (Creswell, 2007). This study was not aiming at generalising the data to the broader population but was rather focused on gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon from the participant's perspectives and experiences. This research study also needed intense involvement from the participants as well as involvement from the researcher which is possible within the qualitative research approach. This research study was also practical in nature, which made it subjective and in-depth in nature which fits the qualitative research approach within the interpretivist paradigm. During this research I explored as presented in an in-depth manner the perceptions and experiences of three Life Orientation educators on using moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in their classrooms.

3.3. Research design

3.3.1. Action research

During this study I made use of Participatory Action research as my research design. Action research is also very similar to the mixed methods research design as it makes use of multiple data collection methods, namely quantitative as well as qualitative or even both if necessary, to try and solve or to investigate the proposed phenomenon (Hendricks, 2006). Action research is unique in the way that it makes it possible for the educator– researcher to bridge the action–theory gap in the classroom. The educators could implement their findings immediately after the training and reflect, revise (after the follow-up interviews) and re-implement the new findings as needed (Hendricks, 2006). During my study I made use of qualitative data collection methods because I wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon presented (Creswell, 2007. Action research is defined in many different ways when considered within the field of educational research. Cohen *et al* (2010) defined action research as a "*small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such an intervention.*" Action research in this case had an applied focus. McNiff (1988) supports Creswell (2007) that action research is seen as a systematic procedure that is done by the educator and/or researcher to try and bring about social and practical change in education. In this regard, the educators aim to improve their own teaching practice by making use of a new teaching strategy in conducting moral education using the Life Orientation CAPS document in their classrooms. Action research is an elegant and collaborative research design. It involves a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning (McNiff, 1988; Creswell, 2007.

McNiff (1988) acknowledges two major types of action research designs, namely participatory action research and practical action research. This research study is focused on the participatory action research (PAR) design due to the fact that as a researcher I was actively involved in the research process as I trained the participants in using moral dilemma discussions, I discussed the process with them and we planned the next cycle's implementations with the participants. Table 3.1. is a graphical presentation of the PAR design used in this study. The table shows which data collection method was used during each section of the PAR process, the purpose for using the different data collection methods during the specific phases, how the data was analysed and the findings that occurred.

Participatory Action Research design				
Cycle 1	**Intervention**	**Cycle 2**	**Cycle 3**	**Cycle 4**
Pre-interview	*Training of the participants*	*Moral lesson(s)*	*Post-interview*	*Moral action*
The purpose of the pre-interviews was to gain an idea of the participant's understanding and personal experiences on the following topics: >Training in moral education >Knowledge of learners responses to moral dilemma discussions >Possibility of implementing a new teaching strategy in their classrooms	The purpose of the training of the participants was to: >Inform the participants on what constitutes moral dilemma discussions >Inform the participants on the function of moral dilemma discussions >Inform the participant on how to create moral dilemma discussions based on the curriculum topics >Guide the participants on the process of how to conduct moral dilemma discussions	The participants each had to prepare 3 lessons to be implemented. These lessons entailed presenting a moral dilemma discussion in each lesson based on their curriculum topics. Only 2 of the 3 participants prepared 3 lessons. Participant A presented only 1 lesson. The purpose was to observe the following: >The learners' responses to moral dilemma discussions >The educators' responses to moral dilemma discussions >The possibility of using moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in Life Orientation in Primary Schools	The purpose of the post-interview was to establish the following: >The participants' experience and perception of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy >Whether the participants' will make use of moral dilemma discussions in the future >Do the participants feel that moral dilemma discussions fit the Life Orientation curriculum >Do the participants feel moral dilemma discussions could be used in Primary Schools	The purpose of the implementation of moral action was to: >close the judgement-action gap >make sure that moral action flows from moral reasoning
The data was collected in the format of a group interview.	The training of the participants took place in an hour training session where the participants were informed of what constitutes moral dilemma discussions and were provided with examples of how to draw up moral dilemma discussions.	The data was collected using non-participatory observation schedules.	The data was collected making use of open-ended interviews.	The data was collected using non-participatory observation schedules.

The analysis of this data was done using content analysis. I transcribed the interview and used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to identify themes and codes to construct the meaning of the data collected.	The analysis of this data was done using content analysis. I transcribed the interview and used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to identify themes and codes to construct the meaning of the data collected.	The analysis of this data was done using content analysis. I transcribed the observation schedules and used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to identify themes and codes to construct the meaning of the data collected.	The analysis of this data was done using content analysis. I transcribed the interview and used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to identify themes and codes to construct the meaning of the data collected.	The analysis of this data was done using content analysis. I transcribed the observation schedules and used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to identify themes and codes to construct the meaning of the data collected.
The following important aspects emerged: >The participants did not receive any formal moral education training. >They had some vague idea of what a moral dilemma discussion was >Moral education is important >Training in moral education is needed	The following important aspects emerged: >The training was only an information session and not as practical as intended (detailed discussion in Chapters 4 and 5) >The participants were not sure about how to create a moral dilemma discussion, which influenced the implementation phase	The following important aspects emerged: >moral dilemma discussions do fit the Life Orientation curriculum topics >2 of the 3 participants responded well to the strategy >the learners responded well to the strategy >the learners were able to reason in a moral manner	The following important aspects emerged: > moral dilemmas could be used as part of the Life Orientation curriculum >Curriculum and time constraints occured >Support from school management is limited at times >Moral dilemma discussions are relevant to Primary School learners >Primary School learners enjoy this method of teaching	No opportunities for implementing moral action occurred.

Table 3.1: Participatory Action Research Design.

The emphasis is on "equal" participation or collaboration of individuals to try and focus on "life-enhancing" changes (Creswell, 2007). During this study I worked, in collaboration with my participants, on implementing moral dilemma discussions as part of the Life Orientation CAPS document to try and establish the flow of moral action as a result of these discussions and Life Orientation lessons presented to promote moral behaviour.

3.4.   Selection of participants

For the purposes of this study the sampling method used was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is when a sample is 'hand- picked' from the wider population as this sample contains certain characteristics needed to be able to answer the research questions posed (Cohen et al, 2010).

While this sample was selected for a specific purpose and according to the pre-determined characteristics taken into consideration by the researcher, to be able to conduct this research as effectively as possible, it does not mean that the sample represents the wider population (Cohen et al, 2010). This type of sample is deliberately selective.

During this study the sample was selected purposefully, focussing on the following criteria: firstly this research project was conducted in one primary school only, in order to simplify access to the research site for consent purposes, because I do not teach at a school anymore. This primary school was diverse in many ways namely: culture, race, ethnic groups and languages. Diversity plays an important role when dealing with moral issues in South Africa as certain moral issues differ among the different groups mentioned. Also Kohlberg did not consider diversity when he conducted his moral dilemma discussions as part of his moral development theory in the 1970s (Gilligan, 1982; Ferns, 2007). Gilligan (1982) and Ferns (2007) expressed the necessity of considering this important aspect of society as it would play a role and also of including all diverse groups in the moral development initiative to determine whether Kohlberg's moral developmental stages would be able to cater for all these groups. Although group discussions as a teaching approach became an important strategy in the late nineties when outcomes based education (DoE, 2001) was introduced, it did not made provision for the use of moral dilemma discussions in Life Orientation. I therefore could assume that the educators were familiar with the importance of group discussions and that learners were used to them. The only aspect that would be new was the focus of the discussions and the way in which they would be facilitated.

The selected primary school did also consist of three Life Orientation educators to ensure the possibility of collecting enough rich data for the analysis phase. To be able to find a school with at least three Life Orientation educators, I had to consider a school that consisted of at least one educator per grade from Grades 4-7 as this would be the ideal group to work with. In this case my participants did cover all these mentioned aged groups: Participant A taught Grade 7, Participant B Grades 5 and 6 and finally Participant C Grade 4.

3.5. Data collection

The data collection for this study took place in four phases as illustrated in the diagram below:

| Phase 1:
Pre-Interviews | → | Phase 2:
Intervention
Training in
moral dilemma
discussions | → | Phase 3
Post – interviews
and observations | ⇄ | Phase 4
Actions that flow
from Moral
dilemma
discussions |
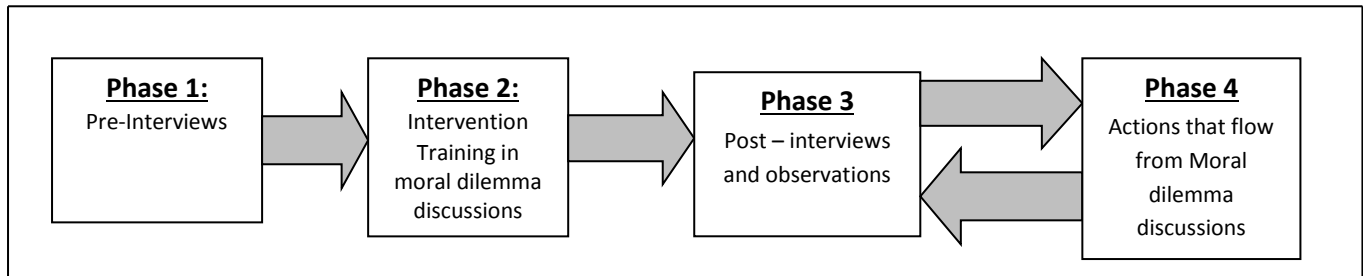
Diagram 3.1. : Data collection process

| Phase 1:
Group Interviews | → | Phase 2:
Intervention
Discussion on how
to use moral
dilemma
discussions | → | Phase 3
Observations | → | Phase 4
Post –interview
based on the
experience. |
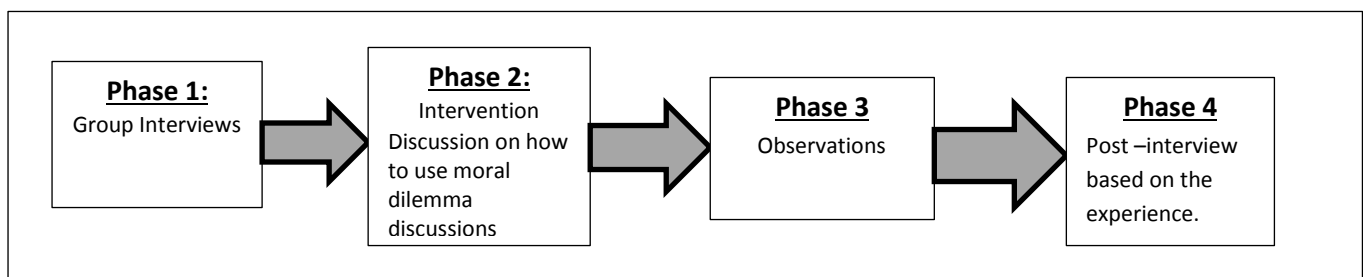
Diagram 3.2. Data collection process adapted to accommodate the research site, participant participation and time constraints.

Phase one of the data collection process consisted of interviews only. During this phase I made use of a group interview. I interviewed all three of my participants at once due to a time constraint, as the principal of the school provided me with only an hour after school for these interviews. It was then decided, in collaboration with my supervisor, that I would use my semi- structured interview schedule to conduct this group interview. The reason why the semi-structured interview schedule was used, was because these interviews cater for making use of pre-determined questions to be answered by the participants. This type of interview is also excellent for the use of probing and clarifying certain issues related to the phenomenon (Maree *et al,* 2010; Creswell, 2007).

During this phase I interviewed all the participants as a group to try and establish each of the participant's idea of moral education and their attitude towards moral education as a phenomenon. A group interview can be formal with a specific, structured focus or it can be informal taking place in a field setting where a researcher stimulates a group discussion with a topical question(s). The data gathered from group interviews can be instrumental or factual. It can also be subjective and qualitative (Frey, 1991).

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This interview was also used to determine the teaching strategy that the participants were using in their classrooms. Furthermore, I also used this interview to determine the participants' knowledge of moral dilemma discussion and whether they had made use of it in the past. After the interview was conducted, I started to transcribe it. I used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to analyse the data. I identified themes and codes to help me make sense from the data collected from the group interviews.

From the data I determined that the participants had never used moral dilemma discussions in their classes before, but had a vague idea of what it may entail. The data collected during this phase greatly assisted me in the development of the training.

In Phase two of the data collection process I dealt with the intervention of this participative action research, which focused on the staff development part of the research project. During this phase the participants were introduced to the use of moral dilemma discussions. Examples of moral dilemma discussions were discussed with the participants and the essential elements related to this teaching strategy. The participants then had to create their own moral dilemmas to present in their classrooms using the CAPS document as a guide on choosing topics for these dilemma discussions and using the training received to frame the dilemmas.

This is essential to PAR because PAR is practical in nature and it is focused on change (Maree *et al*, 2010). PAR is transformative in nature, meaning that the practice-research interaction is aimed at the empowerment and transformation of the participants participating in this research study (Maree *et al,* 2010). This is true in this regard as the participants during this phase are empowered with a new teaching strategy namely: moral dilemma discussions to enhance their teaching of values through the Life Orientation curriculum in their classrooms. Also this training is aimed at promoting change in the classroom practice of the participants with regard to values education specifically.

During phase three and four of the data collection process, I returned to the selected primary school for the three cycles of data to be collected. During this phase I made use of non-participant observations and a second set of semi-structured interviews. These interviews now involved each participant separately. I started off with the non-participant observation. This is conducted in such a way that the researcher observes the situation from a distance, and is not involved in the activities in any way (Maree *et al,* 2010; Cohen *et al,* 2010; Creswell, 2007).

The data collection process was adapted to meet the requirements of the research site. The adaption became an emerging design due to unforeseen circumstances and not by choice.

The purpose of this type of data collection method was for me to observe how the moral dilemma discussions were implemented during the Life Orientation lessons and to observe the learners' responses to the moral dilemma discussions. At this stage it was necessary for me not to be involved so that I could reflect on the process so that the relevant changes and adaptions could be communicated to the participants during the follow-up interviews in order to prepare for the lessons to follow. Finally, I also used these observations to establish if any actions had flowed from these discussions and how these discussions had influenced the educator and learners' experiences.

After the non-participant observation in this phase of the data collection process, a set of semi-structured interviews was conducted. Semi-structured interviews are commonly used in research. It requires the participants to answer some pre-determined questions and is not that time-consuming (Maree *et al,* 2010). This type of interview schedule defines the line of enquiry. It allows for probing. These interviews could get side-tracked and it is essential and possible for the researcher to guide the participant back to the enquiry at hand (Maree *et al,* 2010). During this interview the researcher tries to determine whether the training in moral dilemma discussions had assisted these participants with the development of sensitivity towards reflecting upon their own values and moral behaviour. How did the participants experience the action that flowed from the discussions, if any action did indeed occur?

The participants are also expected to express their experience in using this teaching strategy, and then whether or not the moral dilemma discussions changed their classroom practice in such a way that the participants wanted to continue using this strategy in their classrooms in the future. After each of the lessons I transcribed the observation data. The data also informed the semi-structured interviews that followed at the end of the 3 observations of 2 of the participants as well as the semi-structured interview after the single observation of 1 of the participants. I transcribed the interview with each participant as soon as the interview was finished. I used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to analyse the data using the content analysis method. From the data I identified themes and codes which I used to answer my research sub--questions as presented in the table below:

Data collection method	Research sub-questions to be answered
Non-participatory observations	• What difference does the training in moral dilemma discussions make to the classroom practice of educators? • How do primary school learners respond to moral dilemma discussions? • What moral actions flowed from the discussion and how was it experienced by educators and learners?
Semi-structured interviews	• How did the educators experience the training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in order to teach morals in primary schools? • How did the training in moral dilemma discussions assist the educators with the development of sensitivity towards reflecting upon their own values and moral behaviour? • What difference does the training in moral dilemma discussions make to the classroom practice of educators? • How do primary school learners respond to moral dilemma discussions? • What moral actions flowed from the discussion and how was it experienced by educators and learners?

Table 3.2. : Data collected to answer the research sub-questions

3.6. Data analysis

For the analysis of the data for this research study, content analysis was used as it is the most appropriate method for analysis to be used. Content analysis is understood as a systematic approach to the analysis of qualitative data. The data will then also be able to identify and summarise the messages hidden in the data (Cohen et al, 2010; Maree et al, 2010).

Content analysis is also used as a process for looking at data from different perspectives and angles to try and identify similarities, differences and keys that will assist the researcher to understand and interpret the new data to construct meaning using my theoretical framework (Cohen et al, 2010; Maree et al, 2010).

During the data analysis phase of the research I collected and analysed my data in an iterative manner which is essential to PAR as a research design. The basis of my data analysis was based on Seidel's (1998) model for data analysis as presented below:

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                    ┌──────────────┐                  │
│                    │ Notice things │                 │
│                    └──────────────┘                  │
│                 ↗        ↑        ↖                   │
│              ↙      ↙         ↘      ↘                │
│  ┌──────────────────┐          ┌──────────────┐      │
│  │ Think about things│  ←────→  │ Collect things│     │
│  └──────────────────┘          └──────────────┘      │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
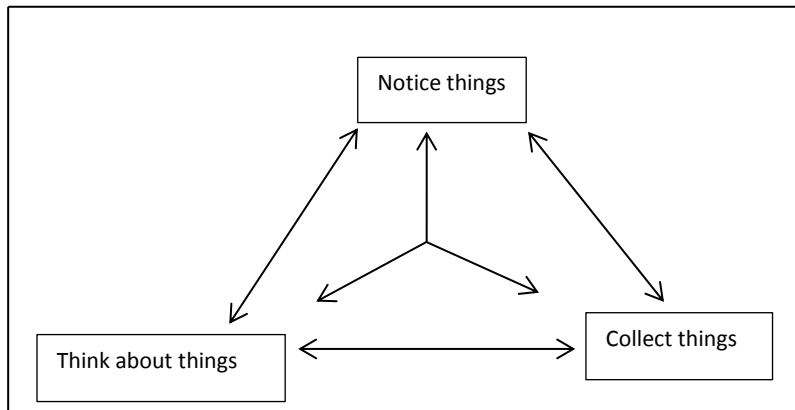
Diagram 3.3. : The data analysis process (Seidel, 1998)

Firstly I conducted a group interview. After I had conducted the interview (which I recorded with my voice recorder) I listened to the interview a few times for a day or two. The reason for this was to try and just make sense of the information gathered before I started my transcriptions. I then started my transcription and once the transcription was done I read through the data and identified themes and codes. I then used the WeftQ qualitative data analysis programme to analyse the data collected and transcribed.

I added the data to the programme, arranging it under the themes and codes that I had identified. From this data I had an idea of what the participants expected from the training sessions and their idea of what they thought moral dilemmas were. The data during this interview was essential in my preparation for the training session to be conducted.

After the training session, I conducted observations of the implementation of the moral dilemma discussions. After the first observation, all three participants informally asked me if they were on the right track with the implementation phase. I had informal discussions (which were not formally recorded) with the participants to reflect on the first observation and to make some adjustments before the second observation (lesson). After the informal discussion I read through the observation schedules (see Annexure B) to make sure I had documented all the data detailed. I then transcribed the observation data which was then imported into my data analysis programme (WeftQ).

The data was then arranged under the relevant codes and themes identified. After analysing this data it was possible for me, after each lesson implementation (observation), to guide the participants on how to improve their lessons. This phase of the data analysis also made it possible for me to adjust my semi-structured interview in such a way that I could collect all the relevant data that was still needed.

After the observations were conducted, transcribed and analysed I returned to the research site for the final phase of data collection. I conducted semi-structured interviews with the participants separately as a final reflection on the experience. After I conducted the interviews I transcribed them and imported the data into my data analysis programme (WeftQ). The data was then once again arranged under the themes and codes identified.

After all the data was transcribed, arranged under themes and codes and analysed d I presented it in Chapter 4 where I used my research sub-questions as guidelines. I used each sub-question as a section in this chapter where I presented the data in such a manner as to try and answer the research sub- question in as much detail as possible.

3.7.   Trustworthiness and Credibility

Trustworthiness is of the utmost importance when referring to the data analysis, findings and conclusions of any research project. It is important to keep these issues in mind throughout the course of the study.

 In dealing with these issues and assuring the trustworthiness of the research project, it is important to consider procedures such as consistency checks and credibility checks (Maree et al, 2010). The following considerations were considered for the purposes of this research project, namely the use of multiple data sources and stakeholder checks (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007 Maree et al, 2010).

During the course of this study numerous data collection methods such as a group interview, semi-structured interviews and non-participator observations were used to ensure consistency in the findings (Maree et al, 2010). All these methods of data collection are used to enhance the trustworthiness of the study and also to gain a clear understanding of the phenomenon to be studied.

This could be considered as triangulation. Triangulation according to Maree *et al* (2010) is a traditional strategy for improving the trustworthiness and credibility of research or the analysis and evaluation of the findings. In this study, three lessons were planned (with observations as a data collection method) and supported by semi-structured interviews to enhance the data collected during the observation phase. This is a much stronger argument for trustworthiness as I supported the observation data with the semi-structured interview data. Even though the whole planned data collection process did not work as planned, this will be presented in Chapter 4.

Credibility in qualitative research is according to Maree *et al* (2010) and Cohen *et al* (2010) to ensure that the qualitative research is believable. This sometimes implies quality rather that quantity. In this research study credibility was ensured by using only one school and three Life Orientation educators. Also, as a researcher, I spent some time in the field to try and gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. As a researcher I tried to gather rich data that is worth reporting on and that will support the theory presented in some way.

3.8.   Ethical considerations

Any research involving individuals and social organisations or institutions must involve ethical decision-making. Therefore research is a type of practise and practice needs to ensure ethical considerations. Ethics involves dealing with decisions to be taken during the research project based on rightful and wrongful actions. During social science qualitative research in particular, many ethical considerations should be taken into account, as it is an in-depth exploration of the participant's views (Zeni, 2001).

During this research project numerous ethical considerations had to be taken into account, namely informed consent from the ethical committee of the University of Pretoria and the participants, confidentiality and anonymity, gaining access to the research site and trust.

Firstly, I applied for ethical clearance from the ethical committee of the University. The committee reviewed all my consent letters and research proposal to ensure that all activities conducted were ethical and protected the participants as prescribed.

During the first phase of my data collection plan, provision was made for a pre-interview session which was used to gain the informed consent from the participants and also to assure them of the confidentiality and anonymity of their participation during this research project. A copy of the consent letter to the participants is attached to the annexures at the end of this study (see Annexure A). The process and procedures of the research were explained in great detail to the participants as well as the importance of their participating in the proposed research project.

A description of the participants' possible discomfort and risks to be expected during the research had to be discussed and explained, as well as the benefits that the participants could encounter when taking part in this research project. The participants would take part in the research project on a voluntary basis only, implying that the participant could withdraw from the research project at any time (Cohen et al, 2010).

When dealing with the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, it would be necessary to ensure that the participants were given the opportunity to remain anonymous.

All data would be kept and treated with confidentiality to protect the participants from any harm. Interviewees would be granted the opportunity to verify statements at the stage of the drafting of the final report.

Permission for possible publication of the research findings would also be negotiated with the participants. In the case of this participative action research, it would be of great importance for the final research findings to benefit the school and educators (Cohen et al, 2010). In this study I would not be working with the learners in the school. The study would be focused on the Life Orientation educators only. With regard to the observations to take place based on the educators' teaching practice, it would be necessary for me to get consent from the parents of the learners in the different classes (see copy of the informed consent letter in Annexure A). The appropriate procedure would be followed to gain the consent of the parents in an ethical manner as set out by the different organisations and institutions involved.

Gaining access to the research site would be an essential consideration for me as a researcher doing action research and not being based in a school. It would be necessary for me to gain permission from the principal and school board of the school as the school is an independent school. It was therefore not necessary for me to gain consent from the Department of Basic Education. The school stakeholders whose consent I required would include the principal, School Governing Body, Life Orientation educators and the parents of the learners in the classes, as previously stated during the observation phase (Cohen et al, 2010; McNiff et al, 2005).

Finally I committed myself to the principle of trust. This implies that no acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or published outcomes would occur. As a researcher I would build a good relationship with my participants and conduct myself with integrity towards my participants by keeping my promises, demonstrating courtesy and respect to all my participants at all times (McNiff et al, 2005).

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3.9. Conclusion

This chapter shows how the research methodology was used in order to collect the data necessary to answer the presented research question for this study. In this chapter I presented my research design and research paradigm that showed that this was an in-depth study to understand the participant's perception of the phenomenon as the participants were actively involved in the study. I also presented my data collection methods and the processes used in the collection of data as well as the process for selecting my sample.

In this chapter the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations were addressed. The in-depth analysis and interpretation of the data collected will be presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

Presentation of the research findings

4.1. Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 3, the methodology for this research was based on a participative action research design. Collecting data for this specific research consisted of open-ended group and individual interviews, non-participative observations and an intervention strategy in the form of training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy for Life Orientation in Primary schools.

The data was collected from three (3) primary school teachers. I collected data from all three (3) participants using interviews and classroom observations. After each interview and observation I transcribed each set of data separately. Data from each of the participants was analysed separately. I then used a qualitative data analysis programme to analyse the three participants' data together by coding the data. I have now reconstructed the data gathered and analysed in person specific classroom stories which resulted in three (3) classroom stories, each associated with a single participant. The term 'story' as used in my dissertation refers to a description of the participant's attitude and experience of the intervention and a description of classroom methodology. The classroom stories formed the basis for the interpretation of my data in this chapter. I will use the data to try and identify which similarities and differences occur in the data as presented in the three (3) stories, where I will look for key patterns in the data to determine if it supports my theory presented in Chapter 2.

For me to be able to protect the identity of my participants and research site I will refer to Participant A, B and C and the research site will just be referred to as 'the school' as only one site was used to conduct this research. In presenting the data I will distil the story of each classroom based on the data collected and analysed. Even though the interviews were mostly conducted in Afrikaans they will be presented in this study in English to create a better understanding of the data within the context of this dissertation.

The first story to be told will be that of a seasoned Life Orientation educator who has been teaching this subject for more than ten years (Participant A). This participant from the observations and interviews seemed eager to participate and explore a new teaching strategy, but as the research progressed, it was discovered that she was set in her ways of teaching and found it very difficult to try out new strategies of teaching. In this chapter I will present her story and what I learned from this participant.

The second story is of an educator who is the Subject Head of Life Orientation and who has been teaching the subject for the past 3 years (Participant B). She appeared to be open-minded and open to new possibilities. Her story revealed a second strand to the research. .

The third story is of a novice teacher who is still in the process of finishing his studies and who is teaching Life Orientation for the first time this year (Participant C). This participant appeared to be eager to participate and to cooperate in the research. From the data analysed, a totally different tale to that of the other two participants emerged.

In presenting the three stories that emerged from the research, the following research questions that guided the study will be answered:

- How do educators experience training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in order to teach morals in primary schools?

- How does training in moral dilemma discussions assist educators with the development of sensitivity towards reflecting upon their own values and moral behaviour?

- What difference does the training in moral dilemma discussions make to the classroom practice of educators?

- How do primary school learners respond to moral dilemma discussions?

- What moral actions flowed from the discussion and how was it experienced by educators and learners?

In presenting the data the following initial points are important to note. Firstly, the school agreed to participate in the research and it was stated upfront that the research would not interfere with the normal school programme, but had the possibility of enriching the educators participating in the research by introducing them to a new teaching strategy that could be used in the teaching of morals.

Educators gave informed consent to participate in the research and were informed that they would play a pivotal role in the success of the research, but that they could withdraw from the research at any point. I was thus totally dependent on the school and the educators for the success of the project and had to accommodate other priorities that arose at the school during the unfolding of the research.

4.2. Context of the research site

The primary school used for the research is situated in the northern suburbs of Pretoria in Gauteng. It is a private faith-based school that consists of more or less 400 - 600 learners from Grade R to Grade 7. Each Grade consists of two register classes with no more than twenty-eight learners per class. The school's management consists of the principal and the deputy-principal. This school does not have Heads of Departments; they only make use of Subject Heads, who are responsible for the moderation of papers, files and learner books. The principal conducts class visits on a regular basis as part of the quality assurance function in the school.

As a faith-based school it supports the religious practices, holidays and rituals of the specific faith. Although the school is faith-based, it accepts learners from all religious orientations, language and ethnic backgrounds thus creating a diverse student population which ideally suits the purpose of the research. Because the school is an independent faith-based school, the Life Orientation periods are divided in half, using two of the prescribed four periods a week for Life Orientation and two periods for Religious Education.

It was explained to me by the principal and the participants that the school makes use of their six pillars of values which are taught to the learners on a regular basis during their assemblies, Life Orientation and Religious Education periods.

The six pillars consist of the following values, namely: respect, responsibility, citizenship, compassion, tolerance and love. These values are advocated in all their activities and Religious Education curriculum in the school as the foundation of what they strive for.

The staff members of the school are diverse in terms of language and race. Even though some of the staff members do not belong to the mainstream religion of the school, they participate in the faith-based practices during the school day. The staff and principal do support the faith-based ethos of the school.

The learners of the school come from very diverse backgrounds as I learned from my participants during the group interview conducted at the start of the data collection process (see Chapter 3). From the discussion I could identify six main groups of learners in the school. The first group of learners come from the townships. These learners are viewed as less vulnerable and 'street-wise'. It was also expressed by all my participants that this group of learners is well-dressed, technologically advanced and view themselves as the better group in the school. The second group is from the rural areas. These learners are seen as the vulnerable and more traditional (conservative) group of learners in the school. The next group of learners come from single-parent families. The reason for this type of family is due to a wide range of circumstances such as divorce, deceased parents; the parents never marrying, teenage pregnancies or the one parent leaving the family and not having any further contact with the family. These learners are mostly described as the group that is troublesome at times, insecure, neglected, aggressive etc. and that these parents are not that involved with the school. Then there is the group of learners who are raised by family members other than their parents, mostly by the grandparents. These learners are perceived as spoiled, irresponsible and disrespectful at times due to the grandparents finding it difficult to adapt and deal with the learners in the technological and media advanced world. The final group of learners identified by the participants are the learners who are cared for by their Au pairs. These learners come from affluent families, where the parents are not that involved in the education of their children and are often away for work purposes. These learners show the same characteristics as the single-family learners, namely being troublesome and aggressive at times, and displaying feelings of insecurity and being neglected.

Finally it is necessary to consider that the parental involvement in the school is also very poor according to my participants. The parents are very hard to get hold of when needed and do not show up for sport, cultural events and meetings at the school. The picture painted by the participants is an overall lack of parental involvement in the school. The learners in the school primarily use public transport which also complicates many aspects of the school's extramural activities and contact with the parents when needed. Due to the transport problem the school accommodates the learners with extramural activities by making it part of their formal school day - they have a sports or cultural period at the end of the day. This makes it possible for the learners to participate in sport.

The school has also made an arrangement with other schools to have sport days that will also start during school hours and finish at a reasonable time so that the learners can still make use of their regular transport arrangements.

4.3. Background on the participants

The background on the participants will be presented in the form of three narratives.

4.3.1. "She could not play a curved ball"

Participant A is an experienced educator, first in Guidance and then in the field of Life Orientation. She has taught this subject for more than ten (10) years to Grade 7s. She has been teaching at the school (research site) for more than a decade and has had experience of the previous education system as well as the present education system. . The change from the old education system to the new education system implied that she not only had to adjust to the new system, but in addition, to three curriculum changes (C2005, RNCS, and CAPS) and new ways of teaching. Commenting on her experience at the school she stated that she has been there *"…very long (laughing). I first started here then I left for five years and now I'm back. So I don't know if I have to give you a time frame then I'll have to lie. More than ten years (pause) for Grade 7."* At first as the research started this participant seemed very positive towards the research. She was eager to share her ideas, knowledge and attitude towards Life Orientation, which gave the impression at the time that she was eager to participate in the study.

However, during the training session there were contradicting responses from her about the training. She insisted that she did make use of scenarios as she indicated: *"I make use of scenarios, yes"* as used in the Grade 7 Life Orientation textbooks and as part of their RE periods. "*Look because uh the Grade 7 syllabus consists almost of only moral dilemmas. "Yes, like I say I, I deal with it in religion education and I'm, I'm busy with the final discussions thereof, even though it is included in everything that you do."* She found it difficult to look at morals as more than religion. For her, any moral issue was a religious issue. It is clear from the previous statement of the participant that she is very focused on the religious aspect rather than on the moral aspect of teaching values as she mentioned*:" I…I…I… emphasise it in RE because I first work from the religion perspective and then from a human perspective.* "She was thus less open to explore possibilities outside her own frame of reference. Throughout the research it became evident that her understanding of what moral dilemmas are was much skewed as she perceives them to be only religious in nature. She also thought that moral dilemma discussions were nothing more than small group discussions that are widely used as a teaching strategy.

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Furthermore, she displayed a poor understanding of what moral dilemma discussions entailed, and confused them with group discussions that have become very common in the outcomes-based approach to teaching. When I asked her if she had any knowledge of what a moral dilemma is she responded by saying:" *like where they also create scenarios or what?"*

Also, she was reluctant to view and explore a different idea of teaching morals separately from religion. She was very fixed in her ideas and preferred to stick to that, even though at times she did attempt to be more open and positive to the new proposed strategy of teaching values in her classroom. She was thus less open to exploring any possibilities outside her own frame of reference. The lack of openness was confirmed by my initial classroom observations:

The first lesson I observed dealt with peer pressure. The participant handed out the 'worksheet' with the scenario and two pages of questions, based on the scenario but mostly content based e.g. What is meant by peer pressure? What do you do when you are confronted with peer pressure?

The participant read the scenario to the class. The learners were then expected to complete the two pages of questions by themselves. This was very problematic as the periods were only thirty minutes long.

The participant gave the learners time to complete the questions but, due to the number of questions asked, the learners did not manage to finish within the specific time frame. The participant then divided the learners into groups of four. The learners were expected to come up with one answer for each of the questions which one learner in the group would give feedback on. During the group discussion the participant moved around the classroom in between the groups to facilitate the discussions taking place. The participant, however, gave too much time for the discussions which resulted in the learners losing track of what was needed.

Once the time limit had passed and the learners had completed their discussion, they reported back on the questions, but because of poorly managed time only a limited number of questions were reported on. . No debates or discussion took place during this feedback.

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It was just a situation where all the groups gave their answers to the different questions. No responses, debates or discussions occurred and it was obvious that the teacher expected only one correct answer. No moral clarification could occur, and no alternatives were explored. .

During this observation it was clear that she was indeed fixed in her way of teaching. She did not really make use of a moral dilemma discussion. The participant took a scenario from the textbook with questions based on it. The questions in the book did not explore the moral dilemma. It never invited learners to explore the "ought to do" (moral dimension). In fact, the example from the textbook did not pose a moral dilemma. The result was that the students did not finish the lesson within the period. It seemed to me when we had an informal discussion after the lesson that the educator was unsure of what was expected.

If we were to look at the lesson from a moral dilemma discussion as a teaching strategy perspective a number of salient issues emerged:

- The learners were never confronted with a real life dilemma. Whatever dilemma was embedded in the scenario on peer pressure was nullified by the fact that the scenario came with a ready-made answer to the problem, thus denying learners the opportunity to reflect on the problem and to bring their own values to the table for discussion.

- The questions posed were not value-based questions, but purely questions aimed at determining if learners could recall information transmitted to them. Again this denied them the opportunity to reflect on and clarify their own values.

- The discussion that resulted from the questions posed was merely aimed at learners finding the answers by recalling what they had heard. It did not bring the learners to the point of clarifying their own values.

After the observation the participant explained to me that she did not finish in time and that there was not enough time for such an activity. I then informally explained to her that it would be better if she narrowed down the questions to four or five questions at the most. This would ensure that she would finish in time.

She was not really open to my suggestions on how to adjust the activity to make it a moral dilemma discussion and she felt that time had been wasted as she would have to spend another period on this activity. She also felt that she was experienced in the field.

She did not really pay attention and complained about being overloaded and that she needed content which could be tested during examinations. This could not be covered in the four to five questions as I had suggested.

In terms of this research, it meant that teaching from the textbook took precedence over engaging with learners on a much deeper level to assist them in their moral development. "*Uhm it is (pause) for me (pause) because I do it for quite a while now.*" For her, teaching was "teaching to the book" and completing the syllabus within the time set.

When returning for the second part of the previously mentioned observation I handed the educator some possible questions that she could use in future for the same scenario (moral dilemma discussion). She first finished off the questions of the previous observation as this was the priority. She then used the questions I had given her out of her own free will. There was, however, not enough time to run through the whole process of a moral dilemma again. So what she did was to read the questions to the learners and they had to respond to them spontaneously. Suddenly there were major discussions and debates. Children were coming up with ideas and arguments for which she was less prepared to handle. It was as if the floodgates opened and it challenged her opinions and experience in a way she was not prepared to deal with. The learners responded well to the questions and enjoyed the participation in the debates that took place. She was surprised with the outcome of the discussions and how the atmosphere in the class had changed.

It made me realise that introducing a new teaching approach to more seasoned educators presented challenges that are often hard to anticipate at the start of a research process. I gathered from what had happened that the learners' spontaneous reaction bringing out ideas that differed from hers made her feel, in a certain sense, threatened and insecure. She was not equipped, despite her years of experience, to deal with such situations. The result was that she steered away from similar situations in future and the training had no impact on her classroom practice. It became evident that she had difficulty understanding how moral dilemma discussions work when she mentioned that:" *maybe if we had a more practical session maybe then I would have been able to understand the designing of the questions better (pause) understand? I just used what I had in the textbook and then uhm I did use my own ideas (pause.)*"

She felt that reverting to her own ways was safer and that dealing with a wide range of opinions and ideas was much more difficult to assess than simply providing children with ready-made answers. To my surprise when I requested the educator to return for the final two observations, this participant found numerous excuses and withdrew from the research.

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4.3.2. "She was testing new waters"

Participant B is an experienced educator in Mathematics, but not really in the field of Life Orientation. She has been teaching Life Orientation for the past *"two years (pause) Grades 5 and 6"* and is also the Subject Head for Life Orientation in the school. During the first meeting with the participant it seemed as if she was going to turn out to be the participant not likely to participate as wished. She did not seem excited or really willing to participate.

This was worrying as such she was an important gatekeeper to the research as she could exert influence over the other educators to commit to the research. To my surprise this participant was very positive towards the whole research process including the training, as well as the opportunity to explore the new teaching strategy as she mentioned that it was "*nice to hear there are other ways of doing things also".*

During the training the participant showed great interest at the reasoning behind the strategy. She showed the ability to grasp the notion of the moral dilemma discussion as a teaching strategy quite well as she stated that she liked changes in the way of teaching because she felt that as educators "*you can do things differently because you really get into a rut of doing things your way that suits you the best not the children necessarily but you as a teacher."* She was very supportive and enthusiastic in starting the research. Before the first observation the participant emailed me her self-designed moral dilemma discussions for me to see if she was on the right track and to make sure the observations were successful for this research. I saw this as a great advantage for the project.

During the first set of observations in two different grades I was very impressed with the educator's participation.

The first observation was in the Grade 5 class and the second with the Grade 6 class. The topic of the moral dilemma discussion for the Grade 5 class was based on child abuse and the moral dilemma discussion for the Grade 6 class was based on HIV/AIDS.
The lesson time was also thirty minutes and this participant managed her time very well and finished the discussion within the given time. From my observation it was evident that Participant B had a better understanding of the design and process of conducting a moral dilemma discussion. She allocated enough time for all the different sections of the process in conducting a moral dilemma discussion. When I complimented her on her excellent time management she responded saying: "*you have to, you don't have a choice."* The same procedure was followed for both grades.

She handed out to each of the learners the moral dilemma discussion worksheet. The participant then read the moral dilemma discussion to the learners. After reading it she explained to them that they were now expected to answer the questions individually to best of their ability and emphasised that there were no right or wrong answers. She then allocated a time frame for them in which to complete it. After the learners had completed the questions, they were divided into groups of three or four. The participant then instructed the learners to discuss their answers in the group. She then reminded them again that there were no right or wrong answers and said that all must have a fair opportunity to present their answers and to be heard by the whole group. During the class discussion the participant would nominate a learner to share his/her ideas as a starting point. From there she encouraged the learners to take part in a debate.

I was surprised with the moral dilemma discussions and how she executed the process successfully as a first-timer. It was clearly visible that lots of effort and preparation had gone t into these lessons. Unlike Participant A, this participant attempted to wrap up the lesson with a discussion on what actions could be followed in a situation like that would be the best way to act. However, time ran out and no strategy was selected or put into action to promote moral actions. The lesson stopped here.

She played her role as mediator and facilitator of the discussion very well and facilitated the class discussion successfully to the great satisfaction of the learners. The learners responded well to the whole process and to the class and group discussions specifically. The Grade 5s were very eager and got into the discussions and debates immediately while the Grade 6s were very aware of my presence and it took them a while to participate effectively. It seems as if the training did have an impact on this participant's classroom practice. It might be because she had a better understanding of what was expected.

In analysing the two lessons from a moral dilemma discussion perspective, the following was noted:

- The scenarios presented to learners were real life scenarios with a strong moral base, which means that the scenario had no prescribed answer or solution to the dilemma presented. The learners were required to reason and clarify their own values in order to solve the moral dilemma presented. Even though the scenario was taken from the prescribed textbook, it was adapted to fit the criteria for a moral dilemma discussion.

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- The questions presented were value-based questions. The questions were specifically designed to encourage reasoning from the learners in order to clarify their values. The questions presented were not content based. The learners were expected to go beyond the content presented to them and explore other real-life possibilities.
- The discussions were mediated and facilitated in such a way that the learners were encouraged to clarify their own values. The discussions were focused on the learners' reasoning behind their answers to create an opportunity where moral reasoning and value clarification could be facilitated by the educator.

During the first individual interview the participant was very excited about the strategy and how she had conducted it when she mentioned that *"It… it… it sort of uhm reassured me that I'm a bit on the right track the way of (pause) my way of teaching (pause) that is actually how we should do it."* The participant was also very eager to start the new cycle in the research as she asked lots of questions for clarification to improve her practice in this strategy even more. She also assured me of having two more observations for each Grade to ensure good data for the purpose of this research.

Before the next and final observation and interview I had great difficulty in getting hold of this participant to try and finish off the rest of my data collection successfully. I ended up driving to the school to meet with this participant as the lack of interest from her side did not make any sense. When I met up with her, she mentioned that it would be difficult to assist me with the research as they were having difficulty completing all their own work activities within the given time due to religion-based activities that had influenced their academic programme.

However, she did not withdraw from the study like Participant A. She was willing to assist me with one more observation and interview. During this observation the participant did not conduct herself as she did in the first cycle. The lesson was not planned well and I could sense the loss of interest that had occurred since the previous cycle.

During this observation, the participant only included the one Grade 5 class to participate. Once again the participant handed out a moral dilemma discussion based on peer pressure to the learners. This time around the moral dilemma itself was a scenario taken from the textbook. It was not really based on the 'what ought I to do?' However, the questions based on the moral dilemma discussion were well set and had great potential for a good class discussion and debate. The participant once again finished in good time and displayed the ability to manage time well.

The participant then requested the learners to read the scenario and answer the four questions provided. The learners immediately completed the task within the time limit given to them. The participant then divided the learners once again into groups of three or four with the request that they discuss these questions in the class. Once again she reminded them that they all had the right to their own opinion and that all sides should be heard and considered as there was no right or wrong answer to the questions. After the group discussion what was unusual to me was that she requested feedback and a discussion on only one of the questions presented which was, "What would you say or do if you saw this happening?" She did not give an opportunity for any other question to be discussed as part of the class activity. This was another way she showed her lack of interest in continuing to participate in this research study. Once again there was only a discussion of possible strategies to put in place but once again none were actually selected and implemented. Still, this participant conducted herself well in her time management and facilitation of the whole process. She elicited responses from the learners. The learners participated well, in fact, even better than in the previous cycle. It felt to me as if they were now familiar with the process, they knew what was expected and they were comfortable with my presence in the classroom.

After analysing the lesson presented, the following points were noted from a moral dilemma discussion perspective:

- Unlike the previous lesson, this lesson was not based on a moral dilemma. This was merely a scenario taken from the textbook. The scenario consisted of a pre-determined solution or answers to the questions posed. The scenario did not consist of any dilemma to be solved. The scenario elicited the learners personal opinions and did not engage them in clarifying their values related to a moral dilemma.
- Like the previous moral dilemma presented, the questions based on the scenario were well set for a class discussion and debate. However, the questions were all taken from the textbook except for the last question. None of the questions were value based. The questions were content based and the final question was based more on the learners' previous experiences and opinions, as they had to state how they would act in the given scenario.

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- Unlike the previous moral dilemma presented, the discussion or debate was just a general discussion in the class after the learners had completed the questions. The moral dilemma process of individual work, group discussion and class discussion were not followed. No clarifying of values within a group discussion or class discussion took place. The class discussion was based on the content provided and personal opinions and experiences.

During the interview, however it was clear that the participant was under severe pressure and stress. She mentioned that "*I did not put in the planning that I should've because there was just not enough time, and it is unfair to you also."* This made me realize that the participant was indeed still positive and wanted to participate to her full potential but due to her time and curriculum constraints she was just not able to continue her participation as I would have hoped. A key element that appeared at this stage of the research, that was not anticipated, was the continued support of the principal.

Although the principal indicated his support of the project at the onset, other priorities in the school took precedence over the project and without his continued support it was difficult to maintain the commitment of the staff. Nevertheless this participant still did contribute a lot to this research and was very willing and as helpful as was humanly possible. The data collected from this participant contributed enormously to this research.

4.3.3. "He was willing but unsettled"

Participant C was an inexperienced Life Orientation educator at the start of the research. At that stage he had been teaching Grade 4 Life Orientation for *"four months".* He was also in his final year of study towards completing his teacher education qualification. . During the initial group interview he appeared to be eager to participate in the research. As the research progressed he really tried his best to accommodate the research to the best of his ability. During the training he was very quiet and paid attention to what should be done.

I observed three lessons that he presented to Grade 4. At first it was clear that the participant experienced problems in implementing moral dilemma discussions as a strategy in his Grade 4 classes. It should be noted that this is an extremely young age group (9 to 10-year-olds) to use for this type of approach and was not initially planned to be part of the research, but because of the willingness on the part of the participant it was decided to include this group.

Before my first visit he decided to pilot the process to see how the Grade 4s responded to moral dilemma discussions. When he piloted the moral dilemma discussion to be used for the observation, he saw that the Grade 4s had difficulty in understanding the scenario. This relates to Kohlberg's idea as mentioned in Chapter 2 when he argued that primary school children at this age lack the cognitive ability to engage in this kind of moral reasoning. He mentioned that children at this level of their development display conventional thought as the child only reasons in a way that he or she feels will please others (in Crosser, 2008). Therefore, it would be necessary to design moral dilemma discussions suitable for this age group in order for them to deal with this process of moral reasoning. According to the participant he decided to explain the dilemma to the learners in detail before attempting the activities. In the interview he said that the day before the lesson was to be observed, he explained the dilemma to the learners and told them for homework to go and think about it before he conducted the lesson during my first observation in his classroom. Whether this was in fact done as he said is questionable, because during all the observations I noted that the participant did not prepare for a single lesson.

When I arrived at the school for two of the observations (the first and the final) this participant was running around making photocopies of the moral dilemmas that I had provided during the training, which were not relevant to Grade 4 or to the curriculum. The participant first handed out the moral dilemma discussion to the learners. He then read and explained the scenario in detail to the students making sure that they had a clear understanding of the moral dilemma discussion at hand. The participant then requested the learners to complete the questions individually. After the learners had answered the questions, the participant skipped the group discussions and went directly to asking for feedback from the learners. He then asked random learners in the class their answers to each of the questions correcting them when he felt it necessary to guide them in the 'correct' way of dealing with the situation. No facilitation took place and the whole lesson turned out to be an exercise in value transmission. Also during the lesson, the participant frequently asked me if he was on the right track, if that was what I wanted.

 After the lesson I gave him guidance in drawing up his own moral dilemma discussion, encouraged him to include group discussions and to facilitate rather than to tell them what to do. The first observation of this participant was based on a moral dilemma discussion that I had provided as an example during the training. The topic of this moral dilemma discussion was based on a trusting relationship between the educators and students. This moral dilemma discussion was aimed at adults and not at Grade 4 learners. The time management of the participant was not as expected which might have been due to his inexperience.

He finished within the given thirty minutes but did not cover all the prescribed phases of a moral dilemma discussion.

In analysing the lesson from a moral dilemma discussion point of view, the following salient points emerged:

- The educator lacked the skill, experience and knowledge to be able to design a moral dilemma that would be suitable for younger children. Using an example of a moral dilemma that was not adapted to the age group, was a non-starter. It could not assist in helping children to clarify their values, to discuss moral issues or to relate to the dilemma.

- However, the participant did not facilitate the class discussions to ensure a quality value clarification situation. This hindered the discussions from being as effective as they could have been as the participant did not facilitate all the time but mostly provided the learners with the 'socially accepted' answers to the questions. In other words facilitating the discussion into a direction that he was comfortable with or that was accepted within his values framework.

After the first observation I also had difficulty making contact again with this participant. However, when I did meet up with him again he was the only participant willing to assist me in being able to be in his class for three observations and one more interview. Therefore this participant, regardless of his enthusiasm, experience, uncertainty etc., was the participant most willing to participate to the end of this research.

During the second observation, the participant requested the learners to take out their textbooks and open them to page forty-two. The topic for discussion was: who are your elders? The educator divided them into groups and gave each group a piece of paper. On the paper they were requested to write down ideas on how to respect their elders.

The groups were sent out of the class onto the sports field to have their group discussion while the participant and I remained in his class. The learners had ten minutes to complete the task and then return to class for the feedback session. Feedback was conducted where each group read their answers to the class. The participant then verbally created a moral dilemma in the form of a question which he then presented to the class namely: "What are you to do if you are forced or asked by an adult to do something you are not comfortable with?" The learners were once again divided into groups of four to discuss the dilemma or question posed. After the group discussion and feedback the participant read to the learners the relevant section from the textbook.

When analysing the lesson, the following is important to take note of from a moral dilemma perspective:

- When considering the design it is important to note that no moral dilemma was designed for this lesson. The participant formulated an open-ended question verbally to the learners to create some sort of discussion. The values that needed to be clarified were obscured and not brought to the fore at any stage of the discussion. No dilemma was presented to be clarified. The question and class activity posed were content and opinion based. No value clarification took place.

- There were no value-based questions posed that could assist in exploring the dilemma from a moral perspective. The participant instructed the learners to come up with a list of information based on the topic of the day in the textbook. Also the participant posed one general question to the class.
  This question was verbally done and content based. It did not focus on the learners' moral reasoning or clarification of their values. Also the question posed did not provoke an effective class discussion or debate.

- There were no real class discussions taking place, facilitated by the participant in order to encourage the learners to clarify their values and express their reasoning for their answers provided. This was only a report back on the information gathered by the groups.

During the final observation the participant again used two moral dilemma discussions as presented to them during the training. The topics of the two dilemmas were bullying and not talking to strangers. The learners were each handed the worksheet with the two moral dilemma discussions on it. The participant then divided the learners into groups immediately. The learners were requested to read the two moral dilemma discussions and answer the questions in their groups. After the discussion each group was requested to give feedback of their answers for each of the questions. First the one moral dilemma discussion was handled and then the next moral dilemma followed. Still no facilitation took place. The participant did not during any of the observations encourage class discussion or debate. No discussions on possible strategies flowed from the discussions to try and establish moral actions. The participant managed to stay within the time limit of thirty minutes.

When analysing the lesson observed from a moral dilemma discussion perspective it is important to pay attention to the following:

- The designs of the moral dilemma discussions were moral based, but not adapted to the age group. They had already been designed and used in the past, but with adults. These moral dilemma discussions had been made available to the participants during training as examples and were therefore not relevant to the curriculum and planning of the participant at that time. Although the moral dilemma discussions had been designed to promote value clarification they had to be adapted or redesigned to fit the age-group. This was not done.
- The questions originally designed as part of the example were value-based and focused on stimulating the reasoning of the learners. Although the questions did provoke proper class and group discussions, they were not age specific. The questions the learners were asked did not t clarify their values and were not content based.
- The participant did not provoke class and group discussions, even though the questions and dilemmas presented were sufficient to do so. The learners were only requested to give feedback on their answers. No reasoning or value clarification were facilitated.

Although this participant was willing to participate and learn about new approaches to teaching, he was very unsure of himself and this new teaching strategy seemed to unsettle him (which could be due to a lack of effective preparation or experience).

He was also very uncomfortable with making use of group discussions in his class, which is essential for moral education to take *place "(pause) ok the group work you understand? Because you always get that child that is disruptive or that is very… you know urgh really I don't like group work at all. Because you always have to sjuut sju sju ok not that loud, don't shout at each other. It breaks down the discipline for me, my own opinion and there are many teachers that can handle it well, I don't like group work that's just my opinion."* This was clearly visible during the observations as he restricted the group discussions to the minimum to try and avoid using group discussions. This was problematic to the research as this was essential for the data to be collected from the observations. Furthermore, the participant felt comfortable if he could teach from the textbook. He was open to new strategies and changing his way of teaching but he was very uncertain about himself and displayed the typical characteristics of a novice teacher.

Based on the data collected during the research in terms of the four research questions asked, the following main findings emerged.

4.4.   Participant's experience of training in moral dilemma discussions

To be able to answer the first research sub-question posed (i.e. How did educators experience training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy?), I will make use of the data collected from both of the group interviews that took place during the first phase of my data collection and the follow-up interview during the first cycle of my participatory action research design.

In the literature as presented in Chapter 2, it is stated that limited staff development opportunities are made available to educators to deal with moral education in their classrooms (Straughan, 1988; Haydon, 1997 & Halstead *et* al, 1996). Also from the literature (Straughan, 1988; Haydon, 1997 & Halstead *et* al, 1996) and from personal experience as an educator, educators often have to rely on their pre-service training and to use that to adapt and adjust to the frequent curriculum changes that occur or are still occurring. Their ability to use their pre-service training varies and might result in being a barrier to the successful implementation of curriculum changes. This also applies to the introduction of the new CAPS and its focus on introducing moral aspects in primary schools specifically. It was also noted earlier that curriculum changes introduced since 1994 were often not accompanied by thorough training of educators on the changes.

Using Participatory Action research as a staff development strategy makes provision for the researcher to be actively involved in the developmental process together with the participants to improve their skills (Raubenheimer, 2004) and to increase confidence in redesigning their classroom instructions by testing new teaching strategies (Neapolitan, 2000).

For the purpose of this research study the possibility of using Participatory Action research as a staff development strategy was studied. It was intended to provide the three participants with training in using moral dilemma discussions in conjunction with their Life Orientation curriculum to promote moral education in their classrooms. Although it was initially thought that this training would span sufficient time to ensure that educators become comfortable with the approach, it turned out to be a trade-off between the time that educators or the school were prepared to set aside for the training and the time needed for thorough training. In the end, the training had to be done on a single afternoon, which was not the ideal.

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The training part was seen as a crucial element of the intervention aspect of Participatory Action research as discussed in Chapter 3.

The training was planned and designed as a workshop which provided the participants with a 'hands-on' experience and exploration of the new strategy to be implemented in their classrooms. As the researcher and trainer I planned to hand each, at the beginning of the training session, a moral dilemma discussion. They would then have been expected to complete the moral dilemma discussion process while I acted as mediator and facilitator so that they could experience the process first hand. This was then to be followed by a debriefing and discussion process.

For this part of the training forty minutes was allocated as this was the expected duration of a moral dilemma discussion. After the participants experienced the strategy first-hand I engaged them in the debriefing part where we reflected on how moral dilemma discussions could be used in teaching moral education. As the facilitator, I then provided them with notes from the literature on what this strategy is about, how it was designed, how to use it, why to use it etc. The aim was to provide them with at least some theoretical understanding of Kohlberg's idea of moral clarification. About one hour was allocated to this part of the training. The final stage of the training was aimed at involving participants in designing a number of moral dilemmas that were related to the curriculum and could be used in the grade-groups for which they were responsible. About two hours was set aside for this. It was hoped that this exercise would assist them in designing moral dilemmas that were ready-made for their classes and would ease the pressure of preparing lessons after the training.

I was also hoping that I would be able to spend some time with them during the training session to discuss the possibilities of putting some strategy in place as a follow-up to a moral dilemma discussion that would promote moral behaviour resulting from the moral dilemma discussion. All-in-all I had prepared a training session of about four hours that would run from about 14:00 to 18:00.

At no stage was there any talk of a training session that would be less than what I had planned. During my meeting with the principal to gain access to the research site, I was open about the time needed for the process of the training, observations and interviews. The whole process was also explained and discussed with the participants during the initial meeting to gain their consent for participating in the research. All the parties agreed to the whole process and were very positive about the training and the research expectations.

However, when I arrived at the school on the afternoon scheduled for the training session the principal informed me that I would now only have an hour at my disposal for the training session. No reasons were provided, and I realised that this had serious implications for the research as the training part was the most important part of the whole endeavour to ensure that the following cycles would be successful and for collecting efficient and rich data. I had to consider various options. Either to continue and present a reduced training programme or to find an alternative research site. The latter option was less favourable as it took me months to negotiate access to the research site. Secondly, I did not want to disappoint the participants who at this stage were really excited about the research. I thus had to settle for a reduced training time, realising that it was not the ideal.

This meant that serious adjustments had to be made to provide the participants with some sort of guidance within the given time limit to be able to understand and implement the strategy as effectively possible. . I thought at that stage that aspects that could not be covered in the hour provided could address in the follow-up meetings. The training was thus very limited, including only the discussion on what a moral dilemma discussion is, how it was designed, how it could be used in the classroom and why it should be used in the classroom.

Also during this training I familiarised them with the features of a good moral dilemma discussion and the process of facilitating it. To support them in designing their own moral dilemma discussions for implementation, as no time was available to design at least one during the training, I provided them with numerous examples and guidance on how to change scenario's in the text book into a moral dilemma discussion. No time was available to discuss the possibility of putting strategies in place to promote moral behaviour outside the classroom.

Due to circumstances beyond the control of the researcher, the training ended up in the same undesirable state as so much of the often criticised training of the department of education where inadequate time is provided for the training.

During the training session the participants responded differently to the training provided. Mostly the participants seemed positive about the training and interested in the strategy presented to them. Participant C, however, was confused at times about the execution of the moral dilemma discussion and the facilitation thereof. He asked numerous questions to gain a clearer understanding of what was expected.

The other participants also seemed confused about how this process of conducting a moral dilemma discussion differed from the current idea of individual work, group work and class discussion. However, once the training session was completed within the given hour the participants were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. The participants responded that they had a clear understanding of what was expected from them. They also stated that they liked the idea of the strategy and would implement it. We agreed that after the first cycle of observations I would provide them with additional guidance to improve on their implementation of the strategy.

I was very disappointed with the training session as it did not work out as planned. I personally felt that the training provided to the participants was not sufficient for the effective implementation thereof. I wanted the training to be a more 'hands-on' experience than just simply an information transmission session like all the other training sessions that educators attend during their professional career.

This training was aimed at providing educators with the experience, information and practical application of the new strategy before implementation to ensure a more effective implementation process.

I was also very disappointed in the principal's interest and support concerning the research process and the training, specifically when he changed the time negotiated which now had serious implications for the remaining cycles of the implementation of the research project. I also felt that the participants did not receive enough support and curriculum freedom from the principal to be able to use their curriculum documents and textbooks to design their own effective moral dilemma discussions or on how to put strategies in place to promote moral behaviour. This worried me as it was the beginning of the research process and this could have an enormous impact on the research process.

After conducting the training session and reflecting on the experiences I had a number of concerns that I had to consider in the further unfolding of the research project:

- I had serious reservations about the ability of the participants to design age-relevant moral dilemmas. In part, this concern was based on the participants' views on what moral education entails. For them, morality was embedded in religion and thus there were clear-cut right and wrong answers in life. Secondly, the training offered was extremely limited. The participants may have difficulty in designing their own moral dilemmas from the examples provided as they might not link up with the topics in their curriculum.

- Also, the participants might have difficulty in designing the moral dilemma in such a way that it was value based and encouraged learners to clarify their own values. The participants could have difficulty in designing the dilemma in such a way that the choices to be made were less obvious so that it would elicit discussion and reasoning and thus result in the clarification of values. To address this concern I thought that I would provide individual coaching when I started with the observations of the lessons.

- One of the key foci of the intended research was to ensure that all moral dilemma discussions would be followed up with some action where learners could put what they had learned into practice. The ridiculous time constraints placed on the training resulted in this important dimension not receiving the attention that was needed. I therefore feared that the lack of training in this regard could result in the participants not implementing this aspect of the research at all or the implementation thereof could be in the form of reinforcement of the existing systems in place. Again I thought that I would use the follow-up classroom observation sessions to brief participants on this important aspect.

- I was also concerned about the lack of practical hands-on training on the strategy. The practicality of the teaching strategy could also be seen as a problem as the participants did not have the opportunity to experience the teaching strategy themselves and therefore the implementation, facilitation and time management might be a problem. Due to the time limitation of the training it was not possible to guide the participants or explain to them that this strategy I would not be applicable to all the topics covered in the curriculum, but was simply one way of dealing with moral education in their classrooms.

During the first set of interviews after the training and first observation of the implementation of moral dilemma discussions in the participants' classrooms, a discussion took place on how they experienced the training provided. After analysing the data gathered from these interviews the following points of discussion were raised which are important for the purpose of this research project and the data will also now be presented. These points of discussion include the positive and negative aspects of the training session, recommendations on how to improve the training session provided, time allocation and finally training done by the DoBE.

When analysing the data the participants were overall very happy with the training provided, in the sense that they felt that it forced the educator to put more into the preparation of Life Orientation lessons than was done previously. Participant C mentioned *"…uhm, yes uhm it is a way of thinking uhm yes oh well it forces you as well to think further as an educator."* Participant A supported the above-mentioned statement when she said, *"…you know it made a person think again about all these things you know."* While Participant B felt the training was very effective in providing educators with new ideas of teaching in the classroom, she also felt that the support in the implementation section of PAR was very positive. She had this to say about the training: *"I like it because it is always nice to hear how you can do things differently because you really get into a rut of doing things your way that suits you the best not the children necessarily but you as a teacher. Nice to hear there are other ways of doing things also…"* Participant A responded that the training was: "*The training which you presented, I could use it a lot, and I really enjoyed it."*

When I asked the participants whether the training contributed to their professional development in their own opinion they provided me with mixed answers as all three of them experienced the contribution to their professional development differently.

Participant A felt that the training session provided did contribute to her professional development when she said,*"uhmf (pause) yeeeeeees you know it did force a person to think about all the things again, you know? A person think you know everything but actually you learn also as you go along."* Participant B again felt that the training contributed partially to her professional development, *"It it it sort of uhm reassured me that I'm a bit on the right track the way of (pause) my way of teaching (pause) that is actually how we should do it."*

Finally Participant C mentioned that it was hard for him personally as not enough time had passed after the implementation thereof, and that he would need more time to explore this strategy before he would be able to establish whether or not it had contributed   to his professional development. He stated,: "*It's too quick to say give me uhm three (3) months understand hey, to, to test the whole thing and then I'll be able to tell you, I can then say yes how did I experience it, you understand? This is now the first time I have done this so now it could be easy for me to now say it is wonderful and everything and all you know, but then now I leave it just there and I continue with what I have done before, understand ask me ask me later."*

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Some of the negative comments regarding the training and the teaching strategy were firstly, confusion on when to use the teaching strategy as mentioned by Participant C in connection with the issue that a moral dilemma discussion could not be used for all the topics in the curriculum, especially when dealing with the topics that are strictly content based and not value based when he said, "*uhm yes it is it is actually another way uhm look urgh, it makes it difficult because not all the subjects all the all the work that we do, provide you with the opportunity to do this type of work, understand? For example uhm the other day we did out the the ten steps on how to study ok? And that makes it difficult to find a situation out of it to get a situation from it but I'm sure if a person tries really hard it will be possible for a person to do it uhm yes well it forces you as an educator as well to think a bit further.*" The second negative comment regarding the training was the time allocation. Most of the participants felt that the time allocated (1hour) was not enough as it created some confusion, such as the design of a moral dilemma from scratch or the modification of existing scenarios in the textbooks. The participants raised a few concerns they had experienced after the training when they started to implement the strategy, as presented in the adjusted training, to fit the time limit.

These concerns included the fact that they would have wanted to have a more practical session during the training to be more comfortable with the use of a moral dilemma discussion. Participant A felt that:" *maybe if we had a more practical session maybe then I would have been able to understand the designing of the questions better (pause) understand? I just used what I had in the textbook and then uhm I did use my own ideas (pause.)*"

Participant A also felt that they might have found it easier to design their own moral dilemma discussions from scratch rather than to modify an existing scenario from the textbook to a moral dilemma discussion to be used in the classroom. She expressed her need for a more practical training session in this way:" *So I did actually fool around in the dark a bit, but yes if you gave us a practical lesson or if you could've presented one lesson yourself (pause) so that we could observe that might have been better. Yes or if it was possible for you to maybe present a lesson yourself to the learners so that we could observe you, that would also have helped us to know what you expected of us.*" Participant B however felt that if I had had more time during the training session and had done a practical session first followed by the theory part, that it might have made a difference to the implementation of the strategy. Her answer was, however, not really convincing as she said" *maybe yes, yes, it could've influenced the way you would've done it class, I think?*"

Participant C in turn felt that the time allocation for the training was adequate and that the examples and theory provided were sufficient as he said, " *No I don't think so, the examples that you gave to us are surely good enough."*

After the first round of interviews which was focused on the training presented and the first round of implementation of the new teaching strategy, the participants made a few recommendations which in their opinion could be an improvement to the training as it was presented. It was requested form Participant B that more examples of moral dilemma discussions could be made available during the training session to assist them in the design of their own moral dilemma discussions or to modify already existing scenarios in the textbook to a moral dilemma discussion.

This participant also felt that the textbook limits them from exploring more options of teaching as the textbooks are really more content that value based. "*Yes I would actually like it if you could give me more examples of moral dilemmas that I can do in the class… because the textbooks that we have it's you don't really get they, they want to give you the facts and give everything and you don't really get that scenarios that you can you know give to the children what would you say? Or what will you do? And things like that. That makes it difficult for Life Orientation"* while Participant C in response to the comment presented here by Participant B disagreed when he mentioned that in his opinion the examples were sufficient enough to be used when he said:" *No way, you did give nice and clear examples."*

Participant A suggested that the training be done in the format of a demo lesson either to the participants themselves as if they were the learners, or to the learners and let them sit in on the lesson to observe what is expected. She felt that this could have contributed positively to the implementation when she explained that for herself personally:" *So I did actually fool around in the dark a bit, but yes if you gave us a practical lesson or if you could've presented one lesson yourself (pause) so that we could observe that might have been better. Yes or if it was possible for you to maybe present a lesson yourself to the learners so that we could observe you, that would also have helped us to know what you expected of us."*

Also Participant A suggested that the training be more practical by having time allocated to actually design at least one moral dilemma discussion with the participants as an example:" *Maybe, maybe then we could've or maybe then I would've understood the design of the questions, or maybe I would've understood it differently (pause)".*

Finally, Participant B suggested that when we deal with moral education that we consider the use of visual aids and the internet as a source and not only typed out moral dilemma discussions as she explained: "*we can maybe we can have more visual (pause) you know pictures and things like that you also but I will also also sometimes find if you give them too much. Then you sort of put them in a direction cause they are really like sheep you you say this then they all do the same thing. But I mean if if we we that's why I use the the computer the internet a lot for them to see things I mean I can tell them what what people look like when they have AIDS AIDS in the last stages but I mean they saw it on the comp on the internet. and and they were shocked (pause) it's an illness but they just know it's an illness but they don't know what how their bodies are you know deteriorating as it you know carries on. if we can make it a bit more interesting maybe for the children (pause) have a different introduction cause sometimes if you just give a picture (pause) without uhm a scenario typed out just give a picture with questions and they must look at that picture it sometimes also (pause) different.*"

When reflecting on the data presented based on the training provided and the experiences of the different participants relating to the different aspects of the training presented, it is now possible for me to answer the first research question which asked: how do educators experience training in the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in order to teach morals in primary schools? Overall, the participants were very positive about the training presented as they felt it was useful and helpful for them to be able to make use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy in their classrooms.

However, the time limitation of the training did play a vital role as the participants were unsure of some aspects of the implementation of the teaching strategy, specifically referring to the design and process of a moral dilemma discussion. The participants also appreciated the idea of the training where the researcher plays a supportive role to refine the implementation process. Therefore the educators had a positive experience of the training provided for the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy to teach morals in their classrooms.

4.5.   Educators' reflection upon their own values and moral behaviour

This section of the chapter will focus on the second research question as presented in Chapter 1 and at the beginning of this chapter. I will use data from the group and follow-up interviews to try and answer this research question.

Firstly, it will be necessary to reflect on the literature presented in Chapter 2 before presenting the data related to this research question to try and make sense of the underlying meaning hidden in the analysed data to be presented here. In Chapter 2 the reasoning was based on the fact that it is expected of education to make moral education part of the curriculum as it has become the responsibility of education to teach values (Straughan, 1988 and Halstead *et al*, 1996). The question however was, which values do we teach these learners?

It was mentioned that the Constitutional values should be considered as possibilities. These include human dignity, non-racism or non-sexism, the rule of law and finally universal suffrage (Republic of South Africa, 1996) also including the values presented in the Manifesto (Republic of South Africa, 2001) as these values are derived from the Constitution. These values are considered for the purpose of this research study as it is expected of all South Africans to value and act in accordance with these values. Also because this research study is based on the Life Orientation CAPS document, so therefore it will be necessary to consider the main values underlying this document. These values are based on teaching learners respect for the rights of others and tolerance for cultural and religious differences to build a democratic country (DoBE, 2010). When I entered the research site, these were the values overarching the research and the values which I had in mind for the teaching of values as it is mentioned in the Life Orientation CAPS document using moral dilemma discussions.

During the group interview at the beginning of the research and my meeting with the principal to try and gain access to this site; I learnt that the school based their values and religious education on their so called six pillars of values. These pillars, as previously mentioned in this chapter, include respect (in-line with both the Constitution and CAPS), responsibility, citizenship (in-line with CAPS), compassion, tolerance (in-line with CAPS) and finally love. What I realised from the discussion with the principal is that these pillars were the foundation of all actions and activities in the school. The school gave precedence to this set of values. Each term they focus on one of these specific values to reinforce it in the learners' lives.

During the group interview before the training I also realised that the participants (especially Participant A and Participant B) were also very focused and fixated on these six pillars of values as they kept on referring to these values, while Participant C preferred to stick to his own personal values.

What is important to note at this point is that values are directional – they provide direction for the activities or actions of a person or institution. Morals and ethics are prescriptive in providing the rules and principles on which actions should be based. Without this understanding, the lines between the concepts become blurred and vague and it could become very confusing as people may be referring to something other than what they intend.   During the group interview at the beginning of the research process, Participant A was very focused on using religion to teach values. Also, this participant pays a lot of attention to the six pillars of values used in the school.

The reason for this could be that it is a faith-based school using religion and these values as the basis of teaching values or that it is due to personal preference. She explained it as follows:" *My Life Orientation I approach it with my Religion Education, because we still have Religion Education (pause) because it is a religion-based school. So (pause) I absolutely teach them interchangeably because the one cannot function without the other."* The participant also mentioned that when she teaches values such as those she was busy with during her Life Orientation periods before the research started, she refers to the religious aspect thereof, to simplify difficult issues in the learners' lives as she explained:" *You know this is where I usually go back and focus on the religion where I tell the learners look we are all equal before God, and in the eyes of God. We are all equal and then from there I go into the values and so on so that doesn't feel some are better than other. That is not the case, you are you from the glory of God."* When I asked the participant how she deals with moral actions and whether she deals with them from a value perspective she did mention the following:" *yes, yes I don't have a choice, we address it immediately. Because we work from a responsibility and respect point of view or these pillars it is always mentioned and promoted practically into the learner's lives. I then also emphasise it from a religion perspective as well."* For her, morality spawns from religion and the principles that will inform moral behaviour are to be drawn from a specific religious orientation. A moral dilemma should thus be resolved using a religious lens where there are clear cut deontological rights and wrongs. Less room will thus be left for the ethic of care.

Participant B, like Participant A, was very focused on the pillars of values promoted by the school. She was fixed in using them as her basis for teaching Life Orientation and values in her classroom. Unlike Participant A, Participant B was not really focused on the religious aspect thereof. She only focused on the values aspect and not so much on the religious underpinning. She explained it in this way:" *uhmm I really enjoy it, because it is everything (pause) that we do at the school when I teach Life Orientation, in general this is what we do (pause) so it is the six pillars (pause) everything comes back to these six… I don't know if you know about our six pillars?*

Values and responsibility but it is (pause) very informal discussions but we let them pay attention to these types of things." What is less clear in this instance is whether the participant identified with the values for some ulterior motive (e.g. to use them as leverage to instil discipline in the class) or for the intrinsic value.

Participant C, unlike Participant A and B, was not focused on the six pillars of values or the religious aspect of the school. He did not even mention any of the above-mentioned aspects of teaching Life Orientation and values in the school. He was very focused on his own perspective on teaching values when he explained:" In *the first place you need to show values that are important to me. I feel that you as an educator has to be an educator with good values and you need to show it. How do you speak about something which you don't believe, learners see right through you. I feel to use examples from your personal life is a nice idea to teach and discuss values. It will also make it easier to create scenarios and so forth and it start at you as an educator. I believe it all starts with you (pause) I feel that a guy without values can't teach values, he doesn't even know what values are or the importance thereof. I feel it starts at the educator himself."* The participant, however, never articulated his own values. Also this participant showed hedonism, which underpins the idea that he feels that rewards are important when you expect people to participate in certain activities, when he mentioned that:*" yes but you will have to give a prize for it hey, understand? You are not necessarily going to see or experience it understand? Uh but when for example you tell a child that if you see someone sitting alone uhm and you you need to go to him and chat with him or whatever the case or the value might be. Sit… is he, how does it reach the teacher in the first place and how do you reward that child that need to be rewarded? If a child doesn't receive a reward, this is just my experience, what are the chances of them doing it? Ok I might be wrong there might be a child here and there that will care, understand but also there will be ones that don't care."* This relates to his careless approach and participation during this research study.

From my observations and interaction with Participant A after the training and implementation of moral dilemma discussions in her classroom, it was clear that being part of this research did not make any difference to how she reflected on her own values and moral behaviour. The participant remained totally focused on the religious aspect of teaching Life Orientation in her classroom. She still believed that the best way to deal with this type of education was to focus on the religious aspect thereof because this was a religion-based school. She said:" *You can't do it like this. I have tried, but it is a religion-based school. This is what the religion believes and goes by totally (pause) so this is the values that we convey to the learners"* – and those values were not up for discussion or clarification.

The interesting observation made was that when she allowed the learners to really express their own opinions, she could not deal with the alternative views.

Participant B and C, after the training and implementation of moral dilemma discussions, moved away from their original views of teaching values. Participant B mentioned that she would appreciate more guidance and materials to enhance her teaching in Life Orientation when she said:" *….if you have more ideas of how to you know how to teach Life Orientation then you are welcome to send it to me. I'm very open for things I'm really not stuck in that are the way and that's it. It's been working all these years and then we carry on like this. I like it I like it its maybe it's its its it depends on your personality some people are very its either black or white so they don't like the grey areas of the maybes I mean for the subject you must have your grey areas so (pause) for me it works (pause)."* This shows that the training in moral dilemmas did assist this participant to be more sensitive towards her own way of doing things, but also towards alternative views. She moved away from the six pillars in the sense that for the remainder of the research study she never mentioned it again. Participant C was very happy with the fact that the learners participated more and that he could learn from their differences and not just be focused on his own life experiences but also on that of the learners. He did not, however, really show a sensitivity and development towards reflecting on his own values and moral behaviour. He was also in a sense still fixed in his own ways, only giving the learners more freedom to express themselves. He did however, during the observations, still focus on what he believed originally and no new reflections occurred.

When referring back to the data presented in this section it is clear that the training in moral dilemmas did not really contribute to the sensitivity or reflection by the participants on their own values or moral behaviour. Two of the participants were still very focused on what they believe and what is expected of them by the school and the curriculum as they find the culture differences challenging.

While one of the participants did start to move her way of thinking and doing into a new direction during the first observations and interview, it is not sure if she would have continued to do so after the research study was completed. In part, this finding may be the result of the reduced training time. To really help people to change their ideas and views, the training must create a significant emotional event that will result in new reflections and exploration of the inner-self. The reduced training time prevented the researcher from really exploring participants own reflection on a deeper level.

4.6.   Educators' classroom practice using moral dilemma discussions

During this section of this chapter which is focused on the third sub- question of the research as presented at the beginning of this chapter, I will use the data gathered and analysed from both the follow-up interviews and the classroom observations.

When reflecting on Chapter 2 I mentioned the complexities of introducing moral education in classrooms and specifically in primary schools. The focus of these complexities lay within the debate of which values to teach and then how to teach them.

For the purpose of this study we focused on the Life Orientation CAPS document, and its focus on teaching values and morals in schools. Life Orientation is aimed at creating a holistically developed learner including their moral development, and providing learners with practical skills to deal with real-life dilemmas (DoE, 2010). This document gives clear guidelines for the teaching of Life Orientation and Participant B made the comment: : "*it's more that you know what is expected of you as an educator and what you should prepare. They tell you what type of things you can do and how you need to assess it.*" However when I asked her whether the CAPS training or the curriculum provide some strategy to be used to deal with value and moral education she did confirm that no strategy was suggested in how to deal with this type of teaching in the classroom. She said:" *No not really, the curriculum just say what your topics are and this is what needs to be covered and how it should be assessed. That is all.*" That is why for the purpose of this research I decided to present the participants with moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy for using value clarification to teach values through the Life Orientation curriculum. This strategy has been suggested as one of the most effective ways of guiding or facilitating learners to moral maturity (Baer, 1982; Kirschenbaum, 1992 and Ryan, 1986).

In the following pages I will focus mainly on the participants' responses to the use of moral dilemma discussions in their classrooms. This will include their experiences that they shared with me and that which I observed based on the challenges they have experienced, positive experiences and possibilities that they have identified and acknowledged using this strategy. Finally I will also present the data based on the relevance and constraints for using moral dilemma discussions and the challenges experienced through the curriculum and the teaching time at the participants' disposal.

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During the follow-up interviews I had a discussion with the participants on what challenges they had or might have experienced during the implementation phases of moral dilemma discussions. Participant B and Participant C experienced some interesting implementation challenges that are important to consider for the purpose of this research. Participant Bs major challenge was to create or find relevant moral dilemma discussions aimed at the age group in the classroom. As she said," *…it is difficult to formally assess this type of thing, it is nothing to give one uh uh uh uh a passage for them to read and… (pause) but then to find questions to use fitting the specific age group? Because I had this one also which I had that I could've used maybe, I had one involving uhm children smoking dagga. And uh but that again is more community based and not school based, but then I saw it was not relevant to Grade 5. Yes the children know a lot, but it is not to say they will find themselves within this situation by this age."*

Participant B also mentioned that what makes the selection of a proper moral dilemma problematic is not only the age-based challenge but also the culture-based challenge and the way children are brought up. As educators involved in this type of education we should be very aware of diversity:" *What I feel now is not the way it is supposed to be, it is .in their culture right so they will tell you that their farther does this and does so and so. Then then I mean you as an educator need to respect that, that is why I always also say that to them, it's done in your culture but not in other cultures. Yes, yes like it is difficult, you can't just say that is the way it should be, you will receive phone calls from the parents."* When I asked her if she thinks that the whole idea of value clarification could assist in the diversity issue as the educator then only facilitates the process without transmitting any form of values, she responded:" *uhm and then you get their ideas of how they are raised and what is acceptable or not, but then again the textbook states that it is wrong or not allowed."* Throughout the research process it was clear that the participants were under pressure from the school to stick to the textbook and the set programme, thus leaving almost no room for experimentation with alternative strategies.

Participant C in turn explained that his greatest challenge during the implementation of this strategy was to get the Grade 4 learners to reason effectively as they did not understand the moral dilemmas presented to them. He explained:" *So I don't think it is necessarily the design or thinking of an idea for a moral dilemma that is the challenge, as we are facing moral dilemmas every single day of our lives whether it is small or a huge dilemma. The challenge is to make the learners understand the dilemma and to create the urgency to solve the moral dilemma."*

During the interviews and observations the participants were positive towards the use of moral dilemma discussions in their classrooms. The main reason for enjoying the strategy in their classrooms was the response of the learners during the group and class discussions and that the learners found it a safe environment in which to express their opinions.

Participant C explained his experience of the response of the learners as follows:" *The fact that they have an opinion (pause). I believe they have an opinion to share. Yes the moral dilemma discussion is not aimed at them, even though they know people in such circumstances. So many of them can talk about it as themselves without adding their name to the dilemma discussed."* Participant A shared Participant Cs thoughts on how she enjoyed using a moral dilemma in her class:" *look because uh the Grade 7 syllabus is is practically only moral dilemmas, uhm is it (pause) for me (pause) because I do it for quite a while now. So I enjoy it and it is nice for me to experience and hear the different children from different circumstances and backgrounds opinions. Then they are very scared to answer the questions or they are scared to talk (pause) and it is always (pause) somebody else when they do."* When I asked the participant if she agreed that the moral dilemma discussions do in some way solve this problem as it puts the focus on a 'fictional character' rather than the learners themselves to create a safe environment, she responded by saying," *So they contribute but it is always somebody else. They are scared, they are sometimes scared you realize that it is them."*

Participant C and Participant B identified some possibilities from their implementation experiences that could be a great advantage for the future use of this strategy in their classrooms. Participant C felt that this method of teaching could be a way to understand and deal with cultural differences as the learners have the confidence to express them within a safe environment. He explained his experience in this way:" *The fact that you can connect with the learners you know uhm you you you get a bit of an idea of how they think even though you know each child think differently uhm a person get to know the children. This is a person per I think a person get to know the children better by doing something like this. It also make them think a bit and the way in which they reason and so also helps you to understand the cultural differences, because I've paid attention to that a bit and if you you ask them a bit and you you battle with a situation then you know that many times the cultural differences play a role in that instances. Therefore I feel it is a good thing uh you know then how people see things and where they come from."*

Furthermore this participant also highlighted that the use of moral dilemma discussions could enhance learners' self-confidence to participate in a classroom discussion. He said," *A very important thing to note is that many many children with a low self-confidence don't want to participate in the classroom. I don't know maybe because they experience self-confidence issues, but this helps because there is not really a right or a wrong answer to the questions understand? So many of them can speak about these things as themselves being involved or experiencing a similar dilemma but now they don't have to link their own name to the situation.*"

Participant B indicated from her implementation experience that there are a few possibilities which are positive in the use of moral dilemma discussions to enhance the learner's moral development. Firstly this participant mentioned," *They can actually with each other uhm how could you say it? Disagree hey and they can do it seriously at times. Yes, because uh uh uh uh because what is good is that they do not agree on everything presented to them or with what the others say, but you should, you should open their eyes to what is going on around them.*" The participant agreed that this is a good strategy to use for moral education. She also used her facilities (the computer room) to encourage the learners to read up on the dilemma presented and see pictures.

She feels that this will create a reality of the dilemma to them rather than just the content as the textbooks do. She explained it in this way:" *We go on the internet and we look at pictures, I feel sometimes you need to shock them so that the children can realise that it does happen and then they start reading on the topic. So that they can also realise it happen in other countries but also in their country and communities. I hate it just to give them information to cover the content.*" This participant expressed the importance of the learners reading up on the topic or dilemma given to get a clear idea of all the different implications thereof to make an informed decision. She also at times asks the learners to bring sources of information to school on the topic or dilemma for discussion. She explained her reason," *When we do a certain topic then I will tell the children that if they can find extra information they can bring it to school. Then I will give them a merit if they do. And there are parents that take information from the internet, print it and the children bring it to school, which I don't expect from them. But then again that is a way of getting the parents involved and, and in what you do at school.*"

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Finally Participant B mentioned that this teaching strategy also provides the learners with the opportunity to learn from each other, rather than just receiving information from the educators when she explained," *because it it makes it for them more uhm real you see? It comes from other learners and not always from an adult (pause) because children will also tell each other but I read it in this book, I saw it in this newspaper, and most of them have tablets, internet and so on.*"

Some of the participants agreed that moral dilemma discussions are relevant to the Life Orientation curriculum. As Participant B mentioned," *yes, yes, because look we do your moral dilemmas it is now based on the topics that you do. Yes certain parts, yes certain parts of the curriculum.*" Participant A, like Participant B, mentioned," *look because uh, the Grade 7 syllabus is is about only moral dilemmas.*"

Participant C, unlike Participant B and A, felt that the use of moral dilemma discussions is not as relevant to the Life Orientation curriculum as his co-workers might feel when he mentioned," *Yes it will, yes but it will work very well uhm (pause) and that you, I know the others also told me that uhm it is great for them and Life Orientation is unbelievable for everyone and the curriculum for these things are perfect, but…yes.*" From Participant Cs comment, he seemed confused. In a way it almost seemed as if he wanted to provide me with a desired response (what he thought I wanted to hear) and then he contradicted himself with his own personal feelings or experiences.

The mentioned contradiction might be due to this participant's inexperience as an educator and also in the field of Life Orientation when he explained," *yes look I started teaching this year, the beginning of the year, starting teaching Life Orientation and I (pause) and uhmf I work but uh you uh talk quite a lot uh oh well it's actually for me (pause) I enjoy the subject but it is different for me so uhm I still get to know the subject with the learners uhm, even though I can state my opinion about things and so on (pause).*"

All three participants experienced some constraints when making use of moral dilemma discussions in their classrooms. These constraints included either/or both curriculum and time constraints. Participant C mostly experienced curriculum constraints," *but the textbook that I work from don't give me many opportunities. You know it tells you ok this is the situation it is one of the four provided answers, pick an answer. Then come make it then it is ok obviously it is just the one which is right from the four, the other three are like way out understand? So I feel the textbook don't provide you with the opportunity to think about it even though you can talk about it, but if you have to do the written work (pause) then you are sort of provided with sort of the expected answers that is provided to you as the only correct answers. Does that make sense to you? So yes it is true the textbook limits me.*

Understand so in that case you don't find a lot of problem-solving in the textbook. This is what I experienced in the textbook but see mine is Grade 4 it is very limited. It will be nice if the textbooks will give a problem which the children can read as well."

Unlike Participant C, Participant A did not experience a textbook problem when she mentioned," *Look because uh the Grade 7 syllabus is is having only moral dilemmas."* Her major concern or curriculum constraint that she experienced was that this strategy does not provide her with enough content to assess during tests and exams as she indicated*:" I use it quite a lot, but I I I don't always give them so many questions cause sometimes we discuss these things and then they give uh uh feedback. You cannot do this frequently because the reason therefore is that you need to do work which the learners can write a test on.*"

This participant furthermore expressed that curriculum constraints are a reality in the teaching of values:" *yes your curriculum constraints are there all the time and the assessment and the planning and this and that."* Due to this reality of curriculum constraints the participant expressed her concern when it comes to the teaching of values and guiding learners in making good decisions in their daily lives:

"*There is not opportunities to discuss these things, it is all flossy and flimsy covering the the content as I have mentioned. Like I have mentioned, you give some guidance that he needs to write down that he needs to know for the exam. This is not guidance for his life."* This participant also expressed the importance of providing the necessary life skills and values to learners at school. She then explained that the curriculum constraints are preventing Life Orientation from fulfilling its purpose of guiding and supporting learners when she said," *many times and I mean really we need more psychological training also to help many of the learners. Psychology at University should almost play a bigger role so that a person could have better insight. We refer learners to psychologists but this should not be necessary (pause) and that is why each school's and you know this because you used to teach yourself, wherever you go there sits broken, broken, broken children that come from very sad and bad circumstances. As educators we want them to come out a whole secure person on the other side and that is difficult as I have said you have the whole day have to deal with assessments, lesson planning. This lesson need to be finished today (pause) ok I said now this is in my planning and now I have finished it (pause), now I need to move to the next theme planned (pause) this this is very tiring (pause) like I have said you can't give them the answers to all their questions and then you give the 'wrong' answers which is not in the book then you guided them wrong (pause). This happens every day."*

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Participant B, like Participant C, experienced some constraints with the textbook and did feel that she is limited in a sense when she said, "*yes I would actually like it if you could give me more examples of moral dilemmas that I can do in the class… Because the textbooks that we have it's you don't really get they they want to give you the facts. And give everything and you don't really get that scenarios that you can you know give to the children what would you say? Or what will you do? And things like that. That makes it difficult for Life Orientation.*"

Related to the curriculum constraints experienced by the participants, it became evident that assessment of Life Orientation is also a major concern. As was previously mentioned by the participants, the curriculum requires them to cover enough content to be tested during tests and exams. During the interviews the participants and I had a discussion on whether Life Orientation should be assessed as other subjects. Participant A as well as Participant B mentioned, *values which they learn from home are what they know and you can't tell them that the values they learn from their parents are wrong, or it is bad values. You need to be very careful in handling these situations (pause).*"

Participant B further explained her feeling of Life Orientation being assessed as follows:" *uhm I don't like the formal exam, I don't like it because there are (pause) we (pause) the the subject (pause) is not a theory subject I feel. It is not about facts all the time so have you so little that you can actually uhm if you if you set a question paper that it must be a right, that this is the right answer. So at the end of the day it should be the things they do in class that should count. So I like the continuous assessment, you know when you have uhm you give them uh like a like a you give them like like a project and they must find out about this or that or that and give report back. I like that. I feel they learn learn more when they give their report back instead of you giving them all the answers about something.*" Participant C in his turn responded to whether Life Orientation should be assessed in agreement with Participant A and B in the following way:"*(sigh) (pause) Yes well you know hey? Whether I say yes or no the Department expect it. So the mere fact that all subjects should be assessed because the child need a percentage on his/her report. But I personally feel it is more a thinking subject uh to go and think more and you know uhm more focused on the child's development uhm because how do you tell a child they handled the given situation wrong? (pause) if he would've handled it in a certain situation?*"

After presenting the data based on the difference that moral dilemma discussions made to the classroom practice of educators it will be possible for me to answer the following research question namely: what difference does the training in moral dilemma discussions make to the classroom practice of educators?

From the data presented it is clear that the training did provide the participants with a new possibility to be used in their classrooms. When I asked the participants if they would use moral dilemma discussions in their classroom in future, Participant A and Participant B mentioned that they will make use of this strategy in future. Participant A mentioned that her reason was simply:" *no because uh like I have mentioned to you before we hope that this will help the children in their future, that is why we hope that it will work and that it would really help. These children need to be able to think for themselves because they still going to experience very hard times, some will go through life easily (pause) but others will really have a difficult time (pause) especially the ones that do not have the relevant support from home (pause)".* Participant B also stated that she would use this strategy in future when she said," *yes, yes I like it."* Even though these two participants mentioned that they would use the strategy in future, it is unfortunate from the data presented that the training did not make a difference in the classroom practice of the educators.

Even though they seemed interested and positive after the first cycle, they did go back to their 'old ways' of teaching. In part this could be explained by the need expressed to teach to the textbook and the assessment driven nature of the school. On the other hand, participants were tired of changes in the curriculum and did not want to be confronted by change again. The educators are under tremendous curriculum and time constraints and find this strategy time-consuming and not relevant in teaching the content to be assessed. Therefore the participant's classroom practice changed for the purpose of the research but there is no evidence that this would be a permanent change in their classroom practice in the future.

4.7.   Primary School learners' response to moral dilemma discussions

This section will now be based on the fourth sub- question (i.e. how do primary school learners respond to moral dilemma discussions?). In this section I will present data collected during the non-participatory observations of classes and the follow-up interviews conducted with the participants after each of the mentioned observations.

The focus of this research was based on using moral dilemma discussions with primary school learners (specifically using Grades 4 – 7) as this was not advised by Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) during his research process of developing his moral developmental theory. Kohlberg (1969) argued that primary school children lack the cognitive ability to participate in moral reasoning as he intended it in his research.

He mentioned that learners during these ages and even younger, typically display conventional thought which means the child begins to think in terms of pleasing others and doing what is helpful (Crosser, 2008).

In the research a special effort was made to look at how the learners in the different grades responded to the use of moral dilemma discussions, how the participants perceived the learners' responses to this strategy and finally considerations of presenting moral dilemma discussions to the younger grades. Using the data from my non-participatory observations I will present the data here in a narrative format grade by grade to try and illustrate how the effective participation of the learners in moral reasoning progressed, if indeed it progressed at all.

During the Grade 4 observations the learners participated well. It was evident that this group of learners was very eager to participate in the activity at hand. The learners listened well to the instructions given. What was interesting and evident from the observations was how much the learners enjoyed the discussions. They enjoyed listening to each other's ideas as well as expressing their own ideas and opinions. The Grade 4s really felt sorry for the character in the moral dilemma and wanted what was best for the character in the situation. This does correspond with Kohlberg's claim that learners at this age typically display conventional thought, which means the child begins to think in terms of pleasing others and doing what is helpful for others. But it is also true that the educator did not really succeed in adapting the dilemma to the age-specific group. Nonetheless, what did emerge clearly was the learners' eagerness to debate and reason and to put their views on the table. These learners were much more comfortable in disagreeing with each other and expressing their own viewpoint than the older learners observed.

This group of learners was not at all worried about what others thought of their ideas as long as they could express their own personal views. The learners responded very positively to this strategy of teaching as noted from the observations. Listening to the learners' responses to the dilemma presented impressed me a lot. Even though the participant used moral dilemmas focused on adults, the learners did answer the questions from a learner perspective providing reasons for their views. .

From personal experience with the moral dilemma strategy, I was left with the distinct feeling that the process could have been done much better had it been better facilitated by the participant. His lack of experience as educator and of teaching per se did not stand him in good stead in facilitating the discussion. These learners were not shy and had very interesting and good reasons for their viewpoints expressed in the class but lacked the direction needed that a good facilitator would have offered.

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These learners really did take the time to think things through and to present their views. What was needed was a facilitator who could guide them to explore the value and moral dimensions of the dilemma posed.

During the group interview right at the beginning of the research, Participant C made a comment that he thought that this method of moral reasoning could be too advanced for a Grade 4 learner. After the research process (which included the observations and follow-up interviews) he mentioned that this method was applicable after reconsidering and implementing it in his classroom when he said:" *u- uhm no I did not think so, but when I took the time to think about how to approach it I did realise that when I told them to go and think about the dilemma a bit you have three periods and a break go and touch on it a bit, and then that made the world of difference."* This participant also felt that the learners responded well to this strategy when he explained how it involved learners participating freely when he said:" *No I think they did well, I think they did well if you now look at the essence, they did realise the essence of how there are similar situations that yes that they can know but I have or are experiencing a similar problem you know? And I do have the right to state my opinion because there is no real right or wrong approach to the problem. I believe that is the important thing."*

The learners did enjoy the teaching strategy and participating in this process as they were very positive and enthusiastic. This was supported and explained by Participant C as to why he thought the learners responded so well to the strategy as he explained:" *I think it is because they are allowed to have an opinion. Yes also it is not aimed at them. They might know people in similar situations but it is a safe environment as they don't need to link names to the situation."*

However even though the Grade 4 learners responded well to the strategy and adjusted well, it is important to consider that there might be some challenges when confronting them with this strategy for the very first time.

Participant C had difficulty during the first attempt to get the Grade 4s to participate as he wished when he explained to me that:" *uhm look to get the children (pause) onto that level (pause) where you, you give them a situation (pause) each one come from a different home so each situation in his or her mind will differ as they explain it to themselves and how they understand things or see it as it is."* Participant C mentioned that he first tried the strategy on his first class to test it before my visit and it was not as successful as he wished. He then changed his approach the second time around for the reason he explained previously.

He then realized that this strategy is applicable to the Grade 4s but that they might need just a bit more guidance as he explained:" *uh when I realized that I did it with the other class that did not work so well, I then realized maybe I should approach it in a different way. I then explained the essence of the dilemma to the learners. I also discussed with them the positive and negative aspects thereof.*

I then gave them an opportunity to go and think about it a bit. Then all of them had the opportunity to go and think about it and so on, I never gave them any answers to the question and you could then hear all the stunning answers they gave. So I feel you need to give them an opportunity to go and think about it and give substance to the discussion. Otherwise you get, get that all of them are on different levels if you present it to them for the first time."

During the first Grade 5 observation it was clear that the learners were very positive in participating in the proposed strategy. They responded well to moral dilemma discussions as they understood what was expected and enjoyed giving their opinions. They also enjoyed hearing the responses of the rest of the class and showed excitement when they agreed or disagreed. The learners did what was expected of them to the best of their ability and caught up with the process very quickly.

The learners showed a positive reaction to the moral dilemma discussions as they were very excited, especially during the group discussion and the debating phase. They were immediately excited to start each phase of the dilemma discussions. Still they were a bit shy with me being in the classroom. At first they tried to provide the desirable answers which they thought were expected. This did not last long as they really became part of the dilemma and felt the urgency to participate and give their opinions. The learners did listen to each other's opinions and were not shy to give their opinions on the matter. The learners reasoned in an appropriate manner. Their reasons for their answers or opinions were relevant and well thought through. They were touched by the dilemma discussion and the character that needed assistance. The emotions came into play (it was clearly evident that some of the learners had experienced this dilemma themselves or knew of somebody that had) when listening to the responses given.

During the second Grade 5 observation, it was interesting to sense and see the excitement of the learners when they saw me enter the class. They immediately realised that on that day a moral dilemma discussion was going to take place. The learners moved to their seats very quickly and were ready to start. They were familiar and comfortable with the process and my presence did not make a difference anymore. After the group discussion finished a few 'ahhhhhs' were heard. I did enjoy the comments coming from the learners.

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It was interesting and intriguing to hear how they experienced the dilemma. The learners do listen to each other (at times they get too excited). Some of the groups missed the point completely. The learners were way more comfortable with the process and with me being present in the class. The participation was much more interactive and honest in nature.

Also, the learners were comfortable with the strategy and the process thereof which resulted in a better understanding of what was expected and needed. It was clear that the learners had previously been unsure about what was expected, and they were not really comfortable with giving their own honest opinion. They were now (when they become more used to this process) more comfortable with reasoning and exploring different possibilities in clarifying the moral dilemmas discussed. The learners were now used to clarifying their values and participated effectively in moral dilemma discussions.

During the Grade 6 observation the learners participated positively and enthusiastically, especially during the group and class discussions. All instructions were executed to the best of their ability. They did at times try to please the educator. Thereafter the learners were very interested in the process and gave their own opinions on the moral dilemma discussed. They immediately responded well to the 'no right or wrong answer' policy that was adopted in the class during this period and for the purpose of this discussion. When they realised there was no right or wrong answer and that no judgements were made, they responded even better to the moral dilemma discussions.

They participated well most of the time (some individuals were shy at first). They enjoyed the activities and the process was well executed from both the participant and the learners' side.

Participant B mentioned that both Grade 5 and 6 learners responded well to the strategy as she mentioned:" *I think they enjoy it, ok it is Life Orientation. I don't know how they do it in other subjects, but in Life Orientation this is the way we do it, unless we are busy with a topic that is more content based, otherwise this is how it gets done."* Participant B mentioned that there are some reasons for the learners to respond well to this teaching strategy. Some of the reasons include;" *they have an opinion and they are allowed to disagree with each other, which they can do seriously at times. It is a good thing that they don't always agree with what everyone says."*

Participant B furthermore expressed that:" *our learners in the school are not afraid to express their opinions, that it is also why they respond well to this strategy.*" Finally this participant mentioned that:" *They love it because uh I never really had problems, uh (pause) I have problems keeping them quiet you know because they all want to shout out at the same time but I mean that is group work and uhm you have your children in the group that is very domineering in a group they always want their opinions and things like that to discuss it in a group even if they listened well to the instructions or not.*"

During the Grade 7 observation these learners participated eagerly. They shared their ideas with ease and there were no issues regarding sharing and commenting in groups. They did disagree with one another; some were shocked by some of the responses of their peers as they expected everyone to agree with their viewpoints. However, the learners refrained from arguing   in their groups. No learner disregarded another learner's opinion. Some groups fooled around while some learners talked about topics not relevant to the group discussions. It seemed as if the Grade 7s get bored easily as the time limits provided by the educator were too long. The Grade 7 learners moved through the process easily. They responded and adapted to the process easily. They gave very good feedback as the process progressed. They gave opinions which were personal and honest. They related some of their comments to their own previous experiences. They shared ideas spontaneously. These learners were very comfortable in sharing their own moral perspective, in clarifying their values and in discussing the scenario as presented in the classroom. Many enjoyed the activities, although some were shy. No real debates occurred as it was not facilitated by the participant. Good reflections on the dilemma discussed did touch some learners' hearts as they had experienced this dilemma in their own lives.

Participant A mentioned that the learners had responded well to this strategy when she explained:" *They enjoy it, they enjoy it, and it is fun for them, because on numerous occasions the children find it easier to speak to each other about dilemmas that they experience. That's why I also said that they can sit with their friends in their groups for the group discussion, rather than sitting with people that they are not comfortable with and then they don't want to share their ideas and opinions.*"

From the data presented it will be possible for me to answer the research question presented earlier in this section. Primary school children do respond well to this approach as all the participants have stated clearly for different reasons, the most common one being that the learners were allowed to have their own opinions and share them. They also responded well to the strategy and participated as wished.

This is supported by Participant B when she mentioned that this strategy was relevant to primary school level:" *yes why not, uhm (pause) they can actually start in Grade 4 already (pause). You deal with moral issues every day that they are familiar with. No I think they are capable to reason in this manner. If you provide learners with an opportunity to share ideas on moral issues they will.*"

Participant A agreed with Participant B when she mentioned that: "B*ecause the children know what is acceptable and what is not, they are old enough to be exposed to these kinds of dilemmas. The Grade 4s might have some difficulty but Grades 5-7 are well equipped emotionally and cognitively to participate in this strategy of teaching.*" Finally Participant C also agreed that this strategy was appropriate to primary school learners as he mentioned that:" *yes ag yes yes you know I think from Grade from the age of ten (10) children are able to start thinking and reasoning in a logical way. They are able to solve problems which need logic and this strategy will improve children's logic and problem-solving skills.*"

Kohlberg (1969) argued that primary school children lack the cognitive ability to participate in moral reasoning. He mentioned that learners during these ages and even younger typically display conventional thought which means the child begins to think in terms of pleasing others and doing what is helpful (Crosser, 2008).

4.8. Educators and learners' responses to moral actions flowing from moral dilemma discussions

Using data gathered from the non-participatory observations and follow-up interviews I will now be able to answer the fifth and final sub-question as presented in Chapter 1.The focus of Kohlberg's (1969) moral dilemma discussions or moral developmental theory was based mainly on the reasoning of the participants. In other words Kohlberg (1969) focused on the reasons for the participants' answers rather than on the answer itself. Also, Kohlberg (1969) paid hardly any attention to moral action or moral behaviour that should preferably follow these moral dilemma discussions. The essence of experimental learning according to Kolb (1984) is that a learner should practice what they have learned in their personal life. Therefore this essential part of learning cannot be ignored.

In conceptualising this research, the idea was to put strategies in place that would follow the moral dilemma discussions to promote moral action.

The basic idea was that if the participants dealt with caring for others in their classes, they would follow it up with an activity where learners could actually care for someone. It was envisaged that the research would then also explore the learners as well as the educator's experiences of the moral action.

It was evident during the planning phase of the research that this aspect would require focused training and that it would require buy-in from the participants as they might view it as additional work. From what has been presented thus far it should be evident that this aspect did not succeed as planned. First, the reduced training time provided made it impossible to introduce or discuss this aspect with the participants. From that point onwards, participants never saw it as an integral part of the study. Nonetheless, I did gather data regarding their views on this aspect of the process. The data will be presented according to each participant's experiences, the learners in their classes' experiences and some confusion or challenges that might have occurred during the implementation process.

Firstly I will present the data gathered from Participant C in his Grade 4 class. During the first observation of the participant no attempt was made by the educator to put some strategies in place to promote moral action to come from the dilemma discussions. As the period finished, the educator only instructed the learners to think about ideas for the following period on how they could act in an acceptable way according to the dilemmas discussed.

It was not clear when that would be as they were about to start their exams and no formal teaching was taking place for the remainder of that term. During the second and the third observation no attempt was made to implement strategies to promote moral action to flow from the discussions that took place in the classroom.

I realised during the first follow-up interview that the participant was experiencing some confusion as to what was expected and meant by strategies to be put in place to promote moral actions. He asked:" *Can you give me an example of a strategy? Uhm it's difficult, it is really difficult."* This could be one of the reasons why this participant did not really attempt to put any follow-up action in place.

Other challenges or concerns about the implementation of strategies to promote moral actions were mentioned by this participant as:" *No look for me just the fact that we reasoned about it a bit and then you know and that you have experienced how the learners that they understood the dilemma presented and that they understand the situation behind the problem that is an experience we are familiar with from somewhere. Uhm (pause) how do you use it? Uhmf maybe using role play understand hey, then, then tell them listen uhm I'm waiting for it maybe but then again you need to assess it in some way?"* Also the participant mentioned that the lack of time is a huge concern for this kind of activity.

The periods of the school were only 30 minutes long which was not sufficient to do a moral dilemma discussion and have time to have a discussion on possible strategies. Then even the implementation thereof is not an option. He said:" *Yes, no if I have to do (pause) group work first and then those strategies it would never work (pause) there is just not enough (pause) time. Two periods might be enough to handle the situation, talk about it you know, and then let them think about it for the next period. When they return let's communicate about it a bit and did you think about it? Half of the period will then be finished again and then you only know if there is a problem or if they are unsure. Yes but then again it takes time understand hey to again make use of something like role play, which is fair but that can take up to three periods so urgh (pause) and you see we only see them twice a week. So that adds up to two and a half weeks that you spend on one lesson (pause) so yes."*

The participant, however did share the idea that this part of the teaching process was of the utmost importance and that it should be considered. He also felt that it would be rewarding to the society, school and learners if it was possible to implement, but still there was just not enough time allocated to Life Orientation to deal with the ideal process and all that the educators could do would be to do the teaching part and hope the actions came naturally to the learners:" *Time is limiting you and because you want the pay-it-forward that you talk about. How nice will it not be to have a role-play base on it and you can see it made a difference in the learner's lives and that they have learned something from it. It will then be possible to see how the learners experienced what they have learned. Uhm and then a person will just have to believe and have faith because (pause) so a person should just believe and have faith that you know that when they do experience a certain situation that they will remember how to handle and solve the problem."* In summary, this participant from his already presented statement mentioned that the assessment of the effectiveness of moral actions is complicated as not enough time could be spent on it in class. The only way to deal with the strategies is to hope that the learner will in his or her life-time be able to handle certain situations discussed in class when they do come across it in their lives.

As the participant mentioned, there is not really time for a discussion based on putting strategies in place to promote moral behaviour to follow the moral dilemma discussions. Therefore it is very difficult for me to present data to illustrate the learners' experiences of strategies put in place and their participation in the creation thereof. During the first and second observation in the Grade 4 class no participation occurred as the period finished and the educator only instructed the learners to think about ideas for the following period.

 It was not clear when that would be as they were about to start their exams and no formal teaching was taking place for the remainder of that term. During the last observation the participant started to initiate a discussion on possible ideas on how to act in a similar situation as that being presented in the moral dilemma discussion. The learners provided all the ideas. They were very quick and eager to share their ideas and also to say why they had selected the ideas. Unfortunately it never went further than a discussion and no form of implementation was discussed or put in place.

During the observations of Participant B in both her Grades 5 and 6 classes it was noted, as with Participant C, that no strategies were put in place to try and promote moral actions to flow from the moral dilemma discussions.

During both of the observations of the Grade 5 lessons the educator initiated a discussion on how to act in a certain situation as presented in the moral dilemma discussed. The educator was very positive about the responses of the learners.

She felt that the discussions that started might have led to the implementation of possible strategies. During the first observation the participant was a bit unsure about what these strategies entailed and how they should fit in with the moral dilemma discussions. During the second observation she had a better understanding thereof. She gave the learners good direction in identifying possible strategies that were more realistic than the ones identified by the learners. She did not put any strategies in place herself as there was not enough time left. The educator did try to have some sort of strategy put in place that would fit within the 30min time limit of the periods, but it was not successful.

The Grade 6 observation was on the same day as the first Grade 5 observation. So, as discussed previously, the participant was unsure about the strategies and the implementation thereof as discussed during the follow-up interview. However, the educator did direct and lead learners to achieve outcomes of strategy discussions. In other words, there was some sort of discussion on how to act in the given, or a similar, situation. The educator was very positive about the responses of the learners relating to the discussion on how to act in the discussed moral dilemma.

She was supportive of the possibility of the discussions that started leading to possible strategies to be considered. She was a bit unsure about this phase of the moral dilemma discussions. During the first follow-up interview this participant showed some confusion as to what was expected or of what these strategies entailed when she asked*:" uhm ok then how will I go about now do that conclusion with then? What should I do?"*

After a brief discussion where I just gave her an example of a strategy to be used, the participant had a better understanding of what we wanted to achieve by these strategies when she replied:" *ok so they must they must make it on how they would help the person?"*

The participant then explained that she does at times have some strategies that she puts in place to promote actions to flow from what the learners learn in her class, when she told me about this one example that she did a while ago:" *I sometimes do things to make them think about actions that they take e.g. last year we discussed how to care for animals and our own pets. So I invited the guy from 'Wet nose' to tell them when animals are abused and to come and show them what abused animals look like. When they see it they become more aware of how they should rather act in these situations."* During the second follow-up interview with the same participant I asked her whether she had had the time to experiment a bit with putting strategies in place to promote moral behaviour as we had discussed during the previous follow-up interview. Her response was simply:" *No, I didn't I just did not have the time. I'm not even finished yet with my assessments for this term I promise you."*

This participant shared the concern with Participant C that time in the school as well as time allocated to Life Orientation was limited and was a constraint to this type of teaching strategy when she explained:" *With the past three weeks we had so many things going on at the school that we missed a lot of our Life Orientation time which is only twice a week. If you do miss one day in the week then you fall behind with your planning and you need to present written work as well as well as assessment from all the different activities that was conducted (pause). There is really no time to test new things like you wanted to do."* When I asked her if the main concern for strategies not being considered for moral action was time she simply responded:" *yes."* She also mentioned that due to the time constraints they do try and implement some strategies:" *we do the conclusions of the lessons but not the way you want it. Sometimes we use worksheets or we talk about it. Also remember what we see at school does not necessarily happen outside the school or at home. We can only support the learners. The parents should be included in the process to make it a success even though the curriculum does make provision for this type of teaching strategy."*

The learners' experiences of the strategies were not possible to determine or assess as no strategies were put in place due to the reasons provided by the participants so far. When looking at the observations again based on the Grades 5 and 6 lessons, the following should be noted:

Firstly, looking at the Grade 5 observations, these learners were the ones to give the ideas for possible strategies to be put in place. Time ran out to make it more practical and to put more secure strategies in place. The discussion was based only on the learners' ideas and contributions.

Learners provided the above-mentioned ideas in dealing with the moral dilemma. In turn, it was noted that the Grade 6 observation was quite similar to the Grade 5 observation in that the learners provided the ideas for the strategies. They were very eager to give their ideas. They thought of ideas easily and these ideas made sense. However, none of these ideas were implemented due to the discussed time and curriculum constraints that were experienced.

It was obvious that the learners enjoyed the discussions but it was not possible to determine their experiences of the actual implementation of strategies as no strategy was put in place to promote moral actions.

During the Grade 7 observation (an observation that took place over two periods) there was no real attempt to discuss or implement any sort of strategy to promote moral behaviour in these learners after the moral dilemma discussions. During this lesson a scenario with too many questions was discussed and lots of time and effort were spent on giving the learners the correct content to study for the test. Therefore no real strategies were put in place to try and promote moral actions. Participant A did listen to the responses of the learners and was positive about their ideas on how to act in a similar situation as the scenario presented. However, no executions thereof were visible.

Participant A was very supportive of the idea of the implementation of strategies to promote moral actions from these discussions when she mentioned that:" *for sure this can only be to the benefit of these learners. If the learner come in a certain situation that is challenging and he does not know immediately how to handle the situation, then maybe this will come to mind but we have discussed a similar dilemma during class and this is how we acted. To help them to stop, think and then act.*"

Participant A also shared the same concern as both Participant B and C that time was a constraint when it came to the creation and implementation of strategies to promote moral actions. She explained it as follows:" *That feedback that you wanted (pause) actions (pause) when these learners leave the school they will be confronted with similar and other situations which they will not know how to handle.*

The parents should also be involved, which they are not. The parents work late and just buy the children whatever they want. Now it is expected to deal with this guidance in class. There is no time. There is just not the time to work on and practice these actions. And that is what you want a sort of a pay-it-forward situation. There is just not the time for it, and then you need to move again to the next chapter because that is what the curriculum expects. You need to cover the curriculum and you need to assess assignments and this and that need to be done (pause) this is the part of Life Orientation that I don't like."

Participant A also expressed great concern about whether the discussion and what she discussed with the learners would make an impact and stick in some way. It was not possible to assess this during the research project as the participant did not implement any strategies and she did not continue her participation throughout the research. She did however express her concern in the following way:" *yes you hope that something will have made an impact on these learners concerning values (pause) because all those values differ which we try to establish in these learners whether it is through examinations or discussions. We hope that something will stick for them to be able to use when they leave Grade 7. It's like I tell them Grade 7 Life Orientation is not something you just pass for the year it should be something you have for the rest of your life.*"

As discussed previously, during the Grade 7 observation the participant was very focused on the learners answering content questions based on the scenario given for assessment purposes. No real discussion based on strategies for moral action was conducted. At the end of the lesson she asked how these learners would l act in the given scenario. Due to the lack of time for this type of discussion and the limited participation of the participant it was not possible to assess the learners' experiences in this regard. What I did was to note down how they responded to the discussion and what I noted was, firstly they were very positive and participated well. They enjoyed the discussions.

After presenting the data it is now possible for me to answer the sub-question stated earlier in this Chapter. Firstly, from the data it is clear that no moral actions flowed from the moral dilemma discussions as no strategies were implemented to ensure these actions.

One of the reasons was simply that the participants did not have the time to do so as the periods were too short and limited for this type of education strategy to be implemented, but more importantly, the school is overly focused on teaching to the textbook and assessments based on the curriculum. There was no room for experimenting outside the box.

Also the curriculum constraint is quite evident as the participants are under tremendous pressure to complete all that is expected in the curriculum for assessment. This then contributed to the participants being frustrated with the constraints and this teaching strategy as they were not able to meet the expectations of teaching children values that will lead to moral behaviour. Lastly, the experience of the learners cannot be determined as no strategies were implemented for them to act on. They only responded well to some sort of the discussions thereof.

4.9.   Conclusion

This chapter presented my research findings as they relate to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. In an attempt to create a context for the findings, I presented the three participants in terms of the three narrative stories that shed some light on the findings presented. Also in this chapter I presented the reader with an introduction to my participants and research site to give a clearer understanding of the data presented. The data presented here was analysed using content analysis as explained in Chapter 3, to provide a clear understanding of the phenomenon studied during this research study.

Therefore the research findings presented in this chapter and the conclusions made based on the proposed research sub-questions will now be used as the basis for Chapter 5 which will present the final findings and answer the main research question as well as present ideas for future research and the limitations experienced during this research study.

Chapter 5

Significance and implications of the research inquiry

5.1.   Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the possibilities of using moral dilemma discussions as a way of teaching moral education at primary school level. I have argued that the new curriculum statement (CAPS) does make provision for the teaching of values and moral education. Well-known economist Michael Jensen (2011) in an interview was asked to differentiate between integrity, ethics and morality. He had this to say about integrity:

> *"An individual is whole and complete when their word is whole and complete, and their word is whole and complete when they honour their word. We can honour our word in one of two ways: first, by keeping our word, and on time as promised; or second, as soon as we know that we won't keep our word, we inform all parties involved and clean up any mess that we've caused in their lives. When we do this, we are honouring our word despite having not kept it, and we have maintained our integrity."*

Through the literature review presented in Chapter 2 I have indicated that values are things that are 'worth living for' which is important to an individual and/or a social group. When we value honesty, we will act in an honest manner, which will result in our behaviour being morally acceptable (Nieuwenhuis, 2009). Moral education is concerned with teaching individuals morals (acting in a morally acceptable way) that will lead to moral behaviour before it can be considered as moral education (Solomons *et al*, 2011). The link between the two is obvious. Whereas values provide direction in our lives, morals offer the prescripts of what we ought or ought not to do and therefore moral education is aimed at teaching children right from wrong. The problem, as discussed in Chapter 2, is that in a diverse and multicultural environment, the lines between right and wrong are no longer that obvious. In addition, when faced with a moral dilemma, the choice is not always between right and wrong but often between two possibilities that may be equally right (Kidder, 2003). For this reason moral education cannot be taught like other subjects but needs to explore other options and possibilities.

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For the purpose of this study I have looked at the possibility of training educators in using moral dilemma discussions as a possible teaching strategy in teaching values at primary school level. Because of the nature of this study, I decided to use an action research approach. Action research is defined in many different ways when considered within the field of educational research. Cohen *et al* (2010: 297) defined action research as a "*small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such an intervention.*" Action research in this case had an applied focus. McNiff (1988) supports Creswell (2007) that action research is seen as a systematic procedure that is done by the educator and/or researcher to try and bring forth social and practical change to education. In this regard the educators are actually aiming to improve their own teaching practice by making use of a new teaching strategy in conducting moral education using in their classrooms.

Action research is an elegant and collaborative research design. It involves a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning (McNiff, 1988; Creswell, 2007). The main question that drove this study was what difference does the training of teachers in moral dilemma discussions make on the teachers' approach to the teaching of morals in primary schools? In this chapter I will firstly present my findings from the data presented in chapter 4. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the theory on which the research was based to try and make sense of the data collected, analysed and presented in Chapter 4 to establish if the data corroborates the theory presented and in what way do the findings enhance our understanding of the use of moral dilemma discussions in primary schools. Although it was not the primary aim of the research to come up with specific recommendations, certain interesting dynamics and findings did emerge from the research that justify certain recommendations for future research in this field of study.

5.2.   Findings of the research study

5.2.1.   Findings pertaining to the curriculum

During the data collection phase of this research study while I conducted non-participatory observations and also during follow-up interviews, it became clear that the participants were set on teaching to the curriculum in the set manner used in the school.

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Some reasons for educators to be curriculum bound could be linked to the work of Lankshear et al (2004) and Morris (1999). These researchers (Lankshear et al, 2004 & Morris, 1999) mention that educational institutions can be viewed as the so-called "spaces of enclosure". These spaces are bound to enclose meaning and the experience of the learner through a fixed curriculum and classroom where the textbook is the form of authority. Possibilities for learners to learn are conveniently and silently overlooked by the education system and educators. Educators see their task in the education system as   adhering to the curriculum as the authority, and all that they as educators need to do is to make sure the learners' interpretation of the curriculum is accurate according to the education system's prescriptions (Morris, 1999). Morris (1999) also states that this way of teaching, where the educator and the textbook carry the authority, maintains discipline and allows education to take place. Within the South African context, primary schools annually write the Annual National Assessment tests and the success and failure of schools is often measured against the outcomes of these tests. The curriculum therefore creates a safe space for teaching in preparation for the annual tests.

It became obvious during the research that participants, and more importantly the school principal, viewed the curriculum and the textbooks prescribed as sacrosanct and that no deviation from them was tolerated. It offered participants the content to transmit and the content to assess irrespective of whether it achieved the curriculum objectives of moral education. The participants did not manage to deal with moral education using a new strategy different from what was presented in the textbooks that they use in the school. All three of the participants were very concerned and aware of what content they needed to cover within the given time. During the observations, all three participants made use of scenarios from the textbook. None of them used a topic from the textbook or curriculum to create their own moral dilemmas to be used in the classroom except for Participant C who, in two of his three observations, used moral dilemma discussions which had been used as examples during the training.

The participants had numerous explanations as to why they remained within the enclosed boundaries of the textbook and curriculum. The first reason was that they needed to cover a certain amount of activities and assessment activities to be reflected on the learners' report card as expected by the DoBE and the school board. The second reason for the participants to be curriculum bound was that they experience time constraints. The school has two Life Orientation periods of 30 minutes each per week. The participants were therefore unable to deviate from the prescribed curriculum due to the time allocation allowing them to complete the prescribed curriculum topics and assessment activities only.

The school allocated two of the prescribed four periods of Life Orientation to religious education. This is permissible in a religious-based private school.

The third reason for the participants to be curriculum bound was because not all the topics in the curriculum lend themselves to a moral dilemma discussion strategy and therefore it is more appropriate to stick to activities in the textbook, even though Participant C mentioned that he feels constrained by the textbook. It limits his creative teaching potential in a way.

The fourth reason mentioned by Participant B and C is that the group discussions could disrupt the learning environment and discipline. Participant B mentioned that this strategy is doable in this school as the classroom has a small number of learners in it, but it could become a challenge in a classroom with large numbers. Participant C mentioned that he does not like the group discussions as the learners become disruptive and lose track of what is expected of them. Therefore during this study, even though the participants were introduced to a new teaching strategy and attempted to make use of it in their classrooms, they still felt that they should be severable to the curriculum and what is expected of them by the curriculum, school and education system.

The problem with a curriculum dominated approach to teaching, especially in the field of morals, civics and values, has been reported in numerous international studies (Dean, 2007). Dean refers to Kickbusch (1987) who claimed that such instruction…"*is oriented towards the acquisition of unproblematic knowledge and passive acceptance of social institutions…Critics…have faulted this approach to citizenship education…for its passive, classroom-based processes*" (Dean, 2007: 174).

Being closed to other options, as was found in this study, heightens the risk alluded to by Dean (2007) that teaching and learning is simply reduced to the transmission of textbook facts which students must memorise in order to pass examinations without engaging in debate and discussion about the values and principles that underpin the morals being taught in school.

Reflecting on the findings as presented here from the data analysed in Chapter 4 it is necessary for curriculums to be designed in such a manner that they allow room for educators to be creative and innovative innovative in ways to present knowledge. The curriculum should allow more time for Life Orientation during school time and opportunities for a greater degree of discussion and debate about values and morals to develop the learners' skill of moral reasoning. This is essential for moral development as indicated in the Literature Review in Chapter 2.

5.2.2. The management trap

The research was challenged by ever-changing permissions and the retraction of agreed-upon arrangements. The researcher constantly had to make provision for changes to the programme and schedule of the research. As a researcher, I tried to be as lenient as possible and allow for the needs of my participants. In the end, this was counter-productive to the research study.

I had personally approached the principal and informed him about the intended research and the possible contributing outcomes and potential of this research for the school as well as for the educators participating. The principal was supportive at first, or so it seemed, and arranged a meeting with the participants. During this meeting to gain consent, the principal explained to the participants the research process as I had presented it to him, allowing me the negotiated time to conduct the training session and the remaining aspects of the research.

When I returned to the school to start the research with individual interviews with the three participants, the principal came into the seminar room to inform me that I had only an hour to conduct these interviews and not the negotiated hour allocated for each interview. I was then forced, after consultation with my supervisor, to conduct a group interview within the hour provided.

The same happened again when I returned to the school to conduct the training. The training had been negotiated and scheduled as an afternoon session (at least four hours) as this would constitute a practical workshop session.

When I arrived, the principal informed me that the four hour training session had been re-scheduled to last for only an hour. This had serious implications for the research because the training was the essential aspect of the research. Due to the time constraint, the training had to become an information session and not a practical workshop session. This impacted on the participants, who now had additional preparation to do which should have been done during the training session. This led to confusion about the process of conducting moral dilemma discussions and caused doubt as to the support of the principal.

This resulted in the training being immediately adjusted to an hour training session which was not adequate for the success of this research and the implementation of the strategy in the classrooms of my participants.

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Also, the principal's lack of support of the research, the training and the proposed strategy reflected in the attitude and participation of the participants during the duration of the research. The training of educators for the implementation of new curricula is usually problematic as the training sessions provided are more content transmission rather than practical (Kazempour, 2009). To be effective, educators should be involved in a structured staff development initiative aimed at helping them to explore and implement new strategies and to reflect on and assess the success of the new strategy as a means of broadening their own repertoire of teaching methods. The best way of achieving this is to involve them in a programme where they can be trained on using a strategy and assessing its success within their school situation (Kazempour, 2009). In this research study I intended to make use of a participative training session as suggested by Kazempour (2009). Firstly, I would have conducted a moral dilemma discussion with the participants, to familiarise them with the process and idea. Secondly, I would have used the time to explain the origin and intent of moral dilemma discussions as used by Kohlberg (1969) and Gilligan (1982) as presented in Chapter 2. I then intended to use the remaining time to design (according to CAPS topics) three moral dilemma discussions to be implemented.

The idea was that the planned moral dilemma discussion would be sufficient so that the participants would not need to do any other planning and could use it as part of their Life Orientation teaching. It was thought that in this way the participants would experience support in their planning and thus overcome the curriculum constraints experienced.

It was lastly intended that each lesson be implemented with me observing it. A discussion session would follow to adjust the implementation as part of the professional development in this new strategy and to ensure that the educators would be confident enough in the new teaching strategy to use it in their teaching. The training could no be executed as intended as the principal reduced the training session to just one hour.

This only provided me with the opportunity to tell the teachers about the strategy and provide them with example of how to develop their own moral dilemma discussions. This resulted in extra stress relating to their workload and the participants were unsure of what was expected. This compromised the research as one of the participants withdrew from the research and the others did not implement the strategy as intended. This had a big impact on the results of this research.

One question remains. Why did I continue when I experienced so many challenges with the study? When I arrived at the training, the participants were interested and willing. I did not want to lose their goodwill at the outset of the research study.

So rather than abandon the project, I continued with the training as it could still contribute to this field of study and to this research project in particular. As the research process unfolded, I was faced with more and more changes made by the school to agreements which had been reached. By that time the project was too far advanced to quit. Successful training depends on variables: time and opportunity. Simply creating the opportunity without allocating sufficient time is not adequate. This is a trap that is typical of the training initiatives so often introduced over the last decade in South Africa. Therefore this type of training is not successful in schools if the principal is not supportive and promoting a positive attitude towards new ideas and development.

5.2.3. Participants resistance to change

A major challenge to educational innovation is assisting teachers to unlearn the beliefs, values, assumptions, and culture that underlie their school's standard operating procedures and practices (Dede, 1999). This claim was corroborated in the data analysed and presented in Chapter 4.

To be successful beyond initial implementation, school systems need to assist teachers in learning, but also aid them in unlearning beliefs, values and assumptions about education that inhibit innovation and creativity.

The goals of the innovation implementation must include organizational changes as teachers learn. A shift in organizational change will sustain change that can only be achieved when owned by teachers and not imposed or mandated (Dede, 1999).

This is clearly evident from the data presented in Chapter 4 and the findings presented in the previous section of this chapter. This school, the principal and the participants displayed inertia. Although they initially said that they were interested in new and innovative practices, they could not leave the safe haven of the traditional way of doing things. It is easier to teach to the curriculum than to experiment with innovative alternatives. The inertia was supported by the need to complete curriculum activities. They felt that they were already successful in teaching religion and values and did not need alternatives.

What I learned about this school from the participants is that they are fixed in their approach to their RE periods and their six (6) pillars of values where each value is addressed during a given term. The school and the participants want to keep to what they know best and to what they know works for them.

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The reasons for the school's lack of the will to develop even more could be based on some of the following explanations. Firstly, Life Orientation educators do not receive relevant support to make this subject come alive in this school. The participants mentioned the lack of support of the relevant stakeholders (principal, parents and educators) of the school regarding Life Orientation as a subject and the moral well-being of the child.

The second reason could be based on an aspect also mentioned previously in this chapter, and that is that the educators are very comfortable with their current position as an educator in the field of education. These participants believe that the way teaching and learning is taking place in this school is acceptable and that there is no need for change. This could be because they really do feel that they have mastered the skills to teach Life Orientation and values.

The final reason could be because the participants do not want to learn or adapt to more changes in the curriculum or the teaching thereof as they have experienced too many changes already during the past few years.

Therefore there are a few contributing factors that lead to schools not being willing to develop more than they already have as they are happy with what they have accomplished and see no reason for participating in more professional developmental strategies.

5.2.3.1. Moral dilemma discussions and the primary school child

As mentioned previously in Chapter 2 as well as in Chapter 4, when looking at the moral developmental theory of Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) he did not recommend that moral dilemma discussions be used with primary school learners. Kohlberg (1969) mentioned that learners at primary school level do not have the cognitive ability to reason in such a way as is expected for moral dilemma discussions. The reasoning of the learners was the focus of Kohlberg's (1969) study rather than the answers that the learners give to the questions asked, based on the moral dilemma discussion.

In Chapter 1 I focused this study on two aspects, namely the training of educators to use moral dilemma discussions and also to use moral dilemma discussions with primary school learners which was not what Kohlberg (1969) advised. In this study I deviated from Kohlberg's theory by focussing the study on the intermediate phase (Grades 4 – 6) as these learners are cognitively sufficiently developed due to the changes in society and access to information through the media and the internet (Haydon, 1997 and Halstead *et al*, 1996).

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Therefore it is necessary to start using moral dilemma discussions at an earlier stage of the learner's development to ensure that their moral development and moral reasoning is effective at a younger age to try and develop more moral adolescents.

The aim of this deviation, as suggested and supported by Gilligan (1982), is to improve learners' moral reasoning skills at an earlier stage of their development in order to prevent a lack of moral development at a later stage of their lives. The intermediate phase is a time of marked change in the experiences, capacities and typical behaviour of children, with lasting results and impacts for later adolescents and, in the long term, for adulthood. Hutson *et al* (2006) view the immense impact that the intermediate phase – those years from Grade 4 to 6 - has on the moral development of individuals and on their futures as a great concern. One frequently hears about the importance of the early childhood development phase as the phase in which learners have to master certain basic skills in order to optimise their contribution to society in the future. However, the intermediate phase learners do show the ability to reason and debate as was indicated necessary by Kohlberg (1969) to participate effectively in moral dilemma discussions. The challenge that I encountered in the school where I conducted the study was that when the learners started reasoning and debating it became overwhelming for some educators. who then reverted to the traditional classroom practice of information transmission as we know it (Hutson *et al*, 2006). This makes the implementation of new teaching strategies very challenging in schools where most teachers are very comfortable with the traditional teaching strategies and find it difficult to change. The difficulty educators experience to change their teaching approach when dealing with moral education has a great impact on the moral development of the learners. When confronted with the concerns and troubles of the adolescent phase, learners are then more likely to participate in activities such as drug abuse, juvenile crime and underage sex (Hutson *et al*, 2006).

Reasons for the occurrence of such behaviour in the adolescent phase might be the lack of moral development and education in the intermediate phase. This is probably because during this phase learners experience very few moral hazards and therefore require less moral guidance. Hutson *et al* (2006) and Bergin *et al* (2012) agree that this 'gap' should therefore be seized as a window of opportunity and as an ideal period for moral growth and development. During this research the judgement-action gap, discussed by other researchers, was not bridged (Gibbs *et al,* 2009 and Firmer *et al*, 2008) This is an aspect of Kohlberg's (1969) moral dilemma discussions that needs urgent attention as moral action cannot take place without some intervention.

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So the focus of future research in this regard should be on interventions to be put in place within the limited teaching time available in schools, bearing in mind the curriculum constraints that limit educators from promoting the moral actions which should flow from the moral dilemma discussions.

The second idea for future research could be based on how to convert educator's negative attitudes towards change and professional development opportunities to a willingness to learn and implement new strategies of teaching in their classrooms. Also, to use a professional developmental model or method that will assist educators to, in a stress-free way, learn and implement new teaching strategies in their classrooms. The potential model should be supportive and less intimidating in nature than the present model.

During this research, as presented in Chapter 4, it was found that it is actually possible to use moral dilemma discussions at primary school level and not only during the adolescent phase as Kohlberg (1969)suggested. The reasons for the above- mentioned statement are firstly that the learners are exposed to many things and circumstances which make these moral dilemmas real to them. They are able to identify with the moral dilemmas presented to them, either because they have been or are in such a dilemma or they know somebody who is experiencing a moral dilemma such as the one being presented.

It therefore seems that primary school learners, in this case Grades 4 – 6 in particular, are ready to participate and embrace their cognitive ability and the opportunity to engage in the participation of debating moral dilemmas in general, but also specifically moral dilemmas that are real to them. The challenge that I experienced during this study is that the educators are not as keen as the learners to participate in the process of moral dilemma discussions, not necessarily because they lack the skills, but rather that they do not want to confront or deal with their own insecurities when the discussions require an own stance. The moral dilemma discussions, in other words, could expose the educator's moral dilemmas which they do not want to expose to the learners.

Secondly, during the observation it was surprising how the learners responded to the moral dilemma discussions and how well they adapted to this new way of learning. The learners caught up with the strategy easily and contributed in a valuable way. Thirdly, the reasoning behind the answers of the learners was very good and applicable. This was clearly evident from my classroom observations as presented in great detail previously in Chapter 4.

The learners provided reasons for their answers that were applicable and sensibly related to the moral dilemma presented to them. Fourthly the learners participated and contributed satisfactorily in relation to what Kohlberg (1969) intended in his theory as presented in Chapter 2.

Therefore it is possible to conclude that moral dilemma discussions could be used as a teaching strategy in primary schools. Based on the learner's group discussions, debates and reasoning it is clear that they do have the cognitive ability to reason in the way Kohlberg (1969) intended in his moral development theory also presented in great detail in Chapter 2.

5.3.   Limitations of this research study

It is necessary to mention certain limitations which were experienced in the research and to take note of them for any potential future research study in this field. It is also necessary to mention that these limitations indirectly contributed to the result of the study. Possible limitations to the study could firstly be to gain access to the research site, as I am an 'outsider' researcher, to conduct this research project within a specific school. Another limitation to this research is that this research was conducted in only one school. This means that the data collected cannot be generalised.

Other reasons why this research study could not be generalised are because the school used is specifically religion-based. This study also only focused on Life Orientation (a single subject) in a small number of classes that participated in only three Grades. Even though this research was done on a very small, specified scale it does provide emerging trends that could be considered for future research in this field.

The first challenge experienced was the fact that this project was only conducted within one school. The data can't be generalised. Also when I experienced the numerous challenges concerning the training and participation of the participants as previously stated in this chapter and Chapter 4, it was necessary for me to put in all the effort to get as much data as possible to be able to complete this project. There was no back-up or another possibility and the study was too far advanced to quit at that stage.

The second limitation of the research was the effective participation of the participants during the study. At first the participants seemed very eager to participate in the research study at the time when I negotiated access to the site and participation of these participants.

After the first observation, which was towards the end of the term, they said that they would continue their participation after the school holidays. After the school holidays the participants became disinterested making it almost impossible to contact them.

I tried to phone and email them to schedule new appointments as discussed after the first observation the previous term. When I phoned the school office I left numerous messages for the participants and the principal but did not get any response from any of the relevant parties. When I went to the school to talk to the participants, neither they nor the principal was available for a meeting for assistance.

Only after three (3) months of failed communication with the participants did I get hold of them. They mentioned that they were very busy with school related activities (the school's birthday) and religious festivities at the time. They mentioned that these activities were accommodated during the Life Orientation lessons and that they were very far behind with their scheduled lessons and would not be able to commit themselves to the full extent of the research as was planned. Also when I had finished what two (2) of the participants allowed me to do with them I found that the participation and the data was not as rich and informative as it had been during the first observation. This influenced the cycles of the PAR as it was neither an improvement nor a reflection of the previous cycle.

The third limitation worth mentioning is that during this research study too few real-life moral dilemma discussions were used in the classes. The moral dilemma discussions used from the textbooks did work, but more research in this regard is needed. The inertia of the educators to work outside the box and embrace new ways of teaching was not helpful. The lack of management support for innovation and experimentation within the school prevented this study from being conducted as planned and contributed to the educators' unwillingness to experiment and make any changes.

Other reasons why this research study could not be generalised are because the school used for the study is based on a specific religion. This study also only focused on Life Orientation (a single subject) and was limited to a small number of classes from three Grades only. Even though this research was done on a very small, specified scale it does provide emerging trends that could be considered for future research in this field.

The final limitation is based on the inability to implement the full cycle of PAR. I planned interactive training which did not happen. I also planned to do interviews after each of the three lessons implemented so that I could reflect and adapt where needed, with the participation of the participant, for the next cycle. There was, however, no time for this to take place due to the circumstances explained in this study.

5.4.   Recommendations for future research

This section of this chapter will now be based on ideas to consider for future research based on this study or on this field of study. The first idea for future study is the aspect of how to put strategies in place to promote moral action following the moral dilemma discussions. An idea for future research could be based on the idea of improving Lawrence Kohlberg's (1969) moral dilemma discussions by creating new knowledge based on the moral dilemma presented. This was already initiated by Participant B as she used her Computer Literacy periods to allow students to read up on the topic to be discussed in the moral dilemma to advance their reasoning and decision-making in solving the moral dilemma discussion. This could then even improve the reasoning and decision-making of primary school learners even more. This might then also improve on the attempt to have an intervention to promote moral actions to flow from these moral dilemma discussions. None of the above-mentioned recommendations were possible during this research study due to the limitations that I experienced as discussed in the section mentioned above. Also, during this research study some valuable lessons were learned which are worth noting: firstly the lack of control over the research site if you are an outsider. Secondly, the unwillingness or unpreparedness of educators to experiment with new teaching strategies. How do we curb this? Thirdly, and importantly, there is a need for more research in the teaching of values and morality – moral education. Finally, there is a need for more research into how learners can acquire moral values.

5.5.   Reflections on the study

According to the data presented as collected in this school, the training in moral dilemma discussions did not make any difference to the way these educators taught values. Using Action research seemed to be the best possible way to conduct the training session. This was not effective as it was very restricted and did not cater for the time and curriculum constraints. However, I would rather have made use of another training method which is less labour intensive and easier to implement. These educators did implement the strategy to the best of their ability. As the research progressed, one of them withdrew from the study and continued with their old way of teaching.

While the two remaining participants did implement the strategy for the purpose of the research there is no evidence that they will continue to use the strategy or that it changed their ways of teaching morals in this school. The school is religion-based with certain values unique to the school and religion on which it is based. The school teaches and focusses on these values in their specific way that is, according to them, effective and they prefer to stick to what they know.

As a researcher I learned that hardly any part of the planned research methodology worked out as planned. It is necessary for a researcher to make peace with the challenges and use the data collected to the best of his/her ability. I learned how to conduct PAR and about the complexities thereof. The experience taught me that as a researcher you are so dependent on other individuals who might not value research and the process thereof as you do and that no research is possible without willing participants. The quality of participation is essential but not definite. This study shaped me as a researcher and made me more open-minded (if I am ever part of a research study again) so that I will be more aware of the possible limitations the study could experience and be more prepared. I will not conduct research on such a small scale again. I will use at least 2 research sites in future to ensure the participation of more people.

My learning journey during this research study was quite complex. This was one of the hardest and most difficult experiences of my life to date. It was a very emotionally challenging experience. I learned that I am more diligent than I thought I was. Perseverance has a new and more valuable meaning for me now.

Perseverance is much harder to practise than I thought as I did not think it was possible for me to finish this study in the way I did and still produce such a quality study. I have learned that research is a road you travel mostly alone and that you, your topic and writing should be in harmony in order to be successful. I have learned how dependent I have become and how we as people in our work or research space take other people and their role for granted. This journey made me realise that as a person I should try to see not only the challenges but also the new possibilities.

The significance of this research project is also to propose an alternative strategy for moral education in South African schools. It should be considered and understood that this is not the only possibility.

This research project will also provide an opportunity for the participants and their learners, especially at primary school level, to engage in moral clarification that could improve moral actions in society. This research project could create awareness in the field of moral education and moral development within a South African context

5.6.   Conclusion

In this chapter I have concluded my research study. The final findings of the research study are presented in this chapter focussing specifically on the contextual findings. During this study I corroborated my theoretical framework which was adapted in some aspects from Kohlberg (1969). These aspects include the fact that moral dilemma discussions could be used in primary schools, as the learners are cognitively able to reason in a moral way. Moral dilemma discussions are effective when used in classrooms with boys, girls and culture diversity.

However, I did find that the action-judgement gap is still not bridged and moral action still does not flow from moral dilemma discussions within the framework of the study that I conducted.

I have identified that this study had numerous limitations which hindered me from executing the study as I planned it at first. If the study had worked out as planned, there could be the possibility of even more pleasing results. However, even though I experienced numerous limitations, this study did provide certain promising possibilities for future research in this field and it did generate knowledge worth noting in the field of moral education.

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Addendum A: Pre-Interview Schedule.

Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education

Pre-interview schedule

Background of the study:

Moral education gained lots of interest in the field of education specifically due to the moral decline that is visible internationally and nationally. The responsibility of moral education has now been shifted onto the shoulders of the school and educators by the parents specifically. Therefore moral education cannot be left to chance anymore and it is expected of schools to put strategies in place to deal with this issue. Numerous strategies have been used internationally to deal with moral education in schools; however there is still 'silence' on a possible strategy in the South African context. A possible strategy to be used is value-clarification through the means of Lawrence Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions. These dilemma discussions entails that learners are confronted with a hypothetical moral dilemma that they might be confronted with based on the themes in the Life Orientation CAPS document as part of the formal lessons to be conducted in this subject. The learners will then be expected to answer certain questions related to the hypothetical moral dilemma presented to them, in order to have a group discussion. This will provide the learners and you as the educators the opportunity to take part in clarifying existing or newly developed values in order to promote moral action and behaviour to follow from these discussions.

You will be participating in two sets of interviews, a training session and observation session. During the first interview we will just discuss background and your experiences as a Life Orientation educator up to date, after the training you will implement the new teaching strategy in your classroom where I will come to observe the responses of both you and the learners, the potential for moral dilemma discussions as a possible teaching strategy and which strategies was put into place to promote moral action and behaviour to follow.

The final set of interviews will be to clarify any aspect that is not clear to me during the observation and to determine your experience of the process.

Please remember that whatever you say during this interview will be treated confidentiality and no third party will gain access to this information that your share with me. This information will only be used for research purposes.

Are there any questions before we start?

1. How long have you been teaching Life Orientation and for which grades?

2. Tell me about your experiences in teaching Life Orientation as a Learning Area ?

3. In your view, what is the purpose of Life Orientation as a Learning Area?

4. What training have you received in preparing you in teaching Life Orientation?

5. If you think of the Life Orientation curriculum, are there specific themes or areas that you feel you have not received sufficient training?

6. What are the greatest challenges that you face in teaching Life Orientation?

7. How do you deal with moral/ values education in the school?

8. How do you teach values/morals in your classroom?

9. How do the learners respond to this method of moral education?

10. Do you notice any change in learners' moral action or moral behaviour after morals have been taught?

11. One of the strategies used in some overseas countries in teaching values and morals is called "moral clarification" What do you know about this strategy?

12. "Moral clarification" is based on the idea of getting children to think and talk about certain moral dilemmas in an attempt to help them clarify their own moral and values understanding. What would you regard as a moral dilemma?

13. Would you be interested to learn more about moral clarification and its possible use in teaching morals and values in Life Orientation?

Addendum B: Non-participatory observation schedules.

Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education

Observational schedule

Activity	√	X	Comments, notes or reflections
Educator presentation			
Learners listening to educator			
Learners working individually			

Inter-learner discussions			
Answering questions			
Learner's contribution in class activities			
Educator's facilitation of moral dilemma discussions			
Learner responses to moral dilemma discussions			

Educator's response to moral dilemma discussions			
Strategies put into place to promote moral actions			
Learner participation in creating strategies			
Educator's response to creating strategies			

Moral dilemma 40 min duration			
Time allocation for each phase			
Effect of strategies to promote moral actions			

Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education

Pre-interview schedule

Background of the study:

Moral education gained lots of interest in the field of education specifically due to the moral decline that is visible internationally and nationally. The responsibility of moral education has now been shifted onto the shoulders of the school and educators by the parents specifically. Therefore moral education cannot be left to chance anymore and it is expected of schools to put strategies in place to deal with this issue. Numerous strategies have been used internationally to deal with moral education in schools; however there is still 'silence' on a possible strategy in the South African context. A possible strategy to be used is value-clarification through the means of Lawrence Kohlberg's moral dilemma discussions. These dilemma discussions entails that learners are confronted with a hypothetical moral dilemma that they might be confronted with based on the themes in the Life Orientation CAPS document as part of the formal lessons to be conducted in this subject. The learners will then be expected to answer certain questions related to the hypothetical moral dilemma presented to them, in order to have a group discussion. This will provide the learners and you as the educators the opportunity to take part in clarifying existing or newly developed values in order to promote moral action and behaviour to follow from these discussions.

You will be participating in two sets of interviews, a training session and observation session. During the first interview we will just discuss background and your experiences as a Life Orientation educator up to date, after the training you will implement the new teaching strategy in your classroom where I will come to observe the responses of both you and the learners, the potential for moral dilemma discussions as a possible teaching strategy and which strategies was put into place to promote moral action and behaviour to follow.

The final set of interviews will be to clarify any aspect that is not clear to me during the observation and to determine your experience of the process.

Please remember that whatever you say during this interview will be treated confidentiality and no third party will gain access to this information that your share with me. This information will only be used for research purposes.

Are there any questions before we start?

1. How did you experience the use of moral dilemma discussions as a teaching strategy?
2. What challenges did you experience today with the use of moral dilemma discussions?
3. How did you experience the drawing up of the moral dilemma discussion that you have used in the class today? (positive/ negative and why?)
4. What did you enjoy most about moral dilemma discussions during today's lesson?
5. How did the learners respond to moral dilemma discussions?
6. Do you think the learners respond differently than the previous session? Could you give a reason for your answer?
7. Why do you think did they respond in this way?
8. Do you think moral dilemma discussions is suitable for both Grade 5 and 6? In what way?
9. How does moral dilemmas differ from the way you previously used to teach values in your classroom?
10. Do you think moral dilemmas is suitable for teaching LO curriculum? Please give a reason for your answer.
11. Do you think LO should be assessed?
12. Were you able to put any strategies in place for action to flow from the discussions as discussed last time during the interview? Why or why not?
13. Did you find these strategies successful?
14. How was it successful? Could you give an example?
15. How does your time and curriculum constrains hinder value education in your classroom?
16. Would you use moral dilemma discussions as a strategy in your class? Why?

Addendum D: Letter of Consent to the School board.

1 November 2012

Dear Chairperson of the School Governing Body

Request for permission to conduct research

I am a Master's degree student in the Faculty of Education (Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies) and wish to engage in a research study titled "Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education."

Moral education has gained a lot of interest in the field of education specifically due to the moral decline that is visible internationally and nationally. The responsibility of schools in providing some form of moral education is generally accepted. The challenge facing educators internationally is how to introduce moral education in the curriculum. In the new CAPS document, schools are expected to deal with values as part of the Life Orientation programme. The question, however, remains. What is the best strategy of teaching values and morals to children? A possible strategy to be used is value-clarification based on the approach developed by Lawrence Kohlberg termed "moral dilemma discussions".

A moral dilemma is not a choice between right and wrong, but rather a situation where a decision needs to be taken where different values and morals need to be considered. It is a choice between two "rights" and the reasons for choosing a specific course of action. Very little is known about the use of this strategy for primary school learners and more so very little research have been done in South Africa on the use of moral clarification. This is the focus of my research. I intend to use action research as research strategy. This implies that educators who are interested in learning more about this strategy will be invited to participate voluntarily as research participants and to become actively involved in the project. The benefit to educators is that they will be given the opportunity to learn more about the teaching strategy and get the opportunity to use it in their normal Life Orientation lessons and assess the possible success of the strategy as teaching strategy.

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I would firstly want to ensure you that the school's participation is voluntarily and participant may withdraw from the study at any given time if they would want to. In terms of my research design, I will interview each educator that is willing to participate on the teaching approach that they have used in the past and their experiences with the strategies used, before introducing them to moral dilemma discussions as teaching strategy. These interviews will be conducted at a time and place convenient to the educators outside of their normal teaching duties. Those willing to participate will then be given training on the strategy after normal school hours. They will then have the opportunity to implement the teaching strategy. If they are willing, I will observe the lesson(s) and conduct a follow-up interview regarding their experiences and plan with them possible follow-up lessons and activities.

All participants will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Informed consent letters will be issued to educators interested in participating. These letters will clearly indicate that their participation will be voluntary and they are under no obligation to participate and that they may withdraw from the research at any stage. Such a decision will not in any way be held against them. They will also be given the opportunity to provide written or oral comments on the draft report of the findings.

In the final research report no names of schools, educators or any other identifying information that could link the research to the research site will be revealed as the focus is more on the possible use and effect of the strategy and of the training in equipping educators on different teaching strategies as part of their professional development.

Your kind consideration for the request is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Andria Ungerer   Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis

MEd Candidate   Supervisor

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Addendum E: Consent letter to the Principal.

1 November 2012

Dear Principal

Request for permission to conduct research

I am a Master's degree student in the Faculty of Education (Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies) and wish to engage in a research study titled "Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education."

Moral education has gained a lot of interest in the field of education specifically due to the moral decline that is visible internationally and nationally. The responsibility of education in providing some form of moral education is generally accepted. The challenge facing educators internationally is how to introduce moral education in the curriculum. In the new CAPS document, schools are expected to deal with values as part of the Life Orientation programme. The question, however, remains. What is the best strategy of teaching values and morals to children? A possible strategy to be used is value-clarification based on the approach developed by Lawrence Kohlberg termed "moral dilemma discussions".

A moral dilemma is not a choice between right and wrong, but rather a situation where a decision needs to be taken where different values and morals need to be considered. It is a choice between two "rights" and the reasons for choosing a specific course of action. Very little is known about the use of this strategy for primary school learners and more so very little research have been done in South Africa on the use of moral clarification. This is the focus of my research. For this reason, it is important to use action research as research strategy. This implies that educators who are interested in learning more about this strategy will be invited to participate voluntarily as research participants and they will have the right to withdraw from the research at any stage.

The benefit to educators is that they will be given the opportunity to learn more about the teaching strategy and get the opportunity to use it in their normal Life Orientation programme and assess the possible success of the strategy as teaching strategy.

In terms of my research design, I will interview each educator that is willing to participate on the teaching approach that they have used in the past and their experiences with the strategies used, before introducing them to the idea of moral dilemma discussions. These interviews will be conducted at a time and place convenient to the educators outside of their normal teaching programme. Those willing to participate will then be given training on the strategy after normal school hours. They will then have the opportunity to implement the strategy. If they are willing, I will observe the lesson(s) and conduct a follow-up interview regarding their experiences and plan with them possible follow-up lessons and activities.

Participation in this research study is voluntarily and you as a participant may withdraw from the study at any time if you wish to do so. All participants will be ensured of confidentiality and anonymity. Informed consent letters will be issued to them for their signatures. These letters will clearly indicate that their participation will be voluntary and they are under no obligation to participate and such a decision will not in any way be held against them. The letters will also assure them that they are free to withdraw from participating at any time. They will also be given the opportunity to provide written or oral comments on the draft report of the findings.

In the final research report no names of schools, educators or any other identifying information that could link the research to the research site will be revealed as the focus is more on the possible use and effect of the strategy and of the training in equipping educators on different teaching strategies as part of their professional development.

Your kind consideration for the request to conduct the research in your school is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Andria Ungerer   Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis

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Addendum F: Consent Letter to the Participants.

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

1 November 2012

Dear Life Orientation educator

Invitation for participation in a research study

I am a Master's degree student in the Faculty of Education (Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies) and wish to engage in a research study titled "Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education."

Moral education has gained a lot of interest in the field of education specifically due to the moral decline that is visible internationally and nationally. The responsibility of schools in providing some form of moral education is generally accepted. The challenge facing educators internationally is how to introduce moral education in the curriculum. In the new CAPS document, schools are expected to deal with values as part of the Life Orientation programme. The question, however, remains. What is the best strategy of teaching values and morals to children? A possible strategy to be used is value-clarification based on the approach developed by Lawrence Kohlberg termed "moral dilemma discussions".

A moral dilemma is not a choice between right and wrong, but rather a situation where a decision needs to be taken where different values and morals need to be considered. It is a choice between two "rights" and the reasons for choosing a specific course of action. Very little is known about the use of this strategy with primary school learners and more so, very little research have been done in South Africa on the use of moral clarification. This is the focus of my research. For this reason, it is important to use action research as research strategy. This implies that educators who are interested in learning more about this strategy are invited to participate voluntarily as research participants.

The benefit to you is that you will be given the opportunity to learn more about the teaching strategy and get the opportunity to use it as part of your normal Life Orientation programme and to assess the possible success of the strategy as teaching strategy.

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In terms of my research design, I will interview each educator that is willing to participate on the teaching approach that they have used in the past and their experiences with the strategies used, before introducing them to moral dilemma discussions. These interviews will be conducted at a time and place convenient to the educators outside of their normal teaching programme and will last approximately thirty minutes. After the interview, you will be given the opportunity to decide if you want to be part of the research and if so, I will provide you with training on strategy and its use. This training will be given after normal school hours. You will then have the opportunity to implement the strategy as part of your normal teaching on the theme that is apposite to values and morals. With you permission, I will observe the lesson(s) and conduct a follow-up interview regarding your experiences and plan with you some possible follow-up lessons and activities.

Participation is voluntarily and you may withdraw from the study at any given time if you wish to do so. Confidentiality and anonymity are important and your identity or any details that will enable a third party to identify you will not be divulged. What you discuss and tell me will only be used for the purpose of this research and to establish if moral dilemma discussions could be used as a possible strategy in South African primary schools to promote moral education.

The interviews and training sessions will not interfere with your teaching obligations.

You will be granted the opportunity to provide input on the draft report to ensure that the data reported on is a true reflection of the data gathered during this project. All interviews will be tape recorded and your permission to do this will also be appreciated.

Should you be willing to participate under the terms set out above, you are requested to sign the consent letter attached.

Yours sincerely

Andria Ungerer	Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis
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Consent Letter

I _____ agree to participate in a study conducted by Andria Ungerer on "Using Action research in Staff development: the case of moral education". I am aware that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time should I wish to do so and my decision will not be held against me.

I understand that my educator's duties will not be influenced or neglected due to this study and I grant the researcher permission to use some of my formal lessons for observation purposes and some of my free time for interviews and training.

I understand that my identity and all tape-recorded interviews will remain anonymous and confidential.

I also understand that I will be expected to provide written or oral comments on the draft report.

I grant permission that the interviews may be recorded for research purposes and understand that these will be stored safely.

I have received contact details for the researcher and the supervisor should I need to contact them about matters related to this research.

Signed: _____   Date:_____

Addendum G: Consent Letter to the Parents.

1 November 2012

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian

Request for permission to conduct research

I am a Master's degree student in the Faculty of Education (Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies) and wish to engage in a research study titled "Using Action Research in Staff development: the case of moral education."

Moral education has gained a lot of interest in the field of education specifically due to the moral decline that is visible internationally and nationally. The responsibility of schools in providing some form of moral education is generally accepted. The challenge facing educators internationally is how to introduce moral education in the curriculum. In the new CAPS document, schools are expected to deal with values as part of the Life Orientation programme. The question, however, remains. What is the best strategy of teaching values and morals to children? A possible strategy to be used is value-clarification based on the approach developed by Lawrence Kohlberg termed "moral dilemma discussions".

A moral dilemma is not a choice between right and wrong, but rather a situation where a decision needs to be taken where different values and morals need to be considered. It is a choice between two "rights" and the reasons for choosing a specific course of action. Very little is known about the use of this strategy for primary school learners and more so very little research have been done in South Africa on the use of moral clarification. This is the focus of my research. I intend to use action research as research strategy. This implies that educators who are interested in learning more about this strategy will be invited to participate voluntarily as research participants and to become actively involved in the project. The benefit to educators is that they will be given the opportunity to learn more about the teaching strategy and get the opportunity to use it in their normal Life Orientation lessons and assess the possible success of the strategy as teaching strategy.

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In terms of my research design, I will interview each educator that is willing to participate on the teaching approach that they have used in the past and their experiences with the strategies used, before introducing them to moral dilemma discussions as teaching strategy. These interviews will be conducted at a time and place convenient to the educators outside of their normal teaching duties. Those willing to participate will then be given training on the strategy after normal school hours. They will then have the opportunity to implement the teaching strategy. What is important in terms of the research is to observe the lesson(s) and conduct a follow-up interview regarding their experiences and plan with them possible follow-up lessons and activities.

Since your child will be a learner in the class that I will be observing, I would like to request your permission to allow me to observe the lessons and the interaction between learners and the educator. For the purpose of this observation will I only sit in the lesson and make observational notes of the teaching practice of the educator after the training. No audio visual recording or photos will be taken during the observation. The educator's involvement in the research will not have any influence on their teaching time as it is going to be used as part of the Life Orientation guidelines as set out in CAPS and they will be interviewed at times that fall outside of their teaching responsibilities.

Participation is voluntarily and any participant may withdraw from the study at any given time if they wish to do so. All participants including your child are assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Educators will clearly indicate that their participation will be voluntary and they are under no obligation to participate and that they may withdraw from the research at any stage. Such a decision will not in any way be held against them. They will also be given the opportunity to provide written or oral comments on the draft report of the findings.

In the final research report no names of schools, educators, children or any other identifying information that could link the research to the research site will be revealed as the focus is more on the possible use and effect of the strategy and of the training in equipping educators on different teaching strategies as part of their professional development.

You are invited to talk to your child about these lessons and about their experiences of this new possible strategy of teaching Life Orientation to enable them to reflect on the activities and what was learned during these lessons.

Your kind consideration for the request is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Andria Ungerer   Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis

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Consent Letter

I _____ agree to allow my child to participate in a study conducted by Andria Ungerer on "Using Action research in Staff development: the case of moral education". I am aware that my child is free to withdraw his/her participation at any time should he/she wish to do so and his/her decision will not be held against him/her.

I understand that my educator's duties will not be influenced or neglected due to this study and I grant the researcher permission to use some of the formal lessons for observation purposes.

I understand that my child's identity will remain anonymous and confidential.

I understand that no audio visual recording or photo's will be taken during the observations and that the researcher will only take observational notes on the educator's teaching practice after the training received and understand that these will be stored safely.

I have received contact details for the researcher and the supervisor should I need to contact them about matters related to this research.

Signed: _____   Date:_____