THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNER

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation *The role of the parents in the moral devlopment of the foundation phase learner* represents my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

S L Haynes
Kwadlangezwa
September 2006

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother, Crissy Imelda Haines, who believed in the power of education.

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SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to pursue an investigation into the role of the family in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

From the literature study it became clear that the family plays an important role in the moral development of the young child. Each family sets guidelines, principles and norms with regard to what is right and what is wrong. It is the educational responsibility of parents to transfer these norms to their children. From an early age the child is taught to behave correctly and is reprimanded when his behaviour is wrong or not acceptable. Eventually the child has to reach moral independence and responsibility with educational help. In the latter aspect the parents, as primary educators, play an important role in assisting the child to internalize and assimilate moral norms and values.

For the purpose of the empirical investigation a self-structured questionnaire, to be completed by parents with children in the foundation phase, was utilised. The completed questionnaires were analysed by means of descriptive statistics.

In conclusion a summary was presented on the findings of the literature and empirical study and the following are some of the recommendations that were made:

- Positive moral values must be inculcated in young children by their parents.

- Support programmes should be made available to parents to assist them in the moral education of their children.

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

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ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

To be able to live harmoniously with other people in society one has to live according to cultural norms (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:64). Making moral decisions means that a choice must be made between right and wrong, accepting responsibility for choices made and for the reactions which result. Moral decision-making involves a person's conscience which addresses him and keeps him accountable for his decisions and deeds. A person's conscience prompts him to live according to morals, and to choose and do the right, good and decent thing rather than the wrong, evil and improper thing.

Each community and family set guidelines, principles, rules and norms with regard to that which is considered right and wrong, proper and improper, good and evil (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:148). Some of these moral norms are incorporated into the laws of the land such as laws against theft, while others are set within a cultural context by customs and traditions.

According to Crain (1992:22) the child has to learn norms with the help of his educators. Initially the parents urge the child to behave correctly and decently and reprimand him when he has acted wrongly and improperly. With the help of educators the child learns to attribute logically

acknowledged meanings to moral norms, social norms and those of his family. Crain (1992:22) says the child reaches moral independence and responsibility with educational help, which assists him to internalize and assimilate moral meaning.

Since the child in the foundation phase is in the pre-operational and concrete-operational phase of his cognitive development his moral experience still rests on concrete and realistic grounds (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:128). During this phase the child looks for constant, immutable rules which he interprets literally, so that he clings to specific codes of conduct such as those which prohibit stealing, lying, cheating and so forth (Vrey, 1990: 82). Virtues such as honesty, dependability, conscientiousness, courtesy and friendliness should be inculcated in the child through educational help. The parents as primary educators can purposefully instruct the child in this by laying down rules and setting certain limits. The child may also be rewarded for his obedience and punished should he ignore the rules. Mwamwenda (1998:36) maintains that young children identify with their parents, adopting their values, personality traits and beliefs as their own.

Parental attitudes and behavioural responses to right and wrong set the tone and the direction of the child's moral development. As morality is basically learned it is obvious that the family is central to the learning of moral codes. DuToit and Kruger(1994:129) state that the most successful way of normative instruction is by the educator's (parent's) own example. The foundation phase child models his behaviour on that of his educators, and in the same way develops his value structure on the living example of his educators where the parents, as primary educators, play a significant role. Farrant (1991:16) says that by means of their example parents should endeavour to

exercise a specific influence on their children which will continue when the parents are not present.

1.2   ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Levine (1995:13) says that children, including the foundation phase learner, are exposed to a bewildering array of risks and challenges relating to morality at an early age. These risks and challenges relate to the choices and decisions the child has to make.

According to Dowling (1999:83), when it comes to the difficult matter of handling moral problems faced by young children, many of them are as a result of their social upbringing. Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003:85) are of the opinion that the fault lies mainly in the moral guidance that the young child receives at home and in school. Within the family milieu the child has to conform to traditional norms, values and standards. Outside the family, for example in the community and at school, norms, values and standards might be different from those of the family. Children are taught that they must choose their own moral beliefs. This is, however, difficult for the child in the foundation phase who is still dependant on the guidance of parents or a responsible adult (Vrey, 1990:17).

Grobler (1987:1) maintains that attitudes, values, interest and personality traits have their foundations in early childhood when the child is the most susceptible to influences. The working mother has become an integral part of society as increasing numbers of women return to the job market when their children are still very young. Working parents that leave the transfer of norms and values mostly to chance risk failure of an integral part of their

responsibility in the education of their children (Schiller & Bryant, 1998:7).

According to Angenant(1990:54) it has become more difficult to educate children on the basis of specific historical norms and values which seem to be losing the impact it used to have. Owing to misrepresentations in the media parents are often confused about what norms and values child rearing should embrace. Even young children are exposed to the confusion and question the norms that their parents wish to convey (De Witt & Booysen, 1995:31).

Watching violence on television triggers increased aggressiveness in children (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003:144). According to Gray (1999:29) when young children view violence or mean behaviour on television, they lose to some degree the opportunity to develop a healthy sense of innocence, serenity and sensitivity. It is also believed that too much sensory input overwhelms the young child's nervous system and the child becomes irritable, demanding, moody, hyperactive, sensitive and uncooperative. Excessive stimulation do not have a healthy influence on the foundation phase child.

Kretzchmar (1998:13) says to be without morality is like someone trying to find his way around a foreign city without a map. He does not know where he is, where he comes from or where he wishes to go.

1.3   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem that will be investigated in this study pertains to the challenges facing the family in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

The following are questions that require answers in order to establish the role of the family in the moral development of the foundation phase child:

- What are the main challenges facing parents in the moral development of the foundation phase child?

- Are parents adequately equipped to guide and assist the foundation phase child in his moral development?

1.4 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

The study on the role of the family in the moral development of the foundation phase child will cover a wide spectrum of concepts. To ensure a clear understanding of the problem to be investigated it is deemed necessary to explain certain concepts.

1.4.1 Gender

In this study all references to any gender includes references to the other gender.

1.4.2 Education

The term "education" is of Latin origin and means "to bring up, train, provide schooling for" (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:5). Education is a process in which the practice of education is involved: where a responsible adult leads, helps, supports and accompanies a child to self-actualization and ultimate

According to Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:366) education in its pedagogic form, may be defined as the conscious, purposive intervention by an adult in the life of a non-adult to bring him to independence. Education as pedagogic assistance is the positive influencing of a non-adult by an adult, with the specific purpose of effecting changes of significant value. Du Toit and Kruger (1994:5) say that education refers to the help and support which the child receives from an adult with a view of attaining adulthood.

1.4.3 **Educator**

An educator is one who educates, who takes the responsibility of leading the child to adulthood. Baldwin (1998:11) says the primary educators are the parents who from the earliest moments of the child's life are involved in his education. While the parents retain this responsibility, the secondary educators (school teachers and other concerned adults) supplement the primary educator's efforts as they together purposefully lead the child in every aspect of his becoming and through each stage of development.

A professional educator (pedagogue) is a scientifically schooled educator practising education on a post-scientific level; he chooses education as an occupation and a vocation. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:73) state that an educator is concerned with the educand as a totality and not simply with the teaching and learning of a specific subject or subjects. An educator is more than a mere teacher of knowledge but seeks to impart to the child qualities, such as norms and values, which will enable him to reach responsible adulthood successfully.

1.4.4 Family

Haralambos (1985:325) describes a family as a social group characterized by a common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. The members of a family consist of a father, mother and siblings. According to Elliot (1991:4) in modern Western societies the family denotes a unit consisting of a husband and wife and their children. It is a group based on marriage and biological parenthood, sharing a common residence, united by ties of affection, an obligation of care and support and a sense of common identity. Bradshaw (1996:1) sees families as dynamic social systems, having structural laws, components and rules.

1.4.5 Foundation phase learner

The period approximately spanning the ages of six to nine years is generally known as the foundation phase (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:104). The foundation phase is also known as the junior primary phase which extends from grade 1 (± 6years) to grade 3 (± 9years).

1.4.6 Morality and moral norms

Morality refers to the principles, rules or reasoning by which behaviour is judged to be acceptable, right or wrong (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:151). Morality gives orientation and meaning to an individual's life. It provides a cohesive fabric for society, providing solutions for social problems (Kretzchmar, 1998:14).

Moral norms are the norms which a person follows with regard to behaviour. (Crain, 1992:25). Every society and family set up certain guidelines, principles, norms and rules for behaviour, based on what is considered right or wrong, these are known as moral norms (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:151). Without moral norms the family and society would be chaotic and ungovernable.

1.4.6 <u>Moral development</u>

According to Lawton (1982:484) moral development is concerned with learning the appropriate rules and values that guide social behaviour and the extent to which moral thought is reflected in moral behaviour. Moral development is learning to know what is right and wrong, good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable behaviour within a particular society in which the child lives. Moral behaviour can only be learned and the child learns by imitation.

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:148) say moral development refers to the child's actions, attitudes and aspirations and volition, to the child's whole character, his virtues and vices and at a later stage in his development to his value judgements. Moral development is dependent on cognitive development.

For the purpose of this study the moral development of the foundation phase child is described as the process by which the child learns the principles that enable him to judge particular behavioural patterns as good or bad and that direct the child's behaviour in accordance with these moral principles.

1.4.8 <u>Norms and moral norms</u>

Norms are the standardized ways of acting or the expectations governing limits of variation in behaviour (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:156). Norms are culturally determined but also universal, such as respect for human life. Norms are supported by a high degree of consensus and may elicit intense reaction when violated such as the committing of murder. Louw (1997:43) says norms are transmitted from one generation to another through groups and the individual incorporates beliefs and ideas about these norms into his meaningful understanding of relationships. Moral norms are the norms which a person follows with regard to behaviour (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:444).

1.4.9 <u>Value(s)</u>

A value is that to which a society, cultural group, family or individual attach worth, value or significance (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1990:238). According to Woodbridge and Barnard (1990:56) values are ideas as to what is good, beautiful, effective or just, and therefore worth having, worth doing, or worth striving to attain.

Values serve as standards by which a person determines if a particular thing (object, idea, policy, etc.) Is good or bad, desirable or undesirable, worthy or unworthy, or someplace in between these two extremes. In the context of this study the term value refers to the moral principles or accepted standards of the family.

1.4.10 Parents as primary educators

Du Toit and Kruger (1994:3) say that parents, as the child's primary educators, have the greatest share in the child's education and the quality of his becoming an adult. Initially the child's parents are responsible for his education which implies that primarily the child's views about morality depend largely on those of his parents. When the child enters school, the educational help and support of the parents, who remain responsible for his education, are complemented by that of his school teachers.

1.4.11 Theories of moral development

A theory is a mental view formulated to explain a behaviour (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:553). A theory is a plan or scheme existing in the mind only, but based on principles verifiable by experiment or observation. A theory based on research attempts to create some order, pattern or generalization to explain a phenomenon. It is scientifically arrived at and presents a unified system of principles, definitions, postulates and observations organized to most simply explain the relationship among variables (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:230). However, theories rarely explain all the facts and often lean toward one perspective or the other. The most useful theories are those that adequately and simply explain the greatest number of facts. Theory may, however, have an influence on practice. For the purpose of this study the moral theory of Piaget seems the most relevant and will be discussed next.

According to Piaget's theory the moral development of the child falls into two categories, namely (Mwamwenda, 1998:108; Turner & Helms, 1983:246):

- Morality of realism (also referred to as morality of constraint or heteronomous morality). During the period of moral realism, which occurs before a child is ten years of age, morality is perceived as being externally made and imposed. In the mind of the child nothing is in itself right or wrong, good or bad. What determines whether a given behaviour is good or bad is what the parents say. Good behaviour is that which conforms with the wishes of the parents. To the child rules ought to be obeyed as presented and should not be modified; what counts is the letter of the law rather than the spirit. Furthermore when a child judges a certain action he takes into account only the consequences of the behaviour and pays no attention to the intention underlying the behaviour, for example, suppose two children have done wrong, one child accidentally breaks two cups, the other deliberately breaks one cup. If a child is asked to make a judgement he will say that the one who broke two cups must be punished more severely than the one who broke one cup. The fact that the one who broke the two cups had no intention of breaking them is not taken into account. At this age children believe in what is called immanent justice, which means that if somebody has done something wrong and gets hurt he is being punished for his wrong behaviour.

- Morality of cooperation (also known as autonomous morality, morality of reciprocity, moral flexibility and moral relativism). When a child attains the stage of morality of cooperation he has a different view of morality. Rules are considered to be flexible and subject to change. Rules are also understood to be

made for the purpose of protecting the rights of individuals rather than for giving allegiance to those in authority. If a rule is transgressed a child at this stage makes a judgement on the basis of the motive behind the behaviour. If the rule was violated with no malicious intention the offender is likely to be forgiven.

1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of this study are:

- To pursue a study of relevant literature in order to establish the role that parents and other people play in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

- To undertake an empirical investigation into the role that parents and other people play in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

- To make certain recommendations which can serve as guidelines to parents in the moral development of their children.

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

Research with regard to this study will be conducted as follows:

- A literature study of available, relevant literature.

- An empirical survey comprising structured questionnaires to be completed by parents with children in the foundation phase.

1.7 FURTHER COURSE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 will be a literature review of the people that play a role in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

In chapter 3 the method of research followed in this study will be explained.

Chapter 4 will consist of the presentation and analysis of the research data.

In chapter 5 a summary of the research, findings from the study and certain recommendation will be presented.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Moral development contains a clear cognitive component. According to Papalia and Olds (1992:250) the most influential explanation of moral development is that moral values develop in a rational process coinciding with cognitive development.   Children cannot make sound moral judgements until they shed egocentric thinking and achieve a certain level of cognitive maturity.

Du Toit and Kruger (1994:128) say that since the foundation phase learner (primary school learner) is in the pre-operational and concrete-operational phases of his cognitive development, his moral experience still rests on concrete and realistic grounds. The foundation phase learner thus looks for constant, immutable rules which he interprets literally and he clings to specific codes of conduct such as those which prohibit stealing, lying, cheating and so forth. During this phase the child sets great store by equal and fair treatment for all (Sprinthall, Sprinthall & Oja, 1994:180).

The moral judgement and reasoning of the foundation phase learner develop as a result of his cognitive development which is described by Vrey (1990:181) as a gradual transition from heteronomous to more autonomous moral judgement. This means a development from a morality based on rules and norms prescribed by others to an inner moral sense based on the child's convictions and judgements. The young child does not steal because his

parents forbid it, but as his moral judgement develops he sees that his parents obey the norm and he agrees with the principle underlying it, that one should not steal (Roehlkepartain, 2000:8).

To inculcate moral norms such as honesty, consciousness, courtesy and friendliness in the child the educator (parents) can purposefully instruct the child in this connection by laying down rules and setting specific limits. Du Toit and Kruger (1994:129) stress the fact that the most successful way of moral instruction is by the educator's (parents) own example. The foundation phase child models his moral behaviour on that of his educators, (parents and school teachers). Papalia and Olds (1992:253) maintain that the young child develops his value structure and moral beliefs based on the living example of his educators

Giddens (1993:77) say that an important factor in the moral development of the foundation phase child is the fact that the educators of the child must possess positive moral norms. As primary educators the parents should endeavour to transfer these positive virtues to their children.

In this chapter the focus will be on the foundation phase learner as a moral person. The essentials of moral development will be discussed and the role of the family in the moral development of the child will be looked at.

2.2   THE FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNER AS A MORAL PERSON

As the child begins to find his way in the world, his inclination for a determined set of values becomes fixed and constant (Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein, 1994:444). At birth the child is incapable of distinguishing between what carries approval and what is unseemly.

Through the experience of education the child's conscience is actualized to guide him in deciding between right and wrong, since man has an innate moral sense that responds to the call of education. Woodbridge and Barnard (1990:58) maintain that education is essentially a moral function to arouse a sense of accountability in the child for his actions. In submitting himself to education the child reveals his moral being and his education confirms his dependence on that support for awareness of moral principles, for eventual self-decision and for a free choice of accepted moral norms (Jacobs & Gawe, 1999:79).

Fontana (1990:431) maintains that children in the foundation phase, between the ages of five and eleven years of age, are very much tied up in what is called the "good boy or good girl syndrome", which means the child's actions is towards gaining adult praise. The child considers himself as "good" mainly when his parents or teachers tell him he is. Kohlberg (Papalia & Olds, 1992:253) sees the child between ages 4 and 10 as a pre-conventional moral being as the emphasis at this level is on external control. The moral standards of the young child are those of others (parents) and they are observed either to avoid punishment or to reap rewards. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:149) also refer to the pre-conventional stage in the moral development of the primary school (foundation phase) child. Young children obey adult (their parents') rules to avoid punishment but they make little attempt to understand them. Towards the end of the foundation phase children begin to evaluate their behaviour but are still very motivated by reward and punishment and their own selfish interests.

2.2.1 Moral behaviour

Moral behaviour is the way in which a person behaves in accordance with the rules of the society in which he lives. Schuster and Ashburn (1992:330) see moral behaviour as the responses individuals make throughout life to ethical pressures. If these responses are consistent with societal standards of good, they are regarded as moral, if they contradict society's expectations, they are considered immoral. For the foundation phase child moral behaviour is in the realm of what is right and wrong, what is good and bad. Before the child enters school moral behaviour is depicted by and insisted upon, or not, by the parents. Moral behaviour, however, extends outside the family and is then further developed by building socially approved behaviours which are reinforced and maintained by society (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:148).

According to Lindon (1998:150) children in the foundation phase may behave in line with ways that gain adult approval, for example taking turns on the playground without fully understanding the idea of "sharing" that the adult is explaining. Children can learn moral behaviour in a socially approved manner through trial and error, through direct teaching or through identification (Hurlock, 1987:391). The learner in the foundation phase is at a stage where he mostly wants adult approval. Therefore he can easily adopt and display behaviour which is moral. This attitude of the learner promotes the acquisition of acceptable moral behaviour .

Moral behaviour may vary according to the situation a child is in (Davenport,1994:101). A child who is generally truthful and honest may cheat and lie under certain circumstances, and a generally wicked child may sometimes behave like a saint. Their behaviour does not change just

because their thinking may be passing through different stages, but depends on factors like how the child sees the situation, whether the child has previously been rewarded or punished in similar situations, or whether the child has seen other influential role models behaving in the same way (Farrant, 1991:13). The foundation phase learner has a conscience and therefore the potential to take moral decisions and behave accordingly. However, because of his cognitive level of development the child does not know the meaning of the moral norms he chooses and is not able to behave morally of his own accord (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:64). Thus the child's conscience does not address him and he can not be held accountable by society for what he has done wrong. Through education the foundation phase learner needs to learn to know moral norms and behave accordingly.

One of the important facets of moral development is the development of moral behaviour (Bee, 1981:396). The question to be asked in this regard is can the child match his moral behaviour to internalised rules? The child knows its wrong to steal, but can he resist the impulse to shoplift when the transistor radio he desires is right there within his reach and nobody is watching? Can the child say no to friends who are urging him to do something he knows he should not do? Modeling by parents plays a significant role in the learning of basic rules of right and wrong moral behaviour by the young child (Jacobs & Gawe, 1999:60). According to Bee (1981:396) parents are quite often inconsistent in their moral behaviour and therefore it seems quite normal for their children to also develop inconsistent moral behaviour. Bell (1980:418) says direct enforcement and modeling by the parents of young children play a significant role in their moral behaviour.

2.2.2 Moral judgement

Moral judgement refers to the child's cognitive ability to understand moral concepts and moral behaviour (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987:9). Cognitive development is crucial to the acquisition and maintenance of moral judgement (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:148). The child must be able to determine if a particular action is right or wrong, or whether somebody is guilty or not. This is only possible if the child has reached the cognitive level that will enable him to conceptualize and generalize moral norms (Vrey, 1990:181).

According to Du Toit and Kruger (1994:128) at the age of about eight the foundation phase learner develops an inner moral sense which means he understands the norms of morality although it still rests on concrete and realistic grounds. At the end of the foundation phase the child begins to develop a genuine conscience. The child's moral judgement and reasoning improve as a result of his cognitive development.

According to Kohlberg's (Lindon,1998:152) levels of moral judgement the foundation phase child is at the pre-conventional level and judges right and wrong primarily by the consequences of action.

Fontana (1990:431) says that as the five to ten years old child's powers of thinking develop he is also able to ponder more over the things he is asked to do and start judging the moral value of his actions. According to Dowling (1999:86) there are certain rules the young child must understand when making moral judgements. The foundation phase learner will become only aware of these rules if he has reached the cognitive ability to understand them.

2.2.3 Moral reasoning

Moral reasoning is the grasping of different concepts that underpin moral behaviour (Lindon, 1998:150). According to Crain (1992:135) in their moral reasoning young children focus on what they can do or have personally experienced . The moral rules expressed and followed by foundation phase learners tend to be more fixed. In their moral reasoning younger children look and think from their own point of view but are able to learn and look through the eyes of others and build up a more general framework (Lindon, 1998:151)

For the child between the ages of six and ten years moral reasoning is seen in terms of "very right or very wrong" (Papalia & Olds, 1992: 253). The change in conventional moral reasoning is parallel to the course of the child's intellectual development. Cross-cultural studies done by Lawton (1982:485) indicate that formal education affects the level of moral reasoning of the foundation phase learner.

2.3   THE ESSENTIALS OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Children at an early age, before the "dawn of reason", are capable of doing considerable harm to themselves and to others because they are still unable to make a clear distinction between right and wrong (Peters, 1981:35). According to Le Roux (1992:112) it is socially essential that children should observe certain rudimentary rules from an early age (Peters, 1981:35). The foundation phase learner needs laws, rules and social interaction to guide his moral behaviour in a way that would not harm himself or other people.

2.3.1 Conscience

Gouws and Kruger (1994:174) describe conscience as a uniquely human, inherent ability to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil and proper and improper. It is influenced by teaching, habits and education. Moral values that influence the conscience include honesty, loyalty, responsibility, appreciation, respect and a sense of duty. Conscience is the faculty of the mind which dictates the moral quality of one's actions or behaviour (Bell, 1980:419). It is a moral awareness by which a person distinguishes between the morally right and the morally wrong. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:50) describe the conscience as that which urges one to do what is recognized to be right and restrains one from doing what is known to be wrong. Conscience is innate and universal and not a product of the environment, training, habit or education although it is influenced by these.

A person's conscience makes him feel guilty or ashamed when he has behaved badly (Eysenck, 2002:140). This is why the conscience play such an important role in the moral development of the child. Conscience makes a person aware of what is right and wrong and can be seen as the guardian of morality, justice and decency.

According to Schuster and Ashburn (1992:337) the capacity for a conscience is present at birth and develops through discernable, describable stages. Du Toit and Kruger (1994:97) say the child's development of a conscience based on values does not just originate in prescribed norms, but is influenced especially by the example set by the behaviour of his educators (parents). Initially the young child accepts the moral norms of the parents (educators) without questioning because they provide him with specific boundaries

within which he experiences safety. Gradually, however, the child develops his own internalized value system.

Vrey (1990:90) says the child learns from an early age that certain forms of conduct are accepted and others not. In the family the child learns that certain acts meet with an approving "good" and others with a reprimanding "bad or naughty". As he grows older and goes to school, the foundation phase learner learns that good and bad are norms of conduct irrespective of the presence of the parents. Papalia and Olds (1992:212) state that the internalization of norms eventually comes from the child as he realizes "one should not do this". By identifying himself with the examples of his educators, parents or teachers the child comes to accept the norms as his own, to form a scale of values and to activate his conscience. According to Yeats (1991:99) at about the age of eight the child develops an inner moral sense and at the end of the foundation phase the child begins to develop a genuine conscience

2.3.2 Laws, customs and rules

Cultures have well-defined rules that dictate morally right and wrong actions. Darly and Schultz (1990:529) say a rule becomes moral if adherence to it is experienced as obligatory, it applies to all people regardless of their attitude toward it, and if its force is impersonal and external. The latter description distinguishes moral rules from social conventions which are standards of behaviour which have been agreed to by a cultural group but are not really obligatory. Rules against murder and theft are moral, but rules concerning manners and the like are social conventions. At the beginning of the foundation phase most children can distinguish between moral rules and social conventions.

Young children judge hurting other people or taking their possessions to be more serious transgressions than eating ice-cream with their fingers or not paying attention to a story (Kail & Wicks-Nelson, 1993:358).

In observing young children playing games, Piaget (Sprinthall, Sprinthall & Oja, 1994:177) established that shared rules do not appear before the age of eight years. At this stage the child realises that rules should be followed but their own desires are uppermost and their moral behaviour is egocentrically determined. Between the ages of seven and eight years the child's belief regarding the existence of rules are based on heteronomous forces and powers outside the child. The child is at a stage of moral realism; moral rules have an existence that is independent from the child. Towards the end of the foundation phase moral realism is replaced by moral subjectivity. Rutter (1980:340) says the child then begins to contribute to rule making, is able to follow rules and is able to distinguish between right and wrong.

Between the ages of five and ten years the child regards rules as unchangeable and sacred, as extensions of a higher authority, such as the parent or even God (Louw, 1993:342). They use rules as guidelines for acceptable behaviour, they believe that any infringement of a rule should be punished and are capable of taking mitigating circumstances into account (Louw, 1993:342).

According to Tattum and Tattum (1992:82) rules are part of the hidden curriculum at school. These rules are part of the organizational procedure an educator will use to control the behaviour of the learners in his class. It is a known fact that foundation phase learners are lively, noisy, unpredictable and at times irrational in their behaviour in class. This behaviour requires from

parents and teachers to set clear guidelines for the foundation phase learner to be followed and assist him in his moral development.

Rules give substance and expression to values and are the symbols of a person's beliefs and attitudes (Crain, 1992:6). As the creators and enforcers of school rules educators give meaning to their preferences for the particular forms of social behaviour that they deem worthwhile and desirable. Values, however, are vague and general while rules are more specific and are intended to apply to identifiable situations (Tattum & Tattum, 1992:83).

2.3.3 Guilt and shame

Guilt and shame play an important role in the moral development of the foundation phase learner (Papalia & Olds, 1992:212). After developing a conscience the child uses it as a guideline for behaviour. If the child's behaviour does not meet the standards set by his conscience he feels guilty, ashamed or both (Hurlock, 1987:389). According to Pringle (1997:41,47) guilt can be explained as a special kind of negative self-evaluation which occurs when a person acknowledges that his behaviour is at viriance with a given moral value to which he feels obligated to conform.

Children who feel guilty about what they have done have acknowledged to themselves that their behaviour has fallen below the standards they have set for themselves (Hurlock, 1987:389). Only when the foundation phase learner has developed a genuine conscience will he experience guilt and shame or both as a result of improper moral behaviour. According to Du Toit and Kruger (1994:128) the child develops a genuine conscience at the end of the foundation phase.

The intra-personal communication system of the superego is guilt and shame versus self-approval (Shuster & Ashburn, 1992:338). When one violates accepted moral principles, guilt is experienced. If an individual's behaviour is consistent with a self-concept and value system, or ego ideal, the individual will experience self-approval. To avoid the negative feelings associated with the activation of the conscience, the individual will attempt either to withstand temptation and to perform his moral duty (Schuster & Ashburn, 1992:338). The experiencing of feelings of guilt and shame form an important part of the moral development of the foundation phase learner as he will strive not to behave badly in order to avoid these negative feelings.

According to Rutter (1980:343) guilt is manifested around the age of three years when the child may clearly refer to himself as "naughty" and show appropriate signs of emotional change following a transgression. Pringle (1997:47) says shame is an emotion closely linked to guilt by virtue of its occurrence after a real or imagined transgression. With shame, however, the emotional experience has to do with the visibility of the transgression to others. Anecdotal evidence suggests that shame, like guilt, can usually be first identified at about the age of three years (Rutter, 1980:343).

2.3.4 Social interaction

According to Le Roux (1992:73) opportunities for interactions with members of the social group is essential in learning to be a moral person. Social interactions play an important role in the child's moral development by providing them with (Hurlock, 1987:389):

- standards of socially approved behaviour; and

- a source of motivation through social approval and disapproval to conform to these standards.

Without interaction with others, children would not know what socially approved behaviour is nor would they have a source of motivation to behave in any way except as they wished. The first social interactions occur within the family group and children learn from parents, siblings and other family members what their social group regards as right or wrong behaviour. From social disapproval or punishment for wrong behaviour and approval for right behaviour the child desires the necessary motivation to conform to standards of behavior prescribed by family members (Hurlock, 1987:389).

It is thus clear that social interactions play a very important role in assisting the foundation phase learner towards acceptable behaviour within the society in which he lives.

2.3.5 **Knowledge**

Straughan (1988:104) maintains that there are certain areas where a child will need factual information regarding rules of behaviour to which he is expected to adhere and conform to in order to ensure the safety of others and to establish healthy relationships. Papalia and Olds (1992:253) state that for effective moral development children need to increase their understanding of why people behave in certain ways in certain circumstances. This knowledge is essential so that the child may become better at anticipating the feelings and reactions of others and themselves.

According to Vrey (1990:72) some measure of egocentrism is still present in

the foundation phase leaner. The learner requires knowledge about morality in order to treat others in a moral manner in his own moral development. Authentic knowledge about morality will equip the young child with the information needed to make informed moral decisions.

Children must learn (be knowledgeable) about what is right and wrong, what is acceptable and not acceptable. Hurlock (1987:387) says that as soon as a child is old enough he must be given explanations of why certain modes of behaviour are right and wrong. A child must also be given opportunities to take part in group activities so that they can learn what behaviour the group expects. Even more important they must develop a desire to do what is right, to act for the common good and avoid the wrong. Du Toit and Kruger (1994:97) maintain that by interacting with others the child gains knowledge and experience of how to behave morally correct in the company of others. This is accomplished most successfully by associating pleasant reactions with what is right.

In the moral development of foundation phase children parents and teachers have to provide them with knowledge to increase their understanding of morality and thus encourage them to become moral agents themselves (Straughan, 1988:32). Educators must explain the ideas of the features and range of moral operations to children before they can recommend to them a particular pattern of morality which they will recognize as an example of moral goodness (Jacobs & Gawe, 1999:79). It is aimless to preach the virtue of keeping a promise to a young child who does not understand the convention of promise making and the moral implications which surround it. Knowledge about moral issues and its implications serve as a guide in the moral development of the foundation phase learner.

According to Isaacs (1981:16) parents, as the child's primary educators, initially guide and support him by providing information as to why certain behaviours are good and certain behaviour is bad. As the child grows older and develops cognitively he needs more explanations and better reasons for acquiring good habits. The child needs knowledge and understanding of other people's behaviour, for example older people (Pringle, 1997:47). Knowledge about other people's attitudes, beliefs, hopes and fears will produce greater tolerance from a child if he is aware of it. There will also be less danger of a person (or group) being indiscriminately labelled or stereotyped without knowledge and recognition of their uniqueness. Straughan (1988:116) says that a child cannot learn to consider other people's interests and feelings without having adequate knowledge about their life-world.

2.4   THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

The influence of the family on the development of a child in school remains strong throughout the ages six to ten and continues into adolescence (Sproufe, 1992:457). The primary family influence is usually exerted by the parents although all family relationships influence the child's development. This implies that the family plays a significant role in the moral development of the foundation phase learner.

De Lange (1994:56) maintains that the family, as the ontic reality, initiates the child into the intricacies of his society in order to ensure that the cultural values and norms are instilled from an early age. Parents are the most influential agents in the child's learning of morals. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:148) say parental attitudes and behavioural responses to right and wrong, good and evil, acceptable and

unacceptable, set the tone and direction of the child's moral development. From his earliest years the child should be introduced to the right behaviour.

2.4.1 Parents as role models

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:148) emphasize the fact that parents are the most influential agents in the learning of morals by the child. Parental attitude and behavioural responses to right and wrong and good and evil, set the tone and direction of the child's development of morals. At each developmental phase the child needs his parent's moral guidance.

According to Du Toit and Kruger (1994:97) the child's moral development is directed and determined, especially in the preschool years, within the family environment or a preschool facility. Upon starting formal schooling the foundation phase learner should have developed a reasonable sense of moral responsibility. During the foundation phase years the child becomes more and more independent and acquires good manners. Clark (1983:113) points out that during moral development discipline and meaningful communication play an important role. Vrey (1990:181) mentions the cultural component in the child's moral development and suggests that the young child's way of doing things is typical of the particular subculture in which his parents live.

Young children need to be taught how to cope with frustration and disappointments. Roehlkepartain (2000:248) sees parents, as primary educators, as the most suitable educators to help a young child consider all possible solutions to a problem. Young children may cheat, push others around, will cry and throw tantrums to get what they want. Under these

circumstances parents must let the child know that his behaviour is unacceptable and teach them how to negotiate and make compromises. Gray (1999:32) says parents must help the young child in learning healthier ways to assert themselves.

Straughan (1988:125) maintains that parents have many opportunities to further their children's moral development, but the danger exists that they do not carefully consider what they are trying to teach. It is therefore probable that the "moral influence" of the family have little or nothing to do with morality itself, but more with domestic convenience, socialization and the mere imposition of parental authority. Pringle (1997:41) says that if parents are to claim the title of moral educators, they must learn to do more than just declare their own opinion in the hope that their children will conform to them. Parents have to think carefully about their responsibility as moral educators and must act in a manner which will benefit the moral development of the child.

Gray (1999:xxv) confirms parents' responsibility to guide, assist and set an example for the moral development of the young child. The goal of positive parenting is to create strong-willed children that are confident in their moral decisions. According to Le Roux (1992:28) positive parenting produces confident, compassionate children who do not have to be threatened to follow moral rules but spontaneously act and make decisions. Morality is not imposed on these children but emerges from within and is learned by cooperating with their parents.

According to Fontana (1990:434) teaching a five to ten year old child a mature, responsible moral sense is no easy task. However, as the child's cognitive development matures it becomes easier for parents to reason with

the child about resisting deviation from what is right and controlling their behaviour. Santrock (1995:311) suggests the following ways in teaching the young child about morality:

- Parents should monitor, guide and support children at a distance.

- Parents should effectively use the times when they have direct contact with the child.

- They should strengthen in their children the ability to monitor their own behaviour, to adopt appropriate standards of behaviour, to avoid hazardous risks and to sense when parental contact and support is appropriate.

According to Levine (1995:14) the young child (foundation phase) does most of his learning through imitation and his primary role models are his parents. The child picks up more than skills and abilities from his parents. He also absorbs subtle nuances of expressions, attitudes and values that will have a lasting effect on who he becomes, his ideas about gender and gender roles, moral values, and how to deal with feelings such as anger, fear and sadness.

Roehlkepartain (2000:197) says young children learn by watching their parents. Therefore parents must be positive role models and behave as they would like their children to behave. Parents must model the moral norms as prescribed by their society that they want the foundation phase learner to adopt.

According to Levine (1995:121) moral standards of honesty, fairness and trustworthiness must be learned at home. The child learns to behave responsibly at home and it is therefore essential that parents be aware of the powerful influence of their own actions. When parents make a promise they must keep it or apologize with a valid explanation if they break it (Vrey, 1990:90). Parents must take note of the way in which they respond to people who do not respect their principles, values or beliefs. Do they react in the way they that they would like their children to do in similar circumstances? Roehlkepartain (2000:203) says when a parent realizes he has told a lie or has stretched the truth, he must admit it and explain why he has acted that way and apologize. This will show children that honesty is a way to correct a mistake.

The young child best learn to obey moral norms not by fear tactics but through imitation of adults which are in most cases their parents. According to Gray (1999:xxx) young children are programmed to imitate their parents. Their minds are always "taking pictures" and "making recordings" to mimic and follow whatever their parents say and do. Young children learn practically everything through imitation. When parents model respectful behaviour by remaining cool, calm and loving when a child throws a tantrum, the child gradually learns how to stay cool, calm and loving when strong feelings are experienced (Gray, 1999:xxx). The learner in the foundation phase is still egocentric in his behaviour but if he observes how is treated, he will be able to threat other people in a similar way.

According to Eysenck (2002:150) three parental styles can be distinguished in the moral education of their children:

• **Induction.** Parents explain to the child why a certain action is

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wrong with special emphasis on its effects on other people.

- **Power assertion.** Punishment, such as spanking, removal of privileges and harsh words are used by parents for wrong doings.

- **Love withdrawal.** Parents withhold attention or affection (love) when a child behaves badly.

Induction is effective because it provides the child with useful information that helps the development of moral reasoning. Induction also encourages children to think about other people and to consider their needs and emotions (Schiller & Bryant, 1998:6).

Although parents spend less time with their children when they go to school, they continue to be extremely important as moral agents in the foundation phase learner's life. Santrock (1995:311) says that when the child enters school some control (moral responsibility) is transferred from the parents to the child. This should be a gradual process which involves correlation rather than control by the parent or the child. When entering school the foundation phase learner has to take some responsibility for his moral behaviour with the assistance of his parents. According to Thacker (1988:22), unlike adolescents, for whom the peer group is a strong influence, the foundation phase learner is still largely influenced by the family (Tattum & Tattum, 1992:92). Parents are role models to their children, particularly in the early formative years. Through their own actions parents have to convey to their children all the rules of behaviour they will need to be accepted by society (Pringle, 1997:37).

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2.4.2 Siblings

Siblings, brothers and sisters, are the child's first peers. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:212) say older siblings tend to serve as role models for younger siblings; they also act as surrogate parents, taking on parental responsibilities and contribute, *inter alia*, to the child's moral development. In the family with more than one child the sibling or siblings also play a role in the moralization of the child (Mwamwenda, 1989:35). By observing older brothers and sisters the foundation phase learner adopts ways of behaving in society. Younger children may imitate the behaviour of older siblings.

De Witt and Booysen (1995:13) maintain that the relationship between siblings should not be underestimated in the development of children, thus also the moral development of the child. Gouws and Kruger (1994:116) state that the influence of sibling relations on the development of children depends on age, gender, birth order and spacing. First-borns, for example, tend to act like authoritarian parents and tend to boss, command and reprimand younger siblings. The young child imitating this behavior may learn the wrong moral behavior. An elder sister who has to take care of younger siblings in the absence of their mother may rebel against this role and transmit negative moral values (Anselmo, 1987:316). However, older siblings also offer unique opportunities for the six to ten year old to learn how to deal with moral issues, for example responsibility, appreciation, a sense of duty and so forth.

Abromivitch (1982:72) points to the fact that sibling relations are more equal in status than those between parents and children, especially the young child. Sproufe (1992:466) mentions that the level of cognitive development

between siblings is less different than between young children and their adult parents. As A result younger siblings can learn a great deal from their older siblings, for example how to deal with respect, honesty and other moral virtues. Hurlock (1987:80) says that older siblings that feel nurturant towards younger ones and have good morals play an important role in the moral development of the foundation phase learner.

2.4.3 <u>Communication</u>

Communication is a sharing, verbally and non-verbally of experiences, happenings, knowledge, opinions and ideas and is effectively coloured (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:45). The young child wants to know and so is constantly asking questions and communicating. Gray (1999:xxvii) says effective communication between parents and their children is very important. The atmosphere in a family's home depends, amongst others, on the quality of communication between family members, and a happy, secure home can be created by effective communication to relate to others.

Yeats (1991:85) maintains that a child learns family values through the interaction that occurs between family members. Frost (1990:14) sees communication as interaction as an essential part of family. Effective communication is a skill that has to be learnt. Yeats (1991:87) argues that children learn moral values by seeing what their parents do, but seeing what parents do depends on verbal and non-verbal communication. Parents who communicate well have problem solving skills, hold constructive arguments and are able to reach solutions and will teach their children these skills, along with the values associated with them.

Frost (1990:14) says that although the young child imitates the moral actions of his parents, the value of a specific behaviour has to be explained verbally to the child. Parents need to explain family rules (moral values) to the child in order to promote its adoption by the child. In his moral development it is important that the foundation phase learner listens and obeys the moral guidance of parents and teachers. This is only possible if the parent-child relationship is characterized by trust, understanding and security. The child must also feel secure and accepted by his educators (parents and teachers).

Littledyke (1997:137) emphasizes the importance of positive dialogue between parents and the foundation phase learner. Parents need a special way of relating and talking to the young child in order to verbally convey the message they want to. In the communication with the young child parents must use a language understood by the child and avoid phrases and words that may be emotionally harmful. The language used by parents should be protective of the child's feelings, rather than be only critical of wrong behaviour. Ginott (2003:2) sees communication with young children as a unique art with rules and meanings of its own.

Communication with the young child related to moral issues, especially sensitive issues, should be based on respect. That means it will require that messages preserve the child's as well as the parent's self-respect and that statements of understanding precede statements of advice or instruction about moral behaviour (Ginott, 2003:12).

Yeats (1990:16) points to the fact that in every verbal message there is always an element of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication includes all gestures, body movements, facial expressions t

and even breathing that accompany speech. The latter all add to and thus confirm, contradict or take the place of words. Often a parent only has to "glance" at a young child to convey a message, for example a parent can only give a certain look to a wriggling child in church and it will stop. A quick pat on the head, or a tug at a child's clothes from a mother can by mere measure convey caring or irritation. Parents are often not aware of the power of non-verbal communication. Often children learn to stay out of sight and walk quietly around the house when Dad comes home from work with a heavy tread and a frown on his face.

2.4.4 **Importance of moral norms**

Moral development is predicated on the customs, manners or patterns of behaviour that conform to the standard of a family and the society in which they live (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:151). Children have to learn to behave at home, in school and in the community according to moral rules. It is important to adhere and conform to these rules to ensure the safety of the members and the nurturing of healthy relationships. Crain (1991:61) says it is important that children learn to understand and follow moral norms, and that the better they do it the more normal they are considered to be and the more socially acceptable by the particular community. Without moral norms a society would be chaotic and ungovernable.

The following may, *inter alia*, be seen as important moral norms in the family and therefore also in the moral development of the foundation phase learner (Gouws & Kruger, 1994:175; Jacobs & Gawe, 1999:78; Yeats, 199184):

• Honesty.

- Being trustworthy.
- Telling the truth.
- Willingness to help others.
- Respect for other.
- Concern for people.
- Tolerance towards others.
- Loyalty.
- Awareness of responsibilities at home and in society.
- Being responsible.

Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:444) state that the education of a child, whether in the family or school, is essentially a moral function to arouse a sense of accountability. In submitting himself to education the child reveals his moral being and his education confirms his dependence on that support for awareness of moral principles, for eventual self-decision and for a free choice of accepted norms. The importance of the child's moral development is to elicit a code of moral and social behaviour which would be self-imposed (Morrish, 1987:262).

2.4.5 Family values

The child learns family values through the interaction that occurs between the family members (Crain, 1992:25). Under family values could be marriage, manners, free speech, obedience, punishment, relations, leisure time, money, household duties, etc. When considering family values the following questions need to be answered (Yeats, 1991:85):

- How does the family as a unit see each individual member?

- Does mum and dad respect each other?
- Is there respect between and for each member of the family?

Values such as honesty, dependability, respect, courtesy and friendliness enjoy universal recognition and should be inculcated in the child by educational help (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:129). Although there are various methods which educators (parents) may implement to help the child develop an internalized system of values the most successful way of normative instruction is by the educator's (parent's) own example (Sprinthall, Sprinthall & Oja, 1994:187).

Responsible parents assist their children in selecting values which are important for their moral development (Isaacs, 1981:15). According to Schiller and Bryant (1998:15) parents must model values which will benefit the moral development of their children. If parents want their children to accept the family values they must be worthy exemplary figures. Bradshaw (1996:269) says that values must be acted upon and acted upon repeatedly to become internalized as a constituent of a person's character. When parents together with their children in the foundation phase act on values it becomes easier for the young child to internalize and adopt these values.

Children whose parents constantly complain and criticize other people and the world in general are likely to get into the same habit. Parents' behaviour towards other people will be faithfully copied by their children and especially younger children because their moral-religious development still rests on concrete and realistic grounds (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:128). Parents should be consistent in their values and as role models to their children avoid transmitting conflicting values.

2.4.6 <u>Moral-religious development</u>

According to Du Toit and Kruger (1994:98) the most important implication of the normative and moral-religious development of the child is definitely the fact that the young child develops his value system and religious contexts on the basis of his educators' (parents') example. Therefore educators (parents) cannot direct the young child's religious development by prescription only but should influence his development by their practical example,

As regards the moral-religious development of the young child, educators should involve the child in worship from an early age (Le Roux, 1992:71). Even though the young child does not necessarily know what religion is about, the idea of dependence and worship takes shape in the child's development. Pringle (1997:57) maintains that with the right guidance the young child can remember moral implications even though he cannot apply them in real life.

When parents belong to a church and attend church meetings, their children learn specific values about religion (Yeats. 1991:86). Children often ask about religion and moral values and the manner in which parents answer these questions determines the child's beliefs and thus moral development. Morrish (1987:171) says if parents have a definite attitude towards religion they will find it much easier to convey these attitudes to their children.

2.5   TELEVISION AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

According to Comstock and Park (1991:123) children are exposed to media virtually from birth. The average child spends more time watching television

than doing any other waking activity, including being at school. Media refers to a means of communication that reaches many people, such as books, newspapers, magazines, radio and television (Faye, 1994:649). This means that the foundation phase learner is exposed to various forms of media which do not necessarily have a positive influence oh his moral development. The media can portray values that are different from those the young child learn in the family or are contradicting the family values.

Responsible and caring parents are concerned about the effect that television has on the development of the child but more so on the moral development of the child. Purves (1999:35) says that one of the most dreadful, guilt-inducing sights for a caring parent is the sight of a bright, keen, good-hearted and impressionable young child sitting mesmerized by some appalling, cynical rubbish on the television screen.

A variety of television channels are available to children during the day and even throughout the night. If parents have DSTV the number of channels increase, and with a video machine programs can be recorded during the night and watched during the day when parents are at work. On any given day or evening the child can watch children programs and cartoons but also TV characters engaging in physical threats, scuffles, fistfights, shooting, sexual encounters and much more (Faye, 1994:649).

It is thus clear that the television programs the foundation phase child is exposed to will quite often not be in accordance with the moral values practiced in the family. According to Gray (1999:29) watching violence on television triggers increased aggression in children. When children view violence or mean behaviour on television they loose to some degree the opportunity to develop a healthy sense of innocence, serenity and sensitivity

(Comstock & Park, 1991:99). These are traits that play an important role in the moral development of the young child.

Raatjies and Schwartz (1993:112) maintain that viewing television programs with violent content influences the ethical and moral development of the child. Gray (1999:xxiii) believes that drug abuse and low self-esteem can to a great extent be blamed on watching television programs displaying similar behaviou.

Purves (1999:36) says that when a child is passively watching television he is not able to actively take part in his own moral development – he just accepts what he sees on the television. Responsible parents should not merely forbid young children to watch certain television programs but must guide the young child to select suitable programs by explaining the value of the content. Parents, together with the child, need to formulate clear rules regarding television viewing. Young children should watch programs of a doubtful nature under parental guidance.

Brenfenbrenner (Killian, 1991:82) says that television with its magic spell, freezing speech and action, turns the living into silent statues as long as the enchantment lasts. The primary danger of the television screen lies not so much in the behaviour it produces, as in the behaviour that it prevents. Passive television viewing prevents the conversation (talks), games, family meals and arguments through which most of the child's learning takes place and through which character is formed (De Witt & Booysen,1995:93).

Hopkins (1989:35) points to specific social roles which are continually portrayed by television and which vary in accordance with the type of program. These social roles can be adopted by the younger child and

hence influence his social conduct (moral behaviour) because he believes that it is the accepted way to behave. According to Botha (1990:309)and De Witt and Boosen, 1995:94) there are various ways in which the contents of television programs can arouse aggression in a child:

- Identification with or modeling of the behaviour of an aggressive hero in a program.

- Violence on television creates potential for children to learn new aggressive skills.

- Witnessing violence in television programs can diminish the child's inhibitions about behaving in a similar way.

- In his imagination the child shares in the acts of violence and might become conditioned to the violent behaviour of television characters.

- Violence on television can lead to "psychological attenuation" in the child and reinforce his view that the world is a dangerous place.

Giddens (1993:451) maintains that cartoons contain the highest number of violent episodes than any other type of television program. According to Leuvennick (1993:33) television watching is not only bad but can contribute towards the child's education which includes moral development. Parents can use television programs to instill their own views and values in the child. Depending on the child's age television programs can form the ideal point of departure for discussions on sex, violence and crime (De Witt & Booysen,

1995:92). Well planned and relevant educational programs on television can have a positive influence on the child's development. Such programs can increase the child's knowledge about the world beyond his immediate environment and provide models for pro-social behaviour (Santrock, 1995:253)

2.6   SUMMARY

The moral development of the learner in the foundation phase is concerned with learning to distinguish between right or wrong, good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable behaviours within the particular society in which he lives. These behaviours can only be learned by the child as it is not inherited.   Moral development is thus dependent on the cognitive development of the child. The parents are the most influential agents in the transfer of morals and their attitudes and behavioural responses to right and wrong, good and bad, set the tone and direction of the foundation phase learner's moral development.

Moral development relates to the foundation phase learner's actions, attitudes, aspirations and volition. This means that moral development applies to the child's whole character, his virtues and vices, and at a later stage in his development, to his values and judgements. A society and family have rules of behaviour which members are expected to obey to guarantee their safety and that of others. The child, from his earliest years, should be introduced to the rules of behaviour of the society and family in which he lives.   Even the preschool child can be taught manners and behaviours which are acceptable in his society and family.

The family, as the ontic reality, initiates the child into the intricacies of the society and family in order to ensure that the cultural values and norms are learned by the child from an early age. Parents, as primary educators, play an important role in the moral development of their child in the foundation phase. The child's moral development is to a great extent determined in the preschool years within the family environment.

In the next chapter the methodology for the empirical research will be explained.

CHAPTER 3

PLANNING OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

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PLANNING OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter a literature study was made of the role the family plays in the moral development of the foundation phase child. The literature study revealed that the most important implication of the moral development of the foundation phase learner is the fact that the young child develops his value system on the basis of his educators' example. This means that the parents, as primary educators, play a significant role in the young child's moral development.

This chapter will focus on the planning of the research in discussing the questionnaire as research instrument and the processing of data.

3.2   SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

The purposeful sampling method was employed to select parents with children in the foundation phase. This strategy was chosen by the researcher because in purposeful sampling respondents likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon investigated can be selected (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:397). The researcher's aim was to understand the role that parents play in the moral development of their children in the foundation phase. Purposeful sampling provided the researcher with a sample of 105 respondents from the Ixopo district in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands. All the questionnaires were returned to the researcher for data analysis which can be considered as adequate for reliable data analysis by means of descriptive statistics.

3.3   DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

3.3.1 Quantitative research

The purpose of research design is to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible to research questions. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:34) say that since there are many types of research questions and many types of designs, it is important to match the design with the questions. Quantitative research methods collect data to be translated into a statistical format. The responses of respondents to the questions in a questionnaire are recorded in coded format, presented in frequency tables, graphs and/or chart formats, analysed and interpreted (De Vos, 2001:208). The simplest form of data analysis is univariate analysis, which means that one variable is analysed, mainly with the view to describing that variable (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:100). It can thus be stated that where information is required by a first time researcher, quantitative data collection and analysis seem to be the most suitable method.   The researcher selected the quantitative approach because:

- it is more formalised;
- better controlled;
- has a range that is more exactly defined; and
- uses methods relatively close to the physical sciences.

3.3.2 The questionnaire as research instrument

A questionnaire can be described a set of questions dealing with some topic or related group of topics, given to a selected group of individuals for the purpose of gathering data on a problem under consideration (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein , 1994:504). According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:190) the written questionnaire is a

prepared question form submitted to certain persons (respondents) with a view to obtaining information. Data is any kind of information that researchers can identify and accumulate to facilitate answers to their queries (Van Wyk, 1996:130). The written questionnaire is regarded as the most widely used survey data collecting technique (De Vaus, 1990:80)

A well-designed questionnaire is the culmination of a long process of planning the research objective, formulating the problem, generating the hypothesis, etc. A questionnaire is not simply thrown together. A poorly designed questionnaire can invalidate any research results, notwithstanding the merits of the sample, the field workers and the statistical techniques (Schnetler,1993:77).

In their criticism of questionnaires Berchie and Anderson (Schnetler, 1993:61) object to poor design rather than to questionnaires as such. A well-designed questionnaire can boost the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable tolerances (Schumacher & Meillon, 1993:42).

It therefore stands to reason that questionnaire design does not take place in a vacuum. According to Dane (1990:315-319) the length of individual questions, the number of response options, as well as the format and wording of questions are determined by the following:

- The choice of the subject to be researched.
- The aim of the research.
- The size of the research sample.
- The method of data collection.
- The analysis of the data.

Against this background the researcher can now look at the principles that determine whether a questionnaire is well-designed. It is thus necessary to

draw a distinction between questionnaire content, question format, question order, type of questions, formulation of questions and the validity and reliability of questions.

3.3.3 Construction of the questionnaire

Questionnaire design is an activity that should not take place in isolation. The researcher should consult and seek advice from specialists and colleagues at all times during the construction of the questionnaire (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:198). Questions to be taken up in the questionnaire should be tested on people to eliminate possible errors. A question may appear correct to the researcher when written down but can be interpreted differently when asked to another person.

There should be no hesitation in changing questions several times before the final formulation whilst keeping the original purpose in mind. The most important point to be taken into account in questionnaire design is that it takes time and effort and that the questionnaire will be re-drafted a number of times before being finalised. A researcher must therefore ensure that adequate time is budgeted for in the construction and preliminary testing of the questionnaire (Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos, 2003:45). All of the above was taken into consideration by the researcher during the designing of the questionnaire for this investigation.

A questionnaire has to engage the interest of people, since participation is voluntarily. If the topic of research is considered as important by the participants it will encourage their co-operation and elicit answers as close as possible to the truth (Cohen & Manion, 1994:93). An important aim in the construction of the questionnaire for this investigation was to present the questions as simply and straightforwardly as possible. The researcher further aimed to avoid ambiguity, vagueness, bias, prejudice and technical language in the questions.

The aim of the questionnaire (Appendix A) was to obtain information regarding parents' views of their role in the moral development of their child in the foundation phase. The questionnaire was sub-divided into the following sections:

- Section one, which dealt with the biographical information of the respondents, namely parents with children in the foundation phase, and consisted of questions 1 to 7.

- Section two contained questions on how parents perceive their role in the moral development of their child in the foundation phase.

- Section three consisted of questions relating to other role players in the foundation phase child's moral development.

3.3.4 Characteristics of a good questionnaire

During the construction of the questionnaire the researcher had to consider the characteristics of a good questionnaire in order to meet the requirements necessary for the research instrument to be reliable. The characteristics of a good questionnaire that guided the researcher are, according to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:190), Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen and Vos (2003:15), the following:

- The questionnaire has to deal with a significant topic, one the respondent will recognize as important enough to warrant spending his or her time on. The significance should be clearly and carefully stated on the questionnaire and in the accompanying letter.

- It must be as short as possible, but long enough to get the essential

data.   Long questionnaires frequently find their way into the wastepaper basket.

- Questionnaires should be attractive in appearance, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed.

- Directions to answer questions must be clear and complete and important terms clearly defined.

- Each question has to deal with a single concept and should be worded as simply and straightforwardly as possible.

- Objectively formulated questions with no leading suggestions should render the desired responses.   Leading questions are just as inappropriate in a questionnaire as they are in a court of law.

- Questions should be presented in a proper psychological order, proceeding from general to more specific and sensitive responses. An orderly grouping of questions helps respondents to organise their own thinking so that their answers are logical and objective. It is preferable to present questions that create a favourable attitude before proceeding to those that are more intimate or delicate in nature.

3.3.5 Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire

Data can be gathered by means of a structured questionnaire in, *inter alia*, the following ways: a written questionnaire that is mailed, delivered or handed out personally, personal interviews or telephone interviews. Each mode has specific advantages and disadvantages which the researcher need to evaluate for their suitability to the research question and the specific target population being studied, as well as relative cost. The researcher used the written questionnaire as research instrument taking into consideration the following advantages:

1   <u>Advantages of the written questionnaire</u>

The written questionnaire as a research instrument, to obtain information, has the following advantages (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:110; Wolhuter, Van der Merwe, Vermeulen & Vos, 2003:16):

- Written questionnaires are the least expensive means of data gathering because they can save the researcher time and money.

- Interviewer bias is precluded in written questionnaires. The way the interviewer asks questions and even the interviewer's general appearance or interaction may influence a respondent's answers. Such biases can be completely eliminated with a written questionnaire.

- A written questionnaire permits anonymity. If responses are given anonymously, it would increase the researcher's chances of receiving responses which genuinely represent a person's beliefs, feelings, opinions or perceptions.

- Completing a questionnaire in his own time permits a respondent a sufficient amount of time to consider answers before responding.

- Questionnaires can be given to many people simultaneously, that is to say a large sample of a target population can be reached.

- Written questionnaires provide greater uniformity across measurement situations than do interviews. Each person responds to exactly the same questions because standard instructions are given to the respondents.

- Generally the data provided by questionnaires can be more easily analyzed and interpreted than the data obtained from verbal responses.

- A respondent may answer questions of a personal or embarrassing nature more willingly and frankly on a written questionnaire than in a face to face situation with an interviewer who may be a complete stranger. In some cases it may happen that respondents report less than expected and make more critical comments in a mail questionnaire.

- Respondents can complete questionnaires in their own time and in a more relaxed atmosphere.

- Questionnaire design is relative easy if the set guidelines are followed.

- The administering of questionnaires and the coding, analysis and interpretation of data can be done without any special training.

(2)   Disadvantages of the questionnaire

The researcher is also aware of the fact that the written questionnaire has important disadvantages. According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:190) and Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:112) the disadvantages of the questionnaire are, *inter alia,* the following:

- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview an idea or comment can be explored. This makes it possible to gauge how people are interpreting the question. If questions asked are interpreted differently by respondents the validity of the information obtained is jeopardized.

- Questions can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straightforward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.

- The written questionnaire does not make provision for obtaining the views of more than one person at a time.

- Answers to written questionnaires must be seen as final. Re-checking of responses cannot be done. There is no chance of investigating beyond the given answer for a clarification of ambiguous answers. If respondents are unwilling to answer certain questions nothing can be done about it because the written questionnaire is essentially inflexible.

- In a written questionnaire the respondent examines all the questions at the same time before answering them and the answers to the different questions can therefore not be treated as "independent".

- Researchers are unable to control the context of question answering, and specifically, the presence of other people. Respondents may ask friends or family members to examine the questionnaire or comment on their answers, causing bias if the respondent's own private opinions are desired.

- Written questionnaires do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstandings or answer questions that the respondents may have. Respondents might answer questions incorrectly or not at all due to confusion or misinterpretation.

3.3.6 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

There are two concepts that are of critical importance in understanding issues of measurement in social science research, namely validity and reliability (Huysamen, 1989:1-3). All too rarely do questionnaire designers deal consciously with the degree of validity and reliability of their instrument. This is one of the reasons why so many questionnaires are lacking in these two qualities (Cooper, 1989:15). Questionnaires have a very limited purpose. In fact, they are often one-time data gathering devices with a very short life, administered to a limited population.

There are ways to improve both the validity and reliability of questionnaires. Basic to the validity of a questionnaire is asking the right questions phrased in the least ambiguous way. In other words, do the items sample a significant aspect of the purpose of the investigation? Terms must therefore be clearly defined so that they have the same meaning to all respondents (Cohen & Manion, 1989: 111-112).

Kidder and Judd (1989:53-54) mention the fact that although reliability and validity are two different characteristics of measurement, they "shade into each other". They are two ends of a continuum but at points in the middle it is difficult to distinguish between them. Validity and reliability are especially important in educational research because most of the measurements attempted in this area are obtained indirectly. Researchers can never guarantee that an educational or psychological measuring instrument measures precisely and dependably what it is intended to measure (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:198). It is essential, therefore, to assess the validity and reliability of these instruments. Researchers must therefore have a general knowledge as to what validity and reliability are and how one goes about validating a research instrument and establishing its reliability.

(1)   Validity of the questionnaire

Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:560) define validity as the extent to which a measuring instrument satisfies the purpose for which it was constructed. It also refers to the extent to which it correlates with some criterion external to the instrument itself. Validity is that quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to determine what it was designed to determine. In general terms validity refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure.

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:237), Mouton (1996:85-87) and Dane (1990:257-258) distinguish between three types of validity:

- Content validity, where content and cognitive processes included can be measured. Topics, skills and abilities should be prepared and items from each category randomly drawn.

- Criterium validity, which refers to the relationship between scores on a measuring instrument and an independent variable (criterion) believed to measure directly the behaviour or characteristic in question. The criterion should be relevant, reliable and free from bias and contamination.

- Construct validity, where the extent to which the test measures a specific trait or construct is concerned, for example, intelligence, reasoning ability, attitudes, etc.

The validity of the questionnaire indicates how worthwhile a measure is likely to be in a given situation. Validity shows whether the instrument is reflecting the true story, or at least something approximating the truth. A valid research instrument is one that has demonstrated that it detects some "real" ability, attitude or prevailing situation that the researcher can identify and

characterize (Schnetler, 1993:71). If the ability or attitude is itself stable, and if a respondent's answers to the items are not affected by other unpredictable factors, then each administration of the instrument should yield essentially the same results (Dane, 1990:158).

The validity of the questionnaire as a research instrument reflects the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn. It refers to the extent to which interpretations of the instrument's results, other than the ones the researcher wishes to make, can be ruled out. Establishing validity requires that the researcher anticipates the potential arguments that sceptics might use to dismiss the research results (Cooper, 1989:120).

The researcher employed the questionnaire as an indirect method to measure educators' views of discipline as an integral part of a code of conduct for learners. Because of the complexity of the respondents' attributes one is never sure that the questionnaire devised will actually measure what it purports to measure. Items in the questionnaire cannot be measured like height, mass, length or size. From the interpretation of the results obtained and the sureness with which conclusions could be drawn, the researcher is convinced that the questionnaire, to a great extent, did measure that which is was designed for.

(2)   Reliability of the questionnaire

According to Mulder (1989:209) and Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994: 512) reliability is a statistical concept and relates to consistency and dependability. Consistency refers to obtaining the same relative answer when measuring phenomena that have not changed. A reliable measuring instrument is one that, if repeated under similar conditions, would present the same result or a near approximation of the initial result.

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:194) and Kidder and Judd
(1986: 47-48) distinguish between the following types of reliability:

- Test-retest reliability (coefficient of stability) - consistency
  estimated by comparing two or more repeated administrations
  of the measuring instrument. This gives an indication of the
  dependability of the results on one occasion and on another
  occasion.

- Internal consistency reliability - this indicates how well the test
  items measure the same thing.

- Split-half reliability - by correlating the results obtained from two
  halves of the same measuring instrument, one can calculate
  the split-half reliability.

In essence, reliability refers to consistency, but consistency does not
guarantee truthfulness. The reliability of the question is no proof that the
answers given reflect the respondent's true feelings (Dane, 1990: 256). A
demonstration of reliability is necessary but not conclusive evidence that an
instrument is valid. Reliability refers to the extent to which measurement
results are free of unpredictable kinds of error. Sources of error that effect
reliability are, *inter alia*, the following (Mulder, 1989: 209):

- Fluctuations in the mood or alertness of respondents because of
  illness, fatigue, recent good or bad experiences, or temporary
  differences amongst members of the group bring measured.

- Variations in the conditions of administration between groups.
  These range from various distractions, such as unusual outside
  noise to inconsistencies in the administration of the measuring
  instrument such as omissions in verbal instructions.

- Differences in scoring or interpretation of results, chance differences in what the observer notices and errors in computing scores.

- Random effects by respondents who guess or check off attitude alternatives without trying to understand them.

When the questionnaire is used as an empirical research instrument there is no specific method, for example the "test-retest" method, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Therefore, it will be difficult to establish to what extent the answers of the respondents were reliable. The researcher, however, believes that the questionnaires in this investigation were completed with the necessary honesty and sincerity required to render the maximum possible reliability. Frankness in responding to questions was made possible by the anonymity of the questionnaire. In the coding of the questions it was evident that questionnaires were completed with the necessary dedication.

3.4   PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is an abbreviated version of a research project in which the researcher practises or tests the procedures to be used in the subsequent full-scale project (De Vos, 2001:178). The pilot study is a preliminary or "trial run" investigation using similar questions and similar subjects as in the final survey. Kidder and Judd (1986:211-212) say the basic purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the design of the subsequent study can be improved and to identify flaws in the measuring instrument. A pilot study gives the researcher an idea of what the method will actually look like in operation and what effects (intended or not) it is likely to have. In other words, by generating many of the practical problems that will ultimately arise, a pilot study enables the researcher to avert these problems by changing procedures, instructions and questions.

The number of participants in the pilot study or group is normally smaller than the number scheduled to take part in the final survey. Participants in the pilot study and the sample for the final study must be selected from the same target population. For the purpose of this study the researcher conducted a pilot run on ten colleagues.

According to Plug, Meyer, Louw and Gouws (1991: 49-66) the following are the purposes of a pilot study, and these were also the aim of the researcher in this survey:

- It provided the researcher with the opportunity of refining the wording, ordering and layout and it helped to prune the questionnaire to a manageable size.

- It permitted a thorough check of the planned statistical and analytical procedures, thus allowing an appraisal of their adequacy in treating the data.

- It greatly reduced the number of treatment errors because unforeseen problems revealed in the pilot study resulted in redesigning the main study.

- It saved the researcher major expenditures in time and money on aspects of the research which would have been unnecessary.

- Feedback from other persons involved were made possible and led to important improvements in the main study.

- The approximate time required to complete the questionnaire was established in the pilot study.

- Questions and/or instructions that were misinterpreted were reformulated.

Through the use of the pilot study as "pre-test" the researcher was satisfied that the questions asked complied adequately to the requirements of the study.

3.5   ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

If properly administered the questionnaire is the best available instrument for obtaining information from widespread sources or large groups simultaneously (Cooper, 1989:39). The researcher personally delivered questionnaires to the purposefully selected respondents and collected them again after completion. This method of administration facilitated the process and the response rate. An excellent return rate of 100% was obtained with all distributed questionnaires completed and collected (105).

3.6   THE PROCESSING OF THE DATA

Once data was collected, it had to be captured in a format which would permit analysis and interpretation. This involved the careful coding of the 105 questionnaires completed by the purposefully selected respondents (parents). The coded data was subsequently transferred onto a computer spreadsheet using the Exel program. The coded data was analysed using the same program in order to interpret the results by means of descriptive statistics.

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics serve to describe and summarise observations (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:355). Frequency tables, histograms and polygons are useful in forming impressions about the distribution of data. According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:65) frequency distribution is a method to organize data obtained from questionnaires to simplify statistical analysis. A frequency table provides the following information:

- It indicates how many times a particular response appears on the completed questionnaires.

- It provides percentages that reflect the number of responses to a certain question in relation to the total number of responses.

- The arithmetic mean (average) can be calculated by adding all the scores and dividing it by the number of scores.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation was constrained by a number of factors. The following are likely factors that might have influenced the reliability and validity of the questionnaire:

- Although anonymity was required in the questionnaire the possibility exists that parents with children in the same school could have discussed the questions and they might not have been frank and truthful in their responses.

- The sensitive nature of items in the questionnaire might have elicited false or misleading responses and influenced the reliability of the results.

- To restrict the investigation to manageable proportions, the researcher limited the study to parents in the Ixopo district in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands.

- The questions were formulated in English which is the second language of the respondents. The meaning of questions could have been differently interpreted because of the language barrier.

3.8   SUMMARY

In this chapter the planning and design of the empirical research were discussed and a comprehensive description of the questionnaire as research instrument was given.

In the following chapter the data obtained from the completed questionnaires will be analysed.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the data that was collected from the completed questionnaires will be analysed, findings will be interpreted and some comments will be presented. The data comprised biographical information and the role parents, people outside the family and institutions play in the moral development of the foundation phase child. The data from 105 questionnaires, completed by parents of foundation phase children, were analysed and interpreted.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Research aims, *inter alia*, to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:42). Research is a systematic attempt to provide answers to questions. Through research the investigator uncovers facts and then formulates a generalisation based on the interpretation of the facts.

Descriptive research is one of the methods of research used to study a person or persons scientifically in the educational situation. In this study the role of family in the moral education of the foundation phase child were investigated. Descriptive research attempts to describe the situation as it is, thus there is no intervention on the part of the researcher and therefore no control. Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:355) say descriptive studies do not set out with the idea of testing hypotheses about relationships, but want to find the distribution of variables.

In this study nomothetic descriptive research was employed with the aim of describing the role of the family in the moral development of the child. The researcher was primarily concerned with the nature and degree of existing situations in the family with children in the foundation phase.

4.2.1 Gender of respondents

Table 1   **Frequency distribution according to the parents' gender**

	Gender	Frequency	%
1	Father	34	32%
2	Mother	71	68%
	TOTAL	105	100%

Table 1 shows that most of the respondents (63%) that completed the questionnaire are the mothers of foundation phase children. Possible reasons why more mothers than fathers completed the questionnaire are:

• Traditionally the mother is seen as the caregiver at home and the father as the breadwinner.

• Vrey (1990:73) says that the mother who is consistent in her behaviour forms the anchorage point or beacon for the child in the forming of relationships, including relationship with morality.

• It appears as if mothers, as caregivers, are often more concerned about the moral development of the child than the fathers that are more often absent from home because of work commitment.

4.2.2 Age of respondents

Table 2 **Frequency distribution according to parents' age group**

	Age group	Frequency	%
1	Younger than 20 years	1	1%
2	20 - 25 years	2	2%
3	26 - 30 years	11	10%
4	31 - 35 years	36	34%
5	36 - 40 years	28	27%
6	41 - 45 years	18	17%
7	46 - 50 years	7	7%
8	51 - 55 years	2	2%
	TOTAL	105	100%

The larger number of parents (34%) that partook in the research are in the age group 31 to 35 years while nearly half (47%) of the parents are 35 years or younger and the majority (74%) are younger than 40 years of age (Table 2). Parents in the latter age group normally have children between the ages of six and ten years which are in the foundation phase.

4.2.3 Qualifications

Table 3 **Frequency distribution according to qualifications of parents**

	Highest qualification	Frequency	%
1	Lower than Grade 7	24	23%
2	Grade 7	2	2%
3	Grade 8	4	4%
4	Grade 9	3	3%
5	Grade 10	6	6%
6	Grade 11	7	7%
7	Grade 12	9	8%
8	Certificate(s)	10	9%
9	Diploma(s)	27	26%
10	Degree (s)	13	12%
	TOTAL	105	100%

According to Table 3 more than a quarter (26%) of the parents that completed the questionnaire possess diplomas and half (50%) have either a degree, diploma or certificate. This finding can be explained by the sampling method employed by the researcher. Respondents were selected by means of purposeful sampling (cf. 3.2) and the researcher targeted her colleagues in the teaching profession with children in the foundation phase. Being educators in primary schools most of them possess teaching diplomas and certificates because their practical contents are perceived as more suitable for teaching younger children in primary school.

4.2.4 Home language

Table 4   **Frequency distribution according to the home language of the parents**

	Language	Frequency	%
1	English	27	26%
2	Afrikaans	0	0%
3	Zulu	69	66%
4	Xhosa	9	8%
5	Others	0	0%
	TOTAL	105	100%

The findings in Table 4 were expected because the area selected for the research is situated in the midlands of KwaZulu-Natal with a predominantly Zulu speaking population. The little more than a quarter (26%) of parents whose home language is English might be explained by the Indian and coloured communities living in the area.

4.2.5 <u>Residence</u>

Table 5   **Frequency distribution according to the place where the family live**

	Residence	Frequency	%
1	Own house	65	62%
2	Renting a housl	12	11%
3	Live with parents	24	23%
4	Live with relatives	4	4%
	TOTAL	105	100%

According to the frequency distribution in Table 5 most of the parents (62%) in the research sample are home owners. Pretorius (1986:46) says every child needs a family home as a place of security. A family home provides the child with a permanent space, which he can experience as his own space and thus also becomes intentionally a space in which the child learns to attach meaning to moral issues. The security of a parental home has a particular significance in the moral development of the child, as moral development begins in the family. At home moral development begins in the realm of what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. Such morals are depicted by and insisted upon, or not, by parents (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:148).

4.2.6   Parents' role in child's moral development

Table 6   Frequency distribution according to the parents' role in the moral development of the foundation phase child

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	TOTAL
	As parent I must teach my foundation phase child to:				
2.1	be honest at all times (e.g. tell the truth)	99 94%	4 4%	2 2%	105 100%
2.2	be trustworthy (e.g. honour a promise)	99 94%	0 0%	6 6%	105 100%
2.3	be caring towards others (e.g. help older persons)	103 98%	0 0%	2 2%	105 100&
2.4	live harmoniously (lovingly) with other people	98 93%	0 0%	7 7&	105 100%
2.5	obey the rules of society (e.g. school rules)	101 96%	2 2%	2 2%	105 100%
2.6	distinguish between right and wrong (e.g. it is wrong to steal)	103 98%	2 2%	0 0%	105 100%
2.7	show respect for property of others (e.g. do not break school windows)	93 89%	0 0%	12 11%	105 100%
2.8	obey the rules of the family (e.g. be on time for meals)	95 90%	4 4%	6 6%	105 100%
2.9	behave in public places (e.g. be quiet in church)	97 92%	0 0%	8 8%	105 100%
2.10	respect other cultures (e.g. dress code)	98 93%	0 0%	7 7%	105 100%
2.11	be self-disciplined (e.g. to finish schoolwork before play)	97 92%	0 0%	8 8%	105 100%
2.12	show respect for nature (e.g. don't litter or destroy plants)	87 83%	0 0%	18 17%	105 100%
2.13	obey authority figures (e.g. listen to educators)	101 96%	0 0%	4 4%	105 100%
2.14	know what is good and bad (e.g. cursing is bad)	101 96%	2 2%	2 2%	105 100%
2.15	accept discipline from adults (e.g. obey reprimands)	97 92%	2 2%	6 6%	105 100%

The findings in Table 6 show that the majority of respondents are in agreement with the statements regarding the parents' role in the moral development of the foundation phase child. According to Du Toit and Kruger (1994:98) the most important implication of the moral development of the child is definitely the fact that the young child (foundation phase age) develops his moral system on the basis of his parents' example. Therefore parents, as the child's primary educators, cannot direct the child's moral development by prescription only but should influence his development by their practical example.

The above is substantiated by the following responses to the statements in Table 6.

Honesty (2.1)

The majority of parents (94%) agreed that they must teach their child to be honest at al times. Parents must be exemplary figures in telling the truth and if the child realizes that the parents has lied to him or has stretched the truth the parents have some explanation to do. It is important that the parent offers a valid reason for not telling the truth, or explain way he acted that way and apologize. Such behaviour will show children that honesty is also a way to rectify a mistake (Roehlkepartain, 200:210)

Trustworthiness (2.2)

More than ninety percent (94%) of the parents confirmed that they must teach their children to be trustworthy. Vrey (1990:97) maintains that a particular development task for the young child is to trust the mother (parents). The child has to learn to depend, rely and believe in his parents stability and their continuous provision of his needs. This experience of trustworthiness, dependency, belief and stability fosters the child's trust so

that he surrenders himself to his parents (or other trustworthy adults, for instance educators) without effort or anxiety. As the child believes in the trustworthiness of his parents he gradually comes to believe (trust) his own ability to do this on his own, for example to do his homework.

Caring towards other (2.3)

Close to one hundred percent (98%) of the parents said that they must teach their children to be caring towards other people. Care implies concern and action regarding the well-being, health, achievement, failure, joys and sorrows of other people (Pringle, 1987:34). Caring parents who show concern for their children, want to know how they are and what is happening to them, can instill in their children similar moral values of being caring towards others. Parents' behaviour towards servants, poor, elderly or sick people will be faithfully copied by their young children. Which people are respected and which are treated with contempt will be quickly learnt by offspring.

Harmonious living (2.4)

Most of the parents (93%) agreed that it is their responsibility to teach their children to live harmoniously with other people. To be able to live harmoniously with others, one has to live according to cultural morals (Du Toit & Kruger, 1994:64). Towards the end of the foundation phase the child is able to accept the moral code of society and adopt such rules as their own (Crain, 1992:148). A society's moral codes sometimes form part of their laws while others are unwritten but accepted and relate to the traditions and customs of society. Parents must teach their children from a young age that violation of society's moral codes may give rise to social disapproval.

Obeying rules (2.5)

Ninety six percent (96%) of the parents acknowledged that they have to teach their children in foundation phase to obey the rules of society. It is important that a child, as a member of society, adhere and conform to the rules of behaviour of that society to ensure the safety of its members and the nurturing of healthy relationships (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:148). The child, from his earliest years, should be introduced to such behaviour by parents and be taught manners and behaviours which are acceptable in society.

Distinguish between right and wrong (2.6; 2.14))

Nearly all the parents (98%) said that they have to teach their young children to distinguish between right and wrong (2.6) while only two percent less (96%) said that they have taught their foundation phase children to know what is good and bad. According to Du Toit and Kruger (1994:64) moral decision-making implies firstly that a choice is made between right and wrong, good and evil, proper and improper. Sprinthall, Sprinthall and Oja (1994: 178) say the young child's moral development begins in the realm of what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad and such morals are depicted by and insisted upon, or not, by parents. Moral decision-making involves a person's conscience. According to Crain (1992:205) at six or seven years of age, children develop a conscience. Conscience is an inherent human ability which enables the child to distinguish between that which is morally right, good and proper and that which is morally wrong, bad and improper.

Respect for property (2.7)

The majority of parents (89%) in the research sample agreed that they must teach their children in the foundation phase to show respect for the property of others. Parents' attitudes towards the property of others are

quickly picked up by their children (Yeats, 1991:86). Children who are allowed to mess, destroy, scribble on walls or get away with destructive actions will grow up finding little value in ownership and respect for property.

Rules of the family (2.8)

Each family set guidelines, principles, rules and norms with regard to that which is acceptable or not in the household. Ninety percent (90%) of the parents acknowledged that they have to see that the foundation phase child obeys the family rules. In the effective functioning family both parents and children should be involved in the setting of family rules. Parents must discuss the reasons for imposing rules with their children. When children were part of making rules they are more likely to abide by them (Crain, 1992:149).

Public behaviour (2.9)

More than ninety percent (92%) of the parents indicated that it is their duty to teach their young children how to behave in public places. According to Papalia and Olds (1992:30) certain kinds of public behaviour exist and are valued according to the culture of a society. Younger children's identification with their parents, who shape their behaviour through reinforcement and punishment, is the most important element in the way they develop a sense of morality and learn socially accepted behaviour in public.

Respect for other cultures (2.10)

The majority of the parents (93%) in the research sample confirmed that parents must teach their foundation phase children to show respect for other cultures. It is accepted that cultural diversity is a common feature of most modern communities. Dekker and Lemmer (1998:447) say in a

multicultural society the conflict between different moral systems are complicated by differences between groups as well as contemporary and traditional moral values held within groups. Papalia and Olds (1992: 254) maintain that conflict in a multicultural society cannot be completely eliminated but can form part of the child's societal growth if he has learnt from his parents to respect other cultures.

Self-discipline (2.11)

The responses of most of the parents (92%) were in agreement with the statement that parents must teach their foundation phase child to be self-disciplined. A child will have attained self-discipline when he, through his own will, is alone able to control his behaviour (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:206). To instill self-discipline in the young child parents should act as follows (Crain, 1992:5):

- Parents must be firm from the onset.

- Parents should pay close attention to how to enforce their children's behaviour.

- Parents should only reward reasonable behaviour and mete out appropriate punishment for unreasonable behaviour or self-indulgence.

- Parents must assure that rewards and punishment produce desirable effects

Respecting nature (2.12)

More than eighty percent (83%) of the parents confirmed that they must teach the young child to show respect for nature. Moral issues concerning

showing respect for nature include, *inter alia*, killing of animals, destroying of plants and littering (pollution), reflections on self and cultural beliefs (De Villiers & Sommerville, 2005:250). Parents should teach their children how to live in and care for the environment because there is not another one if this one is destroyed. From an early age the child must be taught how to respect nature by taking care of it in a sensible way as follows (Van Aswegen, 1993:219):

- Nature must not be exploited maximally (e.g. breaking tree branches for firewood) as livelihood is dependent on the environment for resources.

- Pollution, which occurs when something is added to nature which has an harmful effect on it, must be stopped.

- Nature conservation of natural areas must be emphasized because these ecosystems are necessary for the long-term benefit of generations to come

Obedience to authority (2.13)

Close to one hundred percent (96%) of the parents in the research sample agreed that they must teach their children to obey authority figures. Obedience is aligned to authority and responsible parents expect their children to be obedient, for what the parent requires is the well-being of his child (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:156). Parents should show their children the importance and advantages of obedience so that the child obeys authority not because of fear for punishment but spontaneously and meaningfully. According to Crain (1992:136) parents should insist on obedience because the child should not be free to ignore moral norms, ignore the authority figure's word to set his own morals or to be encouraged to do his own thing in his own way.

Acceptance of discipline (2.15)

Ninety two percent (92%) of the parents said that they must teach their young children to accept discipline. Moral concepts include, *inter alia*, laws, regulations, rules and codes of conduct to show children the limits within which they may function (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:62). The family home, the school and society are all unique in this respect. Younger children have to learn the consequences of a breach of conduct and to accept punishment for the wrongdoing. The child must understand and accept that punishment serves to deter repetition of an offence and to make quite clear the consequences of unacceptable behaviour (Levine, 1995:29).

4.2.7   <u>Role players in the child's moral development</u>

Table 7   **Frequency distribution according to the role players in the moral development of the foundation phase child**

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	TOTAL
	The following people and/or institutions and media play a role in the moral development of the foundation-phase child:				
3.1	Parents (as primary educators must set an example by their behaviour)	102 97%	2 2%	1 1%	105 100%
3.2	Siblings (older siblings are seen as role models)	88 84%	5 5%	12 11%	105 100%
3.3	Other family members (strong family ties may strengthen or weaken morals)	78 74%	7 7%	20 19%	105 100%
3.4	Peers (peer pressure may lead to a contravention of parental morals)	89 85%	8 7%	9 8%	105 100%
3.5	Neighbours (may have different morals that seem more attractive)	81 77%	4 4%	20 19%	105 100%
3.6	Family's church (offer moral judgements according to religion)	102 97%	2 2%	1 1%	105 100%
3.7	Church minister (role model of the morals described by religion)	82 78%	3 3%	20 19%	105 100%
3.8	Television (soapies and reality TV)	55 52%	41 39%	9 9%	105 100%
3.9	Radio (lyrics of songs, news)	65 62%	28 27%	12 11%	105 100%
3.10	Computers (games and Internet)	62 59%	28 27%	15 14%	105 100%

Gouws and Kruger (1996:182) maintain that moral values form continuously from birth with the result that parents' influence is virtually irreversible. This means that parents' good moral influence is imperative, while their bad influence can be shattering. Although children identify themselves with their parents' moral values, a process that leads to the formation of a personal moral system, many other people, institutions and the media play

a role in the child's moral development. The responses to the statements in Table 7 are an indication of parents' perceptions of the contribution of the role players in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

Parents as exemplary figures (3.1)

Nearly all the respondents (97%) agreed that the parents, as the child's primary educators, must set an example by their behaviour in the moral development of the foundation phase child. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:148) maintain that parents are the most influential agents in the learning of morals. Parental attitudes and behavioural responses to right and wrong, good and bad, set the tone and direction of the child's development of morals. Moral behaviours are not inherited but are learned and young children learn by imitating their parents (cf. 2.4.1).

Siblings (3.2)

More than eighty percent (84%) of the parents indicated that siblings play a role in the moral development of the foundation phase child. According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:212) older siblings tend to serve as role models for younger siblings; they also act as surrogate parents, taking on parental responsibilities and contributing to the child's security, belongingness and acceptance. Sproufe (1992:471) says young children learn a great deal from their older siblings, for example, how to master new skills, to negotiate, how to resolve conflict, deal with anger and moral issues (cf. 2.4.2). In their moral development siblings influence each other directly, through interaction, and indirectly, through their impact on each other's relationship with parents (Pringle,1987:26).

Family members (3.3)

Nearly three quarters (74%) of the parents say that family members play a role in the moral development of the young child. In research conducted by Papalia and Olds (1992:281) young children indicated that after parents, the most important other family members are grandparents who were often warm and supportive, offering affection and enhancement of worth. If a parent is not available children turn most often to close family members for guidance, companionship and affection. In the extended family that may include grandparents, uncles and aunts living in the same house, The non-working members often care for the household and younger children. Yeats (1991:85) says that the child learns family values (moral values) through the interaction that occurs between family members. This implies that family members, being the grandparents, other close family members or the extended family, play a role in the moral development of the child.

Peers (3,4)

The majority of parents (85%) agreed that peers play an important role in the moral development of the foundation phase child. Papalia and Olds (1992:282) state that babies are aware of each other, preschoolers begin to make friends, but not until the foundation phase does the peer group come into its own. The peer group helps children to choose moral values to live by. Testing their opinions, feelings and attitudes against those of other children helps them sift through parental values they previously accepted unquestioningly and decide which to keep and which to discard. The peer group also helps children learn how to get along (behave) in society. They learn how and when to adjust their needs and desires to those of others. when to yield and when to stand firm (Roehlkepartain, 200:113).

Neighbours (3.5)

More than three quarters (77%) of the parents acknowledged that neighbours play a role in the moral development of the foundation phase child. According to Sprinthall, Sprinthall and Oja, (1994:200) very little research has been done on the influence of neighbours on the moral development of the young child. In many instances neighbours have children of the same age who become friends, go to the same school and spend time together after school. A young child may learn behaviours and values from neighbours which might be problematic when the morality held by the neighbours is counter to that held by the child's family.

Church (3.6; 3.7))

Close to hundred percent (97%) of the parents agreed that the family's church plays a role in the moral development of the young child. Parents that attend church services and meetings on a regular basis instill in their young children specific religious morals (cf. 2.4.6). Yeats (1991:86) maintains that if parents have a definite attitude towards religious morals, they will find it much easier to convey these attitudes to their children. Vrey (1990:119) says that the foundation phase child goes to Sunday school where he learns about his religion and has to give meaning to it in his personal capacity. Since the foundation phase child is in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development he is not able to think in the abstract and his concrete thinking makes it difficult for him to advance to a more spiritual understanding of religious morality (cf. 2.2.3). Parents and/or the minister of the church thus still have to supply the young child with moral and religious judgements. According to 78% of the parents their church minister plays a role in the moral development of the young child.

Telivision (3.8)

More than half of the parents (52%) indicated that television plays a role in the moral development of the foundation phase child. According to Papalia and Olds (1992:223) research suggests that children are influenced more by seeing filmed violence than by seeing real people acting aggressively. Children who see televised violence tend to behave more aggressively (cf. 2.5). Gouws and Kruger (1994:185) maintain that television programmes often propagate wrong values like materialism, sexual immorality and power as the greatest good. Children who see television characters, both heroes and villains, getting what they want though lawbreaking may fail to intervene when another child is being victimised. In assessing more than 4500 children in seven countries Williams (1987:224) recorded the following effects of cartoon violence on children, namely, increases in:

- Fighting, kicking and choking.
- Loss of temper.
- Cruelty to animals.
- Disrespect for others.

Radio (3.9)

Nearly two thirds 62%) of the parents said that the radio plays a role in the moral development of the young child. Listening to a news bulletin on the radio today can be compared to a crime report because of all the reported incidence of violence like highjackings, armed robberies, etc. (cf. 2.5). Listening to reports of violence seems to make children more willing to hurt people, probably because they want to put in practice what they have heard. Faye (1994:649) is of the opinion that children are today more at the mercy of sensate values peddled by the radio, movies television.

Computers (3.10)

Most of the parents (59%) agreed that computer games and the Internet play a role in the moral development of the foundation phase child. Children imitate what they see in computer games and they absorb the values transmitted and come to accept violence and aggression (cf. 2.5). Young children identify more strongly with aggressive characters in games, and are more likely to believe that the character's aggression in the game reflects real life.

4.3   SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher's aim was to give some order to the range of information provided by the educators in their answers to the statements in the questionnaire. Some of the data collected were of a biographical nature which enabled the researcher to construct a broad profile of the randomly selected sample for the investigation. The data that dealt with the role played by the family, people, institutions and the media in the moral development of the foundation phase child, were organized in frequency tables to simplify the statistical analysis thereof. The frequency of the educators' responses to the statements were interpreted and commented on.

The last chapter of the study will consist of a summary of the literature study and the empirical investigation with findings from both on which certain recommendations will be made.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS   PAGE

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter of the dissertation a summary of the previous chapters will be given and some of the most important findings from the research will be discussed. This will be followed by recommendations and a final remark.

5.2   SUMMARY

5.2.1 Statement of the problem

In essence this study investigated the role of parents in the moral development of their child in the foundation phase.   The moral development of the foundation phase child implies judgement which means that the child must have the cognitive ability to understand moral behaviour.   Children do not inherit morals but have to learn them. Moral values should be inculcated in young children by the educational help of their parents and educators. Parents play an important role in the transfer of values to the foundation phase learner as the young child models his behaviour on that of his parents. The young child develops his value structure on the example set by his parents.

The transfer of morals and values has become an area of concern for many parents due to issues such as mass media, conflict, political corruption and substance abuse. The most important implication of this is

that parents must be in possession of acceptable norms and positive values which they can instill in their children.

5.2.2 Literature review

Moral development, which includes moral reasoning and normative decision-making, go hand in hand with the child's cognitive development. Children are unable to make sound moral judgements until they have achieved a certain level of cognitive (intellectual) development. The foundation phase learner is in the pre-operational and concrete-operational phases of cognitive development which means the child's moral experience still rests on concrete and realistic grounds. The child in the foundation phase is egocentric and cannot conceive of more than one way of looking at a moral issue. Therefore the young child looks for constant, immutable rules which are interpreted literally, and clings to specific rules that prohibit stealing, lying, cheating, etc. The child behaves as directed by parents (adults) because of respect and love for them and regard their morals as inflexible and not negotiable. The moral values of young children are based on obedience; they obey adult rules to avoid punishment, without understanding morality.

It is important that children should obey certain rudimentary rules from an early age. A young child needs laws, rules and social interaction to guide his moral behaviour in a way that would not harm himself or other people. Every society and family set up certain rules, guidelines, principles and norms for behaviour. These are known as moral norms and are based on what is considered as right or wrong, good or bad and acceptable or not acceptable. Moral norms should be inculcated in the child by his parents and educators with the aim to help him develop an internalised system of values.

Towards the end of the foundation phase the learner develops a conscience which is a moral awareness by which he distinguishes between the morally right and the morally wrong. The learner's conscience urges him to do that which is recognized to be right and restrains him from doing what is known to be wrong. Feelings of guilt and shame play an important role in the moral development of the foundation phase learner because if his behaviour does not meet the standards set by his conscience he feels guilty, ashamed or both. After developing a conscience the child uses it as a guideline for his behaviour. Conscience can be seen as the guardian of morality, justice and decency.

In the moral development of the young child there are certain areas where he will need factual information regarding the rules of behaviour which he is expected to obey. The foundation phase learner also needs to understand why people behave in certain ways in certain circumstances. This knowledge is essential so that the child become better at anticipating the feelings and reactions of others and themselves. In his moral development the foundation phase learner requires knowledge about morality in order to treat others in a moral manner. Authentic knowledge about morality is needed to equip the young child with the information needed to make informed moral choices.

Research has found that parents play a significant role in the moral development of the child. The attitudes of parents to right or wrong, good or bad, acceptable or not acceptable set the tone and direction of the child's moral development. The child's moral development is directed and determined to a great extent during the preschool years within the family environment. Upon entering the foundation phase the child should have developed a reasonable sense of moral responsibility. Parenthood implies that parents are responsible to guide, assist and set an

example for the moral development of their young child. The goal of successful parenting is to raise children that are confident in their moral decisions.

In families with more than one child the sibling or siblings also play an important role in the moral development of the young child. Older children tend to serve as role models for younger children in the family and as such influence the moral development of the young ones. By observing the way in which older brothers and sisters behave the young child adopts similar ways of behaving, whether it is acceptable or not. When there is a good relationship between siblings younger siblings can learn a great deal from older siblings, including positive moral values. Young children like to imitate older brothers and sisters and in this way learn right or wrong moral behaviour.

Effective communication between parents and their children is very important in the transfer of moral values. Children learn a great deal of family and society values through the interaction that occurs between family members. Although the young child learns moral values by observing parents' behaviour this observation also depends on verbal and non-verbal communication between them. Despite the fact that the young child imitates the moral actions of his parents, the value of a specific behaviour has to be explained verbally to the child. Parents also need to explain family rules to the child in order to promote its adoption by the child.

The mass media, especially television, also plays an important role in the moral development of the child in the foundation phase. The average child today spends more time watching television than doing any other activity, including being at school. The television programmes the child is

exposed to is not necessarily in accordance with the moral values practised in the family. When the young children view violence or mean behaviour they loose to some degree the opportunity to develop a healthy sense of innocence, serenity and sensitivity. When a child is passively watching television he is unable to actively take part in his own moral development because he just accepts what he sees on the television.

5.2.3 Research design

This study utilised a self-structured questionnaire as research instrument to obtain information concerning parents' views of their role in the moral development of their child in the foundation phase. The information sought for this investigation was not available from any other source and had to be acquired directly from the respondents, namely parents with children in the foundation phase. In a situation like this the most appropriate method of data collection is the questionnaire as it is easily adapted to a variety of situations.

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding the role of parents in the moral development of the foundation phase learner concerning the following:

- Parents' responsibility in instilling moral values in their children in the foundation phase.

- The role that people outside the family, institutions and the media play in the moral development of the young child.

5.2.4 <u>Presentation and analysis of research data</u>

The purpose of chapter 4 was to discuss the data collected from the questionnaires completed by one hundred and five parents and to analyse and interpret the findings. At the outset an explanation and description was provided as to the methods employed in the categorisation of the responses and the analysis of the collected data. This was followed by frequency tables which displayed a set of responses by the number of times each response was obtained. This was done in order to simplify the presentation of data in that it indicates the proportion of the total number of responses that were obtained for a particular statement question. The findings from the frequency distributions were analysed and interpreted.

5.2.5 <u>Aim of the study</u>

The researcher formulated specific aims (cf. 1.5) to determine the course of this study. These aims were realised through the literature study, together with an empirical survey comprising a self-structured questionnaire.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The following are findings from the empirical survey:

- The majority of parents that partook in the research agreed that, concerning the moral development of their children in the foundation phase, the following are values which can be accepted by all and which parents should endeavour to instill in their children:

- Honesty (94%).
- Trustworthiness (94%).
- Care for others (98%).
- Living harmoniously (93%).
- Obey rules of society (96%).
- Distinguish between right or wrong (98%).
- Respect for others property (89%).
- Obey family rules (90%).
- Behave in public (92%).
- Respect other cultures (93%).
- Exercise self-discipline (92%).
- Respect for nature (83%).
- Obey authority figures (96%).
- Distinguish between good and bad (96%).
- Accept discipline from adults (92%).

• Nearly all the parents (97%) in the research sample agreed that the parents, as primary educators, are the most influential agents in the moral development of the foundation phase learner.

• More than eighty percent (84%) of the parents viewed older siblings as role models in instilling moral values in younger children.

• Most of the parents (85%) said that due to peer pressure the young child in the foundation phase could learn moral values that may lead to a contravention of parental morals.

• Close to one hundred percent (97%) of the parents confirmed that their church offers moral judgements according to religion.

- More than three quarters of the parents (78%) indicated that the church minister is a role model of the morals described by religion.

- Close to forty percent (39%) of the parents said that television do not play any role in the moral development of the foundation phase learner.

- More than a quarter (27%) of the parents disagreed that the radio and computers play a role in the moral development of the child in the foundation phase.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Inculcation of positive morals

(1) Motivation

The possession of a healthy set of moral codes which will enable the learner in the foundation phase to be accepted and function well in his family, the school and society is essential. The parents (primary educators) and the schools (secondary educators) have a responsibility to instill a positive morality in the young child. Values, norms, attitudes and manners are not innate but are learned.

The responsibility of parents to educate their children is of such a nature, content and character that it cannot be transferred. However, many parents are not successful in their task of rearing their children, as there is no proven recipe available. Parents' educational responsibility also means instilling sound moral values in their children to enable them to live harmoniously with others (cf. 2.4). The young child in the foundation

phase has to learn the principles, rules and norms with regard to that which is considered right and wrong, proper and improper, good and evil from their primary educators, namely their parents (cf. 2.4.4).

Families, and especially the parents, are responsible for transferring the child from an amoral state to where he becomes an acceptable social participant who knows and follows acceptable values and norms. Education in the family set-up is realized particularly by imitation, identification and intuitive behavioural identification (cf. 2.4.1). The personal attitudes and moral conduct of parents play an important role in the moral development of the foundation phase child.

From the study it is evident that the majority of parents who partook in the empirical research are aware of their responsibilities in the moral development of the young child (cf. 4.2.6 & 5.3). However, being aware of positive morals is not a guarantee that the parents will be successful in transferring these norms to their children as evident in a large number of youth delinquents.

(2)   Recommendation

Since it is accepted that education is directed towards the child's achievement of moral independence and his acceptance of a system of values, parents as primary educators must endeavour to inculcate positive moral norms in their children.

The recommendation is that parents must endeavour to pass on the following values to their children:

- One of the most important things in the life of a child is the kind of person he becomes: the quality of character he has and his moral behaviour.

- Self-discipline when a person does what he knows he should do, even though he would rather not.

- Being trustworthy at all times.

- Telling the truth which is essential for trust, self-respect and the social health of a society.

- Being honest in all aspects of life.

- Doing his work to the best of his ability.

- Using honourable means and respecting the rights of others.

- Recognizing the worth of other people.

- Treating other people as he would like to be treated.

- Obeying the authority of authoritative figures.

5.4.2 Support for parents

(1) Motivation

Without quality education no child can realize adequate adulthood. Man is a being who educates, is educated and is dependent on

education. Initially education takes place mainly in the family as the primary educational situation with the parents as primary educators. In his moral development the young child in the foundation phase develops a set of beliefs about morality based on the ideas and responses of adults (parents and educators). The young child learns and adopts adult's code of morals without really understanding or thinking about them himself.

In the contemporary world parents are increasingly confronted by change and continually changing societal demands (such as moral values) and circumstances in the midst of which they, as primary educators, have to rear their children (cf. 2.5). The family of today is influenced by a complex social, economic and cultural environment which has a dynamic influence on its members. Amidst such a complex and dynamic society with constantly changing norms and values, it becomes increasingly difficult to equip children adequately. The modern parent needs guidance and support in his primary educational task.

As morality is learned it is obvious that the family is central to the learning of moral codes. If positive moral codes are not learned in the family educational institutions, such as the school, should assist the learner and parents. The government, universities, schools and media should each make a constructive and active contribution toward the promotion of meaningful parenthood.

(2)   Recommendation

The recommendation is that support programs for parents should include the following:

- Assistance to parents in the task of bringing up a child with loving support and acceptance.

- Guidance in establishing a relationship of warm, emotional closeness to the child.

- Parents' assurance to the child of their unconditional love but at the same time making it clear that they strongly disapprove of unacceptable behaviour.

- Ways in which parents can stimulate the child's intellectual development by means of acquisition of language and communication skills.

- Support to parents in helping the child to form a positive self-image. Parents have to give credit for a child's positive qualities to help the child develop a positive self-esteem.

- Ways in which parents can encourage the child towards better achievements to enhance his self-image. However, parents must not make unrealistic demands on the child or expect too much of him and then show their displeasure if the child does not meet their expectations.

- Guide parents in instilling a strong feeling of family unity in the child.

- Help parents to guide the child from parental discipline to self-discipline. Parents can do this by praising good conduct and setting a good example of self-discipline.

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- Ways in which parents can encourage the child towards better achievements to enhance his self-image. However, parents must not make unrealistic demands on the child or expect too much of him and then show their displeasure if the child does not meet their expectations.

- Guide parents in instilling a strong feeling of family unity in the child.

- Help parents to guide the child from parental discipline to self-discipline. Parents can do this by praising good conduct and setting a good example of self-discipline.

- Parents should be given guidance to help the child to accept responsibility by allocating responsibilities and challenges which the child will be able to handle.

5.4.3 Further research

(1) Motivation

One of the aims of education is to bring the child to a point where he is able to live harmoniously with others, which means he is living according to cultural morals. As morality is basically learned it is obvious that the parents as primary educators, are central to the learning of moral codes. The role of parents in the moral development of the child are affected by:

- The degree of warmth, acceptance, mutual esteem and trust between parents and their children.

- The frequency and intensity of interaction and communication in the family.

- The type and degree of discipline exercised.

- The degree of independence opportunities the parents provide.

(2) Recommendation

The recommendation is that further research of a quantitative and qualitative nature be undertaken pertaining to the role of parents in the moral development of the child. Due to the diversity of conditions under which parents and children find themselves it is necessary that research

studies be conducted to find suitable ways to support parents in the moral development of their children.

5.5 CRITICISM

Criticism that emanates from this study includes the following:

- It can be presumed that some of the respondents in the research sample formed their perceptions regarding the role of parents in the moral development of the foundation phase learner from the media. The possibility therefore exists that these respondents indicated what their role should be in the moral development of their children and not what really is happening in their family.

- The purposefully selected research sample comprised only parents in the Ixopo district of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands which is a predominantly rural area. Dissimilar responses might have been elicited from other areas, for example parents living in urban areas.

5.6 FINAL REMARK

The aim of this study was to obtain a better understanding of the role parents play in the moral development of their children in the foundation phase. It is trusted that study will be of value to parents and educators who are responsible for the education of young children. It is also hoped that the recommendations may be taken into consideration by parents and educators in order to assist them in their task of moral education.

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APPENDIX A

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

The family and the moral development of the foundation phase learner

Ms S L Haynes
June 2005

Dear Parent

QUESTIONNAIRE: THE FAMILY AND THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OFF THE FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNER

At present I am engaged in a research project towards my MEd (Master in Education) degree at the University of Zululand under the guidance of Proff. G. Urbani and M S Vos. The research is concerned with *The role of the family in the moral development of the foundation phase learner.*

I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected respondents, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experiences relating to the research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be regarded as **CONFIDENTIAL**, and no personal details of any parent/respondent will be mentioned in the findings, nor will any of the results be related to any particular parent or family.

We deeply appreciate your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

....
Ms S L Haynes

....
Date

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RESPONDENT

1. Please read through each statement carefully **before** giving your opinion.

2. Please make sure that you do not **omit** a question, or skip any page.

3. Please be totally **frank** when giving your opinion.

4. Please **do not** discuss statements with anyone.

5. Please **return** the questionnaire after completion.

Kindly answer **all the questions** by supplying the requested information in writing, or by making a cross (X) in the appropriate block.

SECTION ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1.1 Respondent completing the questionnaire

		Code
Father		1
Mother		2

1.2 My age in completed years as at 2004-12-31:

Age group		Code
Younger than 20 years		1
20 - 25 years		2
26 - 30 years		3
31 - 35 years		4
36 - 40 years		5
41 - 45 years		6
46 - 50 years		7
51 - 55 years		8
56 - 60 years		9
61 - 65 years		10
Older than 65 years		11

1.3 My qualifications are:

Qualifications		Code
Lower than Grade 7		1
Grade 7		2
Grade 8		3
Grade 9		4
Grade 10		5
Grade 11		6
Grade 12		7
Certificate(s)		8
Diploma(s)		9
Degree(s)		10

1.4   My home language is:

Language		Code
English		
Afrikaans		
Zulu		
Xhosa		
Other (Please specify)		

1.5   The family:

Live in their own house ☐ 1   Live in their own flat ☐ 4

Rents a house ☐ 2   Rents a flat ☐ 5

Live with parents ☐ 3   Live with relatives ☐ 6

Other (please specify) _____

1.6   Children in the family:

Total number of children in family ☐

Number of school going children in family ☐

Number of foundation phase learners ☐

1.7   Please explain your understanding of the moral development of the foundation phase learner

_____

_____

_____

_____

SECTION TWO: ROLE OF PARENTS IN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
	As parent I must teach my foundation phase child to:			
2.1	be honest at all times (e.g. tell the truth)			
2.2	be trustworthy (e.g. honour a promise)			
2.3	be caring towards others (e.g. help older persons)			
2.4	live harmoniously (lovingly) with other people			
2.5	obey the rules of society (e.g. school rules)			
2.6	distinguish between right and wrong (e.g. it is wrong to steal)			
2.7	show respect for property of others (e.g. do not break school windows)			
2.8	obey the rules of the family (e.g. be on time for meals)			
2.9	behave in public places (e.g. be quiet in church)			
2.10	respect other cultures (e.g. dress code)			
2.11	be self-disciplined (e.g. to finish schoolwork before play)			
2.12	show respect for nature (e.g. don't scatter litter or destroy plants)			
2.13	obey authority figures (e.g. listen to educators)			
2.14	know what is good and bad (e.g. cursing is bad).			
2.15	accept discipline from adults (e.g. obey reprimands from adults)			

SECTION THREE: ROLE PLAYERS IN THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
	The following people and/or institutions and/or media play an important role in the moral development of the foundation phase learner:			
3.1	Parents (as primary educators must set an example by their behaviour)			
3.2	Siblings (older siblings are seen as role models)			
3.3	Other family members (strong family ties may strengthen, or weaken, morals)			
3.4	Peers (peer pressure may lead to a contravention of parental morals)			
3.5	Neighbours (may have different morals that seems more attractive)			
3.6	Family's church (offer moral judgements according to religion)			
3.7	Church minister (role model of the morals described by religion)			
3.8	Television (soapies and reality TV)			
3.9	Radio (lyrics of songs, news)			
3.10	Computers (games and Internet)			