The Role of the School in Providing Moral Education in a Multicultural Society: The Case of Mauritius

by

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I declare that

The Role of the School in Providing Moral Education in a Multicultural Society: The Case of Mauritius is my own work and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

…… ……..
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Title of Thesis: **The Role of the School in Providing Moral Education in a Multicultural Society: The Case of Mauritius**

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Summary:

The present study aimed at describing and analysing stakeholders' perception of the role of the school in providing moral education in a multicultural society. The relevance of moral education today in the context of the Mauritian society cannot be underscored given the widespread concern about the collapse of family structures and the demise of family role models as agents of moral education. The adoption of a materialistic philosophy of life and the increasingly influential role of the media have contributed to the disintegration of the moral fibre of society. Using a qualitative approach, the understanding of various categories of stakeholders, namely teachers, students, parents and school administrators, regarding the issue of morality, moral education and the role of the school have been investigated through a survey. The sample consisted of 33 teachers, 30 students and 9 school administrators and 10 parents. The data was collected through four focus group discussions with students and teachers respectively and a series of individual in depth interviews with parents and school administrators. The data collection period extended over eight months. The conceptual framework used in the study was based on the social learning model developed by Bandura (1991:91). The notion of modelling or vicarious learning as a form of social learning is particularly relevant in the case of moral learning and moral socialisation in the context of the school. The findings reveal a general consensus among adults of the need for schools to seriously reconsider its function as a moral educator. Their perceptions of the ways in which it ought to take place focus primarily on the use of role modelling and dialogue within the school set up. Adults also seem to believe that some form of direct moral instruction could be considered if the strategy used is more student-centred and based on discussions about case studies. The students, however, perceive indirect moral instruction through the hidden curriculum to be more effective in helping them to understand and internalise moral values. Chief among their concern is the role of the

teacher and his or her professionalism as well as communication skills. In the light of the findings, guidelines have been developed to implement a moral education programme at secondary school level.

Key words: *morality, moral education, moral socialisation, role of the school, social learning, role modelling, role of teacher, Mauritian education system, qualitative research*

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List of Abbreviations

Certificate of Primary Education	**CPE**
Higher School Certificate	**HSC**
International Monetary Fund	**IMF**
Movement Militant Mauricien	**MMM**
Movement Socialiste Militant	**MSM**
Member of the Legislative Assembly	**MLA**
National Agency for the Treatment	**NATRESA**
And Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers	
Parti Mauricien Social Democrate	**PMSD**
Private Secondary Schools Authority	**PSSA**
School Certificate	**SC**
United Nations Economic Social and Cultural Organisation	**UNESCO**

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