

Rethinking the Justification of Teaching Morality: Review-Based Evidence

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Abstract

This article aims to stimulate dialogue on the urgent need to teach morality as an integral part of life-long learning. The article is premised on the claim that moral responsiveness and conduct can only be achieved through moral education. Based on a critical analysis of relevant documents, the article attempts a justification of teaching morality. Specifically, it seeks to answer the question of whether or not morality can be taught in both formal and informal situations. It goes deeper into the inevitability of teaching morality, raising scholars' views on the moral concerns inherent in the teaching enterprise. Furthermore, the article grapples with the issue of whether teaching is a moral undertaking, the aspects in which teaching is a moral enterprise, and the extent to which the role of the teacher is implicated in moral education provision. In conclusion, the review confirms that, like academic disciplines, morality can be taught as well as learned and that the teaching of morality is not limited to school or college premises only. Finally, the article contends that the teaching of morality is not an obligation of just professionals in the teaching sector but of all and sundry.

Keywords: Ethics, moral dimension, moral education, morality, teaching enterprise

Introduction

Globally, the literature available on teacher ethics acknowledges the widespread nature of misconduct cases in the teaching sector (South African Council for Educators, 2017; Tierney & Sabharwal, 2016; Coetzee, 2015; Brock *et al.*, 2014; Betweli, 2013; Anangisye, 2011; Anangisye & Barrett, 2005). Misconduct among teachers or educators is evidently historical in nature and character (Anangisye, 2006). Considering the inherent ethical character of teaching one wonders why teaching is still associated with misconduct. Certainly, unbecoming teachers' morals are indicators of morality deterioration prevalent in our societies today. Thus, the mitigation of elements of moral decay in the teaching sector in particular and society in general is indispensable. The underlying assumption of this article rests on the fact that moral awareness and conduct can only be achieved through moral education i.e. teachers or teacher trainees' orientation to moral values.

Against this backdrop, teaching morality is indispensable, necessary and a matter of urgency. As such, ignorance of moral principles and concerns inherent in the teaching enterprise makes the society vulnerable to possible and obvious menaces, with far reaching implications for people's social, political, economic and cultural development. Indeed, Socrates proffers that ignorance makes people put [their] trust in evil doing (Boone, 2017; Anangisye, 2015; 2013). People's involvement in evil doing can be voided by equipping them with knowledge on making doing good a matter of life-and-death i.e. teaching them moral values that are upheld and treasured by their respective societies at any cost. In this regard, the major assumption which was deemed indispensable to inform the present article rests on the *theoretical framework* that largely draws on several different lines of inquiry. The article begins with the basic question regarding

whether or not morality can be taught just like other academic or professional subjects or courses such as Biology, History, Geography, English, Chemistry and Mathematics. Second, the article considers the inescapability or need of teaching morality. Third, the article interrogates the scholars' thinking and views on the moral character inherent in the teaching undertaking. Fourth, the article attempts to clarify on the core moral concerns inherent in the teaching undertaking. Subsequently, the article grapples with how teaching is a moral enterprise and the extent to which the teaching enterprise is implicated in the provision of moral education to foster morality in society.

Methodological Issues and Implications

Qualitative information that informed the foregoing lines of inquiry was sought through the documentary research method (see, for example, Mogalakwe, 2006). This method allowed for a critical analysis of documents deemed as viable sources of information relevant to the article. Several different online resources were accessed through search engines such as google.com and yahoo.com. Other sources of data were relevant books, book chapters, journal articles, published and unpublished documents—dissertations, conference and seminar papers. These scholarly materials enabled the author to investigate critically the justification of teaching morality at various stages of a human's development. Materials used came from psychology, history, sociology, philosophy, curriculum, management, and research (see, for example, Koehn, 1994). These materials support the argument of this article regarding the teaching of morality. The study observed research ethical issues and principles, including obtaining permission to access libraries and adhering to ethical requirements regarding accessing and utilising online materials (Felzmann, 2013). In addition, the analysis of the

literature accessed was treated in accordance with the established lines of inquiry.

The Teaching of Morality Revisited

The viability of teaching morality

A fundamental question of this article is: Can morality be taught? In many ways, this is very much a rhetorical question as morality can in whatever way possible be taught and acquired, hence its value and its continued existence in society. Thus, the question is not so much about whether it can be taught but how it can be taught. However, it is better to grapple with the first dimension of the question before proceeding to the second aspect regarding how it can be taught. In this regard, two points may help to answer the original and primary question. Indubitably, the teaching of morality starts at home. Informally, parents and other members of the family in nuclear and extended families teach morality as an integral part of socialisation and responsible parenthood to ensure children function in society with moral wellbeing. Generally, children are amoral; they become moral through the initial moral upbringing in the family set-up. As Herrick (2003: 22) aptly puts it in his book, *Humanism: An Introduction*:

To develop a moral sense may require the generic potential and the appropriate nurturing. The conscience may be the internalised voice of the parent telling us what to do and not to do. We probably respond much better to the example of moral awareness on the part of parents and others than from a list of commandments.

It is process of teaching of morality known as 'socialisation' in sociological terms (Kirby *et al.*, 1997). Basically, the aim is to initiate a

child into the realm of moral values upheld by his or her respective society. Such values include social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, and spiritual and moral values. It is evident at this point that morality is a 'subject' embedded in the family 'curriculum' – the starting point of learning for any child. For many societies, especially in the African past, child nurturing or teaching was incomplete without the moral component.

At a bigger stage, educational institutions provide equally useful evidence of the teaching of morality. Like other matters, morality is conveyed in schools, colleges, and universities (Wansheng & Wujie, 2005; Barone, 2004; Dawidowicz, 2003). The teaching of morality at this level is two-fold. To begin with, the teaching of morality involves people who are supposed to teach ethics or exercise direct ethical practice as a prerequisite to their responsiveness in their professional endeavour. Such people include student-teachers in teacher education and training. Indeed, the character of their profession makes morality indispensable.

In particular, Arthur (2003) argues that 'teaching courses that ignore values, including ethical and personal qualities, are simply not worth pursuing' (p. 319). Second, the teaching of morality also takes place in schools, colleges, and universities when teachers and other key players orientate pupils or people towards embracing moral values as an integral part of their professional bidding. In the Chinese tradition, for example, moral educators are of three types – subject teachers of morality, the party system, and class teachers (Xiaoman & Cilin, 2004). As such, 'moral development in schools builds on the child's experience in the home' (National Curriculum Council, 1993: 5). Seen this way, moral development is part of a continuum that continues from childhood, to adolescence, to adulthood, and from

one generation to another generation, till proceed *ad infinitum*. Furthermore, and more contentiously, morality is taught in religious institutions. Religious institutions have—to a certain extent—played a vital role in influencing people’s characters. Consider, for example, a situation in which people choose to lead a good life as a result of religious teachings. The good life under any responsible religion entails choosing good over evil, doing good deeds for humanity not diabolical deeds. At this point, the author does not intend to argue that one has to be religious to be morally upright. Rather, the intention is to show that religious teachings may contribute to moral practice. This argument stands irrespective of one’s motive for renouncing unacceptable conduct. One might give up theft for two reasons. One may dread legal or other dire consequences of theft. On the other hand, one might give up theft on moral grounds—by treating one’s neighbours the same way that one would want them to treat him or her. Holloway (2004) calls the second reason, ‘morality without God’. Generally, ‘morality can be learned in the family, in the school and within the community’ (Herrick, 2003: 22). This contextual analysis illustrates that the process of teaching of morality is evident in different segments of society.

The inevitability of teaching morality

The foregoing sub-section, however, raises one equally useful question: Does one need to be taught morality to be moral? In light of the above analysis, the following points may provide a basis for the teaching of morality. Morality is a human quality—associated with human beings as social beings only (Jaroszynski & Anderson, 2003; Herrick, 2003). In particular, Herrick (2003) puts it succinctly thusly:

Morality arises because humans are essentially social animals. An individual alone on a desert island would not need to

behave morally, except perhaps to avoid damaging the island for potential others... In... rare cases where babies have been brought up outside a social environment – for instance by a group of wolves – the being does not acquire social instincts and abilities, having difficulty even with speech and awareness of other people. The social nature of humans creates the need for morality, not from a god but from the nature of human self-responsibility and social inter-relations (p. 21).

Despite being a prerequisite for social being, no human being in the world is born with moral values. As such, every person needs to be taught morality as it is supposed to be an integral part of the social fabric. As Fenstermacher (1990: 132) points out:

Children do not enter the world compassionate, caring, fair, loving, and tolerant. Nor do these qualities emerge in due course like hair on the body or hormones in the endocrine system. Rather, moral qualities are learned – acquired in the course of lived experience.

Simply put, what makes a man or woman on Planet Earth—here it does not matter in what society and in what part of the globe—results from his or her encounter with ‘educators’ or ‘teachers’. Such an encounter can be formal or informal, planned or spontaneous, deliberate or accidental. Eventually, this encounter is an integral part of the moral schooling that makes a man or woman who operates in a society with an acceptable moral imperative (see, for example, Mali, 2012).

Scholars' Thinking on Moral Character of the Teaching Undertaking

It might be held to be a universal truth that 'teaching has a long and honourable tradition of ethical behaviour' (Brock, 1999). Ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, for example, was concerned with moral character as an end or goal of teaching and he claimed that 'virtue is knowledge'. His main argument was 'that all we need in order to be good is to know what is good' (Rowse, 1936). Since the time of Socrates the teacher's conduct has often been considered a moral matter or mission. Indeed, teaching or education is a profoundly moral activity (Fenstermacher, 1990). In particular, most educational philosophers seem to agree that teaching is an inherently moral undertaking. More significantly, it is arguable that, 'values are an integral part of teaching, reflected in what is taught and also in how teachers teach and interact with pupils' (Arthur, 2003: 318).

Such values seem to include punctuality, excellence, courage, patience, fairness, neatness, honesty, trust, truthfulness, orderliness, caring, respect for pupils and other people. Teachers are expected to demonstrate these values in all walks of life. In her recent book, *The Ethical Teacher*, Elizabeth Campbell (2003) shows that such values or virtues are reflected in how teachers relate to their immediate clients. She contends that teaching is an ethical or moral enterprise because 'for teachers, the need to treat students fairly or impartially is an all-pervasive moral imperative that extends into all aspects of their professional practice' (Campbell, 2003: 29). What emerges here is that the virtue of fairness is grounded in the ethical principles of social justice.

Likewise, scholars (Carr, 2000a; Pring, 2001) acknowledge that teaching is prone to evaluation in moral terms. People habitually give moral assessments of teaching. The judgements passed by

people include observations of good or bad behaviour of school or college teachers. Also, school and college students make common evaluative comments in different educational or social settings. University students, for example, may be heard speaking or complaining about fair or unfair treatment or marking of a take-home essay in a certain course. In this respect, the following excerpt is worthy of reflection:

Good teaching is not just teaching which is causally effective or personally attractive, it is teaching which seeks at best to promote the moral, psychological and physical well-being of learners, and at least to avoid their psychological, physical and moral damage (Carr, 2000a: 9).

Finally, the literature reveals that teaching is notable for its normative character and implications. In his work, *Ethics and Education*, Peters (1966), like other educational philosophers, emphasises normative character or aspect inherent in teaching:

‘Education’ does not imply, like ‘reform’, that a man should be brought back from a state of turpitude into which he has lapsed; but it does have normative implications, if along a slightly different dimension. It implies that something worth-while is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a morally accepted manner (Peters, 1966: 3).

This notion is further clarified and developed by Carr (2003). As discussed elsewhere in this article, the normative character of teaching exists on different plains. In particular, the normative character embodies the values inherent in teaching —though it should also be borne in mind that not every undertaking that can be judged or evaluated in terms of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ is necessarily ethical.

In view of these points, one may argue that entering teaching largely implies getting involved in moral commitments and obligations. This implication is important because teaching is also primarily concerned with commitment to individual welfare and basic needs (Carr, 2000b; Carr, 2000c; Sockett, 1993). However, how exactly is teaching implicated in moral concerns? Based on this question, the following section attempts an analysis of the moral dimensions inherent in teaching.

Core Moral Concerns of the Teaching Undertaking Revisited

Different writers have attempted a clarification and justification of the moral nature and character of the teaching venture. Writing from an Australian context and experience, for example, in *Professional ethics and teacher practice*, Bibby (1999) acknowledges that ‘in addition to the ordinary ethical demands on professionals, teaching has special features’ (pertaining to the moral commitments and requirements). But, the question is: What are these distinctive ethical features that make teaching special? Most of the writings by Carr seem relevant to answering this question. In particular, Carr (2006) and, to a certain extent, Peters (1966) identify what they refer to as *key normative dimensions*.

First, like other well-esteemed occupations, teaching ‘stands to be evaluated as (professionally) good or bad by reference to standards of instrumental efficiency or effectiveness’ (Carr, 2006:171). On the one hand, teaching is judged from a skill or competence point-of-view. In this sense, concepts of good or bad, right or wrong, low or high, quality are usually applied in relation to the role, practices, and activities of professional teachers or educationists in carrying out teaching. Knowingly or unknowingly, people pass judgements on teachers’ performance in different ways. Although not all evaluations

regarding teaching are moral in nature, the following aspects are worthy of reflection. School or college teachers have moral responsibility for the subject matter taught to their students. Teachers have the obligation to teach the subject matter that meets the expectations of both the curriculum and societal needs. Hence, the choice of what to teach stands to be judged from a moral viewpoint:

Teachers are members of a profession. As such they have been initiated into a social practice with its own principles of conduct and values. These are frequently implicit. But they embody a commitment to helping young people to learn those things which are judged to be worthwhile. Of course, views differ over what is worthwhile, or over what sort of books or activities are more worthwhile than others. Teaching, then, reflects the very moral divisions of the wider society – and teachers, in making choices about the content of learning or about the ways of promoting learning, are inevitably caught up in the moral debate (Pring, 2001: 105-106).

Also, in the course of promoting the teaching and learning process, there are moral or ethical considerations. Teachers are obliged to use approaches that provide access to knowledge for all learners. The virtues of caring, fairness and impartiality, for example, should apply to all students in the classroom regardless of their background or intellectual capability. In his chapter, *The Teacher and the Taught: Moral Transactions in the Classroom*, Clark (1990: 262) indicates that:

To create and sustain conditions that will promote learning for every student in a class, a morally responsible and pedagogically effective teacher must pursue a commitment to *inclusion* as opposed to selective *exclusion*.

Furthermore, in his book, *The Moral Base for Teacher Professionalism*, Sockett (1993:15) argues that moral judgement is inherent in the teaching techniques:

A technique in teaching is always subservient to a moral end, but it can also be evaluated morally as a means to that end. Effective questioning is different from interrogation under torture. Lecturing is different from the harangues of the propagandist. Rewarding and punishing children is different from changing the behaviour of rats or pigeons to 'produce the desired results'.

It is not uncommon in the meetings of school inspectors with subject or school and college teachers to hear evaluative remarks regarding the teaching and learning process. One might hear them discouraging teachers from the use of methods that are discriminative or the use of negative labels for some students with learning difficulties. Although such judgements are not always ethical in character, the question is: In which contexts can technical or pedagogical competence be ethically judged? Consider the settings where some teachers do not deliver (competently and effectively) quality knowledge or skills because they are conducting *private tuition classes*. As Mosha (1997:12) puts:

Administrators are sometimes aware of teachers who do not teach at all or teach superficially during earmarked times but organize paid tuition classes either at school or elsewhere and teach some content very effectively.

On the other hand, the focus may be on teachers' moral conduct. The words – *good* and *bad* – discussed elsewhere can be used to describe

the day-to-day conduct of people. People speak or write about bad or good conduct, low or high moral conduct with reference to approved or disapproved behaviour. From a normative perspective, it is arguable that school, college or university teachers need to exhibit high moral or ethical standards of performance, practice or conduct. More specifically, the focus of such performance is on academic, pedagogical, andragogical, and professional concerns.

A second level of ethical involvement is reflected in the social contracts or agreements that teachers engage in. Indeed, a social contract in this situation means ethical or moral obligations that are dependent upon the agreement made with others. Usually, such contracts are between teachers and employers; or, on the other hand, between teachers and parents or students. Insofar as some contracts are ethical in nature, such contracts involving teachers are also morally binding. The contracts are ethically binding on the basis of trust, respect, and responsibility. Some moral concerns relate to ethical-contractual obligations or duties. These hold teachers responsible for providing their clients with educational benefits based on certain principles or standards. A primary, secondary school, college, or university teacher, for example, might be criticised for lacking punctuality in undertaking his or her lesson or for failing to teach the authorised syllabus properly for fairly:

We properly engage in moral conduct not out of any desire for personal reward or satisfaction but guided by a rational recognition that we are required so to behave irrespective of our personal desires; not because of what we want but because of what we owe in terms of public duties and obligations. ... Many of the actions that we ordinarily perform are done precisely because we have promised or entered into some kind of contract

with others to do them and contracts and promises clearly create duties and obligations (Carr, 1991: 210).

Central to such social contract is adherence to socially-sanctioned rules that, as discussed elsewhere in this article, bind the parties concerned. Whereas teachers are obliged to conform to the agreed terms, conditions or rules, employers and other parties concerned are obliged to respect and observe the teachers' rights and welfare. Third, as in other occupations such as medicine and law, there is little doubt that teaching is implicated in a general ethical discourse of rights and duties. On the one hand, teachers ought to ensure that the rights of their pupils or students to access education are not violated, but promoted accordingly. Under these circumstances, a teacher should not place her or his personal interest or needs above the needs of her or her clients (students). This safeguard suggests that teachers need not interfere with the educational interests of students under their guardianship (or elsewhere). In this respect, Carr (1993:194) explains:

[...] Just as human life is healthier and more secure when individual rights are legally protected and where there is proper access to medical care, so individual opportunities and life-chances are otherwise enhanced via initiation into the forms of knowledge, skill and expertise which education sets out to provide.

As such, teachers have moral obligations to ensure that children under their guardianship or tutelage are protected, respected, and given quality education. Indeed, they have such a moral duty and obligation irrespective of the backgrounds of the students. In this view, education, as an inalienable human right, cannot be separated

from such other human rights as justice and health. As students have rights, teachers have obligations and duties to treat 'all students justly and equitably – recognising and appreciating the range of values held by individuals as well as within families, groups, cultures, and the wider school community' (Brock, 1998: 17). The ethical or moral implications are apparent in several different tasks or accomplishments contracted or assigned to teachers. A teacher ought to teach the assigned subjects and classes, evaluate the work of students, promote the safety of students, and contribute to the wellbeing of the school and society. These and many other tasks determine the ethical or moral obligations (the responsibility and accountability) of every teacher. Under the discourse of rights and duty, the ethical or moral obligations of teachers may not be confined to the four walls of a classroom or lecture room of school or college compound. Rather, such roles or duties encompass all walks of life.

Fourth, distinctive or unique to the teaching enterprise is the responsibility for the moral development and promotion of the recipients of teaching. Whereas the classic and long-established professions—medicine, the church, and law—have ethical dimensions, teaching is—by its very nature—also concerned with moral education. According to the National Curriculum Council (1993), a school as a whole plays a pivotal role in moral development and formation. This role involves teaching pupils or students to tell the truth, keep promises, respect the rights and property of others, and to act considerately towards others in addition to helping less fortunate and weaker members of the society, taking personal responsibility for one's actions, and being self-disciplined.

By its virtue as the teaching enterprise, moral development is a concern of any teacher of good standing or one worth being called

one. It is evident that as far as the notion of moral development is concerned, teachers build on the moral foundation that has been already laid down by parents and other members of the community – though this prior moral education augurs well with settings that facilitate such a moral foundation. Fifth, congruent with the developmental role is the modelling role that those who undertake the teaching enterprise are supposed to demonstrate. In particular, the modelling function requires teachers to be moral exemplars to pupils and students. Indeed, a morally responsible teacher serves as an exemplar to the wider society, as the community members expect a lot from him or her in building a morally-upright society. More specifically, de Ruyter (2003: 477) elucidates on this issue:

In addition to conveying what one should or should not do, offering ideals means that educators provide children with moral exemplars – an excellent moral community or society – that could provide a positive inducement not only to follow the rules but to follow them as optimally as one can.

Modelling, in this context, operates at several levels or assumes different forms. Academically, in practising teaching, a teacher ought to demonstrate competence in the subjects that she or he teaches. It is the academic proficiency that actually makes one a good or bad example. Although under normal circumstances, academic competence is supposed result from university or college training, it is evident that teachers continually need to update their knowledge and skills as they grow professionally. Teachers must acquaint themselves with new theories and knowledge resulting from changes and developments.

Thus, being a bad example academically implies that a teacher fails to deliver the expected quality subject matter. In addition to academic commitment, teachers must demonstrate professional attributes in everything they do. As already pointed out, academic excellence is arguably very important but it remains incomplete in the absence of generally acceptable general moral conduct. Essentially, the ethical or moral modelling inherent in teaching take various forms. Speaking, for example, of good or bad conduct could also refer to the teachers' dress, language use, and relations with others. All these aspects call for acceptable moral character on the part of teachers. Whereas in some societies dress might not be a strong basis for judging a teacher's conduct, there are grounds for this emphasis in the Tanzanian context, where how one dresses also tends to reflect one's moral inclination. In fact, for the teachers, as exemplars, a strict code of dress is required of them to ensure that they continue serving as role models for their pupils or students.

Sixth, it is arguable that teaching is undertaken by human beings and is always performed in relation to other human beings (students, other teachers, parents, employers, and members of the wider community). In school or college settings, Clark's observation is relevant and worthy of reflection here:

At its core, teaching is a matter of human relationships. Human relationships, whatever else they may be, are moral in character and consequence. After that between parent and child, the most profoundly moral relationship our children experience is that between the teacher and the taught (Clark, 1990: 265).

In this respect, the moral dimension is reflected in the consequences of such human interactions and relationships. Kirk (1988: 14) states

that, 'since teaching involves working with and on behalf of others there is a moral obligation to consider the effects of these actions'. In fact, there is little doubt that children (students) and other people around teachers tend to be affected whenever a teacher behaves unethically. Usually, the impact of such unethical conduct is not only upon the children but also upon the teachers themselves and people near them. After all, teaching is a complex enterprise. The nature of such complexity is well illustrated by Bowyer (1970: 370) in the following terms:

Teaching is probably one of the most complex and all-encompassing operations in contemporary society, for the teacher is responsible to self, the student, the community, the larger social order, and the teaching profession. Her responsibilities extend into three separate areas, her personal life, the classroom, and the public life.

Based on this view, teachers cannot undertake teaching independent of ethical relations with other people. Virtues such as fairness, righteousness, honesty, and justice ought to be always present in every teaching context, hence making teachers answerable for their actions and responsive to the moral demands of their preoccupation. These virtues are well articulated by Barnes (1991:16) who insists: "It seems clear that teachers, whether they accept the role or not, will regularly be judged by pupils on moral and personal level-perhaps in terms of fairness, honesty, lateness or patience".

Equally noteworthy is the role of codes of ethical principles in the teaching profession. Like many other professions, teaching is sometimes characterised by a written code of conduct. Such codes of ethics do not only assist teachers in their conduct but also acquaint

the public with what to expect from them as professionals (Socket, 1990). However, the point is not that without a code of ethics teaching will cease to be a moral enterprise—far from it: codes help to define and clarify the responsibilities and obligations of teachers to different stakeholders within the teaching enterprise. As the United Republic of Tanzania (1962:51) stipulates ‘every teacher shall recognise that he has certain responsibilities to the child under his care; the community in which he lives; the profession; the employer; the state’. In this context, the day-to-day ethical performance of school or college teachers is reflected and judged in light of those responsibilities. Finally, the moral dimension of a teacher is also implicated in an educational research undertaking (Pring, 2004; Anangisye, 2007; Anangisye, 2017). Teaching as research might be appreciated at two levels.

First, teaching is an object of research. In the course of the teaching process, teachers are concerned about reflective inquiry into the teaching method. Teachers carry out research in two ways: They conduct research in self-evaluation of the teaching process; and they are concerned with the learning process. They deal with learners who may have problems with the learning process. As such, teachers are reliable sources of data pertaining to the teaching and learning process. Second, teachers may themselves be researchers. In particular, this role involves teachers in universities and other institutions of higher learning.

Besides teaching and offering consultancy services, university teachers are charged with the responsibility of undertaking research in their specialisations. The role of research for teachers corresponds with the mission of the university as a prime source of knowledge. Though not always the case, research has ethical implications.

Indeed, ‘we need to be aware of the ethical implications for participants and researchers throughout the process of research, from planning through to outcome and sometimes beyond’ (Tindall, 1994: 152). Similarly, arguing for the inherent ethical character of the research undertaking, one British philosopher of education observes:

Moral thinking is a kind of practical thinking, and thus the educational researcher faces the same kind of moral demands as does the teacher as he or she applies professional judgement in the ‘educational practice’. There is a constant need to reflect on the values which inform the research and the ways in which those values might be made concrete in the research activity itself (Pring, 2000:142).

The ethical dimension of research takes different forms—all involving confidentiality, respect, responsibility, and values. The American Educational Research Association cited in Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1996: 514) explicitly reveals the ethical character of any research:

[...] We should strive to maintain the integrity of our research, of our research community, and of all those with whom we have professional relations. We should pledge ourselves to do this by maintaining our own competence and that of people we induct into the field, by continually evaluating our research for its ethical and scientific adequacy and by conducting our internal and external relations according to the highest ethical standards.

Apart from being central to teaching as an occupation, the moral dimension of teaching is also critical in shaping and defining relationships between teachers and students, teachers and teachers, teachers and employers, teachers and parents, and so on. On the

whole, appropriate relationships in teaching and education require sensitivity to the ethical dimension. As such, meaningful 'transactions' between teachers and other players in teaching or education depends on the teachers' ethical awareness.

Conclusions

This article set out to analyse critically issues of morality or moral wellbeing as they relate to teaching and learning. In view of the foregoing analysis, the following points can be made. First, there are teachers, whom one might call *separatists* who perceive education in moral and other values as separate pursuits from teaching (Carr & Landon, 1998). To them, moral development and formation of students is an obligation to be undertaken only by teachers who have expertise in the area. Arguably, such a position distances itself from holding every school or college teacher responsible and accountable for moral development. Second, there are teachers who take the view that every teacher shares in the responsibility for the moral development and formation of students. Central to this view is the observation that teaching is essentially moral in nature and character. In this regard, every individual who pursues teaching as a professional undertaking in some way accepts moral responsibility. This view treats moral concerns as applicable across the curriculum. Third, the process of teaching morality is not limited to a four-wall class or lecture room or school premises. Teachers—as exemplars—do teach morality in all walks of life i.e. in- and outside the classroom and school (or college) premises (see, for example, Mali, 2012). In this sense, teachers and morality are inseparable. Fourth, as this article contends, the obligation to teach morality transcends teacher professionalism as it also encompasses the role of parents, relatives and/or community members as all these stakeholders work in

tandem to foster morality, which is the cog that allows the society to progress and function together under shared human values.

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