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Marva E. Tyrell
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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

PERCEPTIONS OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN A SEVENTH-DAY

ADVENTIST SCHOOL

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of

the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

by

Marva Elaine Tyrell

2012

To: Dean Delia C. Garcia
     College of Education

This dissertation, written by Marva Elaine Tyrell and entitled Perceptions of Character Education in a Seventh-day Adventist School, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommended that it be approved.

_____
Linda Spears Bunton

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Gail Gregg

_____
Thomas Reio

_____
Erskine Dottin, Major Professor

Date of Defense: November 9, 2012

The dissertation of Marva Elaine Tyrell is approved

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Dean Delia C. Garcia
College of Education

_____
Dean Lakshmi N. Reddi
University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2012

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to God, first, whose invitation to approach Him boldly assured me of his love, mercy, and grace: then, to my husband whose persistence, love, and sacrifice encouraged completion of this work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

PERCEPTIONS OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN

A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SCHOOL

by

Marva Elaine Tyrell

Florida International University, 2012

Miami, Florida

Professor Erskine Dottin, Major Professor

Character education has been viewed by many educators as having significant historical, academic, and social value. Many stakeholders in education argue for character development as a curricular experience. While understanding the degree to which character education is of worth to stakeholders of institutions is important, understanding students, teachers, and administrators perspectives from their lived experiences is likewise significant.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to gain a deeper understanding of character education within a Biblical framework environment by examining the lived experiences of students, administrators, and teachers of a Seventh-day Adventist School. Phenomenology describes individuals' daily experiences of phenomena, the manner in which these experiences are structured, and focuses analysis on the perspectives of the persons having the experience (Moustakas, 1994).). This inquiry was undertaken to answer the question: What are the perceptions of students, teachers, and an administrator toward character education in a Seventh-day Adventist school setting?

Ten participants (seven students and three adults) formed the homogeneous purposive sample, and the major data collection tool was semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990; Seidman, 2006). Three 90-minute open-ended interviews were conducted with each of the participants. Data analysis included a three-phase process of description, reduction and interpretation.

The findings from this study revealed that participants perceived that their involvement in the school's character education program decreased the tendency to violence, improved their conduct and ethical sensibility, enhanced their ability to engage in decision-making concerning social relationships and their impact on others, brought to their attention the emerging global awareness of moral deficiency, and fostered incremental progress from practice and recognition of vices to their acquisition of virtues. The findings, therefore, provide a model for teaching character education from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective. The model is also relevant for non-Seventh day Adventists who aspire to teach character education as a means to improving social and moral conditions in schools.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Character education has been viewed by many educators as having significant historical, academic, and social value. Educators, students, and stakeholders value character training in curricular experiences. While understanding the degree to which character education is of worth to students, educators, and stakeholders of institutions, understanding students', teachers', and administrators' perspectives from their lived experiences is likewise significant. This study of character education was undertaken to understand the meanings and the structural essence of the phenomenon of character education through the lived experiences of students, teachers, and administrators of a Seventh-day Adventist school.

Leadership, integrity, concern, courage, curiosity, and service (Gauld, 1993) are a composite of qualities that are inherent in the kind of decision-making that builds character. Research has shown that the implementation of character education programs in schools raises students' consciousness of character development by decreasing inclination toward violence (Schultz, Barr, & Selman, 2001). According to Wilhelm (2005) Christian schools and schools that educate children at home instead of in formal settings (usually referred to as Home Schools) introduce faith as a key link between teachers' and administrators' present and future expectations for character maturity of students.

On the other hand, the focus on cultivating students' character-based decision making in public schools, has been on certain character traits such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship (Josephson, 2001; Lickona,

Schaps & Lewis, 1998). According to Hunter (2000) core values have been continually redefined. On the other hand, Seventh-day Adventists view intentional character development against the backdrop of God's eternal character of love giving humanity wholeness unto eternal life for their brokenness. According to Nash (as cited in Knight, 2006), "*The Bible* provides both an overarching view of history and a comprehensive world view....Christian educators…see…telling of the biblical meta-narrative as one of the primary reasons for the existence of their schools" (p. 100).

Background to the Problem

Historically, culturally, socially, politically, and economically, character education has remained among the major goals of the American curriculum. History taught the founders of American democracy that moral education was necessary for the success of democratic principles (Lickona, 1993). The *Bible* was, then, the reliable source of moral education for the nation. As the nation grew more pluralistic, American society became less reliant on Biblical instruction for moral guidance; instead, McGuffey readers introduced moral lessons of industry, courage, patriotism, honesty, kindness, and love through stories, poetry, and heroic tales (Josephson, 2001; Lickona, 1993). However, throughout the years, philosophical theories, cultural perspectives, psychological strategies, and legislation have brought change to the discourse (Hunter, 2000; Lickona, 1993).

Historically, American citizens accepted Biblical principles of moral instruction, but as scientific and cultural views evolved, moral instruction as filtered through Biblical principles was neutralized. During the early twentieth century, ethnic diversity gave rise to the demand for equitable respect of sacred texts and the question, "whose

morality?" (Josephson, 2001; Lickona, 1993). According to Eisner (2002) moral concepts and skills did not, then, become "a part of students' intellectual repertoire" (p. 107). Such an absence of moral concepts and skills will have significant consequence when students process choices concerning their quality of life.

A clear decline of character education in public schools occurred between the 1920s and the 1980s. Schools were influenced during this period by three philosophical theories: logical positivism, moral relativism, and personalism. Logical positivism held that there was no foundation for moral truths because there are no objective standards for measuring right and wrong. Moral relativism claimed that there are no universal ethical standards because moral values result from one's culture. Personalism, on the other hand, claimed that every person is free to choose his or her standards (Lickona, 1993). Between 1960 and 1980, personalism gave birth to values clarification in the classroom; values clarification emphasized thinking about values instead of differentiating between right and wrong processes. Students engaged in moral dilemma discussions and decision-making processes. Teachers valued their roles as clarifying agents of students' values, instead of instructors of universal principles. The moral content of character education lacked a clear focus (Josephson, 2001; Lickona, 1993).

Politically, legislation influenced schooling by regulating moral issues inherent in racism, sexism, and classism. Legislation, determining quality of relationships and the degree to which students receive equitable instruction, addressed two of these moral issues. The "separate but equal doctrine," (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 267) was ruled illegal under the Fourteenth Amendment of the constitution. *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954) ruled that separate educational facilities were

unequal, while Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 assured education equity for males and females. Studies have shown, though, that disparity in male and female preparation during high school years can hinder equal access to higher education and opportunities (American Association of University Women; Projects on Equal Rights; Rosser, as cited in DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999). As a result, research findings reveal that women at the Bachelor's degree level continue to concentrate on traditionally female professions, and, in science women remain under-represented and under-measured (Benoit & Gidlof-Regnier, 2006; Randour, Stransburg, and Lipman–Blumen, as cited in de Marrais and LeCompte, 1999).

Classism, discrimination based on socioeconomic status, is a moral issue (Powell, 2001). Schools stratify students along economic lines that reveal expectation of performance in school and future occupation. "In American culture – wealth, power, and prestige- are highly valued," according to DeMarrais & LeCompte, (1999). Thus schools' curricula are similarly stratified and justified under the banner of a meritocratic society: if students work hard, all can achieve either in college preparatory programs or in vocational programs. Social class is the single most consistent factor characterizing students of low socio-economic status whose placements are based on the following: (a) location and resources of schools; (b) age of students; (c) number of students in class; (d) teachers' expectation of students according to performance; (e) teachers' knowledge of students' background; and (f) students' cultural capital (DeMarrais & LeCompte, 1999; Powell, 2001). According to MacLeod (as cited in Powell, 2001) "... academic underachievement ... is the result of a system that tends to reject and / or marginalize anyone who does not conform to the middle class ideal" (pp. 44 – 45).

Mindful of the undulating trends of character education in public schools, as well as, the theories and legislation influencing its survival, Seventh-day Adventists have operated institutions worldwide from the mid nineteenth century until the present day. Adventist institutions have remained aware of the various shifts in perception. Knight (2006) succinctly articulates this paradigm shift in the following: "When modern culture lost the concept of the God who is 'out there,' it also lost the idea that there are universal values 'out there' that apply across time, individuals, and cultures" (p. 243). Given the varying contexts of the character education discourse in public schools, Seventh-day Adventists have developed schools based upon six Christian principles of faith: (a) humans' special gift of choice, (b) God's respect of that gift, (c) His character revealed in the *Bible*, (d) humans' fall from perfection to brokenness, (e) their restoration to wholeness through God's sacrificial love, and (f) an inheritance of eternal life with a Creator (Knight, 2006).

Problem Statement

School districts in America have recently focused on character education. In fact, in some states, for example Florida, educational policymakers have mandated character education. This focus raises the salient question, how is character developed?

On one hand some theorists, like Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1984) have posited a case for moral development from inherent, predictable stages of human development. On the other hand, Dewey (1916 / 1944) contended that "we never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment" (p. 19). This view suggests a strong connection between the environment and moral development. In this case, it might be appropriate to ask: are there environments more conducive to character

development? An answer to the foregoing question might be secured by studying the perceptions and conduct of individuals who experience education within a Biblical environment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to gain a deeper understanding of character education within a Biblical framework environment by examining the lived experiences of students, administrators, and teachers of a Seventh-day Adventist School.

Research Questions

The primary research question is as follows: What are the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and students toward character education in a Seventh-day Adventist school setting?

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Psychologists and educators have theorized and conceptualized about the teaching of character education using a variety of theories: from behaviorism (Driscoll, 2000) to stage theory (Piaget, as cited in Driscoll, 2000; Kohlberg, 1984) to the Character ethic (Covey, 1990). This phenomenological study described character education as practiced in a Seventh-day Adventist institution from a human science conceptual perspective. An empirical phenomenological framework "involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essence of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). According to Moustakas (1994) "The human scientist determines the

underlying structures of an experience by interpreting the originally given descriptions of the situation in which the experience occurs" (p. 13).

The theoretical and conceptual aim in this study was "to determine what an experience (in education at a Seventh-day Adventist School) means for the persons (students, teachers, and administrators) who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). From these descriptions, general meanings will be deduced, and as a result, the essence or structures of character education will be made clear.

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to understanding perceptions of character education in a Seventh-day Adventist setting. The results from these data can improve character development in general, and more specifically, institutions that value a Biblical framework of faith.

Definition of Terms

This section defines significant terms that will recur through the study: agape love, character, character education, concern, courage, curiosity, integrity, leadership, reverence, service, and principle.

Agape love is the transformative power and love of the Omniscient God to free each individual to value his or her abilities, qualities, and opportunities as gifts to self and others for cultivating and sustaining relationships of caring; using these gifts, the student practices physical, spiritual, and mental renewal, modelling, dialog, and confirmation (Noddings, as cited in Powell, 1999) of a character fashioned after the divine similitude.

Character in a Seventh-day Adventist setting implies a composite of qualities revealed in behavior and convictions. For example a person of concern shows kindness and interest in the growth of his / her peers. *The Bible* establishes the standard of character for this study.

Character education is intentional training that cultivates love and caring as social and spiritual standards to serve any community, whether social, spiritual, public or private.

Concern is an expression of interest in student and peer empowerment for growth of character in self as well as community: as a result, the learner becomes his / her brother's keeper.

Courage is the ability of the student to remain loyal to God's will and group purpose by performing outside of his or her comfort zone an accomplished skill in service to his or her community for the individual's empowerment and society's enrichment. For example, an instrumental or vocal performance will increase the student's skill, enrich his or her audience, and honor Omnipotence, who gave the skill.

Courtesy is behaviour that shows ownership of good conduct born in a sound mind that recognizes another individual as God's creation who is, therefore, worthy of respect.

Curiosity is exploration of life through formation of good questions that will pursue knowledge for safety, intellectual growth, and moral worth (Barell, 2003). For example, students should be able to inquire into the how, who, what, when, or why of content for analysis and projection.

Integrity is honesty in the use of principles for decision making in which the individual uses opportunities for learning through critical reflection in order to increase skills in the service of God, self, and others.

Leadership is the ability to focus on group purpose through reciprocal teaching and learning, or service that empowers each individual with linguistic skills to express beliefs and ideas for development of identity and moral action; such partnership continues the process of service to, and empowerment of others (Burns, 1978; Covey, 1990; Lambert, 2003).

Reverence is the respect one gives in worship of his or her Creator or to a leader whose protective role provides "the kindness of God" (2 Samuel 9) in a relationship of caring, security, and freedom to make virtuous decisions.

Service is yielding oneself to sharing the good news of a transformative vision of change through living agape love in the performance of any vocation that cooperates with divine purpose (Powell, 1999; White, 1995).

For this study, the word *principle* is preferred instead of values. The expression "principle' diminishes vagueness and adds greater precision to definition. *Principle,* here, means a rule based on the consistency of God's standard. For example, if a student experiences bullying, he or she should be taught to be proactive: counter acts of anger with kindness instead of responding in like manner. In so doing, the student will reveal his or her ownership of the principle of respect for the sanctity of life, or courtesy towards another peer who is also made in his or her Creator's image. Strommen (1993) encourages parents to treasure moral and spiritual principles for their youth though they stand in conflict with the popular value of self-promotion before others.

Limitations

The research design limited the researcher from making comparison and generalization. The research purpose was to answer the question, "What are the perceptions of character education within a Seventh-day Adventist setting?" The researcher delimited data gathering to data collected through semi-structured interviews. Therefore the findings of a study of a specific Seventh-day Adventist school were limited to the named setting of the research. To increase external validity, however, the researcher chose a sample that was representative of perceptions of character given their duration of schooling within the setting. This effort aimed to preserve the merit of the research results. The researcher included individuals who enhanced the research purpose. The researcher's aim was to provide a clear outline of the research data and to include validity and reliability. Findings of this study of students', an administrator's, and teachers' perceptions of character education were limited to the setting and population sample studied because the researcher had no control over theoretical perspectives or content. Attitudes, experiences, reasons, and study participants' perceptions of character education transcended the researcher's control. The unique nature of the historical background of the setting did not permit generalization. Finally, the researcher delimited data gathering to data collected through semi-structured interviews. Thus, the results from this study of perceptions of character education should be limited to the study context.

Summary

The idea of character education has evolved from its early Protestant heritage enveloped in language of virtue, to the language of core ethical values called "The Six

Pillars of Character" (Josephson, 2001) or the language of Character Ethic (Covey, 1990). More recently, there has been a renewed interest by public school officials in character education. This phenomenological study, therefore, described the perceptions of students, administrators, and teachers of character education in a Seventh-day Adventist School in order to gain some insight into the concept of character education, and its relevance for educational growth.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 describes the background of the problem and the problem statement, articulates the research questions and the theoretical and conceptual framework, defines significant terms, explains the significance of this research to the field, and clarifies the limitations of the study.

Putting Adventist Christian Education in perspective, Chapter 2 reviews the literature. It reviews the theory and research of character education studied in different contexts which will include a Seventh-day Adventist setting. Chapter 3 describes in detail the context, method, and characters of the setting, while Chapter 4 discusses the research findings of each case studied. Chapter 5 presents responses to the research question, discusses implications for future research, and concludes with a summary of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Contexts for Studying Character Education in Public Schooling

Though the expression "character education" became a curricular response to the behaviour of "bourgeois young adults with a relaxed attitude to sex and authority" (Schubert, Schubert, Thomas, & Carroll, 2002, p.33) during the decade of the 1920s, its purpose is as old as time: to cultivate mental and intellectual powers of choice in the responsible pursuit of happiness (Schubert et al., 2002); to restore the divine image in man lost through sin and its effects (Genesis 1: 26; 3: 15, King James Version, 2000). Previously known as moral education, it is not unique to colonial times, but is a system of universal principles (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999) that societies have used to prepare youth for full participation in social, historical, political, economic, and cultural life. Students, teachers, and administrators experience character development within these different contexts. Finally, these agents cultivate relationships in schooling with societal forces operating in the background.

Sacred writings of the East and West have provided an understanding of the basic principles that define goodness (Ryan and Bohlin, 1999). *The Analects* of Confucius has provided Chinese culture, in the past, knowledge that guide decision making. In addition to understanding the basis of social relationships, this body of writings defines qualities that qualify good people for participation in government: generosity, diligence, contentment, dignity, and scruples (*The Analects of Confucius*, c. 450 B.C. as cited in Banks et al. 1997).

Hinduism, on the other hand, provides the knowledge of right and wrong through laws and duties of one's caste or the dharma. According to their sacred writings, following the rules maintains an orderly society, but breaking the rules creates disorder. As a result, in the perception of the Hindu, society achieves its highest purpose by doing its proper works (*Vedas* as cited in Banks et al., 1997).

Muslims use the Quran as their source for practicing goodness. The Quran identifies five basic duties that strengthen ties to people in general and to God in particular: a basic belief in one God and the acceptance of Mohammed as Allah's prophet underlie relationships; Muslims pray five times daily; charity guides their relationship with humans; fasting is basic to good health and sound thinking; and a pilgrimage ensures discovery of spiritual self. The devoted Muslim believes his or her aid originates with Allah (*Quran*, A.D. 650 as cited in Banks et al., 1997).

Catholics and other Christian religions view the *Bible* as the sacred text from which to teach character education. The purpose, here, is not to discuss all Christian religions, but to analyse Marine's (1998) theoretical discussion of "Character Education in Catholic Schools," that describes the purpose for teaching in the Catholic tradition. According to the Catholic tradition, teaching foundational values through the sacred writings of a Biblical framework shapes character (Marine, 1998). According to Marine (1998), character education in Catholic schools ensures foundational and cultural values that promote religious and cultural literacy. Foundational values are the basis of character. The objective of foundational values of respect, responsibility, and reverence is to foster a wholesome sense of mind, body, and spirit lived within the tradition of the Catholic faith (Marine, 1998).   Cultural values, on the other hand, encourage

communication with secular cultures, other religions, and other Christians; cultural values, also, contribute to the common good, and promote respect for diversity. The underlying philosophy teaches religious literacy based on communication, unity in diversity, social justice, and dignity of life that maintains the Catholic identity. Defining *respect* as moral restraint that keeps the individual from devaluing self, others, and creation, Marine (1998) abridged Lickona's definition with the inference that freedom is an operative principle underlying the choice to be moral.

Marine (1998) emphasizes the dual purpose of Catholic schools' character education program: to establish foundational values for religious literacy and to teach cultural values in the acquisition of cultural literacy. In Catholic schools, religious education is the context in which Catholic K-12 schools form foundational values. According to Darcy-Berube (as cited in Marine, 1998), religious literacy should be fostered throughout the individual's life span   Foundational literacy is central to the spiritual, communal, and the individual's personal moral existence. Teaching foundational values, through reading, understanding, and interpreting the Bible within the Catholic tradition, shapes character (Marine, 1998). Scriptural reflection, rooted in Luke 4: 1 through 13, is believed to foster a wholesome sense of mind, body, and spirit lived within the tradition of the Catholic faith (Marine, 1998). Thus, tradition and sacred writings are the lens through which this group view the core principles of character education.

While certain sacred writings, as identified, emphasize good works as the foundation of character, theoretical approaches, concerning how character develops, vary. Much controversy surrounds the administration of character education as a

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catalyst of educational improvement. Leadership and professors of teacher education have documented the range of programs taught in the curriculum as character education (Farrelly, 1998; Howard, Berkowitz, & Schaeffer, 2004; Rusnak, 1998; Ryan, 1997; Switala, 1998). Ryan (1997) defines "leadership" as "deans of schools of education and chairpersons of teacher education departments" (p.3). Their identification of character education is as follows: values clarification and values realization, moral reasoning or cognitive development, moral education or virtue, life skills education, service learning, citizenship training or civic education, caring community, health or drug education, pregnancy, and violence prevention, conflict resolution or peer mediation, ethics or moral philosophy, and religious education. The wide range of perceptions shows a lack of consensus on the nature of character education.

The approaches to character education, that leadership of teacher education programs has proposed, focus on effects of internalization of core principles (Ryan, 1997). In a study conducted with the Character Education Partnership, Ryan (1997) of the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character of Boston University provides a list of approaches to character education and the observed effects of their application. In this study with Character Education Partnership, Ryan (1997) surveyed over 600 colleges and universities that prepare educators. These researchers received a "35% response rate to a long instrument" (p. 3) that was based on Professor Jane Wells' doctoral thesis instrument. Her inquiry concerned the "institution's responsibility to prepare teachers as character educators" (p. 3). Leaders identifying Values Clarification and Values Realization as the approach to character education perceived values as highly individual in nature; the teacher acts as a neutral facilitator while engaging

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students in provocative exercises to encourage self-discovery and clarification of individual's personal values. In moral reasoning and cognitive development, character formation was viewed chiefly as a rational process. This approach used exercises involving hypothetical moral dilemmas to encourage students into higher stages of moral cognition. On the other hand, leaders, who offered moral education and virtue as an approach to character education, viewed character formation as acquiring internal virtues through good habits. Practicing this approach, teachers drew from academic content, specifically literature and history, to help students gain knowledge about their civilization's ethical heritage. This approach, however, was cited as a dominant approach by religious schools only. In addition, religious institutions, "the majority of which were Catholic, had religious education as the second most dominant approach" (Ryan, 1997; p. 4).

Life skills, service learning, and citizenship training can be grouped as interactive approaches. Broadly stated, the goals of life skills education are development of positive social attitudes and acquisition of practical skills to succeed in life. More specifically, this approach focuses on personal decision making: building self-esteem, refining communication, and gaining proficiency in work related skills. Deans of Schools of Education rank this approach among the top three approaches to character education with service learning being second; Caring Community was ranked first at 76.7% (Ryan, 1997). Public colleges and universities list life skills program type as the second most dominant with service learning being third for both public and religious colleges and universities (Ryan, 1997)

In secular private colleges and universities, service learning ranks second. Service learning engages the head, heart, and hands of the learner. Architects of the curriculum integrate service opportunities into the content to teach cultural heritage and human oneness. Finally, though citizenship training has been identified among approaches to character education program types, the leadership of teacher education programs of colleges and universities does not view it as one of the dominant six approaches. The broad goals of citizenship training are to teach the civic values of American political system and prepare citizens to participate in a democracy. According to Ryan (1997), psychological models at the foundation of character education vary in approach and because deficiency exists among the leadership of schools of education in their definition of a good and worthy life, teachers of education, as well as, students' understanding will lack soundness.

Bohlin, Farmer, and Ryan (as cited in Ryan, 1997) describe the moral education and virtue approach. This approach is instructional and is a school framework that teachers of teacher education program at the Boston University practice in order to aid students in internalization of virtues. The model is a five step process, emphasizing that "the aim of education is acquisition of a virtuous life" (p. 5); the curriculum and the teacher underlie this process. The virtuous life is a triangle of awareness, within which a circle of understanding, action, and reflection revolves.

To the inquiry, "To what extent do Seventh-day Adventist youth internalize values?" Strommen (1993) offers 6 ways for communicating values: (a) congenial relationships, (b) modelling, (c) gentle reasoning or induction, (d) personal witness, (e) study of the written word, and (f) a grace orientation. Further, this author cites research

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findings to support these methods of communicating values. When parents and significant others cultivate a respectful, loving relationship with youth, the latter assimilate their values (Rosenberg as cited in Strommen, 1993). Secondly, parental involvement in modelling life's affirming values aids youth's internalization of values, according to a 1985 study by Search Institute of 8,165 adolescents: 65% valued parents and peers equally, while 15% indicated a preference for their parents. Third, gentle reasoning instead of compulsion aids youth's internalization of values for reasoning solicits youth's thinking abilities and provides opportunities for discussion and exploration of the worth of moral values. According to Strommen's (1993) study of young adolescents and their parents, adolescents who internalized their parents' values experienced inductive reasoning instead of training by compulsion. Demonstrative affection, modeling, and inductive discussion are three of six indicators of values internalization. A discussion of concern, self-esteem, and service follows.

An attitude of faith, coupled with "agape love," (Powell, 1999, p. 99) drives communicating spiritual values which are exemplified in personal witness, the written word, and the grace orientation (Strommen, 1993). Parental expressions of faith and love aid the direction of students' thinking and choices. Though adolescents need freedom to make choices, parental warnings contingent to certain choices show concern, build adolescents' self-esteem, and are a principled service. If parental guidance is deficient in the language of faith and love when providing safeguards to youths' decision making, adolescents can sometimes be afflicted with a sense of inadequacy that can result in a will enslaved to wrong choices (Strommen, 1993). Furthermore, parents perform service and demonstrate concern for their adolescents'

self-esteem when they introduce youth to mind renewing literature, pregnant with ethical and religious ideals. Strommen (1993) agrees: "Books represent an important method of communicating values." Additionally, if parents communicate a transformative vision through the language of "grace" instead of "restriction," (p. 40) adolescents learn the omnipresence of the love, promise, and forgiveness of transcendence, the standard of character. Trust in the love, promise, presence, and forgiveness of transcendence frees youth to own moral and spiritual values. Studies (Strommen, 1985; Poterski as cited in Strommen, 1993) show that adults who model commitment to the love, promise, presence, and forgiveness of transcendence find that youths choose life's affirming values. On the other hand, attempts to control youths' decision making through "a restrictive approach" invite many adolescents to "reject values being forced on them" (p. 41). Thus, the attitude of grace modelled by the individual, communicating values, is a significant factor to be considered when teaching values.

Theorists (Gauld, 1993; Josephson, 2003; Lickona, 1995; Schriver, 2004) have designed approaches to character education through content and skills based programs that address the needs of various groups. Others illustrate programs that are intentional and engaging of the conflicting, societal voices (Berkowitz, 1993; Gauld, 1993; Madsen, 1999). *Character First*, *Community of Caring*, *Learning for Life*, *Character Counts, Heartwood Institute Literature Program* and, *Facing History and Ourselves* are examples of character education programs that seek to mediate the needs of schooling. Each will be discussed according to sequencing.

Research and Theory on Models of Character Education Programs

Character First is a qualitative case study of Hyde School, in Bath, Maine where Gauld (1993) studied the effects of educating for character before emphasizing academic achievement. This emphasis on character development shifted the focus from achievement of traditional academic excellence to achievement of character excellence. All stakeholders in the educational process engaged in character development: parents, students, teachers, and principals. Students explored choices and examined possible outcomes while parents explored intergenerational issues that may have hindered responsible character growth and the student's development of his or her unique potential.

Gauld's findings revealed that when parents took time to explore the intergenerational weaknesses within their heritage, both parents and students better understood the issues impeding character growth: they understood their heritage, and the advantages of reflective therapy that motivated positive decision making.

Results from this case study of Hyde School, in Bath, Maine revealed that when Hyde schools focused on character development first, 98% of students attended four year colleges and 80% of students graduated in four years.

Community of Caring.

Community of Caring is a K through 12 whole-schools, comprehensive character education program that focuses on all students, especially those with disabilities, and promotes the core ethical values as the foundation on which responsible decisions and behaviours are based. A multi-year study called *An Evaluation of the Nationwide Community of Caring Program* (Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2005, 2006)

reveals positive relationships in perspective taking among students; greater participation in the program's core elements and activities was significantly related to student character; school climate, student behaviours, and teachers' attitudes showed significant relationship with levels of implementation of the program. For example, teachers' relationships with students and students' perceptions of the quality of educational opportunities were significantly and positively related to higher implementation levels.

Learning for Life.

Learning for Life is a school and community - based program that proposes to enhance self-confidence, motivation, and self-esteem. It concentrates on the core ethical values of citizenship, courage, career preparedness, self-concept, personal and social skills, fairness, cooperation, responsibility, as well as life skills. *Learning for Life* mobilizes community resources to teach youth ethical decision making and achievement of their full potential (Ryan & Syndics Research Corporation, 2005)

Approximately 2,500 students in 59 schools nation-wide participated in a study of the effectiveness of *Learning for Life* through teaching of eight lessons to second, fourth, and sixth grade students in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Researchers paired these classes with grade levels that received no instruction and evaluated the scores of pre-test and post-test.

There were 4 key findings from the study: (a) students receiving instruction showed significant improvement in classroom behaviour; (b) second grade students gained the most in the number of appropriate responses; (c) lesson scores of students in the *Learning for Life* classes were higher than those of students who received no instruction; and (d) post test scores were higher for students in the *Learning for Life*

classes than students who received no instruction. The gain was 20% higher on the post test scores of those who received instruction. Students who received no instruction showed a gain of 6% from the pre-test to the post-test. According to the researchers, greatest gain in the number of appropriate responses among second grade students shows that there is merit in early training (Ryan, & Syndics Research Corporation, 2005; Steg, 2000).

Heartwood Multicultural Literature-based Character Education Curriculum.

Theoretical views confirming reader response criticism (Karolides, 2000; Murphy, 1998; Rosenblatt, 1995; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999) agree that transactional theory of literature gives equal voice to the reader and recognizes the social, psychological, experiential, and cultural forces between reader and text as another approach to character education. This concept identifies the reader as a performer with the text, either accepting or rejecting content and themes, interpreting and evaluating the actions of characters, while at the same time reliving or experiencing similar actions from the reader's past. To achieve this quality of transaction, the reader must have willingness to engage with the text: experiences, issues, characters, and symbols must hold specific interest for the reader or understanding will be inhibited. The Heartwood Literature-based character education program values the social change that the reader experiences in response to the meaning, given to human common experiences shared through literature.

The primary mission of Heartwood Literature - based Character Education Curriculum promotes the understanding and practice of seven universal ethical values: courage, justice, loyalty, respect, hope, honesty, and love. These concepts serve as an

organizing ethical vocabulary that addresses body, mind, and spirit; evaluation research

shows that students, studying the curriculum after one year identify examples of these

concepts in new literature. These virtues underlie community spirit among all people

and drive the curriculum. Students from 2,000 schools from preschool to middle school

in 40 states learn how core values influence and contribute to a compassionate world

(Childs, Wood, Wood, Lanke, & Flach, 2010).

Researchers (Leming, Henricks-Smith, & Antis, 2000) evaluated the effects of

the Heartwood Literature based curriculum on four character education variables:

ethical conduct, ethical sensibility, ethnocentrism, and geographical knowledge.

Leming et al. (2000) agree that 6 key findings characterized the study: (a) from pre-test

to post-test, participants' scores increased significantly; (b) there was no change in the

ethical sensibility of Grades 1 through 3 in students of the Heartwood Curriculum but

students of Grades 4 through 6 who did not study the Heartwood Curriculum showed

statistically significant difference on post-test scores; (d) student conduct improved in

both the students of the Heartwood program and the comparison group who did not

study the Heartwood Curriculum; disciplinary referrals reduced 50%; (e) no significant

difference existed between post- test scores with respect to difference in ethnicity; (f)

students could transfer the appropriate use of the Heartwood vocabulary to the implicit

curriculum; and (g) the vocabulary of the Heartwood curriculum became a common

classroom language between teachers and students. According to Leming et al. (2000),

research in character education should respond to the needs of the community that the

program serves. In this study, the communities served were not considered

"communities in crisis" (p. 35).

Facing History and Ourselves Theory and Research.

The character education program, *Facing History and Ourselves* trains teachers to engage students into a critical examination of history with special emphasis on moral issues of intergenerational group conflict- racism, mass violence, genocide, and ethnic cleansing- in order to nurture moral decision making and perspective taking in development of a morally responsible and informed citizenry (Strom & Parsons, 2010). Shultz, Barr and Selman (2001), in an outcome study of the program, illustrated a development methodology used by the Group for the Study of Interpersonal Development; Shultz et al. (2001) examined whether the *Facing History and Ourselves* character education program promotes growth in psychosocial competencies and moral reasoning, increases positive civic attitudes and participation, reduces violence and racism, as well as, changes in ethnic identity development. The participants in this study were 346 eighth grade students of suburban and urban communities in the northeast United States with varied social and economic backgrounds: 212 students from 14 social studies and language arts classes using the *Facing History and Ourselves Curriculum* were compared with 134 students from 8 classrooms that did not use the curriculum.

Schultz et al. (2001) discovered that the *Facing History and Ourselves* character education program influenced psychosocial competencies, decreased racist attitudes, showed a trend for decreasing violence, as well as, a trend approaching significance in change on identity development. In behavior students, who were studying the curriculum, reported less fighting, than the group that did not study the curriculum, but the difference was not large enough to be considered substantively important. In

knowledge, attitudes, and values, the study reported differences that favoured the curriculum in relationship maturity, and in respect for ethnicity. The study, also, favoured the group that did not study the *Facing History and Ourselves* curriculum for civic attitudes and participation, ethnic identity, and moral reasoning. Differences between these groups were not considered "statistically significant or large enough to be considered more important than the comparison students although there was a significant difference between the groups on the civic measures at post-test" (Schultz et al., 2001; p. 3). These researchers recommend that Junior High School teachers should orientate the "ourselves" segment of the curriculum to more age appropriate moral issues instead of contemporary societal issues.

Character Counts.

Character Counts! Coalition, formed in 1993 is a national character education movement that developed the Aspen Declaration of eight principles concerning the nature, content, and importance of character education. *Character Counts* articulates a common vocabulary of six core values defining character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. A set of twelve overlapping assumptions are at the foundation of "The Six Pillars of Character." The mode of transmission, evaluation, and systemic reform are similar to principles of Character Education Partnership (CEP). For example, when the system infuses the explicit and the implicit curricula with the common vocabulary of core values, characters of the institution model and teach character education. Thus, character education becomes an integral feature of systemic educational reform. Additionally, the family is responsible for teaching core values while the school, government, and community function in

supportive roles. Another common element found in CEP and *Character Counts* is a program evaluation in order to determine effectiveness in changing attitudes and behaviours. Other assumptions articulate sustainability, framework for proficiency and acceptance: structure. Josephson (2001) cites 5 major assumptions: (a) "shared non - political and secular values promote unity of purpose and process" (p. 3) and ensure success and sustainability of character education; (b) collaboration of school and community will achieve character education goals; (c) advocacy of a common vocabulary and collaboration will promote partnerships that are sustainable and effective; (d) "The Six Pillars of Character" provide an ethical framework for teaching, discussion, evaluation of character, and a foundation for collaboration; and (e) teaching resources can concentrate on constructing a model that is widely accepted and professional.

Studies indicate that the program, *Character Counts*, improves test scores, develops a culture that embraces the 6 pillars of character education, nurtures a community of learners, reduces discipline referrals, and increases achievement (South Dakota Study, 1997 – 2002; Williams & Taylor, 2004). The South Dakota Study, an on-going five year study in which 10,000 middle and high school students responded to questionnaires that covered attitudes and behaviors, differentiated by age and sexuality between 1997 to 2000, shows that the program, *Character Counts*, reduces crime and drug use, as well as, improves student behaviour toward peers and authority. From 1998 to 2000 truancy declined 30%; students, receiving detention and suspension reduced 28%, while students, using physical force against others decreased 33%; stealing reduced by 50%; the use of illegal drugs among students was reduced by 32%.

According to Josephson (2001), there are 3 reasons for the success of *Character Counts* strategy: (a) it works; (b) organizations have adopted it in their character education programs; and (c) it has the capacity for uniting communities around a common goal that uses a common vocabulary that transcends political and religious concerns. However, in the summary, *Ethics on American Youth*, Josephson (2008) expresses concern for future leaders. A survey of 29,760 high school students reveals profound habits of dishonesty in the future workforce. An average of 30% of males and females overall admit stealing during the year, 2007. Among this group were student leaders, honor students, and youth club members. In lying, 42% claimed lies increased their wealth; and finally, 63% admitted cheating on a test during the year, 2007. Non-religious independent schools reported the lowest rate of 47% in cheating. The summary of dishonesty is believed to be understated because 26% has indicated lying in response to questions on the survey. Though levels of dishonesty are high, the report card attests to students being in possession of high self-esteem.

Approach of Psychology

While the framework of sacred texts have been used as the vehicle for preparing citizens for participating in governments in the 18th and 19th centuries, the lens of psychology as a scientific tool has become an integral feature in the analysis of character development and the manner in which students internalize moral principles. Theorists (Driscoll, 2000; Hoffman as cited in Case & Dudley, 1993; Kohn, 1997) suggest that character development theories can be placed in three frameworks: psychoanalytic, social learning and cognitive developmental. These theories are concerned with how the individual internalizes moral standards so that self-control

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influences character development. The psychoanalytic theory stems from the work of Sigmund Freud and is more therapeutic than educational; it presents an on-going conflict between the id, ego, and the superego: "…a reality sensitive 'ego,' tries to repress a self-gratifying 'id' in order to maintain unity with a set of parental principles that have become internalized as the 'superego'" (Case & Dudley, 1993, p. 55). Shame or guilt results when self violates moral values.

Psychologists and educational theorists have conceptualized the teaching of character education through a variety of theories: from behaviorism to the cognitive developmental approach to moral stages and moralization theory, from the Character Ethic to The Six Pillars of Character reveal the process of internalization of principles of character. This phenomenological study will describe character education as practiced in a Seventh-day Adventist institution. The behaviorist's assumption that controlling a child's environment with reward, praise, or punishment would shape the child's character into the admirable qualities desired has failed to acknowledge the individual's freedom of choice between the stimulus and the response; instead, behaviorism reduces the individual's capacity to think to that of a beast. The sense of being preyed upon replaces that of choice (Covey, 1999). The teacher in the behaviorist's estimation reinforces positive action. Unrewarded negatives, it is thought, will diminish undesirable behavior. According to the social learning theory, character development consists of behaviors and avoidances, learned under the influence of rewards and punishments (Case & Dudley, 1993; Driscoll, 2000; Kohn, 1997). Some key concepts associated with this phenomenon are behaviours, modelling, and reinforcement. While behaviours are observable, modelling conceptualizes acts, and

reinforcement creates habit forming patterns; this theory still does not account for the reasoning processes which occur in the formation of the principled individual.

Piaget (1931), on the other hand, fit his findings on moral development in two stages: absolute rules shaping character before 11, and the perception that rules are relativistic, and the authority, and / or the society can change those rules if the occasion evaluates the action in terms of motives. This limited relativism becomes a major problem, for it rejects moral principles and rules and extends relativism to every specific moral question (Holmes as cited in Knight, 2006). In short, it is unable to set moral boundaries (Knight, 2006).

Lawrence Kohlberg's (1984) cognitive developmental approach to moral stages and moralization developed from Jean Piaget's cognitive developmental theory of logical reasoning: the individual experiences three developmental stages after learning to speak: preoperational or intuitive, concrete operational or logical inferences about concrete things, and formal operational or abstract thinking. Piaget's theory assumes that development is unidirectional and that all normal children should reach the same developmental stage at the same time (Driscoll, 2001). Many individuals are at a higher logical stage than parallel moral stage, but none is at a higher moral stage than their logical stage (Colby & Kohlberg as cited in Kohlberg, 1976) because while logical reasoning is a precondition of moral development, it is not sufficient.

To act in moral character requires a high stage of moral reasoning. According to Kohlberg (1984) moral reasoning develops in 3 stages: pre-conventional or pleasing the individual's point of view in avoidance of pain; conventional or shared relationships;

and post-conventional, which differentiates between moral, and legal perspectives, as well as, universal ethical principles of justice (Kohlberg, 1984).

Kohlberg's pre-conventional and conventional levels of moral development overlap with Piaget's stages of moral development: morality based on consequence and moral decision based on motives. Kohlberg's post-conventional stage transcends societal laws to include universal principles that focus on justice for humanity. Commitment to justice carries with it an obligation to civil disobedience, if laws are unjust. The individual acquires this higher form of moral thinking after discussion and exchange of ideas. Kohlberg's stages focus on aiding the individual's development of his or her full potential. According to Knight (2006), Kohlberg humanized values. The result has been "an ethical relativism that goes against the very core of biblical teaching" (p. 243).

Covey's (1990) stage theory, the Character Ethic, uses the inside out approach. This approach indicates that the person, conscious of character development, operates from a principled center or one's inner core to achieve 3 stages: dependence, independence, and interdependence. At the stage of dependence, the individual's speech is characterized by the second person; the person of independence operates in the first person paradigm; interdependence, on the other hand, combines talents and abilities to produce strength and unity. In this growth and maturity process, the individual develops 7 habits in application of his or her human endowments: self-awareness, imagination, conscience, and independent will. Self-awareness stimulates the student's decision making from the vantage point of core values; using his or her freedom of choice, the individual rejects intergenerational programming and environmental conditioning;

instead, the conscience senses the disparity between the behaviorist's paradigm and principled centering. In the development of character, the student chooses, according to Covey (1990), "personal, moral, and ethical guidelines within which he can happily fulfil his or her unique potential" (p. 147). In short, character grows through proactivity. With imagination, the individual's creativity fuses core values into a mission statement with which he or she manages lived experiences, and for which he or she desires others to remember character. With a mission statement, the student begins with the end in mind. Applying the imagination to refine his / her mission statement, the student engages linguistic skills of revising, interaction, and decision making to build positive character. In short, he or she is goal-oriented and. views personal management, as well as, time through the lens of importance in relationship building. Having achieved private victories, he or she chooses to value others. Thus, the student adds the habit of first things first, to proactivity, and beginning with the end in mind.

According to Covey's (1990) stage theory, core values underlie the student's growth from independence to interdependence: integrity, courage, consideration, and generosity. Viewing others through the lens of generosity, the student "recognizes the unlimited possibilities for positive interactive growth and development" (p. 223) in others. In developing character, the individual gains public victories through four additional habits: (a) thinking win, win; (b) seeking first to understand, then to be understood; (c) synergy; and (d) renewal. The educator's perceptions respect the individual's ability to achieve success and generously share partnership with the student; respect and generosity underlie relationships and cultivate core principles in self and others: leadership, integrity, concern, courage, curiosity, and service. The

educator seeks first to understand, then to be understood. Shared positive energy drives synergy that seeks renewal. In sum, according to Covey, the inside out stage theory of character development cultivates 7 habits that generate from one's core in the application of linguistic skills: (a) pro-activity; (b) beginning with the end in mind: refinement of character; (c) putting first things first; (d) thinking win / win by respecting others' abilities; (e) understanding others through empathic listening; (f) unconditional love or synergy; and (g) renewal that sharpens thinking and relationships. Though Covey's theory acknowledges the student's need for renewal, it divorces renewal from its Biblical source of rest.

Power and Higgins (1992) have identified 2 approaches to character education, arising from the research of Kohlberg and his colleagues: the moral discussion approach and the just community approach. Power et al.(as cited in Power & Higgins, 1992) hypothesized that the degree of collectiveness, the phase and stage of norms making up moral culture have an influence on moral development because collective values encourage group views-taking and create cognitive conflict for students at the lower stage of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Research results showed that development of meaningful moral judgment occurred, especially among students at the pre-conventional stage upon beginning school. Secondly, Power et al. (as cited in Power & Higgins, 1992) discovered that the moral atmosphere influenced the learning environment and intellectual development, though indirectly. Hence, the moral atmosphere influenced the educational process in 2 ways: (a) through the moral discussion and the just community approaches teachers shared values with students; and

(b) students' linguistic skills were refined; as a result, building a positive moral environment led to intellectual and moral growth.

Though the Just Community approach was first applied to a women's correctional facility, Hickey and Scharf (1980) later applied it to the high school setting. Clark and Higgins (1992), writing about the Just Community approach, described how changing the culture of schools into democratic communities generated acceptance of character education programs and fostered cultures amicable to the values shared. This study of an alternative high school, The Cluster School, revealed 3 significant findings: (a) fostering a moral atmosphere promoted moral and intellectual development; (b) educators need to measure change and how they affect it with caution; and (c) cultivating moral reasoning requires time, training, and practice through thinking and discussion, as well as, redirection of the usual top down management. Power (2002) describes building a democratic community as a radical approach to character education. This Just Community approach, based on Kohlberg's stages of moral development, demonstrates how teachers and students engage in moral dialogue about their common life for the welfare of the community. This community nurtures bonding instead of individual interest. Theorists, (Bruce, Weil, & Calhoun, 2000) encourage, "Whenever possible, the school should model a just society in which value of moral inquiry is strongly nurtured" (p. 270).

Vygotsky's (1978) theory of higher mental processes is another approach to character education. Vygotsky advocates language development through internalization, zone of proximal development, and mediation. Internalization occurs when the student transforms reading or other social behavior from speech to experience and

understanding; then, he has entered into its shared meaning and has experienced internalization of language. The zone of proximal development, on the other hand, is the "distance between a child's actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Explaining these processes, Vygotsky reveals how the student narrows the gap between actual skill and desired ability as determined by problem solving. Functioning as a bridge between actual skill and potential ability, the instructor shares knowledge that advances the student beyond his / her actual level of maturity by modelling behavior as well as practicing linguistic skills. The student, at the same time, constructs knowledge through modification and practice of oral skills that become transformative. Entering into partnership with the instructor, the student uses language for reciprocal teaching. According to Vygotsky (1978), language development has the greatest impact on children's acquisition of higher psychological processes.

Theorists agree that the standard curriculum provides necessary opportunities for the teaching of critical thinking and character education (Anyon, 1980; Charney, Crawford, & Wood, 1999; Purpel & Ryan, 1976; Smagorinsky, 2000). As a result, creating a separate program for the purpose of critical thinking and character education is unnecessary. The above listed theorists emphasize teaching for transfer and creating a classroom atmosphere where there is exchange of ideas and growth of attitudes through reflective thinking. Being even more specific, Charney et al. (1999) have identified 6 basic components for the development of responsibility more closely identified as the Responsive Classroom: classroom organization, the circle of power and respect, rules

and logical consequence, academic choice, guided discovery, as well as, assessment and reporting to parents. Students organize in circular groups of 5 to 7 for academic practice; each student respects time, achievement, and person of his or her peer; students agree to consequence, if disrespect occurs; each student chooses a partner, whom he or she assists under adult guidance; students and teachers assess time and achievement for reporting to parents. Five basic skills are at the core of the social curriculum in the Responsive Classroom: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Charney et al. (1999) argue that the development of responsibility requires a repetitious continuum that moves from relationship to practical activity to reflection: this continuum needs to be a daily practice in the social and academic activities of learners.

Theorists (Josephson, 2001; Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 1998) have proposed a theory of core ethical values as the basis of good character. Using similar vocabulary, these theorists define character in 6 core values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. At the foundation of "The Six Pillars of Character," is a set of assumptions concerning mode of transmission, systemic reform, evaluation, collaboration, sustainability, framework of proficiency, and acceptance. Theorists (Bush et al., 1995; Greene, 1978; Lickona et al., 1998; White, 1995) agree that the family is responsible for teaching core values and children learn through modelling, teaching, and evaluation of home, school and community. The school, government, and community perform a supportive role by infusion of core values into the explicit and the implicit curricula for systemic educational reform. Thus, through collaboration of schools and community with a common language of values, it is believed that focus upon character

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education is clear.   In short, internalization of core values results from a supportive

network of teaching, modelling, and evaluation of all stakeholders (Lickona et al, 1998).

Logical positivism has explored internalization of values through observation of

the relationship between social behaviors and mental processes. From the

psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud to Vygotsky's (1978) higher mental processes,

internalization of values has concerned the nature of mental processes influencing social

decision–making. Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the impact of language maturity on

psychological processes. According to Vygotsky (1978), the development of language

matures mental processes to express and own moral choices.

Moral Theory and Philosophy

Oderberg (2005) defines ethics as follows:

Ethics is a rational intelligible discipline that can be taught; its principles and

conclusions derived from them can be communicated between moral

philosophers who do not share the same principles. They can understand each

other's reasoning and see how to get to a certain conclusion, given certain

assumptions (p. 5).

The concern of ethics is the question, "what is good and what is evil?" (Schubert,1986,

p. 123). To say that character education is for the personal good of humans and the

public good of democracy is to indicate that character education enhances the good life.

The philosophical questions, then, at the heart of the study of character education, are as

follows: what is the nature of the good life? How ought the good life to be lived?

 Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, taught young people moral

education. These philosophers taught the virtuous lifestyle. Plato's *Apology* provides

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his philosophical perception of character through Socrates' trial. Both philosophers valued intellectual and moral qualities as qualification for political service. Socrates reasoned with his students regarding respect for transcendence whose existence was beyond the evidence of mythology. He taught that the wisdom of transcendence achieved the virtuous life. The reader of the *Apology* infers that for Socrates and Plato, character meant the ability to think independently and love sacrificially for human good or the good of the state. Such pedagogy contrasted the then, popular definition of character as having the honor of the state, achieving special political interests, and possessing wealth in pursuit of happiness. According to Socrates and Plato, humans develop character through instruction, acquisition of knowledge and understanding, exploration of issues, and acknowledgement of transcendence as the source of truth and love in pursuit of the virtuous life. Plato, through the character, Socrates, summarizes the plight of civilization that silences the discourse of moral education: that civilization becomes a proverb and byword in the mouth of the detractors of moral education.

Aristotle taught ethics as an applied science because it yields knowledge concerned with application of abstract principles to the concrete problems of human action (Oderberg, 2005). According to *Nichomachean Ethics,* Aristotle defines virtue as "the disposition which renders a man a good man and causes him to perform his function well" (p. 21). This sense of goodness, he indicates, should be a quality of the state, not merely that of a single individual. Thus, he indicates three steps in the formation of character: having knowledge, making a virtuous choice, and firmness of conviction.

Moral sense theorists of the 18th and 19th centuries produced the agent-receiver-spectator theory which maintained that humans have a sense of moral perception that detect the quality and nature of a moral act. The agent performs the moral or immoral conduct; the receiver is the one on whom the act has been performed; and the spectator is the person who observes, approves, or disapproves of the conduct. The agent and receiver of the moral act, as well as, the spectator experiences moral perception. The agent's moral sense plans and performs the act that he or she perceives as valuing moral pleasure or reprehension. Both the receiver's and the spectator's moral perceptions experience the quality, nature, and action of conduct that engenders love, esteem or repulsion. Proponents of this theory differ concerning the faculties operative in performance of the conduct and the psychological factors motivating the approval of the conduct: Butler in his *Fifteen Sermons* (as cited in Fieser, 2006) holds that these psychological factors differ in the conduct of the agent and the spectator's approval; Hutcheson, on the other hand, in *Inquiry Concerning Moral Good and Evil, Section 3, 8* (as cited in Fieser, 2006) indicates that moral sense perceives the agent's moral or immoral conduct while the mental perception responds in approval or disapproval. The number of receivers positively affected by the agent's conduct determines the morality of the conduct. Hutcheson calls this concept, "the greatest happiness for the greatest number" (p. 3). In moral judgments, the agent – receiver - spectator theory identifies the quality, nature, and action of the conduct to judge the effect of the consequences that the conduct has upon others. Moral judgment means, therefore, determining the consequences of an agent's conduct upon others (as cited in Fieser, 2006). Later moral sense theorists understood the differing roles of the agent-receiver-spectator theory.

Bruce in *Elements of the Science Ethics* observed that virtuous actions arouse comfort in the agent and love and self-esteem in the spectator (as cited in Fieser, 2006).

Hume builds upon the agent - receiver - spectator moral theory. According to Hume, (as cited in Fieser, 2006) character traits, that are either natural or artificial, motivate the conduct of the agent-receiver-spectator. Natural virtues include benevolence, love, humility, and generosity; artificial virtues, according to Hume, are needed for a well ordered state. Examples of artificial virtues are justice, allegiance, and covenant keeping. According to Hume, (as cited in Fieser, 2006) there are four categories that constitute moral virtue: first, qualities useful to oneself; then, qualities useful to others; third, qualities immediately agreeable to others; and fourth, immediately agreeable to oneself.

According to Hume, (as cited in Fieser, 2006) if the agent's conduct is virtuous, then the receiver and the spectator experience agreeable feelings and understand the worth of the virtuous act. The spectator, who shares the understanding of the receiver's feelings, pronounces the character trait a virtue. This sharing in virtuous feelings between the receiver and the spectator shows that a single person may perform more than one of these psychological roles. At this point, Hume (as cited in Oderberg, 2005) questions whether moral judgments are rational judgments or an emotional response. Hume (as cited in Oderberg, 2005) argues that moral assessments are not judgments about empirical facts because facts are observable elements of concrete reality and the construction, "is" and "is not" are factual and "ought to" and ought not to" cannot be deduce from factual construction; since moral approval is not a judgment of reason, he concludes that it must be an emotional response. Scepticism finds root in this concept.

Expressivism derives its motivation from the Humean idea that "morality is more properly felt than judged, called the emotive theory of ethics (Ogden and Richards, as cited in Oderberg, 2005). The expression concerning the nature of a moral or immoral act is a statement of feeling despite the relationship to the proposition. Prescriptivism, on the other hand, ascribes moral utterances to imperatives or commands (Hare, as cited in Oderberg, 2005).

Both expressivism and prescriptivism deny that moral statements are reports of facts; instead, they equate the assertion of a moral proposition with something that is other than a statement of fact: the former is equated with an emotion, while the latter is equated with a command. The problem, here, is that the intrinsic features of the moral proposition do more than assert: they can be disagreed with; they can be rendered true or false, and conclusions can be drawn. Moral propositions allow certain commands to be made. For example, the Ten Commandments that can be obeyed and not met with horror or disgust, invokes a different reality. It is the truth or falsehood that evokes the quality of response to the issuing of commands (Oderberg, 2005)

Focusing on the central problem and two aspects of Hume's "fact-value distinction," (p.9), Oderberg (2005) discusses the question: "Can morality be recognized by the intellect in factual situations?" (p. 14). Oderberg analyses these two aspects of the central problem: first, that ethical statements are not facts; and second, that morality is about reason for actions. The central problem is avoidance of important information that allows for description of moral characteristics and recognition that the intellect must experience a full grasp of reality in order to acquire perception of the whole truth.

According to Oderberg (2005), facts are more than elements of concrete, observable reality: they are true propositions that contain the same extrinsic features: they can be argued, denied, asserted, and from them, conclusions can be drawn. Secondly, that morality is about reasons for actions is the second aspect that Oderberg (2005) addresses: a reason is a fact that offers explanation and justification. Like the fact, a reason has similar features: it can be argued against, denied, asserted, and used for drawing conclusions.

The central problem of the Humean "fact-value distinction," whether morality can be recognized by the intellect in factual situations depends on the individual's grasp of the total reality. Oderberg (2005) argues that if accurate, complete information and appropriate diction detailing the subject were provided in order to enable the individual to grasp and discover the full moral characteristics, there will be no fact-value distinction. In the essence of ethics the individual finds the very qualities of goodness and evil, the nature, and worth of those qualities, being questioned in the fact value-distinction. Thus, the Humean "duality between fact and reason is an illusion" (Oderberg, 2005; p. 15).

Relativism, according to Oderberg (2005), is the most common form of scepticism, deriving from Hume's philosophy of subjectivism. Relativism is the espousal that morality is subjective. It is void of the characteristic that determines truth or falsity, and is relative to one's culture or another's standard, but cannot be applied to all people in all times (Lickona, 1992; Mueller, 2009; Oderberg, 2005). In short, the relativist views morality as a matter of personal opinion. For the subjectivist, facts concerning the moral opinions of others should be the concern. Varying approval or

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disapproval of truth or falsity of a moral proposition creates uncertainty in one's mind

concerning the permissibility of moral conduct. The problem is, the imbalanced view of

the relativist poses a duality that the relativist will object: it is in harmony with

tolerance and oppression. This duality causes instability, for while the individual claims

tolerance, he or she finds that the theory is likewise compatible with oppression. Thus,

though the relativist rejects objective moral truth, he or she embraces the moral truth

that each individual is endowed with freedom of choice and that none should coerce

another to believe as he or she does (Oderberg, 2005).

There is a serious conceptual problem in viewing morality either as the matter of

individual's opinion or as relative to a social standard. The problem is that the standard

of different groups within a society will vary because of varying belief systems and the

measurement of acceptability within the group, too, will also vary in the effort to

determine a standard. As a result, "social relativism is arbitrary…with respect to

determination of a standard and the degree of measurement within the standard"

(Oderberg, 2005; p. 23).

Moral theory supplies rules governing meaningful behaviour. It embraces the

role of emotions, reason, and spirituality as these relate to human conduct and human

relations to each other. Theorists (Knight, 2006; Oderberg, 2005; Schubert, 1987)

identify this system of ethics that guides humans in pursuit of happiness as morality.

Concerned with character of persons in actions that reveal human conduct, morality

identifies base levels of human conduct that determine whether certain actions are right

or wrong; it gives a person breadth of action in the achievement of desired ends: rules

establish the limits within which the individual may act. These rules are concerned with

free conduct and action. That humans possess freedom of choice in action is an assumption of moral theory. It presupposes that individuals are free to make choices about actions, and to determine whether these actions are right or wrong, good or evil. Such freedom is considered rational. Thus, the study and illustration of the nature of what is good and bad for humans, the nature of good and bad actions, choices, and motives are features of morality. With such understanding, morality opens the way for humanity to protect self against the threats of others in the individual's pursuit of happiness; consequently, our dealings with others and how we ought to live life as individuals is an objective and rational system of truths that hold independently of whether any one knows them; they can be discerned through the use of reason. Morality provides all concepts and principles that unify it into an orderly, workable system tested by human reason and applicable to specific problems and situations. Without this system of principles humans have no guide in their pursuit of happiness (Oderberg, 2005).

Basic concepts and principles govern the reasoning used in the solution of moral problems and in pursuit of the good life. What are some principles? How do they form a network to achieve practical outcomes? How can these concepts and principles be justified in moral decision making? "The good," virtue, rights and duties, rights and contracts, rights and consequentialism, and collision of rights are some concerns aimed at achieving the good life.

According to Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the good is the objective at which every act and every pursuit aims. At the foundation of ethical decision making is the pursuit of goodness, the human concept of living well. The well lived life seeks to

satisfy the human needs and appetites in an orderly way. To achieve this goal of goodness, humans must pursue wisdom: knowledge, understanding, and truth. Such pursuit conceptualizes 5 goals that contribute to happiness. Humans pursue these goals through consistent inquiry into (a) human origin, (b) the reason for human existence (c) the purpose for materiality, and (d) sustenance of human life to pursue those human activities that contribute to achievement of the good life.

Metaphysical concerns such as man's origin and destiny, the existence of God, as well as, one's religious beliefs constitute moral inquiry. Schubert (1987) notes that students enter schools with their religious beliefs that they use as lens through which they interpret knowledge. According to McDonald (as cited in Schubert, 1987), "Education entered into with the intent toward growth is a personally religious endeavour" (p.121). The very word "education," formed from two Latin words, the verb, "*ducere,*" meaning "to lead," and the prefix "*ex,*" meaning "out of" or "from," renders the literal meaning of "education" as, "leading out of." Within educational nurturing, therefore, resides the depth of man's spiritual being, and training reaches into the individual's spiritual nature to draw out the moral light resident within; thus, morality evokes reverence for the individual's perception of transcendence (2 Corinthians 4: 6, 7). Humans' desire to worship, therefore, reveals their spiritual origin, from the Creator's hand, as one philosopher has written: "He made of one blood all nations to dwell on the earth" (Acts 17: 26). In addition, humans received the gift of freedom to choose the quality and the object of worshipful discourse, as well as, the medium through which the experience of worship occurs in pursuit of happiness. This author, also, reminds humans of their destiny and reason for their existence:

accountability to their Creator, Saviour, and Judge (Acts 17: 22 - 34). Education

systems require accountability of educators who will be held accountable for their

freedom of choice. Educators have the freedom to be respectful of, or, to be negligent in

attention to students' metaphysical concerns (Lockwood, 2009).

Aristotle claims that everything a person does, aims at the quality judged good

or worthwhile. Ethical theory is concerned with habits of moral virtues, as well as, vices

practiced in dealing with others. Humans engage the intellect and the will in reasoning,

planning, and choosing the well lived life in pursuit of the good or happiness. The

intellect studies the manner in which society functions to satisfy human needs; further,

the intellect plans for acquisition of knowledge in fulfilment of those needs, and reason

applies the knowledge in decision-making. A trained intellect analyses knowledge and

acknowledges truth; the will, thus, engaged in practice, becomes free to summon

emotions, desires, and sensations in moral choice in harmony with conscience or against

conscience. Vice is the choice against conscience or what the intellect knows to be

objective moral truth. The choice against conscience weakens the will. The human

phenomenon of the weakened will is, therefore, a choice against good for short term

satisfaction of desires. Rationality attests that the nervous system trained to practice

useful and habitual actions, releases the brain for higher thinking processes (James, as

cited in Oderberg, 2005). To cultivate moral virtue, therefore, as a habit, the individual

practices the act as often as he or she confronts it. Tension, though is present when

acquisition of virtue conflicts with vice; however, if repeated, virtues become habitual

and are virtuous because they are of moral excellence. The power to change a vice to a

virtue is within the control of the will (Oderberg, 2005; Ludington & Diehl, 2002).

Goodness is an unyielding quality. The fundamental principle of morality is "Do good and avoid evil" while the basic concept is "good" (Oderberg, 2005; p. 35). "Good" has been defined as the choice that satisfies the needs and appetites and contributes to the fulfilment of the individual's happiness in an orderly manner. "Evil," on the other hand, is the choice against good that diminishes the individual's achievement of happiness within the appropriate time and sequence (Oderberg, 2005). This principle and concept apply to humans whose nature is rational, physical, social, and spiritual. Firm, in nature, the "good" is happiness which consists of many aspects of living well (Oderberg, 2005). To achieve the good physical life, humans are aware of the need to sustain an integrated, restorative, healthy existence. The will, however, may choose against knowledge of the good that maintains a healthy, physical life, in the pursuit of happiness. Such choice may very well result in malnutrition, disease, and ultimately failure to achieve the goal of happiness.

As social beings, humans identify friendship as a good that family life and community living nurture in both body and mind. Through interactions in these settings, individuals acquire knowledge and understanding; within these basic landscapes, life and health receive strength as work and play promote this combination of goods in the pursuit of happiness. To the body, work becomes a source of rejuvenation, while recreation renews both body and mind (Oderberg, 2005). Body, work, and mind, are gifts from the one who extends the invitation to experience renewal. In the invitation to find rest, however, is another gift, study. The invitation to renewal requires a compound response of obedience, restraint, and study of the Giver of rest (Matthew 11: 28 – 30).

Thus, the gifts, work, body, mind, and study-are instruments that sustain human life in pursuit of the good.

Morality protects the individual's pursuit of the good with moral law serving as a guide to interaction with others and a defense against intrusion by other individuals in pursuit of their happiness. As such, morality provides the individual with rights to do or have something according to moral law; additionally, morality enables the individual to act lawfully before his or her conscience, the public, and transcendence. Thus, a right, properly defined, is "title to certain things and actions, for the achievement of happiness" (Oderberg, 2005; p. 58). Morality protects this right by showing respect in words and deeds. Rights are associated with duties. Every right imposes a duty on another person to respect it. Without this correlation between right and duty, morality will be self-contradictory, for it would permit interference by others of the individual in pursuit of happiness. Hence, morality ensures justice.

Justice is a relational virtue concerned with ensuring respect of rights: rights between humans, rights between the individual and the state, and rights between the state and the individual. Involving a form of moral behaviour, justice has three components: commutative, distributive, and civic justice. Commutative justice deals with relationship between individuals and inclines them to respect each other's right. Distributive justice ensures the state's respect of individual's rights, while civic justice concerns the individual's duty to the state (Oderberg, 2005). To explain the fundamental principle governing the relationship between law and morality, Oderberg (2005) juxtaposes justice and rights against law. A law is a rational principle governing human behaviour. The moral law is the body of universal principles guiding humans to

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happiness. Thus, the moral law yields rights and duties in the governance of humans in pursuit of the good or happiness. Legislative authority establishes human laws for governance of a community and for ensuring the good of the community in the estimation of authority. The legislator frames laws and provides the citizens with three rights: (a) rights to do what morality already allows him to do; (b) rights to do what morality obliges him to do in conscience; and (c) rights to sanction those who would intrude upon the individual's pursuit of happiness. The point, is, rights are features of an objective morality and cannot at the same time be creations of human laws; even if human legislation is unjust, the legislator's duty is to ensure that the laws enacted conform to morality. The basic principle is, morality determines the difference between a just and an unjust law; hence, law follows morality, and the law of love ensures respect of rights (Oderberg, 2005).

The law of love is the sum of moral virtues. Moralists (Kozol, 2001; Oderberg, 2005; White, 1995) agree that love is the governing principle that guides individuals in relationships to quietly serve others. The expression, "charity" used in a Biblical framework of faith means love, but has come to mean, aid to the less fortunate, or the organization who gives the aid is called a charity (Oderberg, 2005). The first act of love is to love oneself. The individual, void of self-love, finds relationships challenging. Love of oneself protects the individual against abuse, hatred of self, and others. Love motivates the individual who loves himself or herself to humbly serve others. The true test of character is to love the stranger, the one who abuses, as well as, the human family, described, in Acts 17, as "made of one blood." Love should desire the welfare of this "single family," (Oderberg, 2005; p. 53) as each human being desires his or her

prosperity. Love frees the victim of social pain to live in pursuit of the good life, and to

forgive the social predator, whose freedom depends upon reciprocal love for self,

others, and God's will. The question is, how do humans cultivate the capacity to

practice this quality of service and love?

The Seventh-day Adventist Lens of a Biblical Framework of Faith

The distinctive characteristic of Adventist education derived from a Biblical

framework of faith points to the redemptive aim of true education: to restore human

beings to their Creator's image (Kovalski, 2003). A Biblical framework of faith

provides the lens of love for God, self, and community, reflected in the character of

Christ, through which humans can view behavior. Thus, faith in the wisdom and

knowledge of revelation becomes the safeguard for "individual integrity, purity of the

home, well-being of society, and stability of the nation" (White, 1995; p. 229). Based

on a Biblical framework of faith, those in social interactions with students require more

than academic and psychological understanding. An understanding of the divine science

of development is necessary: restoration of the individual to wholeness is the divine

purpose. As a result, the divine partner understands the need of the less advanced

individual to develop physically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually.

A Biblical framework of faith couples works with faith in God, who is Love.

God develops character akin to goodness when the individual makes choices rooted in

divine science of faith. This framework acknowledges God, whose character and

purposes can be understood as revealed in nature, the Bible, and Jesus Christ, the

ultimate source of existence and truth. God demonstrated that love in providing humans,

marred by sin, an example in the character of the Servant Leader, Jesus. The character

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of Jesus, as the standard of human conduct, motives, thinking, and behaviour lies at the foundation of *Journey to Excellence*, the North American Division Office of Education's vision of curriculum in Seventh – day Adventist schools in the 21st century.

The Learner

"The most important component of the school is the learner," writes Knight, (2006; p. 204). Viewed through a Biblical framework of faith, the learner is a child of God whose greatest need is to know his divine heritage. Having infinite potential, the learner's nature is related to his educational needs. First, he needs to be treated as a whole individual of significance to God. If viewed as such, his experiences with the principles of character building should reveal a healthy balance between spiritual, social, physical, and mental dimensions. To restore the learner in a healthy balance among these aspects is one of the purposes of character education. As a result, methods of teaching and socialization should be framed toward shaping the learner's character according to his nature, needs, and condition.

Secondly, the learner needs to "be fully human," (Knight, 2006; p. 208) controlled by his intellect instead of his baser inclinations. Fulfilment of this need empowers the individual with the ability to reason from cause to effect; when this skill is exercised within a Biblical framework of faith, the individual learner exercises independent decision making. C. S. Lewis (as cited in Knight, 2006) confirms that freedom of choice makes evil possible, but it is also the only thing that "makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having" (p. 209). To exercise this freedom of choice, the learner, using rationality, aided by special revelation and the guidance of the Holy

Spirit, should make moral decisions. Understanding how to exercise this skill, the individual exercises faith, when he or she reasons from cause to effect. More specifically, when the individual yearns for transcendent energy, the physical, mental, and spiritual faculties become saturated with divine energy to obey the dictates of the will in performing the will of transcendence. For example, given the opportunity to choose between sacrifice of principle to custom and uncompromised principle, the learner should choose the latter. Character education, within a Biblical framework should provide the student with this ability to make social choices that transcend custom (White, 1995).

According to Knight (2006), each student has the need to be viewed as a unique individual. Within a Biblical framework of faith, both individual and the social group are of equal value. This need to be valued as a person adds health to the social group. White (1995) makes a similar analogy in analysis of divine interaction: "The true educator will take a personal interest in each pupil and will seek to develop all his (of the student's) powers" (pp. 231-232).

Finally, understanding the constancy of the human predicament is another need of the student. Within a Biblical framework of faith, humanity is either in acceptance or revolt against the free offer of divine love. Conflict between these two postures gives rise to intergenerational issues (Gauld, 1993) that may either diminish or increase the learner's self-worth. As the student learns to resolve personal or intergenerational issues in relationship to the divine ideal, he or she cooperates in mission and service, and he or she values divine love that is the source of service and efficiency in application within many settings and among various human conditions (White, 1995).

The Teacher

According to the literature on teaching methods in Seventh-day Adventist schools, the teacher's standard is the Master Teacher, who exhibited four types of authority: sapiential, moral, personal, and charismatic. Sapiential authority integrates a Biblical framework of faith in teaching; moral authority models virtue; personal authority shows consistency between teaching and behaviors; while charismatic authority holds the audience's attention with teaching (Melbourne, 2003). The teaching styles of the Master Teacher included illustrations, rhetorical devices, deductive and inductive thinking. The educator emulates the Master Teacher's pattern: 5 specific skills include (a) differentiation between levels of thinking, (b) engaging students in the redemptive process, (c) simple, effective, enthusiastic illustrations, (d) planning, and (e) mastery of basic skills. There are also 5 general skills that educators should ensure their students master: (a) sense of industry, (b) refined linguistic skills; (c) problem solving, (d) sequencing skills, (e) refinement of faculties (White, 1995). Application of these teaching strategies nurtures character development (Knight, 2006).

According to White (1995) the power to discriminate between right and wrong, as well as, the ability to reflect, analyse, and evaluate should transcend memory that the student may avoid dependence on the judgment of others. The educator's ability to teach independent thinking correlates with his/her empirical relationship of faith in divine authority over current events. Such use of every day experiences captures the students' attention. The Master Teacher used the known to teach about the unknown, and the unknown to teach the known: for example, "The Deluge" and "The Sermon by the Sea: The Sower, the Seed, and the Soils" (Genesis 6, 7; Matthew 13; King James

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Version). According to White (1995), when students depend on divine reasoning, they will learn to choose what is good. Students grow to appreciate integration of instructive discourse in daily experiences and learn to nurture leadership skills through similar dependence on the divine science of reasoning. Divine reasoning invites the individual learner and teacher into a partnership with Omnipotence whose authority transcends human rationality with what seems illogical (Isaiah 1:18). Given the teacher's relationship of faith, the student should experience demonstration of leadership, courage, and faith. The educator should express belief in student's ability to achieve through procedure and process that seem impossible in man's reality.

Next, the true educator knows that individual instruction is essential (White, 1995) for it shows concern or love for the student. With such an example, the Master Teacher met the need of every heart in fulfilment of the divine objective, to save man. Additionally, this strategy for shaping character should express concern for growth and stimulate the learner's courage or faith to experience new skills. At the same time, personal instruction ensures the learner's mastery of foundational principles in specific content. Repetition of certain daily experiences teaches in the absence of the educator.

White's (1995) emphasis on language refinement and avoidance of hasty speech or criticism, that steals virtue, reflects the Master Teacher's use of rhetorical devices. This mode of instruction injects teaching with freshness, creativity, and longevity. For example hyperbole, exaggeration for dramatic effect; simile, the comparison of two unlike things using "like" or "as"; and metaphor, a comparison of two unlike things in which the first becomes the latter; the paradox, the statement that seems contradictory, yet true; or parallelism, sequential statements of similar grammatical construction ,

often used in speeches for summary and reinforcement - such imaginative thinking and emulation of teaching strategies nurture leadership, integrity, as well as, concern and courage in the student (Melbourne, 2003).

The teacher's service, broadly viewed as demonstration of integrity, will be seen in planning and in relationships with the students. According to White (1995), the teacher has a well laid plan and knows his / her objective and the desired outcome before attempting to teach. Using inductive or deductive reasoning, the educator will teach either the general principle by beginning with the specific or, the known fact by beginning with the unknown principle; such are strategies of the Master Teacher. The educator's conviction will ensure that students understand the principle involved in the concept and can articulate clearly their understanding of it. This achieved, the teacher's strategy will be present even in his or her absence (Melbourne, 2003). The teacher's integrity should be seen also in management of problem solving: how the teacher manages the stress of social relationships will test integrity; for example, if students express negative perceptions of a teacher's professional peer, the educator's inversion of this conventional practice, another strategy of the Master Teacher, will foster lessons in service, self-control, as well as, integrity. "The most influential teachers, whether they recognize it or not, are parents" (Gabelein as cited in Knight, 2006; p. 217). Where home influence is on the wane, the teachers' service is significant. Thus, their questioning that teaches lessons of safety and inspires humility will, not only, nurture student's integrity, but also, be an example of quality service. Finally, the teacher's service exemplifies integrity in valuing all students, including the apparently unpromising.

When teachers' presentations are clear, simple, effective, and enthusiastic, (White, 1995) they stimulate the students' curiosity. Research (Reio, 2010) details four ways that teachers can build upon students' curiosity: creating a secure setting in which students are open to risk taking for learning, sharing; (b) modeling cognitive and sensory curiosities that show knowledge learned within continuing education and thrills experienced safely within a social setting; (c) reflection for problem solving and (d) scaffolding of essential knowledge through students' interests. The zeal and force with which teachers speak concerning the reality of experienced content should inspire questioning or curiosity. Discussing teacher effectiveness, Sarason (1999) recommends that teachers use their personal lives as lens through which they understand students' "thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward learning" (p. 54). Thus, teachers should experience content as personally meaningful and infinite. White (1995) on the other hand, views knowledge through a Biblical framework of faith and is specific. Such knowledge brings educator and learner to an honest examination of learning experiences through the lens of infinite wisdom. According to a Biblical framework of faith, the Master Teacher used his parables to awaken curiosity (Melbourne, 2003). From this perspective, therefore, the Adventist educator "...needs to be a constant learner in the school of Christ" (White, 1948; p. 202). Melbourne (2003) expressed his perception of the effect of the Master Teacher's use of narratives that emphasize truth and appeal to the heart, in these words: "… He awakened His listener's curiosity; He inspired reflection, which led to comprehension and learning" (p. 7). In addition to receiving academic qualifications and an understanding of teaching

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methods, teachers should immerse their life style in "modelling life affirming values" (Strommen, 1993, p. 36).

Finally, the teacher's courage to discuss principles of virtue, a sense of industry, as well as, to develop all abilities instead of mere natural aptitude should stimulate the students' courage to dare new skills or challenges, especially needed in mission and service. Knight (2006) defines Christian service as a response to omnipotent love, instead of an "altruistic humanitarianism," that allows people to honour themselves for their personal goodness. Showing the relationship between character development and service, he writes: "Character development lays the foundation for service. Yet, it is also true that such service further develops character…. It is a truism that character development cannot occur without service" (p. 217).

According to the literature, teaching strategies should nurture in students the qualities of character reflected in the teacher's personality and presentation. Thus, showing that service is integral to character development, the teacher's practice will reveal relationship between service and character.

The Administrator.

According to Knight (2006), the administrator should reflect the same spiritual, social, physical, and mental balance that the setting is seeking to nurture in students. As one who has acquired success and understanding in the teaching profession, the principal should not lose touch with the challenges and problems of the classroom context. Such an individual values teaching for what Knight (2006) calls "a powerful and crucial form of ministry" (p. 219). Thus, the administrator should understand that the development of Christian character in students stands as a major goal of Christian

teachers and should nurture within them the qualities of character needed for students'

growth in the classroom

The administrator's leadership skills should reveal understanding of the human

problem as being of a spiritual nature. Such understanding should motivate his or her

personal nurture of self in divine grace (Eavey, as cited in Knight, 2006). Thus, the

administrator's courage to lead by example should demonstrate his or her respect for the

sacred. Through interaction with teachers, students, and staff in resolution of social

problems, the administrator should show how his or her dependence upon the principles

of character has influenced internalization of the essentials of the divine likeness. As a

result, observing the administrator's actions and relationships should reveal leadership

in a spiritual network.

The administrator's concern for mental growth of students and teachers should

stimulate his or her mental development. Growth in literary qualifications express

interest in understanding human existence and developing ability to communicate and

view educational content in the context of the Christian world view (Knight, 2006).

The administrator should be an individual with the ability to lead the institution beyond

the narrow realm of his or her academic specialization to stimulate genuine interest in

the relationship between learning experiences and the ultimate purpose of developing

character. Thus, while improving literary qualifications, the administrator experiences

mental development. This on-going interaction with curiosity is an opportunity for

questioning as is the experience of the student. The administrator should, therefore, be

able to understand the realities of student and teacher.

As the administrator reflects mental and spiritual balance, he should be a mirror of social and physical well-being also. Concern for the social health of the institution should reflect in the administrator's willing offer of the "gift of companionship" to students (as well as teachers) in work and play (Knight, 2006, p. 220). The divine example of relationships showed concern or love for the refinement of human nature. His insightfulness ranged from tactfulness to impartiality, and he tempered social well-being with good health. If the administrator's physical well-being depends upon the laws of health that "God has built into the natural world and revealed in His Word," (Knight, 2006; p. 221) then, students and teachers' integrity should be seen in balanced academic performance, in healthy attendance, and respectful social relationships. Good health needed for the task of institutional administration should result.

Ethical Positions.

There are four ethical positions from which the administrator, teacher, or student may evaluate social conduct and social relationships: (a) legalism or unlimited absolutism, (b) antinomianism or unlimited relativism, (c) limited relativism or situation ethics, and (d) limited absolutism. Legalism and antinomianism are polar extremes and are pitfalls of the Christian ethic. Legalism is the practice of unbending rules, whether or not there are extenuating circumstances. Antinomianism, on the other hand, is the extreme opposite. It rejects all moral law and gives no place to universal principles (Knight, 2007). Limited relativism or situation ethics espouses the concept that everything is right or wrong according to the situation; this ethical position sets no moral boundaries. The Biblical framework of faith rejects limited relativism and other

extremes; instead, it exemplifies limited absolutism. Knight (2006) writes of limited absolutism:

> This position allows love to retain its cognitive content expressed in the actions and attitudes of God and in the Ten Commandments. It retains the timeless universal principles for the application of law to different situations while providing for the Christian liberty where the law is silent (p. 189).

Learner, teacher, and administrator should remain conscious of this legalist-antinomian tension in the epistemology of character education and the need to mediate relationships with a sense of love, justice, and fairness. According to the literature, educators need to be "… constant learners. The reformers need to be, themselves, reformed." (White, 1948, p.154). Principles of character development seek the goal of spiritual, mental, social, and physical balance through the development of gracious qualities of character according to a Biblical framework of faith.

Theorists, (Josephson, 1993; Lickona et al. 2003) categorize a Biblical framework of faith in common language that serves the individual: trustworthiness, fairness, respect, responsibility, caring, and citizenship. Gauld (1995) translates this list into the language of shared values: leadership, integrity, courage, concern, curiosity, mission and service. While Adventist educators rely on a Biblical framework of faith in cultivation of character traits, they also are aware of the research on core ethical values.

Tools of Character Development

White's (1995) seminal work, *Education* shares seven principles that develop character: instructional strategies, good conduct, grooming, love, faith and prayer, as well as, service. Each will be discussed according to the preceding sequence.

Instructional Strategies

Green (1995) writes: "The core technology in schools is teaching" (p.4). Given this reality, wisdom approves research based instructional strategies. Theorists (Joyce, Weil, & Calhoun, 2000; Noddings, 2008; Schubert et al. 2002; Vygotsky, 1978; White, 1995) agree on instructional strategies for character development even though terms of identification differ: critical thinking, personalized instruction, illustration, advanced organizers, application, deductive and inductive reasoning, cooperative learning, problem solving, reciprocal teaching, scaffolding, and zone of proximal development. These examples are by no means exhaustive. Joyce et al. (2000) have grouped models of teaching into four families: (a) the social family, (b) the information processing family, (c) the personal family, and (d) the behavioral systems family. These authors conceptualized the tools as education's power, organization of intelligence-oriented education, and the learner's media for self-education. Within each family, these theorists illustrate models of instructional strategies. The social family emphasizes cooperative learning as a strategy that enhances partnership instead of competition. According to Thelen (as cited in Joyce et al., 2000), this group investigation model nurtures independent learners, respect for individual dignity, social inquiry, and interpersonal warmth and affiliation.

The basic inductive model is an example of the information processing family of models. Taba (as cited in Joyce et al., 2000) illustrates three teaching strategies: (a) concept formation, (b) interpretation of data, and (c) application of principles. In the concept formation strategy, students identify and list data pertinent to the problem; then, they group the items into categories whose members have common attributes; then, students develop labels for the categories. Second, interpretation of data elicits such mental operations as formulation of hypotheses, interpretation of data, inference, and generalization from exploration of the hypothesis. Third, in application of principles, students overtly predict consequences, explain data that seem unfamiliar, as well as, hypothesize, support, and verify predictions. Additionally, students perform certain covert mental operations: analysis of the nature of the problem, retrieval of relevant information, determination of relationship between cause and hypothesis, as well as, inferential thinking to determine adequate conditions that verify the predictions. The model is designed to nurture language proficiency, attention to the nature of knowledge, the spirit of inquiry, and logical thinking.

Theory and Research.

Within the personal family of models is the self-actualization strategy; rooted in theories of conceptual growth and self-concept, self-actualization purports the belief that students can cultivate rich states of growth and become integrated selves whose outreach to the community contribute to and benefit from interaction with it (Joyce et al., 2000); through interaction, students may acquire social skills and academic content. Researchers (Joyce, Bush, & McKibbin; Joyce &Showers, as cited in Joyce et al., 2000) of The California State Development Study of the concept of states of growth

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hypothesized that the opportunities for growth within any given community were equal (Joyce et al., 2000; p. 303). The study focused on the interaction of teachers with their community in three domains: formal, peer generated, and personal. The formal domain reflected opportunities for workshops, courses, and services of administrators, and supervisors; interaction with peers that provided opportunities for growth was considered peer domain; those aspects of teachers' lives that had implications for professional growth were considered personal domain. Using 300 case studies and 2,000 questionnaires, researchers studied levels of activity and social influence of teachers to determine stages of growth.

After studying levels of activity and social influence in terms of teachers' ability to transcend the minimum provision of their human resource development system, researchers found that teachers who were open to new ideas for organizing new information and novel views of the world had more complex conceptual structures to permit growth; they interacted with their environment, confidently found opportunities for growth, and became productive in providing opportunities to enrich others. This group had strong self-concept, while teachers who permitted their self-concept to be defined by their social context failed to provide fulfilling relationships for others and themselves; these teachers had "limited structures and less ability to figure out how to reach for new experience and deal with it." (p. 309).

Implications for Character.

According to Joyce et al. (2000), modelling rich states of growth for students through rich, organized content, balanced, personal interests, and outreach to the environment, teachers became richer and more productive, while at the same time,

teachers gave students the tools for self-actualization. Teachers' knowledge of a variety of instructional strategies, therefore, has implication for character growth. Variety in instructional approaches provides opportunities for students to develop conceptual structures that permit growth and that engage them in decision-making with freedom to reject hindrances to achievement or accept internalization of principles that enhance achievement and character.

Memorization.

The expression, "metacognition," describes the student's or teacher's ability to use any or all instructional strategies to predict performance on certain tasks and monitor levels of mastery and understanding (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000). Though memorization may be an integral skill in the execution of any of these skills, research has shown that memorization is effective only when related to strategies of thinking and learning. Memorization offers instructional advantages: mastery of facts, information and concepts, and a sense of intellectual power. While the theorists' concern is the individual's ability to evaluate, differentiate, and perceive the re-conceptualization of ideas, as well as, transfer of knowledge to new learning situations, memory is designed for saving time, as well as, to increase the individual's capacity to store and retrieve information for more independent thinking.

A strategy of the information processing family of models, memorization provides students a sense of control over learning. They experience self-esteem, self-understanding, self-reliance and independence. A number of instructional principles have been developed to teach memorization strategies and efficient studying. Mnemonics, or assists to memorization, provide a rich mental context and link that

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increase thinking activity that is an anchor within the information processing system (Joyce et al, 2000.). According to the Atkinson's early studies (as cited in Joyce et al, 2000), the link word method is 50% more effective than conventional rote methods. Students learn 50% more material than if conventional rote methods were used; retention is, also, said to be easier.

Memorization focuses on four principles: (a) attending to the new material, (b) developing connection, (c) expanding sensory images, and (d) practicing recall. In the first phase the teacher focuses students' attention to underlining main ideas of new material to be studied, reflection, and listing key words of the material. In phase two, the student learns to develop connections by using key words, substitute words, and link word systems techniques. In phase three, the teacher works with the student to expand sensory images from the students' mental store of ridiculous association and exaggerations. The student's capacity for creative thinking is thus enhanced, for figurative language becomes a basic feature of visual imagery and ridiculous association.   In stage four, the student practices recall of the material until he or she has learned it thoroughly. From the first to the fourth phase, concept attainment, the inductive model, and advance organizer model facilitate memorization (Joyce et al, 2000). Thus, memorization is applicable to all curricula content. As students achieve mastery of the model, they acquire independence from teacher assisted instruction and demonstrate ability to transfer learning.

Personalized System of Instruction.

Discussing the effects of technology on the personalized system of instruction, Brothen (1998) emphasizes four characteristics of the personalized system of instruction

and its effect for failing students. The four features are as follows: (a) emphasis is on written materials as the major teaching activity; instructors create suitable reading materials; (b) students work according to their abilities; (c) student and teacher determine progress through mastery of small units of knowledge: remediation of deficiencies facilitates progress; and (d) aids help students to understand how to deal with their weaknesses and achieve success. The personalized system of instruction can have the same effect for failing students as for exceptional students since both groups make use of similar tools of assessment: retesting and feedback. Failing students learn to value these tools in monitoring progress to become self-regulating.   If computerized quizzes provide students immediate feedback on content knowledge and reference for restudy, students appreciate the value of restudy and feedback; furthermore, they learn how to improve their learning strategies. In this case, students learn leadership skills of responsibility and cooperation (Brothen, 1998). The personalized system of instruction is "beneficial to 90% of students and typically move average performance from the 50th percentile to the 70th percentile on examination" (Kulik as cited in Brothen, 1998; p. 5). Inspiring confidence and positive energy in the timid ostracized learner, this method of instruction increases social capital: understanding and responsibility to peers and society. The personal element electrifies the learner's thinking while the teacher is free to draw upon a variety of thinking and learning strategies (Brothen, 1998; White, 1995).

According to Brothen (1998), the major teaching activity of the personalized system of instruction is written material for the purpose of mastery at 90 to 100% instead of lecture, but the Master Teacher of a Biblical framework of faith shows the possibility of integrating a variety of instructional strategies into personalized

instruction when the intended outcome is character change. Using prior knowledge or

an advanced organizer (Ausubel as cited in Joyce et al., 2000), the teacher may

introduce a social problem by specific request or respond to a student's deductive

inquiry into the nature of socially sublime phenomena. The student becomes aware of

the difference between his or her actual level of development as determined by

independent problem solving without guided instruction and the level of potential

development as determined by problem solving in collaboration with skilled guidance.

The teacher's response also establishes awareness of this difference that Vygotsky

(1978) calls zone of proximal development. To sustain interest in skill acquisition, and

thereby, narrow the mental gap in decision making and problem solving, the teacher

may use a variety of instructional strategies: scaffolding, inquiry, interaction,

exploration of historical, cultural, social, ethical, and philosophical content (Rosenblatt,

1995) of the problem that not only effects resolution, but also recognizes growth of

cognitive skill. The teacher's provision of reflection time provides opportunity for

practice of skills through exploration of the on-going cultural and socio-political climate

that requires decision making for growth. At this juncture, there is narrowing of mental

gap through a convergence of critical thinking skills. Confidence of mastery becomes

evident in reciprocal teaching and other meta-cognitive skills that use elaboration, and

various forms of discourse to show concern for others (Melbourne, 2003).

Good Conduct Influences Character Building.

Courtesy or self-respect and reverence characterize deportment or good conduct,

the second tool that influences character building. Parents and teachers need most to

nurture these attributes in themselves and demonstrate them in manner, appearance, and

voice since youth often choose to reflect the conduct seen, or simply purpose to deny negative lifestyles (Strommen, 1993; White, 1995).

Seen in the practice of principle, good conduct cuts through the barrier of prejudice, demonstrated in societal class and accords respect to the dignity of all mankind (Gauld & Gauld, 1998; Kozol, 2000; White 1995). Principled deportment gives birth to self-respect and observes universal kinship that teaches lessons of wisdom, instead of inhibitions; acceptance, in place of exclusion; and humility, rather than pride. Respect for the needs of others is the essence of deportment. Educating for character trains the eye and heart to recognize the needs of the full spectrum of humanity: good conduct shows kindness to parents and is considerate of their needs. To the unfortunate, the student of good conduct extends understanding (Kozol, 1991; 2000; White 1995). The listener provides time for biographical reflection, analysis of circumstances of the setting, as well as, interpretation of context as it impacts spiritual, physical, and emotional growth of the individual (Kozol, 1991; 2000). According to White (1995), character moulded after the standard of the Master Teacher reflects good conduct and recognizes reverence for God's greatness and presence, as well as, His name and word.

As a grace, good conduct acknowledges reverence for God's presence; the individual experiences depth of being and awe for the sanctity of God's greatness: a Biblical framework of faith shows Moses' awful reverence (Exodus 3:5). Kozol (2000) records the simple trust in a child's prayer that attests to the kind of awe inspired upon the utterance of God's name. Reverence inspires respect for the timelessness of the

divine message. Moral literacy reveres transcendent knowledge that coexists with

secular misgivings of every age (Bush & Yablonski, 1995).

Society recognizes reverence and courtesy toward the aged as esteemed favours

(Proverbs 16:31). Rising up before the aged shows more than courtesy and respect;

such an act produces beauty and grace of character. Kozol (1991), in *Savage

Inequalities*, concerns himself with this diminishing intergenerational ideal as he

describes the educational, social, and political inequities in the institutions and society

of East St Louis; further, in *Ordinary Resurrections* his admiration of his aged father's

medical expertise coupled with Jonathan's empathy for his dad's Alzheimer knits heart

of author and reader in a bond of empathy

Respect should be accorded parents, teachers, and ministers whose lifestyles

reflect good conduct (Kozol, 2000; Strommen, 1993; White, 1995) for by example, they

reflect the tenderness, justice, and patience of God; students, could, by emulation, learn

trust, obedience, and reverence for God while simultaneously reflecting virtuous

qualities of the standard of character: on the other hand, students can learn distrust from

some of those above mentioned characters, who abuse defenseless children. Statistics

on child abuse and neglect reveal the following :

> During 2007, an estimated 794,000 children in the 50 states, the District of
>
> Columbia, and Puerto Rico were victims of child abuse or neglect. Of this
>
> number, 59% were neglected; 10.8% were physically abused; and 7.6% were
>
> sexually abused. (Child Welfare League of America, 2010, p. 1)

As a result, some youths have learned distrust of adults; others will live with emotional

pain into maturity. Theorists (Bush & Yablonski, 1995; Kozol, 1991, 2000) agree that

suspicion, scepticism, cynicism, and abuse of the aged prevail because of social predators whose actions thrive beneath the dress of respect. Some students within classrooms are victims of diminished courtesy and irreverence for God's image and omnipresence. Contrastingly, though, there are still adults who reflect a caring nature. A Biblical framework of faith provides examples of the "unselfish spirit, gentle grace, and the winsome temper" (2 Samuel 9; White, 1995, p. 242) that characterize courtesy and are reflections of the standard of character. Parents, teachers, and ministers, whose good conduct model quiet confidence in "life-affirming values," (Strommen, 1993, p. 36) give youth an enduring treasure.

Fashion Influences Educating for Character

What is the relationship between fashion and character? Theorists (Kozol, 2000; Lee, 2003; White, 1995) suggest 5 relationships: (a) fashion reaps health consequences; without physical and spiritual health, the student is unable to interact with teaching and learning; (b) fashion robs the student of a nobler life, as well as, the mind of worshipful rest, for fashion stimulates the consciousness of learner and worshipper in their milieu; (c) fashion reflects societal image; instead of choosing to cultivate independent thinking, the student chooses the philosophy of the designer of fashion; (d) habits of interaction, thinking, and speaking shape character; and (e) simplicity of dress reflects independent thinking. Principals and teachers become responsible for enforcing dress codes and uniform policies in the school setting (Anderson, 2002; Kozol 2000; White, 1995).

According to White (1995), devotion to fashion reaps dire consequences: it steals physical and spiritual nutrition. The family who follows fashion closely often

neglects healthy nutrition: parents often yield to the fashion choices of children to the neglect of dietary needs; for example, a costly pair of designer sneakers in exchange for meals high in fat, sugar, and salt is a common choice. In 1995, Holoman's study (as cited in Anderson, 2002) found that students can experience theft or violence as a result of status clothing. Lacking in nutritional value, fast foods train the appetite during meal times and during rest intervals in a desire for more of the same. Such a diet weakens the immune system and reduces the body's production of endorphins, hormones that produce a state of well-being in the body (Ludington & Diehl, 2002); also, a diet of fast foods reduces the flow of oxygen to the brain and nervous system diminishing students' abilities to think during interaction with learning and teaching. Thus, students of fashion may cultivate poor dietary habits that create a diseased pattern which may result in poor health.

Also, devotion to fashion robs the home of time for teaching reverence, courtesy, and other character building experiences. The parent or student becomes what Lee (2003) calls the fashion victim: this individual slavishly remains aware of changing fashions and is captured by the freshness of both newness and the imagined social message being communicated. This slavish response to fashion stimuli becomes a habit. Ludington and Diehl (2002) explain the process of habit formation as the repeated action or thought that builds boutons or grooves at the end of axons or nerve fibres over which the messages from the brain travel. Habits shape character (Ludington & Diehl, 2002). Theorists (Kozol, 2000; White, 1995) agree that preoccupation with the fashion habit, therefore, steals time that should be spent in spiritual rest and training that cultivates independent thinking. In short, parental

indulgence of children's fashion choices "determines the grooves into which time will wear them" (Gilbert as cited in Ludington & Diehl, 2002; p. 233).

In the classroom, dress may compete with the teacher and may win the students' attention. To thwart status attire and gang culture, as well as enhance academic performance, public schools implemented dress codes and uniform policies in the 1980s. Former President Clinton endorsed dress codes and uniforms in his 1996 *State of the Union Address*; then, he followed up his endorsement with instruction for the United States Department of Education to mail *A Manual of School Uniforms* to all 16,000 school districts in the United States (Anderson, 2002).

Though the fashion victim thinks that dress projects his or her image, Lee (2003) expresses the contrary: clothing reflects the thinking of designers, their philosophy, and their image of society (Lee, 2003): whether hemlines are up or down, skin is in, and pants waists are fitting or loosely falling, each mode of dress projects the thinking of the designer. In short, the student as fashion victim communicates social identity to others (Johnson as cited in Lee, 2003). Linguistic skills and potential for constructive leadership should be sublimated into discussions of academic content, social issues, and decision making that cultivates leadership skills in character formation. Dress, then, should enrich the student with a nobler life.

Simplicity of dress reflects independent thinking, refined skill, and the appropriate exercise of the power of choice which reveals character (White, 1995). A summary of studies (Holloman, Stanley, Wilson, as cited in Anderson, 2002) indicates that since school leadership enacted other reforms at the same time uniforms and dress codes were implemented, it is difficult to attribute academic performance and school

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safety to uniform policies. In partnership with the National Association of Elementary

School Principals, Land's End, the clothing retailer, commissioned a telephone survey

of school principals to query the effect of school uniform policies: of 755 responses,

634 felt uniform had a positive effect on the community; 596 indicated school uniform

policies improved classroom discipline; 506 claimed students' academic performance

improved; while 468 indicated that school uniform policies had a positive effect on

school safety (as cited in Anderson, 2002). Dress, in essence, bespeaks character.

A Biblical framework of faith offers Christ's character as the standard (White,

1995). Humans, who choose the character of Jesus, receive his dress to wear it.

Exercising choice to cultivate pure, loving thoughts and perform helpful deeds, students

dress in Christ's beautiful garment of character. Such is a choice of faith that merits

future reward (Rev. 3:4). Though simplicity of dress as a theory exists, debate prevails

concerning the advantages of dress codes and uniform policies in schools (Anderson,

2002). Theorists (Kozol, 2000; White, 1995) agree that simplicity in dress can be

acquired in 3 ways: (a) through reading and narrating the outcome of caring recorded in

the Bible: from feeding the hungry and clothing the naked to comforting the sorrowful;

(b) learning lessons of nature that teach simplicity, neatness, health, and appropriateness

of choice; and (c) exercising the choice of independent thinking. Any of these

interactions is ideal for the study of heroic deeds and cultivation of simplicity.

A summary of theory and research on how fashion influences character

encourages 2 actions: principals and teachers must be conscious to balance school

safety with academic achievement, and students' rights and individualism; secondly,

more empirical research will provide greater understanding of uniform policies

(Anderson, 2002).

Sabbath Celebration Influences Character.

The expression, "Sabbath," derived from the Hebrew "*shabat*" means "to rest."

By definition and purpose, the Sabbath celebration as a tool of character development

embraces the knowledge, and the source of virtue (Exodus 31: 13). Additionally,

celebration of the Sabbath points to the character of transcendence in whom is

wholeness of life. Transcendent example of rest from creation signified pause from

physical labor on the seventh-day as a significant characteristic of humans' wholeness.

In wholeness is the essence of perfection. With the fashioning of male and female, the

crowning act of creation was completed; transcendent celebration of the Sabbath

indicated wholeness of rest: physical rest, mental rest, social rest, and spiritual rest bore

the divine seal of health wholeness and sanctity of life which transcendent love vowed

to sustain (Genesis 1: 26). Thus, with the advent of brokenness, the Sabbath became a

memorial of freedom from brokenness (Deuteronomy 5: 12 – 15). Transcendence

rested from brokenness after fulfilling the demands of justice for humanity. (Luke 23:

54 – 56; 24: 1) Celebration of the Sabbath, therefore, is adoration of the Creator of rest

and the Redeemer from brokenness, who is responsible for infusing humans with His

character of love (Exodus 31: 13). Theorists (Bradford, 1999; Bruinsma, 2009; White,

1995) agree that humans, who pause to celebrate the weekly rhythm of rest by

expressing delight in transcendent examples of rest, worship, and wholeness, embrace

the knowledge of and the source of virtue.

Because transcendence has set a limit to the demand of toil with rest, (White, 1995, p. 251) divine love has given time for physical rest. Research shows that students are universally sleep deprived" (Dement, 1999; p. 408 – 409) and parents give up sleep to maximize time spent with their children (Bianchi, Robinson, and Milkie, 2006). After school jobs, after school sports, drama, homework, jobs, and socializing fill teens after school time - schedule so fully that healthy sleep and school performance are undermined. Up to 55 % of American teenagers work at paid jobs more than three hours daily compared to 18 % of teenagers in other countries including Canada, Russia, Australia, and other European countries as reported in a 1998 report by the U. S. Department of Education (as cited in Dement, 1999). The weekly cycle of rest, then, identified as Sabbath, is physically restorative.

Theorists (Dement & Vaughan, 1999; Ludington & Diehl, 2002; White, 1995) agree that walking is the ideal exercise, and that the body gains the same benefits from walking as it does from other rigorous exercises. Nature walks on Sabbaths may expose students to contrasting scenes of beauty, as well as, brokenness. Beauty may be observed in the variety of natural designs that manifests the creativity, originality, and power of the Creator (Bradford, 1999); however, juxtaposed against such beauty may be the unkempt scenes of waste disposal in the midst of the poor of the inner cities. Exposure to such scenes can stimulate students psychologically and stir them to action. Action that investigates the causes of such social inequities can be framed as projects for service (Kozol, 2000) to the disadvantage with the intent to improve their existing conditions. Such exploration for service should sharpen leadership skills and refresh students physically. Psychological arousal fights the flattening of the circadian rhythm,

the biological clock that controls the cycle of sleep and wakefulness (Dement & Vaughan, 1999).   Furthermore, psychological arousal during the day enhances wakefulness that increases "sleep debt, making sleep more efficient, and facilitating relaxation at the end of the day" (Dement & Vaughan, 1999; p. 416). Additionally, exercise "improves circulation and contributes to clearer minds, better sleep, as well as, faster healing of damaged body areas" (Ludington & Diehl, 2002, p. 187). Walks through nature on the Sabbath can renew students physically, and the scenes of contrasts may also arouse them psychologically, but at the end of the day, they have "fewer awakenings, fall asleep faster, and spend more time in deep sleep" (Dement & Vaughan, 1999, p. 416).

Celebration of the Sabbath not only nurtures physical health, but it generates good mental health; hence, transcendence has provided time for mental rest.   Theorists (Bradford, 1999; Kozol, 2001; White, 1995) agree that Sabbath is the time when students refocus their thinking from secular achievements of humans to meditate on the promises of transcendence to transfer human needs from the realm of human impossibilities to the realm of divine and human reality (Isaiah 1: 18). Bianchi et al. (2006) studied 4 decades of time diary surveys to determine how working parents have developed strategies to maximize time with their children. Parental resolution of this concern through giving up activities such as housework, sleep, socializing with friends, and inducing greater paternal involvement has relieved both students and parents from stress. When parents celebrate rest with their children, however, they experience mental rest from the stress of social problems.

The Sabbath recognizes the Creator's debt to the human family (Genesis 1: 26) and assures social rest. In the proposal, to make man in the image of transcendence, the divine order established equity: there is no "difference of dignity, status, and worth within the human species" (Bradford, 1999, p. 57). The Sabbath provides an opportunity for service among family and community where students learn sequencing and forming relationships. Thus, it is God's public sign of His delight in his children (Ezekiel 20: 12). Bianchi et al. (2006) calculated the weekly hours of child care that married fathers, married mothers, and single mothers provided from 1965 through 2000. These researchers discovered that weekly hours of child care for married mothers dropped from 10.6 in 1965 to 8.8 per week in 1975, but there was an increase of 4.1 hours per week after 1975.   Married mothers spent 12.9 hours per week in child care in 2000. Married fathers, on the other hand, averaged slightly over 2.5 hours per week in child care activities between 1965 and 1975, to 3 hours; then, married fathers' time spent in child care jumped to almost 7 hours in 2000. Whereas, in 1965, single mothers spent almost 8 hours per week in child care, in 2000, single mothers spent 11.8 hours per week caring for their children. In the Sabbath, God provides time for the family to interact with him, with nature, and with one another; in this time, the family realizes the source of joy and possession (Bruinsma, 2009). Thus, children learn the sequencing of family relationships: family, Sabbath for worship and rest, work, and care of a beautiful home (Bradford, 1999). This pattern teaches students the value of their identity: human identity receives meaning through connection with the Creator. In this connection, students see equality of the sexes through the generic term "man" (Genesis 5:1, 2).

Thus Sabbath is the time to cultivate a relationship of communal equity through service and compassion. It is a time of self-esteem building when humans may experience divine joy in acts of kindness; it is a time to explore the inequities that humans have established. Through recognizing humans' beginning, the Sabbath witnesses to God's purpose to recreate us in His image. As a result, in providing relief on the Sabbath from the indignities that humans have inflicted against their community, humans model social rest for the community (Bruinsma, 2009). Purpel (1989) asks: "How do we relate as family, nation, and people?" (p. 9). The Sabbath provides a model response. "The Sabbath and the family … are indissolubly linked together," according to White (1995, p.250). These institutions were established in relational sequence at creation so that the former is a gift to the latter (Genesis 2: 1-3; Mark 2: 27, 28). On the Sabbath, therefore, students not only learn sequencing through family relationships, but they also learn equity through communal relationships (Bradford, 1999).

Spiritual rest contributes to wholeness of health for it yields freedom from brokenness when the individual exercises faith in the renewal that transcendence provides in Jesus' sacrifice of love for the human family (Isaiah 60: 1, 2; Luke 4:16). Spiritual rest requires having a personal relationship with transcendence (Matthew 11: 28 – 30). Cultivating a personal relationship with Omniscience is a process that requires surrender of will by faith to that of transcendence: (a) obedience, (b) restraint, (c) submission to the will of Omnipotence, (d) moulding and fashioning by reading the Scriptures, (e) communing with transcendence as with a friend, as well as, (f) contemplating His character of love as revealed in nature, and Scripture. The settings of

home, school, and church facilitate this process. Individuals who engage in this process

daily experience renewal of mind; in addition, increased literacy converges into inquiry

that often seeks resolution to social problems. For students, studying the Scriptures

should begin at home. Their study should provide for them information for moral

decision making when they encounter social challenges. Social encounters often

stimulate curiosity and conflict between personal will and the will of transcendence.

When the student permits his or her knowledge of transcendence to inform decision

making, the student experiences personal spiritual rest.   Sabbath celebration includes

shared worship when the community of faith explores social issues through the lens of a

Biblical framework of faith. Reverence for this framework becomes a shared

experience through interaction with its sublime instruction. Students' interaction with

instruction transcends listening: documentation of themes, texts, and discussion for

further inquiry at home with parents should increase students' literacy and vary modes

of learning on the Sabbath. Theorists (Bradford, 1999; Kozol, 2001, White, 1995) agree

that students, who engage in this shared awe, experience spiritual rest from its

transcendent source.

The Sabbath equalizes all, for it stands at the centre of justice and human

dignity. Poised between death and resurrection, the Sabbath invites participation in the

revolution of universal dignity and freedom from brokenness (Bradford**,** 1999; Matthew

27 and 28: 1**)**. This revolution effects human preservation, raises consciousness of

principles, as well as, heightens concern for community and service. From cultivation

of linguistic skills to meditation on high moral themes, from inquiry into natural themes

to the reality of shared faith and prayer, from acquisition of physical, mental, social and

spiritual rest to exploration of contrasts in the natural creation, the Biblical framework of rest, "S*abbath*," provides for students the opportunities to vicariously experience creation's harmony, and recapture experiences with sound character development. Thus, the Sabbath, a divine gift to busy people, provides a chance for students to acknowledge God as the source of love, life, freedom, and knowledge (Genesis 1, 2: 1-3; White 1995) and as an eternal symbol of rest that humans have always had in their Creator and Redeemer (Bruinsma, 2009; Hebrews 4: 9 – 12).

Faith and Prayer are Allies in Character Development

Theorists (Finley & Mosley, 2000; White, 1995) agree that faith and prayer are allies in character development. For these authors, simple trust in God is the common element of faith. Recognizing Him as Creator and owner of life, the student trusts God in the "smaller as well as the "greater affairs of life," for His choice is best (White, 1995). Then, students of faith become stewards of God's blessings. Thus, each faith encounter is an opportunity to increase faith; exercising faith is a process that students experience in lived relationships; cherished, faith becomes a shield of divine presence to combat fear, to avenge wrong, and achieve integrity, "the secret of life's success" (p. 253).

The prayer of faith is a construct for success of service (White, 1995). Studies (Byrd, 1988; Harris 1998; Matthews, 1998; Harris, Gowda, Kolb, Strychacz, Vacek, Jones, Forker, O'Keefe, & McCallister, 1999) have concluded that intercessory prayer has beneficial effects and is an effective adjunct to standard medical care.

Scientific inquiry maintains an on-going debate concerning the value of prayer: conflicting conclusions indicate the degree to which transcendence invites human

reason, yet requires human surrender to divine possibility (Isaiah 1: 18). According to

transcendence, the student should ask according to God's will for what has been

promised and use the gifts for God's will; then, the student should express thanks for

the gift. A Biblical framework of faith analyses the prayer of faith: it pursues divine

promises, claims possession of the gift, and cooperates with God's will in using the gift.

How does the student acknowledge having the gift? A Biblical framework of faith

renews heart and mind which receive life, action, and thought through study and prayer.

Obedience to God's will transforms the character. The student exercises faith in

acceptance of the gifts, made available through the promise. Upon need, the student

experiences the gift to be used for God's service. As a result, the student acknowledges

God's ownership of his life and views himself as God's steward of time and ability.

The Bible is replete with examples (Judges 5).

Each faith encounter strengthens faith to increase moral literacy. The student

learns the modes of divine guidance through interaction with the great stories of faith

and opening the heart and the mind to the instructor who interprets the energy of a

Biblical framework of faith for the infilling of life, action, and thought (White, 1995).

In short, students experience transcendence upon interaction with the *Bible.*

Faith relies on transcendent strength and distrusts self (Philippians 4:13) in

experiencing lived relationships. The student depends on divine provision of the gift in

the promise: "Whatsoever things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive

them and you shall have them" (Mark 11:24). This assurance engages the process of

asking, believing, and confidently claiming the gift with respect for generosity. Thus,

the individual relies on basic trust in God in every detail of life especially in avenging

social inequities. Faith enables the student who seeks to avenge injustice to cultivate patience, courtesy, as well as, increased faith to cooperate with the eternal guardian of right who avenges wrong (White, 1995).

Cherished, faith becomes a shield of divine presence to combat fear and achieve integrity in human relationships (White, 1995). Though prayer and faith are allies in influencing character, receiving the gift from the promise, claimed, requires full surrender. Theorists (Greene, 1978; Kozol, 2000 White, 1995) agree that youth is the ideal time at which the experiences of communion, dependence, and surrender should be learned.   At that time, students trust most the wisdom of God's ways: "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).   Such faith is vertical. In Kozol's *Ordinary Resurrections*, accessibility to the students' spiritual leader maintained the children's faith which enabled them to transcend the social inequities that paralyzed others. The character, Pastor Martha, demonstrates horizontal faith in her relationship with the children. Research (Search Institute of Minneapolis, Andrews University, and La Sierra University, 1993) reveals that younger students of Seventh-day Adventist Schools show a high quality of faith, and after Grade 6, faith maturity decreases; the lowest faith maturity tends to be at Grades 10 and 11.

On the other hand, the adult's hasty pursuit of materialism and materiality alienates him or her from that wisdom, the secret of strength, and the Source of life. The adult's dependence on self reveals undeveloped faith. Thus, teachers, who have lived shared experiences of faith and prayer, following the example of the standard, who received wisdom and power through secret communion with transcendence, can educate for character. Such teaching practices integrated faith, faith that depends on

transcendence and reaches out to others (Dudley with Gillespie, 1992). According to

Greene (1978), teachers must have a wide-awake experience in order to provide a moral

interpretation of lived experiences. Parents, too, should exemplify the moral need of

faith acquired through time spent in prayer and study: such parents will be able to teach

the student both academic success and professional dependence on the Creator who

knows best the process of renewal in acquisition of integrity. Only as teachers and

parents learn can they teach (White, 1995).

Researchers (Search Institute of Minneapolis et al., 1993) conducted the

Valuegenesis research. *Valuegenesis* was designed to profile value systems of

Adventist youths in Adventist schools and to identify factors in homes, schools, and

churches that nurture the values and faith, cherished in youth.

The research instrument, a questionnaire, sent to 10,848 students of 271

Adventist elementary schools and academies required 500 responses. Prepared in five

different forms for youths, pastors, teachers, principals, and parents, the instrument had

a basic core, but specific questions addressed the form selected. *Valuegenesis* assessed

faith maturity: dispositions that show faith as deep, vibrant, and life changing.

Researchers used an instrument of 8 basic core dimensions of faith which embraced 2

overall themes: a vertical faith relationship with a loving God, and a horizontal faith

relationship that delights in service.

The 8 core dimensions of faith included statements of mature faith: (a) trust in

the humanity, divinity, and saving grace of Jesus; (b) sense of personal well-being; (c)

integration of faith into all aspects of life; (d) spiritual growth through study, prayer,

discussion, and reflection; (e) nurturing others through witnessing of faith; (f)

cherishing life affirming values that includes gender and racial equality; (g) advocacy of global and social change to effect social justice; and (h) service through acts of love and justice.

The *Valuegenesis* questionnaire composed 38 statements of mature faith into 38 questions with 7 possible responses ranging from never true to always true. An individual of mature faith experienced a life changing relationship with a loving God and demonstrated that change in service to others (Benson and Donahue, 1990).

To simplify the faith maturity of Adventist youth, the researchers listed the percentages of students choosing "often true" "almost always true," and always true." A respondent could receive a score from 1 to 7 on any question. Researchers averaged the responses to the thirty eight questions. A mature faith score could range from 1.00 to 7. A score from 1.00 – 2.99 indicated low faith maturity; a score from 3.00 to 4.99 indicated moderate faith maturity; while a score from 5.00 to 7.00 showed high faith maturity.

Researchers found 5 significant results: (a) average faith maturity score of all Adventist youth was 4.44 or in the moderate range, and at grade 6, students showed high quality of faith. After grade 6, this level of maturity decreased; (b) According to Dudley with Gillespie (1992), 2 themes flow through the mature faith index: the vertical theme and the horizontal theme. Students in a deep, personal relationship with a loving God illustrated the vertical theme, while students demonstrated the horizontal theme in their ability to relate to humans in service; (c) Adventist youths related more to God than to others in service. Students averaged 4.8 for vertical faith and 4.0 for horizontal faith; (d) if a given individual could be classified as high on horizontal faith or high on

vertical faith, then each person could be classified into 1 of 4 faith types: either as having undeveloped faith, vertical faith, horizontal faith, or, having integrated faith; and (e) there are 5 predictors of mature faith: personal piety, grace orientation to salvation, having a purpose in life, and perceptions of a thinking climate within the local church group, and value of service.

Service Influences Character

Though theorists' definitions of service vary from the mundane to the sublime, the common thread of meeting the needs of humanity runs in each (Freire, 1998; Kozol, 2001; Whaley and Whaley, 1996; White, 1995): from transformation of a privileged position (Freire, 1998), to anyone's Easter (Kozol, 2001); from "a chance to reach out and serve someone" (Whaley and Whaley, 1996; p.36) to the definite and noble aim of giving the gospel through any vocation in cooperation with the divine purpose (White, 1995). These definitions recognize a global field of energy in which service attends to social, cultural, academic, as well as, moral inequities. The model of the servant leader is the standard of service. According to Greenleaf, the Servant Leader is "servant first" and "ensures that other people's priority needs are being served" (as cited in Wren, 1995, p. 19, 22). The servant leader works for justice and avoids the contradictions involved in the search for financial help from the world of commerce (Kozol, 2001). Service is proactive and transformative: those served grow as persons, enjoying freedom to effect change in society, and to visualize change; those serving submerge self and reflect the likeness of the true Servant Leader (White, 1995). Thus, the life of service is introspective and renewing; it has horizontal, as well as, vertical dimensions.

Training for service is an integral part of character development and should characterize every phase of the individual's growth process (Knight, 2006; Kozol, 2001; White, 1995). This recommendation of early training for service transcends the system of tracking and ability grouping in schools and bespeaks 2 needs: (a) students should receive equity of service training; and (b) parents, teachers, and administrators should provide opportunity for all students to experience a transformative view of suffering that portrays the multidimensional perspective of service. Theorists (Kiely, 2005; Knight, 2006; Kozol, 2001; Powell, 1999; White, 1995) agree that the students of service learning are in horizontal, introspective, and vertical relationships when they interact with human suffering. Their backgrounds frame a global view from which they begin to critically evaluate their identity, context, and social status.

Students, engaged in service, are in a vertical relationship with transcendence whose paradoxical definition of "service" paraphrased as, the act of love to the least is service to the greatest, reflects service to the Creator (Matthew 25: 40). Theorists (Greenleaf, as cited in Wren, 1995; Kozol, 2001; Powell, 1999) identify this perception as a moral vision that not only sustains the aims of justice and equity, but also, has "the transformative potential of a critical, proper literacy" (Powell, 1999, p. 121) once grounded in *agape,* God's love for humans. Service, that is void of this divine love, according to theorists, is deficient in ethical practice and leadership through sacrificial action (Kozol, 2001; Powell, 1999; White, 1995). To what degree can parents and teachers afford the loss involved in an education without Christ's self-sacrifice? True service arises from love and loyalty to the Servant Leader. Looking beyond self, sacrificial service accepts life and training that give "strength and nobility of character"

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(White, 1995, p. 264). The introspective, horizontal, and vertical dimensions of service mean that the servant leader knows transcendent love for the world. Therein, lies an understanding of the transcendent nature of service, a quality that is larger than parents' and teachers' conceptual understanding, because it not only encompasses man's social needs, but also, puts a face on the solution of political, cultural, social, and moral problems that are so often given to the technique of a faceless system (Arendt, as cited in Greene, 1978; Bush & Yablonski, 1995; Kozol, 2001; Whaley and Whaley, 1996).

Empirical research confirms theoretical claims concerning the nature of transformational learning and the processes of change that students of service learning experience (Bergstrom, 2004; Dudley & Gillespie, 1992; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Kellog, 1999; as cited in Kiely, 2005). In examination of the lived meaning and influence of service learning on Chicago counsellors of a girls' Urban Studies Program, Bergstrom's (2004) phenomenological study of service learning found that counsellors developed leadership skills and experienced transformational learning with a purpose to serve. Since each of the counsellors had been chosen to represent each of the 11 years that the program was in operation, the counsellors had opportunities to experience reflective and affective learning processes. As a result, transformational learning resulted in the counsellors' purposeful intent to serve.

Kiely's longitudinal case study of 43 students who participated in service learning in Nicaragua over a seven year period from 1992 – 2001, on the other hand, reveals 6 transformational learning processes that students of service learning experience in relationships of service: (a) dissonance, (b) contextual border crossing, and (c) personalizing, as well as, (d) global consciousness, (e) processing, and (f)

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connecting. Students experienced dissonance in their first encounter with the new cultural setting. There was a difference between the social, academic, and cultural capital of the new setting and the students' accustomed milieu. Students' inquiry into this difference engaged them into vertical, horizontal, and introspective relationships of service. Within these relationships, students reasoned with transcendence while at the same time challenging society on the inequities of the global poor. Students sensed a moral responsibility for the problems of the global poor and moved to act for social change. The students personalized service with their motivation to act. Kiely (2005) identifies the student's inquiry and praxis as the "chameleon complex:" students used conventional ways of thinking to challenge their conflicting experience. This repositioning of self was classified as contextual border crossing. At that point, the students evaluated their identity, context, and social status in relation to the deficiencies experienced among the citizens whom they served. Evaluation gave rise to empathy. The students' personal interests became secondary to what Powell (1999) calls a "proper critical literacy." Using linguistic skills in critical reflection and discussion, the student re-evaluated their assumptions during their interactions with citizens of Nicaragua. Listening and discussing, the students gave Nicaraguans a voice, while at the same time, students gained answers for their inquiry into social problems of poverty through the interactive modes of processing and connecting.

Overall, review of literature reveals that Kiely's (2005) conceptual model shows six transformational learning processes that the student of service learning experiences: dissonance, contextual border crossing, personalizing, global consciousness, processing, as well as, connecting. Kiely's model provides scope for character development.

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According to Kiely (2005), "One of the most important empirical and theoretical contributions this longitudinal case study makes to previous research and theory is that transformational learning is more apt to persist over a long term if there are opportunities for affective and reflective learning processes to take place" (p. 7). Kiely's (2005) research encouraged the use of transformational learning processes in different settings to provide further empirical evidence to support the transformational potential of service learning. Additionally, *Valuegenesis study* (Dudley with Gillespie, 1992) noted that service is "the most important predictor of mature faith" (p. 131). Since interaction with the Seventh-day Adventist Biblical framework of faith provides opportunities for reflective and affective learning, scholarly studies should be enriched by an investigation of service learning through the lens of the Biblical framework of faith.

Summary

Examination of literature on character education reveals that intentional training through provision of curricular experiences for character development engages the whole individual in the pursuit of happiness for societal amelioration. Curricular experiences, however, have been shown to transcend the academic setting. As a result, societal concerns for character training offer various strategies ranging from the instruction of sacred texts to application of legislation, and philosophical theories to address moral and social inequities to frame character education programs. Some of such programs are as follows: Character First, Character Counts, Facing History and Ourselves, Heartwood Multicultural Literature-based Character Education Curriculum, Learning for Life, Community of Caring, and Covey's Character Ethic, as well as the

Approach of Psychology. A study of the literature revealed three significant thoughts for consideration: (a) these programs affect students' moral decision-making. Deans of Universities, however, have ranked community of caring, service learning and life skills among the top three programs of character education for developing constructive lifestyles for societal improvement. Through such intentional engagement, individuals have learned decision-making that cultivates desirable traits of character willing to engage mind, heart and hands in constructive service. (b) A study of the literature has revealed that character education transcends colonial times to include frameworks of sacred texts that societies have used to prepare youth for full participation in social, historical, political, economic, and cultural life. Students, teachers, and administrators experience character development within these different contexts. Such curricular experiences transcend the academic setting to incorporate the individual's lived experiences from the womb: physical, social, intellectual, cultural, and moral. For this reason, the family landscape that is open to augmenting curricular experiences includes the literature of a Biblical framework, either adding its wisdom to enrichment of curricular experiences, or responding to the needs of the academic setting whether schools elicit aid in character development or not. (c) Finally, the inclusion of the literature of a Biblical framework, given the focus of the study, has revealed two significant metaphors that endorse the wisdom of its inclusion in curricular experiences: without its inclusion, societal strategies that seek to address moral illiteracy become "broken cisterns" without water (Jeremiah 2:13) and an unaccepted "fast" (Isaiah 58). However, its inclusion provides supportive wisdom and renewal from "the fountain of living water" (Jeremiah 2: 12, 13).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Given the researcher's interest in studying the lived experiences of administrators, teachers, and students of character education, phenomenology is the research design chosen for this study. Phenomenology attends to individuals' daily experiences of phenomena, the manner in which these experiences are structured, and focuses analysis on the perspectives of the persons having the experience (Moustakas, 1994). This qualitative study will describe how students, administrators, and teachers experience character education in their setting.

The research approach has been chosen based upon its scientific underpinnings. Phenomenology studies how an individual becomes aware of a specific experience and the conditions producing that experience within its context. It focuses on the manner, content, process, product and meaning of the experience to the individual through description from the first person perspective. According to Husserl (1931), the phenomenological approach of "bracketing" (p. 76) bars the individual from using any judgment that concerns existence of time and space; instead of focusing on physical existence, the individual focuses on the structure of his or her conscious experience which is goal directed, and, thus, intentional. The manner, so experienced, is called, "noema," and produces the content which includes ideas, concepts, images, and propositions in the individual's first person experience: this process produces knowledge for analysis. Phenomenology seeks to describe instead of explain. Thus, this phenomenological approach elicited from participants (students, teachers, and

administrators) their descriptions of immediate lived experiences with character education from the first person point of view.

Merleau Ponty (1964) builds upon Husserl's bracketing in advancement of the "thesis of primacy of perception" (p. 27) which requires classification of experiences through the senses: the thing experienced is "the world," and whom we love is "the person"; instead of suspending rationality and absolute from experience or consciousness, Merleau Ponty (1964) "draws out the conclusions of his predecessors," (p. 27) by describing perceptual experience as "primordial" (p. 25). Using this classification, Merleau Ponty (1964) captures the totality of consciousness. He integrates the physical experience into subjectivity or human relationships on the level of perceptual experience: language, social relationships, and religion. Through integration of physical and conscious experiences, Merleau Ponty (1964) illustrates the meaning of a lived system of values to human's perceptual experience. According to Merleau Ponty (1964) a lived system of values invigorates human relationships, stimulates human consciousness of morality, and the reality of moral actions: rationality demands that humans act morally with others, for the absolute and rationality are integral to the individual, self, and the perceptions of others. Knowledge of existence is integral to consciousness of the infinite range of interpretations of perceptions of the world around us. Merleau Ponty (1964) notes that the phenomenological approach integrates the absolute and rationality in a lived system of values that shows morality lived "before our very eyes" (p. 27). Thus, according to Merleau Ponty's (1964) thesis of the primacy of perception, the phenomenological

approach advances the visibility of positive change in humans' character within the environment where the absolute and rationality merge through lived experiences.

Ricoeur (as cited in Ihde, 1971) posits that phenomenology is a reflective discipline because all experience is arrived at reflectively. Through language, lived experiences gain expression and meaning; moreover, language, used to describe lived experiences, makes hermeneutic phenomenology possible. Symbolic language unveils hidden meanings. Then, using a hermeneutic approach, participants will be able to interpret their immediate lived experiences. This phenomenological study, therefore, describes the lived experiences of students, teachers, and administrators within a Seventh-day Adventist school setting and gathers data concerning their experiences with character education.

Researcher's Autobiography and Assumptions

What causes the student of academic excellence to exhibit repulsive conduct upon exiting his or her academic womb? Often administrators stand in silent wonder in response to negative attitudes. This question has motivated the researcher's concern for character education.

When the researcher first began the course work in curriculum and instruction, she was in transition, from being a K -12 administrator to a middle school teacher. This period of transition tested purpose and faith-based assumptions. The researcher was not actively seeking employment; she trusted divine providence. The background to this transition was a contrast between social reality and the reality of faith; though the researcher's finances were depleted, God permitted no lack of resources. After transitioning from the U. S. Virgin Islands to the state of Florida and learning the

process of certification, she initiated the process. Financial circumstances militated against her vigorous search for employment. While the researcher processed documents for certification, she became interested in curriculum and instruction offerings at the Florida International University's College of Education upon the encouragement of Dr. Stephen Fain, who advised her through the course work. Now, Dr. Erskin Dottin and the dissertation committee guide the completion of the dissertation. This program sustained the researcher's interest in classroom management, as well as, rejuvenated interest in the instructional process. During this period of study, the play and counter-play of students' needs at Miami Union Academy, a Seventh-day Adventist institution, affiliated with the South-eastern Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, required a middle school teacher. Educational leaders who knew the researcher's background in education debated whether she should be asked to fill the opening in view of salary considerations. Filling the need became urgent when the appointed teacher suddenly requested maternity leave.

Salary was a test of both faith and character: the researcher trusted transcendent promise to supply all of her needs. On the other hand, this middle school eighth grade needed a patient and caring teacher. At the same time, these students needed to be treated as whole learners significant to God; furthermore, they needed to be viewed as fully human with a mind free to choose against environmental stimuli and hereditary tendencies. In personalizing choice, students proved that each was unique and of equal worth. Teaching required knowing the assumptions of the Seventh-day Adventist culture of faith and prayer, integrating faith and learning, teaching linguistic skills and community collaboration, as well as, application of teaching methods that value the

learner as an individual whose ability is of value to the social group. Students' conduct and linguistic skills needed refinement. Thus, faith and prayer preceded students' classroom activities daily for there was an ideal to be achieved.

While the researcher agrees that historical, social, economic, and cultural realities affect character development, and that research (Rothstein–Fisch & Trumbull, 2008) reveals that these realities are at the foundation of all interactions between parent, learner, teacher, as well as, administrator, her perception of character development is also based on two additional assumptions. First, these realities of time should be viewed in light of a Biblical framework of faith so that educators can achieve noble and ideal results. Second, the researcher agrees that the educator should exhibit the following characteristics: see meaningful patterns in information, organize knowledge, conditionalize knowledge on a set of circumstances, be fluent in retrieval, effective in teaching, demonstrate adaptive expertise, as well as, maintain an on-going understanding of research in learning and teaching to strengthen the learner's thinking skills (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 2000). While this researcher accepts the role of reason in character development, she likewise anchors humans' ability to reason in the role of revelation. Divine love respects humans in character building and invites them to reason based on faith in the assumption that Wisdom resides in a Biblical framework of Omniscience (Isaiah 1: 18; 2 Chronicles 20: 20; White, 1995).

In preparation for this phenomenological study, the researcher composed a portfolio of articles, notes on pedagogical strategies on moral education, e-mails communications with the committee, topical issues on ethics and ethical values,

quotations, revisions of the proposal, preparatory forms, diagrams and samples of *The Journal of Adventist Education*.

For this study, the researcher chose the British Virgin Islands Seventh-day Adventist Secondary School, the institution where she received schooling during her primary to middle school years. Having been closely associated with Seventh-day Adventists as a student who received early training in this setting, and as a teacher and administrator, who once worked in Seventh-day Adventist settings in other locations, the researcher does have certain biases. Given the experiences in these varied settings, the researcher has five biases: (a) an adult's tendency to guide students' thinking and expression instead of accepting students' thinking and expression seriously; (b) a classroom teacher's tendency to use a single instructional strategy to meet the varying needs of students; (c) an over-identification with the classroom teacher whose challenges are being given limited attention; (d) a tendency to empathize with the socio-economic and political needs of the administrator, and (e) a commitment to faith. The researcher worked to bracket her foregoing biases by focusing on the data and providing an in-depth description of subjects' experiences from varied dimensions in recognition of the complexity of character education. To limit her observer's biases, the researcher recorded detailed field notes that showed reflections on her subjectivity, open, honest respect for participants, and recognition of the primary goal: to inform the work of study participants, and to contribute to the knowledge on character education within the setting. An individual who is of a different belief system was asked to read interview transcripts and interpretation of themes. This feedback is included in the subheading identified as Peer Review which contributed to credibility of knowledge

gained. This form of peer review enhanced inter-subjective reliability of the researcher's findings about character education within the setting. In short, the researcher gave voice to the feelings of insiders and study participants through bracketing and hermeneutic phenomenology.

According to Psathas, "Phenomenological inquiry begins with silence," (as cited in Bogdan and Biklen, 2007), a technique the phenomenologist uses to understand the way in which subjects give meaning to the experiences in their world. To understand the meaning of events, the researcher suspended her predispositions and beliefs, as well as, those of the subjects, to listen to subjects speak about their experiences and themselves. Each subject's narrative was weighed equitably. Participants' descriptions of their experiences with character education provided for the researcher's understanding of teachers' or administrators' efforts to influence character development. The researcher, therefore, set aside her beliefs and predispositions as she listened to the participants' perspectives to gain an understanding of how the participants viewed their world. In suspension of assumptions, the researcher listened to each subject's description equally. Each description was analysed for inquiry into lived experiences of character education.

When language expresses lived experiences, phenomenology is a reflective discipline. Lived experiences require a specific level of language: symbolic language for interpretation. Language reveals experience through expression. In this study, the Biblical meta-narrative interprets the expression for which the symbol stands. Without the aid of symbolic language, experience would remain in obscurity packaged in "its implicit contradictions" (Ricoeur as cited in Ihde, 1971; p. 97). Hermeneutics

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interprets the expression so that original meaning of the symbol stands through the expression. The researcher, therefore, encouraged the participants to describe the meaning of their experiences since the field of symbolic language should be investigated descriptively.

Data Collection

Sharing the research purpose is another role of the researcher (Taylor & Bogdan as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The researcher, therefore, sought permission from the school board by submitting a request through the principal, for permission to enter the setting to study the primary question: what are students', administrators', and teachers' perceptions of character education in the setting?

Population and Sample

The researcher chose the population of the British Virgin Islands Seventh-day Adventist school setting. The senior class, similar in experience and outlook formed a homogeneous purposive sample (Patton, 1990; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The senior class was chosen to enhance depth of thought and information, as well as perspectives on character education since the researcher had evaluated this group as being more willing to share lived experiences of character education. Having spent several years in this setting, the researcher believed that this group demonstrated in relationships, choices, and skills, perceptions of character education lived in this setting. Homogeneous purposive sampling (Gay & Airasian, 2000) would provide much information about the lived experiences of character education in this setting because this group has similar experiences in early character education in varied settings. Similar structural and social experiences within the school setting influenced

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perspectives on character education and would provide rich knowledge on the subject. The researcher sought to maintain gender equity in the sample. The ages of the participants were between 16 and 40 years of age, since two teachers and administrator, and students constituted the sample. They can be classified as middle class: ranging from residents to citizens of the British Virgin Islands. Of a total population of 25, 000, 6% are of Seventh-day Adventist faith. Of a school population of 303 students, 51% are Seventh-day Adventists, and 49% are of other belief systems.

Selection of Participants

Gay and Airasian (2000) indicated that qualitative studies can be done with a single participant or up to 60 or 70 subjects if the researcher is comparing perceptions across different settings. Further, these writers state that new participants may be added over time to corroborate or extend the perspectives of a few participants. Douglas (in Seidman, 2006) on the other hand recommended 25, the number, at which he experienced saturation in his studies.

Seidman (2005) used two criteria for selecting participants: (a) sufficiency, and (b) saturation of information. Combining these two criteria into the single word "enough," Seidman (2005, p. 55) explained its meaning using Bertaux (1981): the interviewer should reach a point where she would realize that no new knowledge is emerging and "the process of interviewing ... is becoming laborious" (p. 56). Seidman leaves the decision of a specific number to the researcher's knowledge of participants' experiences of similar structural and social conditions. According to Seidman (2005) the researcher finds value in the stories of participants whose training and social conditions are similar. Creswell (1998), however, suggested that 10 participants will be

ideal for a phenomenological study. Examining participants' selection through these varied lenses, the researcher provided the opportunity for the social studies and the English Language instructors, as well as, the principal, and students of the senior class to participate in the study. Expressing his wish that all students of the senior class benefit from the study, the principal recommended that the entire class of 13 students be provided the opportunity to experience the benefits that will accrue to the smaller group.

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995) interviewees are conversational partners who should possess three qualities: (a) they should be knowledgeable concerning the experience being studied within the setting; (b) interviewees should be willing to talk; and (c) they should represent the range of perspectives found in the setting where the phenomenon is being studied. Additionally, interviewees shape the discussion, in this case, character education. Thus, after weighing the principal's recommendation and sharing the purpose and nature of the study with the intended participants (students, teachers, and administrators) the researcher distributed the assent and informed consent forms to all participants that included the entire senior class of 13 students.

Number of Participants.

There were 10 participants who returned the completed forms: three adults returned the informed consent forms while seven students returned the assent forms. These subjects had worked and studied in this setting for a period up to 8 years. Furthermore, they not only represented the range of experience found in the setting, but they also willingly chose to participate; and thus, they were willing to speak. Therefore, the 10 participants were information rich cases that manifested the phenomenon intensely based upon their experience, duration in the setting, and willingness to speak.

Seven students, two teachers, and the administrators participated in the study over a three week period between February 8, 2011 and March 4, 2011. Within this time frame, seven students, with their language and history teachers, as well as, an administrator became the focus of the study of character education through the question, what are students' administrators', and teachers' perceptions of character education in a Seventh-day Adventist school setting? Participants' Portfolio as Appendix D shows participants' qualifying attributes for the study.

This institution is known for more than 50 years of Christian Education on an on-going basis; however, it became upgraded to secondary status 7 years ago. In its earlier years, it operated as a feeder school for the British Virgin Islands Secondary School. Now the British Virgin Islands Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School feeds its high school because they share a common campus. Because most students of the senior class attended this institution for up to 8 years, they would qualify as participants in this study. They have experienced similar social, academic, and structural training, as well as, have assimilated institutional culture. Additionally, the primary focus was the senior students', their language and history teachers', as well as, an administrator's perceptions of their lived experiences of character education. True education values character above intellectual achievements, power, goodness, scientific knowledge, and literary achievements (White, 1995).

The sample chosen for this study should yield information about the larger population and should impact the discussion of lived experiences of character education.

Interview Protocol

As soon as permission was granted, the researcher sought permission of the school's administrator to enter the setting in order to communicate with teachers, administrators, and students. The researcher sent home a letter of consent to parents; another letter of consent was prepared and given to teachers who were participating in the study. Each student received a letter of assent. These letters requested permission of study participants on December 7, 2010. Letters were returned on December 21, 2010. The project began February 7, and ended March 4, 2011.

Interview Administration.

According to Seidman (2006), "The three-structure interview of 90 minutes "works best ... when the researcher can space each interview from three days to a week apart" (p. 21). The first interview focused on perceptions of lived experiences of character education; the second interview focused on providing concrete details of character education at present. Then, the third interview focused on the meaning of character education and the meaning of the present experiences in context of the past.

After receiving permission for study participants to engage in the study, the researcher entered the institution to gain access to participants and establish appointment times and dates for interviews, as well as, to carefully record accurate data through interviews that described the lived experiences of character education. Students', teachers', and administrators' descriptions of perceptions of character education operating within the setting provided a whole view of the lived experiences of character education in the setting.

To limit the researcher's effect on the setting, interviews modelled fluent conversation concerning perceptions of character education in the setting. This model heightened participants' trust and provided opportunity for the researcher to capture attitudes, experiences, beliefs, and thoughts of the subjects regarding character education in the setting. Though behaviors of participants may change in the setting because of the researcher's presence (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), this researcher interpreted data in context, as well as, made inquiry into the nature of the normal routine of student, teacher, and principal (Morris & Hurwitz, as cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and kept relationships within the setting in a natural atmosphere while collecting the subjects' first person perspectives of character education.

Interview Administration of Perceptions of Character Education.

There were three open-ended interviews with each participant for a period of 90 minutes each. The first open-ended interview was conducted during the week of February 7, 2011; the second open-ended interview was conducted during the week of February 14, 2011; and the third interview was conducted during the week of February 21, 2011 before the researcher exited the field on March 4, 2011.

According to (Seidman, 2006) the three-interview structure allowed the participant and the interviewer to keep a sense of the focus of each interview. During the three–interview structure, the researcher sought clarification of narratives and descriptions of perceptions of character education that may have been deemed unclear from a previous interview or after transcript analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). Because the researcher adhered to the three- interview structure, participants were able to check for internal consistency of responses; the interviewer correlated participants'

comments, and connected experiences. Finally, if the three- interview structure works well to permit participants to make sense to themselves and to the interviewer, then, "it has gone a long way toward validity" (Seidman, 2006; p.24).

Using an open-ended style of interviewing, the researcher introduced participants to the purpose of the study, assured participants' protection of privacy, and established with participants their important role in providing knowledge on character education as experienced and shared from the first person point of view. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), the open-ended approach is personal and inviting; the participant becomes the expert and the researcher becomes the learner. More importantly, though, the approach provided ideas about ways to think about the topic.

Data Collection Method

After the process of participants' selection, the researcher received appointments for interviews based upon participants' availability. The principal allotted the units of time for himself and students. Then he scheduled time when the researcher could confirm appointments with teachers. The data collection method was interviews. At the scheduled time, the researcher interviewed each participant. Using Siedman's (2006) foci of the three interview structure of three days to one week apart, the researcher engaged the participants in reflection on the past and present lived experiences of character education, as well as, their meaning of character education. Each student spoke in a hand held recorder while the researcher listened to participants' descriptions of seeing, hearing, feeling, and lingering over their experiences. The three open-ended interviews allowed the participants to maintain a sense of the focus of each interview. The three interview structure contributed to validity and internal

consistency. Participants checked for internal consistency of responses. At the beginning of each subsequent interview, participants confirmed the content of each transcript. No discrepancies were noted. The researcher correlated participants' comments, and contrasted their experiences. Seeing their responses in print, participants expressed satisfaction with the recorded data. Finally, participants' responses made sense to the interviewer and themselves. Appendices A, B, and C exhibit the research questions asked of participants.

The researcher transcribed verbatim the recordings of the lived-experiences of character education captured in each interview. As the researcher asked open-ended questions and listened to the interviewees' often lengthy pauses or sometimes repetitions of the questions, she could enter into the feelings and thought processes of the interviewee in conflict with self for appropriate language to reproduce conscious experience. Playing, replaying, and listening to the files in which the researcher stored each interview allowed time for image carving. The researcher valued repetition of interviewee's lived experiences of character education and horizons remained etched in the researcher's mind. These glimpses of students' character evolution grew into mental images. Converting each interview into textural language, the researcher listened to and reflected upon the experiences of character education as she transcribed each interview into text. Listening to and reflecting on the phenomenon of character education meant playing and replaying segments of each interviewee's file. The researcher regained consciousness of the phenomenon and connected that consciousness with the interviewee's experience in production of the transcript each time segments were

replayed.   The replaying, therefore, became a transaction between the interviewee and the researcher during replaying, as well as, initial listening.

Research Journal

Field notes were recorded daily. What the researcher saw, heard, experienced, and thought while collecting data and reflecting on the process of data collection on character education constituted field notes.

The researcher also prepared cue questions that kept the interview focused on the subject: perceptions of character education were recorded; using a cassette recorder with the consent of study participants, the researcher captured the feelings, beliefs, thoughts, and convictions of participants about character education. She recorded notes to supplement memory; field notes were written after each interview session. Questions were directed to the subjects' experiences, feelings, beliefs, and convictions about lived character education in the past and in the present. Remembering the significance of silence, the researcher used cue questions only if needed.   Students, teachers, and administrator discussed the meaning of character education in the past and present and explained the emotional and intellectual connections of lived experiences of character education with the future. Thus, subjects' thoughts and feelings described directly their internal assessment of the value of character education to their lived experiences.

Researcher's responses consisted of probe comments or questions for further elaboration on teaching strategies, conduct, grooming, faith and prayer, love, and service. Depth, detail, and richness of information concerning perceptions of character education from first-hand experiences during interviews were coded, analysed, and synthesized, for themes and patterns of character education. Using phenomenological

principles, the researcher acquired knowledge through descriptions that clarified meanings and essences (Moustakas, 1994) of the lived experiences of character education. The descriptions, obtained through interviews, provided verbal and nonverbal materials for transcripts. The stories of character education described the doubts, as well as, the internal and external conflicts of participants.

Confidentiality of Data

After the study, the researcher filed participants' interviews in a binder of 3 inches in width in her locked filing cabinet to maintain confidentiality of subjects for 3 years. These data were filed and categorized according to subject and content of the study. Each participant's interview was labelled with a number and date. Different interviews were recorded on a separate cassette tape, transcribed, labelled and dated: Folder C – File 2- Interview 2- February 10, 2011. Because there was no need for identification of subjects, storage remains away from the regular circulation of administrative data. The researcher holds the key to the filing cabinet.

Data Interpretation

Using language as the basic sign to transcribe interviews from audible to written record, the researcher coded and sorted data into themes. In participants' descriptions, the researcher discovered ideas that united around common themes. Using examples from participants' descriptions, the researcher illustrated unity of themes. Additionally, the researcher discovered themes across participants' descriptions. Examples of several participants' comments illustrated such themes.

Thematic Reflection

The specific phenomenon under study is character education, and more specifically, how it is perceived in the setting of the British Virgin Islands Seventh-day Adventist School. Given the understanding that the researcher must allow the data to emerge (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998; Kensit, 2000 as cited in Groenewald, 2004) the major data collection tool was semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990; Seidman, 2006).

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), good interviews produce rich descriptions and examples of participants' views of the phenomenon, in this case character education, in the setting. Thematization across participants led to discovery of phrases that captured the phenomenon in figurative language. Examination of such phrases revealed the essence of character education. Explanation of puzzling phrases united the themes into clarification that defined the essence of the phenomenon. Three open-ended interviews were conducted with each study participant ($n = 10$). Interview questions focused on study participants' feelings, experiences, beliefs, and convictions of their lived experiences of character education. The researcher provided opportunity for participants to address emotional connections through the interview that asked for concrete details of character education in the setting. The interview provided the chance for participants to reflect on meaning of their experiences and to add both emotional and intellectual dimensions that revealed connections among the participants (Seidman, 2006). During the interviews, the researcher gained participants' reflections on the value of character education and the meaning that participants associated with pedagogical and socialization skills in the setting.

Coding

According to Saldana (2009), coding captures "a datum's primary content and essence" (p. 3). As a result, these interviews were coded to capture content, location, and essence: for example, Folder A – 1- File 11- Reflections on the Past (PCE) – February 9, 2011. Names viewed in Appendix D are pseudonyms. Upper case letters of the alphabet identify individuals for the researcher. Additionally, this researcher assured study participants of protection of private information through an assigned alpha-numeric identity, according to File number and sequence or time and date of interview. To determine sequence of interviews, letters of the alphabet were used. Then, questions and responses were transcribed and coded. The transcripts of descriptions and meanings were read, reread, and analysed for themes, relationships, and examples that illustrated perceptions of character education (Glesne, 1999). As the researcher identified descriptions of themes, she cut and paste supporting ideas into files that were labelled according to thematic identifications. For example respect, courage, faith and prayer.

Textural/Structural Descriptions of Experience

After producing the transcript, the researcher read and reread the transcripts. In this phase, the researcher treated every statement as having equal value. She read and reread each participant's transcript. Then, according to Moustakas' (1994) modification of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of phenomenological analysis, she deleted repetitive statements as she marked excerpts that overlapped. The textural meanings and invariant constituents remained. The researcher, then, clustered the horizons into themes by underlining and identifying each theme, using marginal notes in coding.

Finally, she organized the horizons and themes into a coherent textural description of character and character education.

Quality Measures

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), the researcher can use "observer's comments" and "images" to initiate interpretation of findings (pp. 163 – 164). Using images observed within the setting, therefore, the researcher interpreted the setting and relationships within it. When the researcher began to hear the same thoughts, feelings and responses from most of the participants, she knew that knowledge of the phenomenon was not increasing. If, however, the researcher did not reach theoretical saturation, then, adding additional students to the sample would have become necessary

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are expressions used to assess the quality of a research study. According to Seidman (2006) in the three-interview structure where participants make sense to themselves and to the interviewer, the interview structure has gone a long way toward validity. Therefore, the following measures were used to assess quality: peer review, member checking, and audit trail.

Member Checking

Member checking (Glesne, 1999) is one method that the researcher used to assess and confirm specific aspects of the data. The researcher provided opportunity for specific study participants to correct errors and challenge what they perceived as wrong interpretations of their lived experiences of character education. The researcher explained the meaning that participants associated with the emergent themes. In such explanations, the researcher found deeper themes that united initial themes into a broader

frame.   Furthermore, participants' explanations of the conscious experience and inner experiences of tools of character in human relationships and thinking revealed initial and deeper themes for analysis. The researcher explained participants' perceptions of the structure of their experiences and their meanings of inter-relationships among themes.

Peer Review

Peer review is the result of consultation with colleagues on research methods, the quality of the data collected, and findings that emerged from the data. For this study, two peers of different belief systems reviewed the study. Peer review occurred before as well as after methodology, data analysis and findings, as well as summary. The feed-back was as follows: (a) "lived-experiences of the three stakeholder groups transcended the research data within the study; (b) reorganization of the interview data was needed to provide a more supportive function; and (c) data consistently described perceptions of character education.

Audit Trail.

The researcher kept a journal of research notes that included descriptions of scenes, sounds, and textures as well as questions that probe beyond conscious reflections on lived-experiences.   The journal recorded the researcher's thoughts and interpretations of the setting; it became a reference source in analysis of the findings. Finally, the journal was significant in recording guidelines for engaging peer review because the researcher used it as reference to guide for both interview and the review process.

Summary

Perceptions of students, administrators, and teachers concerning character education in a Seventh-day Adventist setting should be of interest to educational research, given the varying approaches to character education. According to Seidman (2006) the three interview structure contributes to validity when participants' interviews make sense to the interviewer, as well as, to the interviewees. Additionally, the researcher's permission of a reader from a different belief system to read and analyze interviews confirmed credibility. Analysis of the relationships among students', administrator's, and teachers' perceptions of character education further enhanced credibility. Furthermore, the relationship between experiences narrated in interviews and reduced to themes analysed in transcripts, as well as, discovery of deeper themes across participants' descriptions strengthened internal validity. Permitting study participants to confirm analysis of themes deduced from data enhanced accuracy, as well as, reliability. Finally, descriptions of perceptions of character education in the academic and social settings were viewed through the lens of thematic and theoretical perspectives.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The primary research question is as follows: What are the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and students toward character education in a Seventh-day Adventist School setting?

Given the researcher's interest in studying the lived experiences of character education and the researcher's aim to describe and interpret participants' understanding of the phenomenon, data interpretation included 3 phases: description, reduction, and interpretation. Analysis of interviews of participants' conscious experiences explored participants' lived experiences. Then, reduction of description into themes provided a comparative analysis and illustration of participants' perceptions. Finally, interpretation of the meaning of the lived experiences of the phenomenon of character education, through an exploration of the question, "What are the perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators of character education in a Seventh-day Adventist School?" provided understanding from participants' first person perspective.

Data Analysis

Using Moustakas' (1994) major processes of *epoche,* bracketing, phenomenological reduction, horizonalization, imaginative variation, and synthesis- the researcher engaged in data analysis. From the verbatim transcripts of participants, the researcher organized a composite textural and structural description of experiences and a synthesis of the textural and structural meaning and essences of lived experiences of character education that describe the experiences of the group as a whole.

Evidence From Lived-Experiences

The researcher engaged participants in description of their lived experiences as well as their meaning of character education. Inquiry anchored the process into the topic and questions.   The primary question was: what are the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and students toward character education in a Seventh - day Adventist school setting? The researcher will now focus on the research question and then analyse the data that provided answers to the question.

Students' Perceptions of Past Experiences of Character Education

The pure consciousness of lived-experiences of character education was present for both listener and participant to visualize during reflection on each participant's lived experiences and meanings. As participants reflected on the lived experiences, they identified their risks and consequences, their weaknesses, strengths acquired, and strengths of important people in their lives. The researcher noted, though, that students' responses were not merely similar, but lacked detail of experience.

Students reflected on the question, "How were you prepared to become a student at this institution?" Their responses provided insight into discipline through the teaching and learning processes experienced within varied settings of this student group. The following is a textural and structural description of students' responses:

When I was younger, my parents read me Bible stories. For example, "Daniel in the Lion's Den," that teaches faith in God's protection. I attended church at all times with them. There I learned more and more about God, and I made many friends. Together, now, we encourage each other. At church, my parents taught me to sit and listen and avoid distracting anyone. At home, my parents were

consistent. I received the same counsel. I was taught to sit and listen. My

parents' counsel now fits this setting very well.   They modelled a good

character in my presence, so I could copy their actions as well as the actions

shown in the good habits of my friends. They swat my posterior when I did

anything wrong. Discipline never really worked. I got in many fights with my

siblings. I was obstinate. I did what I desired and never listened. I had my own

identity. As an only child, I listened; sometimes I misbehaved. My parents

practiced the routine of daily devotions which strengthened my faith and

prepared me for study in this institution. My parents attended Wednesday

evening prayer services, ensured that I was a member of the Pathfinders' club, a

youth ministry at church that cultivated both outdoor and home skills and they

engaged us in service to the community. Then, our outreach to our community

was through literature distribution to our neighborhood friends. In this

interaction, we also prayed for their needs. These activities prepared me for

attending this institution. (Students, pp. 1 - 5).

Character education is conscious reflection on parental leadership and discipline.

Individuals identified parental instruction during private and public devotion as

character education. Conscious reflection moved from abstract sharing of good

literature to concrete illustration of renewal, discipline, service learning, and skills

training in description of past lived experiences.

In this school, discussion of instructional themes and demonstration of parental

leadership with respect for others' rights to renewal portrayed respect of the standard of

character. From students' perspective, character education is a parental requirement of

respectful silence and transfer of reverence to varied societal landscapes. Character

education transfers discipline and modelling of reverence that reflect consistency in

training when desire is contrary to discipline for character. In the midst of conflict,

failure, and display of the weakened will, parental consistency and hope for change are

unyielding as well as admirable upon individuals' reflection. Additionally,

consequences or rewards of discipline follow individuals' freedom to reject instruction.

Thus, character education, for the students, focuses on valuing parental discipline and

its effect. Character education is inclusive: from modeling respect for the standard to

application of restraint, from individuals' choice to reject reverential awe or, to

cooperate with the conscious presence of the standard. Character education is

interactive training that injects renewal through concrete illustration of devotional

purpose: service learning and skills' training become underlying factors of character

education. Character education, in this setting, thus, demonstrates service learning and

skills' training not merely as bi-products, but as strengths taught in the training process.

In midweek devotionals and skills training, the researcher sensed training in renewal

and bonding for moral, social, and academic skills development. As a result,

leadership, discipline, renewal, and respect were interpreted as emergent themes of

character education.

Present Experiences

The researcher introduced the second open-ended question: "Describe your

present lived experiences of character education within the setting." The researcher

continued inquiry following Seidman's (2006) three part interview structure.

Individuals' descriptions of present lived experiences of character education within the

setting progressed from impersonal detached observation to personal involvement in the lived activities of character education within this setting. Students' descriptions of the structure of administrative planning for character education gradually converged into their description of personal change and ownership of the planning process as they engaged in execution of and leadership in the administratively planned design. For example, Dempsey reflected:

> Since coming to this institution, I have learned a great deal. I just used to perform the normal routine of my parents. First, they awakened; then, they prayed. After, their personal experience with transcendence, they gathered us for prayer in family worship. They prayed before they ate. Now, I pray more on a regular basis. Bad times, good times, just when nothing is happening, I use those times to reflect on God and to talk to Him. Praying has brought me closer to Christ; I guess, it has also better developed my character. Activities that we do at school for character building would be Week of Prayer, Culture Week, and Adventist Heritage Week. (Dempsey, p. 1).

Dempsey's reflection on personal change repositions this participant from objective observer to participant in the experience of value transmission. This participant's attitude and distance at first project inquiry into the disciplined routine of prayer until immersion in the school setting, that provided time and training, captured mind and heart into freedom to practice the routine instead of pursuit of alternate activity. Tajam, another student, captures a similar attitudinal change that embraces truth as a virtue and rejects its antithesis, lying:

This school has helped to develop my character. The present program of prayer and fasting is troubling my conscience concerning my habit of lying. You know, there are little things that I lie for? Instead of just lying, I can just tell the truth. For example, if the teacher asks, "Where were you?" instead of lying, I can just say where I was, upstairs or someplace, like that. God has helped me. He has shown me that being truthful is good. The Holy Spirit has also helped me by speaking to me through my conscience. Many of us lie for different reasons, but I have realized that lying really makes no sense. My decisions are honoring God because I am seeking and spending more time with God. I know that He is very pleased with that decision; also, I am more helpful at home and kinder to my siblings. I also have made a vow to study my school work (Tajam, pp. 2, 3)

Again, this student views character change through the lens of the observer-participant's repositioning for change. The observer establishes distance between the practice of vice and virtue and deliberates concerning decision-making for change. From the observer's perspective, conscience chooses relief from vice in preference of virtue. Then, in choice, observer functions in dual roles as observer-participant who reflects on the process of deliberation as well as describes the nature of change. As participant, the experience of virtue transcends human practice of vice; hence, description chooses Biblical diction that describes approximation to the standard through improvement in human relationships.

During Week of Prayer, the administration invites a speaker who counsels students on lifestyle choices. Each day, the speaker's counsel ends with an invitation for students to engage in prayer. There is usually a prayer box where teachers and students deposit their prayer needs over which prayer is offered. The school takes time to pray in groups. Counsels on character education have drawn me closer to God. If I go to church, sometimes I would not really listen to the Pastor's lengthy sermon, but in school, we are learning about God constantly, and I would understand more quickly what lifestyle changes I need to make. For example, I learned about kindness and respect, the power of prayer, and God's readiness to answer prayer. I learned that if I ask God for what He sees is good for me, He will grant it. For example, I don't fail Spanish, but I really don't understand it. I don't fail because I pray, and I study.

Other lived experiences are Monday morning assemblies, Culture Week, and Sports Day. During Monday morning assemblies, we meet together as a school family for worship. Then, we sing and study the Bible together. We hear the same message and together we can apply the counsel on lifestyle choices to our lives as the week passes. During Culture Week, we appreciate different cultures, and one another. Adventist Heritage Week is a week set aside to showcase Adventism and to teach others about our principles; and Sports Day is a day of good, clean Christian fun, when the school is divided into different houses named after Bible characters. Many activities at school help us to build character.

Activities at school have developed my character in many ways. Through the Week of Prayer, my faith has developed. Normally I would be afraid to let others hear me pray. During Week of Prayer I realized that I should not be afraid of praying aloud and that prayer time should be for God and me. Praying for others should be easy. Sports Day and Culture Week helped me to express myself. I communicate more. These activities helped me to develop faith, confidence, and self- expression.

Another program is class worship during the week: Tuesday through Friday. Each person is assigned a day to conduct worship. This experience encourages students to interact with God's will for their lives. Students also practice planning and management of the week's program (Students pp. 1 – 10). In the above composite textural and structural descriptions, students' consciousness was real and engaged five movements. First, character education consists of personal as well as corporate instructional time with transcendence. Such communication narrows the gap of character between themselves and that of the standard: "Praying has brought me closer to Christ and has better developed my character" (Abbey, p. 2). Then growth is personal: there is movement from a detached reflection on the past to a lively description of present lived experiences that consciously detail a process of change and the most meaningful feelings produced to impact character. Individuals experience attitudinal change. Movement, then, is from parental valuing of prayer to ownership of the virtue. Description of the process of ownership engages participants in consciousness of structure and process.

Based upon students' descriptions of present lived experiences of character education, the researcher infers that character education reflects the structure of intentional, administrative planning for lived experiences of character. Institutional programs, planned for students' exercise of senses are of a spiritual, social, and academic nature. Interaction with the content of programming motivates self-evaluation and evokes recognition of the differences between lifestyle choices: from loss as a result of inattention, to gain from respectful listening. For example, students have characterized understanding ownership of prayer as opportunity for experiencing the product of faith induced work: academic, social, and moral gains: "I do not fail Spanish because I pray, and I study," says Sally, (p. 2). "I am more helpful and kinder to my siblings; I have, also, made a vow to study my school work" (Cluck, p. 11).

Character education consists of strategically planned programs for community participation. Then, community participation provides instruction for lifestyle choices. Students also articulate attitudinal change. Special programs are corporate activities planned for social and moral renewal among self, others, and the divine. In such moments of renewal, character education yields emotional repositioning. From fear, students gain freedom: students experience understanding of the intimate and the unselfish nature of interaction with transcendence: "God has helped me. He has shown me that being truthful is good. The Holy Spirit has also helped me by speaking to me through my conscience" (Tajam, p. 3). Thus, from taciturn personalities, individuals become confident and expressive. Movement from alienation to ownership of the virtue occurs with nurturing: interaction, listening, engagement in and conscious experience with the virtue.

Character education, in this school, consists of intentional planning for leadership. The motivational device of a master schedule engages individuals in systematic weekly scheduling and execution of lived experiences of character education within the classroom setting. Individuals become an integral feature of the instructional network of character education. Participation, therefore, leads to self-evaluation and attitudinal change. From the awareness of the presence of divine aid in academic need to description of structure and experience of planned change for character development; from deficiencies in comprehension of content to proficiency in skill acquisition; from limited reasoning in social studies content to viewing content through the lens of a Christian Biblical framework, from dishonesty to integrity, from experiencing planned structure to engagement in planning efficient management of and engagement in the planning process. Description of attitudinal change identifies emotional realities associated with present lived experiences. Fear changed to courage, faith, and articulation. Furthermore, participants captured their attitudes in time, suspended them in space while they identified deeper insights gained from experiences: students became kinder and more respectful at home. They also desired greater integrity and academic success. "The present program of prayer and fasting is troubling my conscience concerning lying. I can just tell the truth. I have made a vow to study my school work." (Tajam, p. 15).

In lingering upon experiences, participants characterized their perceived effect of faith and prayer as lived experiences that brought attitudinal change. The researcher heard this attitudinal repositioning both in students' leadership training, instruction in, as well as, ownership of values, and their self-evaluation. Courage, faith, integrity,

respect, and ownership of values are emergent themes of character education within strategic planning for community participation, and student leadership training in the institutional process. Training in leadership effects self-evaluation and attitudinal change. Students' present lived experiences within the setting engaged these five phases of description: (a) the administration's master plan for lived experiences of character education, (b) community participation in the instructional process, (c) administrative plan for students' leadership training, (d) students' planning and execution of present lived experiences, and (e) students' self-evaluation and attitudinal change.

Meaning of Lived Experiences

Using the third part of Seidman's (2006) foci,   the researcher's inquiry engaged students in description of their meaning of character education: "What does character education mean to you within this setting?" Students' perceptions of character education ranged from a demonstration of love to a means of problem solving in preparation for students' future:

> Character education means love. My parents' early training showed their concern and effort to make me God's best possibility. Some youths of present day are very disrespectful. My parents wanted me to be respectful, polite, and know the appropriate language to use in social occasions. They know that there are social traps that I should avoid; so, my parents started to teach me early that I could differentiate between right and wrong decisions. Character education means the possibility of having a bright future by being able to trust in God and develop a relationship with him. My parents trained me in the discipline of church attendance so that I could practice it as I grow older and make decisions

for myself. I feel now that my parents should take pride in my character. Character education means having the skills to make positive decisions such as studying my school work, choosing the best friends, and honoring God in the decisions I make (Alana, p. 9).

Character education means learning to depend on God's help to experience difficult situations. For example, I am studying a course in school. I know nothing about this course. When I learned that I had to register for this course, I was really stressed. I have learned a few concepts. God will guide me through. The course is principles of business, as in accounting and office administration. In physics, my grades were not good. I have prayed and studied more. Additionally, I have chosen to serve in the community without hesitation. My grades have improved drastically. I guess, that was God's way of saying, "Well done." (Dempsey and Alana, pp. 3, 9)

Character education means making the right decisions. Instead of skipping classes and not completing my homework, I have decided to behave myself and study. Character education means practicing the skills to resolve intellectual conflicts. I pray to God when I am having problems in the sciences and he helps me. I also choose to be an example to my friends. When I realized that I was being promoted to the senior class, my grade point average was a C. I decided that there were some decisions that I had to make: first, I decided to study more; then I chose to practice having morning devotions early and alone. I am thankful that my grade point average is now a B. Now when I am asked to serve in the community, I accept without thinking. My confidence is that God

will enable me. Such service will give me greater confidence to do more.
(Tajam, p.15).

Character education means learning the skills to resolve emotional as well as intellectual conflicts. I believe that I can resolve my anger and inclination to talk in excess by Bible study, self-control, listening, communicating with God, exercising faith, and respect. When I am angry, I will listen to the standard; read my Bible a great deal more for God's counsel. Some qualities that I would like to develop are kindness, respect, and patience to think first before speaking. My choice of words may hurt someone. Anger is having a short fuse. I would like to have peace of mind so that I don't become angry when someone hides my bag. Faith is a good quality to have that something will occur out of the ordinary. God provides in ways that we do not expect. I deal with conflicts differently. For instance, if somebody stepped on me now, I would just dust off and keep on walking. In the past, I would have started a brawl. Now my emotions have changed. Jesus experienced worse....
Well, in the future, I should be able to work well with co-workers. Employers do not like conflicts in the work place, so I will be employed. I do not get in conflicts anymore (Dempsey and Row, pp. 5, 7, 9).

God has helped my interaction with other people. My interaction with other people is much easier. For example, in the past, if I talked out of turn in class and my teacher spoke to me in a hostile tone of voice, I would reply and get upset; now, I retire in silence, and put my head on the desk. My anger is diminishing. I deal with matters much easier. I listen to what others have to say

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before speaking; I would accept the fact that sometimes I am wrong and they are sometimes right. I want to get to the stage where nothing at all troubles me. Whenever something happens to me, instead of contemplating on whether I should or shouldn't respond, I want to automatically know what to do and be as Christ-like as possible. Yes, I would like to get to the point where I don't have to think about resolution. I just would naturally resolve the problem (Sally, p. 7).

Emotionally, in the past I was shyer than I am now; and I was angrier. Now, I think my anger has diminished because I prayed and asked for help. Some people might not think that I'm very shy, because I don't really portray that I'm shy, but I am.   When people ask me to participate in church, I sometimes decline because of my shyness or fear. Intellectually, I was very talkative in class. Teachers used to say, I am a good student, but I talk too much; I just needed to stop the talking. Over the years, the talking decreased but that is still one of the complaints. I am still praying, because God can do anything; in the future, I would love to be confident and peaceful because I know that anger can affect me greatly. (Alana, p.7).

I used to be angry, not just with my classmates but with everyone, mostly at home with my relatives; now God has really calmed me down. Even when I get upset for little things, I try to calm myself down and not show my anger; I try to be more nice to my sister especially and, yes, I think kindness will help me in the future when I get a job. I cannot express anger daily.

To resolve my emotional and intellectual problems, I will listen to the Holy

Spirit's instruction. I will read my Bible a great deal more to understand God's

counsel to me. Some qualities that I would like to develop in the future are

kindness, patience, and quiet confidence, because my choice of words might

hurt others. My emotional decisions are comforting because I am no longer a

shy person. I have become outspoken among my peers, and I believe. I'm also

able to help my classmates whenever I can. To resolve my emotional and

intellectual problems, I should ask God to take shyness away when I am asked

to perform. Also, I should ask Him to help me in my school work. I would

have to study more in Physics. Other qualities I would like to have are faith to

stand for God, and diligence to do His work (Students pp. 5 – 15).

In this composite textural and structural description, the researcher heard students'

descriptions of progress through character education. In students' reflections, the

researcher heard parental concern for character emphasized as students listed their desire

for cultivation of core values. Students' descriptions moved from outlining actions

associated with love to listing those core values that they desired. From delineation,

students engaged in interpretation; they interpreted the nature of parental response to

observation of core values at work as a result of character education. According to

students, character education within the setting taught dependence on transcendent

power, presence, and protection that ascertained understanding of content when the

conditions inducing the feelings, whether stresses of fear, failure, anger, or excess

combined with work, a product of faith in transcendence.   Character, in students'

perceptions, therefore, is the composite of the individual's thoughts, thought processes,

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behaviours, and attitudes resulting in decision-making that portrays the individual's attributes or identity.

Evidence from Lived-Experience

Character education is disciplined training through character building literature rooted in Biblical themes of love, reverence, spiritual renewal, devotion, service learning, and problem solving skills that students experience in interaction with parental, counselor, and peer modeling in each landscape of life. Students emulate such actions: parents teach the routine of daily devotion that strengthens faith and cultivates character. Character education teaches spiritual renewal through learning of the standard of character and the will of transcendence; it teaches cultivation of problem solving skills through membership in youth clubs such as Pathfinders' ministry, participation in service learning through community outreach, as well as, public and private devotions. Through character education, students learn reverence for God and respect of human rights to exercise their senses in acquisition of moral knowledge.

Character education is *licks*: according to one student, "My parents licked me when I did something wrong (Row, p. 5). In this student's description of lived experiences of the past was included an attention getting stimulus: a sharp pain distracted his attention from wrong actions: applying this expression, *licks*, to character education, metaphorically, then, character education is the painful effort of bringing character into proper condition by careful, persistent work. Such work teaches confidence in a prayerful lifestyle in which increased faith heightens certainty in the absence of evidence; additionally, increased faith yields moral and practical knowledge that furnishes students with skills for decision-making that reveals character. Character

education, therefore, is love, shared, through intentional, consistent, on-going, yet, subtle training within the home and society.

Teachers' Perceptions and Lived Experiences of Character Education

Character education is training that provides a belief system for a constructive lifestyle of service within students' present and future societies. As a result, such training conceptualizes academic, socialization, and moral decision-making skills that are applied to problem-solving in varying stages of growth: academic and professional goal achievement, forming bonds of friendship, and valuing students' moral and social well-being.

Past Experiences

According to teachers' description of past lived-experiences, character education is motivation for problem-solving. In response to the question, "How were you influenced toward teaching for character education in a Seventh-day Adventist school," teachers described the process through which they achieved decision-making in lived experiences of character education in the past. First, they described the influence of early character education on decision-making skills; then, teachers discussed their lived-experiences of change and conflict that motivated choice:

> I grew up in a Christian family affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist
> Church. Upon entering university, I wanted to do something else. Because of
> my beliefs and the thought of the degree of compromise required, I chose
> teaching. I taught at the government institution back home for 2 years. I had
> applied to this institution some years before. I got the call, and I thought, "This
> is an opportunity to be in the mission field. I have always promised myself to

do missionary work." I had thought of Japan or one of those places that did not have English as its first language. However, coming here, I still see it as missionary work because this is a Christian institution with the aim of building character not only for society, but also aiding readiness for eternity. My aim has always been to work with youths, whether I was going to be teaching or working in any other helping profession.

Home was just my great grandmother and I. This concept of family is shocking to many persons. I was trained in this way: when told to do something, I was told why obedience was good for me. I appreciate now that a reason was given for each action I was asked to take. I did not experience a lot of punishment, per se. I remember reading the first book, the Bible. I did not start going to any school until I was six years old. While at home, I was just being taught from the Bible, apart from learning to count and whatever else. I could tell Bible stories which totally moved me. Other reading materials were Biblical.

I used to love to hear mission stories at church about persons from many countries in the world and how they were taught things that they did not know even though not all of them were youths. This opportunity came. I took it.

From early, I participated in various aspects of the church: I was one person who was always called upon to do: to share Bible texts, sing songs, and speak about children in other places of the world. From that time, I think that I was being groomed for a purpose.

During my time in high school, I'd always thought of becoming an engineer. And, somehow, my mind changed. I didn't do that well in the sciences. I

thought about becoming an environmentalist, because of my love for geography;

however, I decided to enter university. It was not Adventist University. It was

secular, and in my application, I applied for undergrad in geography. When I

was accepted some prerequisites were for me to attend classes on Saturdays.   I

was praying about this problem. The whole decision was that I would not attend

classes on Sabbaths. For geography, there would be many field trips on

Sabbaths; so, the next best thing was for me to study history. During my tenure,

I always thought, 'What could I do with history, since, many persons studied

history, but there were not many opportunities in the market for history. Then, I

decided to study education, and somehow, I didn't choose education, education

chose me. From that, I started to teach.

 I remember when I was studying for my diploma, the assessors said, "You

should remain in education." I did not really see myself as making a big impact,

but they saw something in me.   After university, I applied, and after a number

of years, I started to teach. I, then, later, studied to become a certified teacher.

Then, I decided to study education and pursue something in relation to

computer. I have been always fascinated with computers.   I wish in my time I

had access to computers like children today.   One of the things, is, when I was

studying my course and I was assessed, the assessors asked, "Do you plan to

remain in education?"

I replied, "Yes."

"You should remain because we see something in you. We see that you are able

to reach out to the children, and you teach the information as well as you look

exemplary to other young people." I think that is one of the motivating factors (Teachers, p. 1, 2).

Character education is early education within the family landscape where parents teach the value of reading, listening and reasoning and individuals learn to model the virtuous lifestyle of faith. Reading good literature and practicing inductive thinking, parents nurture character education. These media share themes of justice, equity, and inequity, as well as cultivate reasoning. Lessons of love for others and self incite listeners to living vicariously. Character education, in this instance, becomes a vehicle of goal shaping and needs' analysis. The listeners' consciousness views the characters of diverse narratives through the lens of felt needs and goals that purpose fulfilment. Reflections describe processes of decision-making, from goal setting to goal achievement through scaffolding. Character education shows six levels at which goals can be achieved: (a) goal statement, (b) evaluation of the achievement process, (c) acquisition of academic proficiency, (d) envisioning conflict, (e) purposeful resolution, and (f) motivation:

> I have always promised myself to do missionary work. Coming here, I still see
> it as missionary work, because [this] school is a Christian institution with the
> aim of building character not only for students' society, but also aiding readiness
> for Heaven. It has always been my aim to work with youths. During my time
> in high school, I'd always thought of becoming an engineer. And, somehow,
> my mind changed. I didn't do that well in the sciences. I thought about
> becoming an environmentalist, because of my love for geography. I applied for
> undergrad in geography, and when I was accepted some prerequisites were for

me to attend classes on Saturdays.   I was praying about this problem. The whole

decision was that I would not attend classes on Sabbaths. For geography, there

would be many field trips on Sabbaths; so, the next best thing was for me to

study history. (Teachers, pp. 2, 3).

Given teachers' descriptions of past experiences of character education, the researcher

interprets character education as aiding goal setting and achievement based upon

interests strengthened through academic study. Focusing upon opportunities for goal

fulfilment, in this setting, character education is viewed as success through the lens of a

belief system that guides conflict resolution.

Choice demands preparation, determination, and decision-making. Character

education challenges reflection on training experienced in varied settings where

listening, speaking, and thinking engender skills used in conscious reflection.

Conscious reflection on character education in home lived-experiences reveals hearing

biblical narratives of love, equity, courage, caring, and reverence. Such themes move

the imagination to visualize and dramatize action. On the other hand, lived-experiences

of character education within the community groom skills for shared experiences within

the setting and for service to cultures beyond lived-experiences. Character education

prepares for leadership through tasks that require determination: action, repetition, and

contemplation in visualization of academic and professional skills' development. In

repetition for rehearsal, character education challenges skill refinement for service. In

this setting, character education becomes love motivating service through

memorization, reasoning, sharing, listening, and refinement of kinaesthetic skills: "I

have always had a love for mission stories at church about persons who were taught

new knowledge" (Teacher 010, pp. 1, 2). Character education inspires determination to achieve fixed goals. When deficiencies diminish achievement of objectives, character education arouses consciousness of latent strengths in pursuit of cultural capital. Teachers reflect accordingly:

> During my time in high school, I've always thought of becoming an engineer. I did not do well in sciences. I thought about becoming an environmentalist because of my love for geography, I applied for undergrad in geography. Some prerequisites required classes on Saturdays. I was praying about the decision. The decision was that I would not attend classes on Sabbaths; so the next best choice was to study history. Upon entering university, I wanted to study something else. Because of my beliefs and the degree of compromise required, I chose teaching. (Teachers, pp. 1, 2).

Based upon teachers' description of goal fulfilment, the researcher deduces that character education provides choices and guides decision-making for goal achievement. When threat of failure diminishes reality of achieving fixed goals, character education guides the choice that transcends failure. Then, providing a chance to choose between core values or caprice, the threat of failure confronts aspiration to tip the scale towards the one more dominant. If, on one hand, character development motivates goal achievement, then, choice favors core values; on the other hand, if the desire for goal achievement sacrifices character, then caprice dominates core values. The individual shows ownership of character education in the choice of core values, whereas the choice of goal achievement at any cost reveals deficiency in core values. Character education describes determination, motivation, and conflict resolution.

Conscious determination to achieve stated goals acknowledges academic proficiencies, as well as deficiencies, and cultural conflict that threaten goals' fulfilment: strengths compensate for weakness. Love rejects fear; positive skills redirect negative energies. Cultural conflict finds resolution in choice of core value of respect. Character education motivates personal interests, expression of unfulfilled goals, determination to experience hope fulfilment, work, proficiency in content, exemplary conduct, and respect for self, others, and the Divine.

Character education, in this setting, influences collegiality, opportunity for professional growth, friendships among peers based on shared moral standards, academic and professional achievement, as well as socialization. According to the teachers, character education sustains friendships through students' history and well into the future. Shared moral standards motivate students' achievement of academic excellence among peers and cultivate students' socialization skills: social moulding is constant even in the presence of conflict contrary to the desired moral outcome. Samantha, the English teacher reflects:

> Some of my friends who were also Christians, not necessarily of my beliefs,
> influenced my relationships at school. They usually entertained my beliefs, and
> I would entertain theirs. We held shared moral beliefs that sustained our
> friendships. I did not have many to influence my relationship. In secondary
> school, my relationships encouraged me to reach for higher heights, because I
> did very well in school and my friends also did well. We were a group of four
> and   at the end of the term, names would be posted according to our ranking and

our names would be listed: either first, second, or third. We would all be in sequence from first to third.

An incident among my friends that impacted me greatly was having been taught to live for the enhancement of others' self-esteem as well as my self-denial. That is I should not step on or over others to achieve my progress. First, let me tell the scenario. When I started working, there was a chance that I had to attend the annual national choir competition. Misunderstanding arose from my being chosen to replace another. We were friends, but it appeared that I was asked based upon my moral beliefs and my classroom management skills.   "She is my friend," I thought. "If I say yes, it will appear as though I want the opportunity." Now this is a big thing: we are coming out of school and going to a television station. They [students] were going to sing. A day from school was a coveted opportunity; it was welcomed, and they would be going to different parishes. Now, upon my saying yes, I was told that the previous choice may have been a wrong decision in the first place. I took it; and the teacher, previously chosen, expressed, "You are my friend; why did you accept?"

I had to explain to her that I was not sure of the reason I was asked. I believe, the administration desired better control of the students. I had to ask myself, "Whom do I prefer: the students or this friend?" She was a very good friend. Though a friend, she did not share certain morals. Perhaps, if they had asked, she would permit the students to stop at a bar. These were 6th formers of ages 18 through 19 so they could have. I would have said, "No." She, however,

is that type of person; as a result of that incident, the values that were seen

emerge from those years of training.

Even though the incident seems simple and small, it said much for me and for

the persons around whom I had to be, the students especially, because we are

always taught to put them first. Teachers should always put students first

(Samantha, p. 3).

Given this teacher's description of acquisition of professional proficiency and

envisioning conflict, the researcher views character education, at this school, as

teaching human worth in the consciousness of early childhood education; instruction in

courtesy as well as respect for self and others halts injustice and recognizes

opportunities that require mediation for fairness: "I should not step on or over others to

achieve progress" (p. 3). Valuing self and others are qualities underlying character

education here. Focusing on setting, action, characters, analyses of themes, and the

reasoning that underlies tension, character education pierces shades of unknown

circumstances to analyze proposals for professional growth. Inductive reasoning

provides insight into the outcome of choices and the nature of relationships.

Then, character education evokes varying layers of reasoning that perform several

functions to derive sound conclusions. From examining conjecture that heightens

conflict to drawing inferences that confront the reality of ethical concern, character

education becomes the source of inquiry into the reason for change in perception of an

existing reality. Character education weighs thoughts and actions.

Character education has weight. Professional peers value each other in the

scales of character education. As students respect each other and self, they extend

similar respect to authority who likewise reciprocates with similar courtesy. Character education, thus, provokes professional growth in confrontation with ethical preference. Thus,   the balance of character education, in the moral scale of students' socialization skills or students' whimsical pursuit, tips to favour students' moral and socialization skills. Lenses of comparison, sequence, and decision-making pierce unknown, ethical valuing of students. When character education weighs the worth of professional friendship against valuing students' moral and social skills, the latter transcends the former. Movement from query to decision-making reveals choice: character education values students' moral and social skills' development as well as friendship.   Thinking, inquiry, valuing, sequencing, and choice are critical factors underlying character education for resolution of moral conflict. Samantha, the teacher further reflects on students' profound needs:

There was this particular young man, to whom I taught English. He was known to be very disruptive and was the talk of the school. He was known, and in every sense of the word, he was bad. That was he. I had heard about him before I met him. Upon meeting him (of course, I had always promised myself, "I'm going to know everything about him for myself"), I prayed. On the first day, oh yes, all of my worst fears came to life. He was exactly as was described to me.   I promised myself that I was not going to be caught up in prior knowledge of him, nor what I saw. What I saw could also have been influenced by prior knowledge.

I took him aside almost every day after that first day: I spoke with him, and spoke with him, and spoke with him. At the end of the year, he was in the mid-80th percentile ranking. My department head demanded re-evaluation of the

paper; she could not believe. She said: "Look at his math grade; he must have gotten help from other students; what right does he have to get such a high grade when students of the higher stream were not touching the 80's."

I said, "Well, I believe it was because of his behavior." The long and short of the story is, the year of my departure, he was graduating. He became head boy of the school. I am not attributing that to my effort alone, but it looks as if he started coming to his senses.

He told me, "I did it just for you. I did it just for you." At least somebody got through to him; so I am thinking, if I had just taken the road of the other teachers and the counselor (everybody had given up on him) but as I said, "I prayed." It would have been odd to pray because it was not that type of school, but I prayed for him too. I asked his mother and everybody to pray for him, and it worked. Teachers may have seen the changes, and they started helping, but that's one time, especially in English LanguaGe, he started following. That is one incident in which character improved from what it was (p. 5).

Given this teacher's description of students' profound needs, this researcher deduces that character education is the principle of love motivating teachers' lived experiences and urging their acquisition of a deeper knowledge of students' character. Teachers' and students' interactions seek students' highest worth with depth of consciousness. Capturing teachers' attention like a stimulating text and holding teachers' interactions with the students through to its highest point, character education provides the opportunity for listening. The student had become a news item or case. Teachers hear the context surrounding the object of reporting: narrative framed to its

highest point, reporters expect action from the listener. Character education, however, views context within the frame of independent thinking. While visualizing the social, moral, and intellectual forces influencing student's conscious search for meaning and focus, character education seeks a strategy of love to aid and redirect the student's consciousness of past failures. Furthermore, teachers feel the passion for character education: "We should model what we are teaching. Character is the only treasure that we can take from this life to the world to be made new" (Teachers, Sam and Whit, pp. 4, 14). When students' narratives reach a climax, character education injects repetitive counselling and modelling to contrast reality with ideal behaviors. Character education is penetrating and persistent. It engages the heart and mind in introspection and reflection creating inner conflict that struggles between desire and reality of experiences. Students hear the teachers' passionate plea: "I spoke with him, and spoke with him, and spoke with him" (Samantha, p. 5).

Character education models the virtuous life. Determination to resist past, negative, and limiting experiences comes alive. It pursues a positive path that offers the spectator a virtuous spectacle: independent evaluation: "I am not going to just judge students because they look a certain way or, because they are from a certain community" (p. 4). First hand observation reveals character education opportunities: modelling, counselling, and societal alliance for role reversal. In formation of a supportive network of home, society, and school, character education moves stakeholders of the institution to action that seeks academic, social, and moral gains. Thus, character education envisions role reversal, on one hand, while on the other hand

it evokes administrative query that reveals hidden inequities resident in the spirit of competition:

> At the end of the year, he was in the mid-80th percentile ranking. My
> department head demanded re-evaluation of the paper, she could not believe.
> She said: 'Look at his math grade; he must have gotten help from other students;
> what right does he have to get such a high grade when students of the higher
> stream were not touching the 80's (Samantha, p. 5).

Thus, character education, in this school, arouses students' interests to search for ideal behaviors: academic success, social equity, and partnership that aids achievement; "I am not going to evaluate students based on appearance or place of residence. I spoke with him and spoke with him. I prayed and asked his mother to pray for him" (p. 5); however, while showing a positive effect, on one hand, character education evokes misapprehension of genuine student achievement that offers constructive self-esteem building; misapprehension of genuine student achievement is an effect that signifies ties to conventional systemic evaluation of students according to socioeconomic structure: cultural capital, socio-economic status, and systemic limitations.

Character education, in this setting, is interaction between heart and mind through repetitive counselling that stimulates academic enlightenment and increases valuing of self and others. Such valuing is at first directed externally toward the individual, who is responsible for heightening the self-esteem of the object of character education; "I did it just for you" (p. 5). Such valuing is communication between mind and heart that later turns itself within to engender competence and increased achievement of will. The researcher visualizes role reversal through expressions that

range from "disruptive" to "head boy." Teacher's petitions for student's role reversal become intense. Depth of desire increases in volume so loud that home, social, and academic communities listen and enter into the students' need. Students, too, enter into the aid proffered as well as intrinsic reflection on counsels that provide opportunities for self-examination. In the daily counselling, the teacher's persistence and passion for student's introspection into ways to achieve academic success grows visibly. Frequency of counsel shows the teacher's desire for effectiveness in her profession. Hence, purposeful rejection of prior evidence reveals professional independence and readiness to reason concerning the posture of quiet confidence in the student's ability to achieve, if given a fresh beginning. Character education, in this setting, therefore, exercises faith and challenges students to positive role reversal.

Present Experiences

Character education uses an integrated model to conceptualize core values in this setting. Teachers' reflections on their present lived experiences of character education value methods of instruction for strengthening character: modeling, metaphors, illustrations, inductive reasoning, and integration of faith and learning:

Now in a Christian education system, I can exercise freedom to pray.

Being in this environment with all of my experience and what I was able to do as a result of the influence of negative or positive forces on me, I know that I wanted to teach: whether a subject in school, or just life coping skills. What we are teaching should be modelled within our lives, because at the end of the day, there are many students who may hear the concepts, but they visualize, the person who stands before them.

If individuals are planning to go to heaven to live with Jesus, then living as Jesus wants them to live here means modeling Jesus' lifestyle. Therefore, by participating, by behaving, by showing a positive character, individuals will see that there is a greater reason underlying behavior and will seek to find out the reason.

One of the important ways in which I model is dress. Popular music motivates males to dress with their pants dropping off. Thus males walk improperly groomed; so I think that is one area where I try to model the proper deportment, so that these young men or, teenagers will see the proper way in which they should deport themselves. If we do not have the correct deportment in society, the next generation of males will practically lose their identity, not knowing the correct way to dress, or, the correct way to behave.

Also, I seek to model interaction. Interaction between males, as well as between males and females is underscored by popular culture: music, fashion, as well as communication. Teenagers have deviated from using the correct language and the proper attitude that we have grown up to experience. Now, students see being impolite as important.

I view modelling politeness as very important. It is important for character development and education, because there is an old adage, "Manners take you through the world." I know that some persons may differ by using instead, "Money takes you through the world"; however, being mannerly is of utmost importance. Even though one may have money, being mannerly says

much. For example, students, being in school, learn to be respectful to self, and

then they will be respectful to their teachers, and their peers

(Teachers pp. 1- 3)

Based upon teachers' descriptions of learning strategies and modelling, this researcher

infers that character education, in this setting, is modelling principles of the standard:

"We teach character by modelling the principles of the Master Teacher in our lives (p.

6). Modelling such principles, character education displays word pictures of conduct

and identity. Good conduct models ownership of courage; such practice inspires the

observer's query into the meaning of virtuous choices. Responses often share the merit

of core values to the model's conscious preference of destiny and purpose: "If

individuals are planning to go to heaven to live with Jesus, then living as Jesus wants

them to live here, means modelling Jesus' lifestyle" (p. 6). Thus, character education

within the school setting compounds foundational modelling performed in the home

landscape. Good conduct, illustrated by attitudes, interaction, dress, and speech, creates

a living model of academic and social mobility that strengthens students' perceptions of

character education. Senses of sight and sound engage in admiration and aspiration to

achieve principles of the standard. The suspension of achievement posits faith at work,

advancing towards cultural capital: sound speech, healthy academic achievement as

well as formation of social relationships and cultivation of cultural skills. Modeling

interaction between the sexes, character education instructs in formation of lasting

relationships; heart touches heart in preservation of respect for the sanctity of recurring

life. As a teaching strategy, modelling good conduct averts knowledge deficiency in the

choice of appropriate language that sustains rational thinking in conflict resolution. Whit, the social studies teacher reflects:

> When students are respectful, properly groomed, and are able to communicate using appropriate diction, their development becomes multidimensional.   When they enter college and the world of work, especially, they are well able to function properly in the environment in which they are working. Being respectful will help students to work with co-workers, and, also to work with other individuals. Also, respect helps the student to look out for those who are less fortunate. Over all, it will help to make our world and our society a better place. If individuals are able to respond to each other with respect, then, we would have fewer problems: less violence, as we are seeing emanating within the society today (p. 8).

Reasoning concerning the prevalence of societal ills, Whit gives reasons for the researcher to conclude that character education is a multi-dimensional shield. It recognizes the depth of human dignity to intercept the spears of social inequities and moral injustices prevailing in the moral, academic, social, and professional milieu. Core values of respect, compassion, responsibility, and fairness recognize human worth and teach the underprivileged the ideal of the divine standard. The academic community, then, becomes a formidable alliance for the student in need of role reversal. Uniting resources, the social and academic communities become a supportive network that understands the purpose of character education: to move the alliance into action. Interaction among home, school, and society underscores the effect of infusing

character education in milieu and content. Character education moves the stakeholders of this educational system to action.

Teachers view present lived experiences of character education through the lens of faith and learning, an overarching theme under which the teaching strategies of the Master Teacher find inclusion. Organization of the composite textural and structural descriptions of present lived experiences of character education into a whole presented a beginning, middle, and end that revealed teaching methods: comparison and contrast, illustrations, and metaphors for perspective taking, pursuit of literacy, and students' and teachers' moral and social acculturation:

> Now that I am at this institution, we are expected to integrate faith and learning because we perceive this strategy as helping to mould character, not just with a curriculum that is given to us (for we also use secular curricula) but we have to purpose that whatever we are teaching (language and literature, right now) that we fuse aspects of faith into the subject, see how best students can apply moral themes of the subject to their lives, and how infusion of faith can mould them. We use English Language every day. For example, if I am teaching story writing, I normally look for a story from the Bible. Let them see the tools and techniques that I am teaching them to use were used before. I don't take credit for what I am teaching, but I help students to understand that writers before them have used these techniques, and so far, students have been encouraged to read more. They will share with me that the stories have been interesting to them, and I am hoping, and at this point, we can only hope, that the impact has been made. I don't think that I can compare the behavior, then and now. The

environment calls for a calmer ambience. As a result of the Christian approach that we take, we can attribute it to what is being taught.

I am mindful of an example of integrating faith and learning. I remember introducing the genre of short story writing with the story of Esther from the Bible. There was a non-Christian young lady who at first was very wary of reading the Bible story. I gave her the plot and romance theme, and she read it. I used another version instead of the King James, because students normally complain about the archaic language used. This young lady was so enthused with the narrative, she could not believe. Being a beautiful young lady herself she could relate to the narrative. Students put themselves in the place of Esther.

In this type of setting, students are not only taught the subject matter in a vacuum , but they are also taught on a wider scale to know that there is a Creator, who puts everything into place; so, instead of speaking about the content, for example, in geography, one of my subjects, students are taught more. Instead of teaching merely about volcanoes and the soils, students are taught that these physical phenomena did not occur by chance. There is a Supreme Being, who is instrumental in the creation of these natural phenomena that exist within different areas of the world.
 Integrating faith and learning helps teachers and students to view concepts from a new perspective. Normally, just looking at different areas within a subject, as I said before, geography, or even history, teachers look at content from different topics studied. When we really look at content, we are not working from one

point of view, but integrating faith and learning helps the teacher to look from a broader point of view.

One example is the case of world war and genocide. We view these as human beings fighting each other in order to gain possession of more resources within a country that will aid other countries in possible economic development, but operating in the background (if there is an integration of faith and learning) teachers show a deeper reason for wars and genocides.

From a Christian Biblical perspective, there was war in Heaven, and Michael and his angels fought against Lucifer: Michael prevailed. Therefore, we know that what is happening is as a result of good and evil.

Faith and learning helps students and teachers alike. While the teacher is imparting knowledge, students have many ideas. Students are able to share from different perspectives that the teacher may not have known: in this setting, we have individuals whose perceptions differ: but in terms of faith and learning, while the teacher is sharing and teaching, students understand beliefs: misconceptions are clarified. At the same time the teacher learns about students' culture. (Teachers, pp. 1, 2):

Given teachers' descriptions of faith integration in the learning process, the researcher deducts that character education, in this setting, is the internalization of principles for moral and academic literacy and perspective- taking. Content and form of literary genres illustrate preservation of knowledge that provide the element of comparison and contrast for visualizing the efficiency of techniques, past and present, in stimulating students to literacy: "to read more," or "think about scenarios as content for short story

writing" (Teachers, p. 2). Character education stimulates the senses to acknowledge the temper of the times in which students study and in which authors write. Such comparison and contrast illustrates the elements of letter writing, those of the short story, and times less turbulent or according to teachers "more calming and soothing" with times of violence: "guns, killing, or crime" (Teacher 010, p. 1). Themes challenge student writers to listen to ways in which they should not merely write about, but also manage relationships through self- control and application of principles in the counsel: "They could write about emotions and other conflicts that may have arisen: "I showed them a true story and how conditions could turn out for them for the rest of their lives" (Teacher, p. 1). In such illustrations, types of reasoning surface across content. Character education teaches reasoning from the specific to the general and from the general to the specific. Conceptualization of physical reality transcends literal thought: the personification of good and evil captures the Biblical framework. Present lived experiences, as a result, value the conceptualization of academic content in strategies, such as figurative language and critical thinking. Character education, therefore, teaches valuing relationships between past and present strategies, concepts, and elements of literary genres such as short story or letters for stimulating moral literacy: independent reading as well as creative writing. Character education teaches toward literacy and perspective taking in this setting.

Character education moulds perspectives. Heritage of past wisdom is the lens through which the present treasury of knowledge shapes character. Foundationally and structurally sourced, character education anchors character molding in the science of divine guidance, the standard of truth recognized within the setting. Form and content

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viewed through the lens of continuity and origin shape character for perspective taking. Intellect shapes understanding of relationships among interpretation, content, and evaluation in exercise of the senses. Exercising the senses to discern between right and wrong, the intellect engages in moral and intellectual discourse in molding perspectives. Content becomes meaningful through oral and written discussion, reading, and listening. Such modes of discourse view reality through the lens of the standard. In delivery of content and meaning, depth of values and relevance among moral, social and emotional experiences discussed in context of occurrence, increase through the lens of heritage. Such engagement in discourse evokes decision-making through comparison and contrast as well as deductive and inductive reasoning. The intellect compares reality of time, past and present, in decision-making. Cultural experiences, therefore, of past and present, embody present treasury of knowledge available for shaping decisions.

Character education has a chain effect. It connects self and others. Beginning with self, links of core values unite heart and intellect in understanding the value of good conduct in relationships. Choice-directed, core values reach horizontally to the heterogeneous community in modeling a purposeful lifestyle in dress, relationships, interaction, and polite communication. Such habits of social mobility instruct in self-respect for the preservation of intergenerational values of identity, moral, and social rectitude. Self-respect, then, becomes reciprocal. Agencies of character education network to create opportunities of practice for moral, social, and intellectual growth, as well as awareness of the individual's greater purpose in life.

Character education instructs in the practice of positive virtues when negatives invade the individual's spatial dimension: love ejects fear, peace disarms anxiety;

industry shames indolence; diligent creativity emits constant admiration; independence dispels dependence; and kind compassion replaces bullying. Character education guides the individual through unknown experiences with confidence.

Character education influences literacy and students' perspective-taking: "students have been encouraged to read more" (Samantha, p. 5); the calmer ambience of the past compares with that of "guns, blood, and crime." The phenomenon offers hope for mastery of skills: "I can only hope that they mastered the skills" (p. 5). Teachers' dependence on future maturity, as evidenced in the preceding statement of hope fulfillment, visualizes character education as a security deposit against the future: flashbacks will occur in moments that test mastery of social skills and expose hope fulfillment to increasing maturity. In the interim, teachers' infusion of faith in both inductive and deductive reasoning sounds a continual need for training through repetition of practical application of critical thinking. Thus, character education is a mirror of ongoing acculturation of teachers and students in social, moral, and professional skills and provides opportunities for increasing maturity.

Meaning of Lived-experiences of Character Education

Based upon teachers' description of the meaning of lived experiences of character education, several themes emerged. Character education prepares students physically, socially, and morally through the educative process in readiness for their societies. It trains students in the expectation of equity and fairness. Building self-esteem, character education shows love that carves a path through societal blights to which students become exposed: "a path through blood, drugs, and crime" (Samantha, p. 6). Modeling conduct, dress, and relationships, character education instructs

students through the lens of the divine standard, the Master Teacher. Character education means, therefore, mediating belligerence and bullying by reflecting principles of kindness through teaching compassion, reasoning the weight of choices, listening to decision-making processes, and modeling behavior.

Character education means treating each student with equity. The teacher avoids comparison between students' abilities and her personal growth. Character education means valuing each individual's phases of growth. Such avoidance of measurement indicates respect for the individual's ability and need at each stage of development. Such equity transcends the reality of contrast as character education views the learner through the lens of the divine standard to plan curricula that fulfil the learner's social, academic, and moral needs: "If I am in a position to correct a behavior, I try to remind myself that this is also a child of God. I run that thought through my mind" (Samantha, p. 2). Character education means fairness in socialization. Though character education means love in the act of reprimand, discipline requires emotional balance: love and care that subdues anger or pain. Though a difficult balance, character education means cultivating a strategy of problem-solving. The act of shutting out distraction with shuttered eyes to commune with the standard means, in this setting, character education uses intercessory prayer as a salient feature of problem-solving and valuing the individual. Thus, character education is reliance on the divine standard to guide youthful minds. Such reliance motivates these educators' acknowledgment of being called to a noble vocation in which the educator is not without aid. Consciousness of modelling as a life-style, therefore, transcends the setting to teach respect for all life from the Creator's hand. With such consciousness of omniscient aid,

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character education means viewing knowledge, acquisition of wisdom, and aid to humanity through the lens of transcendence. Character education means respectful socialization through the educative process in cooperation for social skill development. Group work socializes for professional and social readiness to interact with society and harmonize with others in recognition and fulfilment of needs. Thus, character education is empathizing in others' needs to provide relief from the pain of academic, social, and moral failure. As a result, character education means problem-solving through reason that subdues emotions.

Character education ensures academic and social proficiencies. It equips the individual with a moral identity for efficient self-management within societies whose structures are contrary to moral literacy. Within the academic setting, character education studies each countenance for light of knowledge recognition. In the absence of enlightenment, character education means searching for the appropriate instructional tool that ascertains learning. Acquisition of an efficient re-teaching method not only turns on the lamp of reason, but also, heightens expectations for future achievement. Within the social setting, however, responsibility for evaluating the milieu turns inward upon the individual. If the individual evaluates the aura through the lens of moral literacy decision-making subdues emotions to reason. Character education, therefore means hope for social, moral, and academic development. Training the whole person for life within present and future societies, character education acknowledges the individual's purpose for living and seeks to fulfil that purpose. It exhibits the individual's true personality in interaction with others and especially in the absence of observers. Then, character education means consciousness of transcendence. Character

education is love that enables change of character from ill-discipline to disciplined love that listens to the vicissitudes of individuals and sublimate negative energies into constructive skills with firmness.

Character education means receiving divine instruction through models of the divine advanced instructor who seek to narrow the gap between actual and potential moral character development. Stakeholders become vehicles of character education. As witnesses, they model core principles that reflect the standard. The educator remains the best witness. He/she knows the Source and claims aid to sustain renewal. Amidst stresses of technological change, character education means renewal in the midst of stress. Renewal of mind through study of the Bible as well as of Nature's beauty and her vast resource of knowledge calms the heart and fills it with positive energies; moreover renewal is in rest that opens the heart, mind, and hand in pursuit of the divine purpose for living.

An Administrators' Perceptions of Character Education

Past Experiences

According to an administrator's perceptions, early education teaches character education through family time, membership in societal institutions, and service. These agencies teach values such as respect, love, caring, and honesty through illustrated Biblical narratives.   Character education is early education, leadership training, as well as mastery of content. Early education in the home landscape nurtures character education. Personal study, parental instruction, membership in youth clubs, church affiliation prepare for service. Reinforcement at each level ensures practice so that training becomes linear and intergenerational. Leadership training and values instruction

are integral features of youth ministry and underlie character education. In conjunction

with the home, societal entities teach foundational values of respect, honesty,

responsibility, love, and caring. Such leadership training grooms the recipient for

responsible roles and values the worth of on-going refinement of mind.

The administrator reflects:

> First, the experiences at home began with family worship. It was an integral
>
> part of family. We were encouraged to engage in personal, private devotion.
>
> Then, mother called the family together. My father did not lead in the worship
>
> setting. Mother ensured that we had family worship. I, now, see the benefit of
>
> character education, especially through Adventist Christian education. I did not
>
> have the opportunity to attend an Adventist School in my elementary years. My
>
> wife had that privilege. Growing up in the church and in Pathfinder ministry, I
>
> experienced the principles that were taught at home.   As I became independent,
>
> I practiced those values at my home. I have taught them to my children who are
>
> attending school at this institution. Because of my training, we cherish certain
>
> values dearly: have respect for the aged, always tell the truth, try to be helpful in
>
> the community and within the family, and have love for each other. Those
>
> values I learned early as a child. At this point, respect, love, responsibility,
>
> veracity, and concern are some character traits that I have. Such traits of
>
> character have assisted me in acquiring this position (Reflections on the Past,
>
> p.1)

 Leadership emerges from instruction in character education that teaches toward

purposeful goals. Such leadership is conflict free and resides in the strength of moral

literacy that pursues character growth through private and public application of literary skills practice. Individuals learn that core values, taught at home, should be modelled within the community:

> In the church, I served as Pathfinder Director and as an elder. I also studied education at the local community college. Service to the church has motivated my service to the school. I learned the value of service to the church. At that point, I realized that it is important to work for the school: character education assisted me in the decision-making process. For that reason, I am here today. Well, before this position, my interest in work was basically low: I was taught at church: "Go to work; do your best." I was always in the teaching profession. I worked at the Elmore Stoutt High School. I always went to work and did what was necessary at work. Coming here, I learned there is a difference. There is a different philosophy of education. There are different goals. At work I was only looking at the present, the end result: my concern was students' achievement in their school work. Coming to work at this institution, I am training boys and girls, not only for life now, but for a heavenly society. This philosophy is different from where I used to work. (Reflections on the Past, p. 1)

Thus, core values of respect, love, responsibility, veracity, and concern become the diction used in various landscapes so that character education invigorates achievement through practice and repetition instead of total dependence on conventional patriarchal leadership.   Furthermore, through such merging, character education provides leadership practice for teaching and learning service. Individuals learn decision-making that directs toward goal fulfilment and adjustment and that views the future through the

lens of moral literacy to provide the best opportunities for emotional adjustment that strengthens cognitive abilities.

Character education requires mastery of content and training that prepares for present and future societies. The administrator continues:

> There was a student who graduated at age 21. Over the 2 year period, the young lady repeated Grade 11 two to three times. Of course, she arrived at the age where she needed to go elsewhere. With the encouragement and pleading of Mrs, who said, "Let's not give up on children. Let us not look at age as a factor for being accepted or rejected. Look at who this young lady can become 5 or 6 years from now. The young lady could not read at the Grade 11 level; she was reading and comprehending at the Grade 8 level. With prayer and determination, that young lady graduated successfully from this institution. She is now attending a tertiary institution and I am confident that the positive reinforcement that she gained from teachers, here, will enhance future performance. She wrote the national exam and passed; additionally, she wrote the regional exams. She wrote history, electronic document preparation, and business management. We knew that this young lady was weak academically, but (giving God the honor) she passed these exams with good results. Her success was a direct result of the positive encouragement of her teachers and her effort. The teacher at some point in time even took that young lady and other students to her home to encourage them. That was character education. (Reflections on the Past, p. 7).

Given this administrator's description of a path to mastery, the researcher takes away these inferences. Where character education focuses on the present, mastery of content is central to successful achievement. The philosophy of progress and achievement of excellence underlies character education where the focus is simply mastery of content; on the other hand, where restoring moral character underlies schooling, character education focuses on training that transcends the present. Thus, in the setting character education is achievement of excellence through understanding the redemptive process, planned strategically for corporate moral instruction, sharing disciplinary coping skills, critical thinking, and individual modelling. This process engages students in social skills' refinement to understand their interests. Discovery carves a path to understanding needs that require curricula planning for need fulfilment. Then, character education transcends systemic regulations to address the individual's specific needs through empathy. Empathy senses future needs and summons honesty of commitment and responsibility to honor the dignity of the individual by matching present deficiencies against the future proficiencies that worthwhile contribution to society demands. Foresight views the imbalance and plans for cultivation of future skills that will reduce social inequities. Empathy addresses present deficiencies by planning curricula content to interest the student in learning through his / her abilities. Therefore, teaching curricula through identification and nurture of individual's interests and skills, character education crystallizes knowledge and skills that previously seemed dense and beyond students' achievement so that understanding becomes accessible. Individuals achieve the moment of enlightenment through stimulation of interests.

Present Experiences

According to the administrator, present lived-experiences of character education demand strategic planning for implementation of systemic programs for goal achievement. Such planning becomes so demanding of mental resources that concern for sources of renewal ascertains fulfilment of purpose and objectives: relationship with and emulation of the standard in social, moral, and academic achievements. The administrator reflects:

My morning begins at 4:00 a.m. It starts with personal prayer and devotion. I have decided again to really spend some more time studying the Bible; so, I've started to reread the Bible reading program for the year. Studying the Bible is a refreshing, and rewarding experience. The family awakes to personal devotion; then, we have family worship, and we get ready for school.

When we get to school, there is office work to be done, for I arrive at about 7:30 a.m.

The day becomes demanding of my attention: parents' calls and several meetings or referrals that could capture my attention until 4:00 o'clock… For example, yesterday, I spent most of the day counselling a student of Grade 12 who has a drug habit. I spent time listening to her concerns, praying with her, talking with her, and encouraging her to do her best. I requested a parental conference. One parent attended. The occasion was very sad because the parent feels helpless. "I have tried my best; and I am basically ready to send her overseas to someone else," he said.

Those are some activities that can be really demanding. Teachers, also, have certain needs. They have personal issues with classroom-management.

In all of these activities, I have to be careful to direct my attention to the real reason that I am here: to aid our students in bridging that gap between self and a relationship with Christ. Character education, in this setting, is all about helping me to be more like the standard, to be transformed….

Here, on the job, I begin with what I call the easier administrative duty. We start by being deliberate with a calendar of events. Meeting with other administrators, we make drafts and put in place a system of activities to ensure certain religious activities are highlighted. So we calendar Weeks of Prayer, outreach programs, programs to the other churches, Open air programs (that is something we tried last year, and we will try for it again this year). we have three per term; there is a weekly general assembly each Monday morning; devotions are scheduled to occur within the classrooms on each of the remaining four days: Tuesday through Thursday; division meetings are also itemized on the schedule; Adventist Junior Youth sessions ends the weekly program. Each program provides moral counselling, but the harder part is modelling that kind of behavior.

Character education in this school is structured discipline that ensures service learning through interaction with the community to provide moral, physical and social needs. Such aid strengthens and enriches character as outreach narrows the gap between actual and potential character development. The individual, performing service, recounts the sense of pleasure experienced in the process of serving when social

border crossing occurs for repositioning of values. A master plan schedules general devotional assemblies and classroom devotions in which modelling character education teaches skills for coping with conflicting discipline problems. Administrative planning elicits students' reasoning in character education. Thus, students' reasoning skills engage in conflict resolution on an on-going basis, so that framing discipline in character education is an auditory and visual experience in which participation is imagined to be active and fair. From behavior to consequence, reasoning is auditory and visual: character education engages inquiry to illustrate the worth of each decision: evaluation addresses rectitude. Inquiry elicits valuation of choice while students judge the fairness and justice of consequence. The principal explains further:

> We would expect that, for example, when students come to me with disciplinary issues (a child is disrespectful to the teacher, and has refused to comply with certain guidelines) this is where character education is tested for me as principal: I must model what we teach the children in general assembly and in other settings. Today, the administrator approaches discipline differently. Students come in: the administrator discovers the reasons: he / she reasons with the student, relates to what God has done, and elicits students' understanding of their erring behavior. I, too, must model the process, so that while the students have left the office, having been disciplined, they will understand two facts: (1) even though they are wrong, there is a redemptive process, and (2) that their deficiencies can be corrected as the time goes by.

We listen to students who return from the senior citizens' home. They often say, 'I really see things in a different light. I am really going to try to do better. I have issues and I am really going to try to be different… to be somebody that others can be pleased with or, that my parents can be pleased with.'

We see that some students are more optimistic about school and about accomplishing certain tasks. We see that our students are more self-controlled. The teacher does not have to be present for students to exhibit self-control. They realize that time management works to their advantage. So we see change.

She said, "Mr. I do not want to come to school. I don't feel that I am making any progress." We discussed the meaning of life.

She recognized: 'Even though I feel this way now, God has a better purpose for me.' When this young lady came to us, she had migrated from the United States. She was a disciplinary problem. She was into drugs. With the aid of teachers, students, and parents and the strategies that we employ with her at school –counselling, praying, and network support of church, home and school - she is not at all what she can be and ought to be, but she is well on the way to making changes in life. Previously, she dropped out of school, but the home-school-church alliance moved into action. Even though she is over age, we are willing to give her a second chance. She is one of God's children and we do see that she has potential. Thus we have embraced her into the school family and encouraged her to achieve professionally. This is an instance that is on-going.

This is our fourth graduation. Students who have graduated have gone on to

tertiary education. They communicate electronically concerning the foundation

that they acquired here at the school: they are achieving (Principal, pp. 5 - 8)

My relationship with students at the elementary division is a loving

relationship.   I am gratified to know that Grade 1's greeting is a moment of

show and tell: they show gifts and tell their newest knowledge. … At the

elementary division the relationship is cordial and respectful. Students seek

advice. At the secondary level, I practice friendliness with caution. In my

professional practice,   I do not hug students at that level.   We dialogue; they

understand, too, that the principal is firm, fair, and friendly. Grade 12 is my

most amicable group of students within three years. My relationship with this

Grade 12 stands above that of previous classes. Sometimes, they come into my

office, sit down, and begin asking questions: not necessarily, about school, but

about the facts of life. They ask my views on certain issues, and as they learn

much from me, I learn much from them as well. At both levels relationship is

good, but it is even better at the primary level, because I suspect, they are

younger and, they view life differently from those teenagers who are going

through different phases in their lives; so relationship between students and

principal is good.   (Principal, p. 5).

Given the principal's descriptions of relationships at varying levels, the

researcher can deduce that character education cultivates respectful relationships at

varying levels between administration and stakeholders. Interactions adjust to phases of

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character growth and levels of reasoning. Cordial relationships thrive where innocence seems greatest, while maturity and caution restrain cordiality to respectful inquiry into life's problems. Reason transcends interaction and engages communication that relieves anxiety concerning life's issues: inquiry into the degree to which administration can provide relief from systemic and personal challenges becomes an opportunity for students and teachers to experience interim mental rest. Such measured distance between cordiality and reason establishes conscious limitation on social and emotional border crossing. Such limitations are significant for modelling moral values within the setting. Introducing core values modelled within the academic setting into the society, character education injects moral lessons through various disciplines: English Language, sports, music, social studies and mathematics. Through such interactions the society learns the underlying principles that motivate independent thinking and the virtue of achieving one's best. Such achievement practices grace in the presence of defeat or knows that one's best has been achieved though loss results. On the other hand, character education teaches firmness when the tension of winning or losing threatens to compromise the principle of best performance. At this instance, character education chooses appropriate language in explanation of decision-making to compete or to avoid competition that generates chagrin or strife.

Institutional discipline supports the technique of rest and renewal introduced in family time and private devotion. The underlying feature of rest is engrained in character education in this setting, and students as well as teachers are free to tap into renewal at will. Administrators emphasize the need for this renewal in this setting where leadership and management issues converge. Entities seek entry into a cathedral of time

and space for renewal through a simple pause to investigate life's issues, or to ensure

security within the classroom structure, or even, simply listening to peace through

music. Renewal is an underlying factor of character education that is larger than

administrators' students' or teachers' abilities to keep pace with institutional demands.

Administrator's reflection on moments of crises management emphasizes the need for

intermittent rest. As a result, the researcher could visualize participants' entry into the

cathedral of space and time and could hear prayer as one of the underlying factors in

moral, academic and social problem solving and renewal. Thus, according to

administrators, teachers, and students, the development of integrity transcends

conventional wisdom and is an experience of decision-making in crises management

through constant application of tools within the varied landscapes of life. This could be

evidenced in 8 factors: (1) self- love, (2) application of divine counsel on problem; (3)

listening to divine aid; (4) Bible study and prayer; (5) introspection; (6) service; (7)

constructive decision-making; and (8) devotion that includes either listening to music

or inquiry into life's untested experiences within some chosen cathedral of space and

time.

Character education teaches disciplined planning of routine processes

scheduled for goal achievement. Consistency of actions in fulfilling the challenges of

life engages mind, body, and spirit in moral training that teaches the senses to transcend

reality in acceptance of what seems impossible.   Moral renewal timed to begin each

day at the kiss of life injects character education with energy that sets activities in

perspective and plans intermittent pauses for renewal in the midst of the day's

programming. Systemic processes, such as planning, societal communications, and

faculty devotions are within the larger wheel of character education to advance social, academic, and moral skills. Certification of academic skills ascertains planning for character education before circular motion of character education begins. Social processes connect school and society through the link of character education that ensures harmony and a sense of continuity.

Meaning of Lived Experiences of Character Education

According to the principal's perceptions, character education, in this setting, means reflecting the ethical lifestyle of the standard to influence observers into understanding the science of divine reasoning and desiring the redemptive process. This process aids understanding of human purpose: problem-solving, achievement of unity in diversity, and positive reasoning that projects desirable outcomes. Character education is achievement of specific objectives that value freedom of choice to differentiate between desirable and undesirable choices. Understanding human dignity through the lens of divine purpose, the administrator of character education reasons with students concerning the noble purpose of their existence: service learning, identity, acquisition of knowledge, and purposeful fulfilment in life:

> In my opinion, character education is who Christ wants us to be: more like him. Without character education, where would we be today? Without character education, I would not serve in this position. I could have been participating in secular activity. I see character education as that relationship we can foster with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who desires to draw us nearer to Him. As a result, we can see God's purpose for creating us: to be disciples, to impact the world around us for Him; to make disciples for him; to help persons to

understand that there is a God who loves them and wants to live with them. Character education is helping me to fulfil that goal. I am here at the institution now, and I am helping boys and girls to understand that Christ has a purpose for their lives….

For example, if there is a discipline referral, the Principal uses the incident that has brought the student in his office to aid students' understanding of the nature of their choices: where they have made the wrong choice, what they can do to improve themselves, and why they are in school. They are not in school because Mom and Dad are paying the tuition, but that there are specific objectives that the student has to achieve. Those goals and objectives may not necessarily be what students want to accomplish in life, but are what God expects of the individual. Therefore, at this point, the Principal draws on experiences while the student is in his office. If he meets them in the corridor, he questions the students:

'How is your day? What are you learning in class? Do you understand that what you are learning is special and will help you to become that unique individual within your community, created with specific character traits that can enable you to make a difference in their community?

In my training, we had family worship at home. Mom and Dad disciplined me, showing me different scenarios in life of persons who have gone contrary to the Word of God and what the outcome has been. Listening to their instruction has helped to give meaning to my life presently.

It will propel me into the future, if I truly believe the Christian Biblical framework, follow the precepts and examples of the standard, and believe in the same values my parents have taught me. I am an adult now. I am trying to ensure that these same values are taught to students as well, because they are universal principles: love, work, respect, and forming a relationship with Jesus. These principles will remain in the future.

A counterfeit to what God has created has been introduced. I believe in absolute truths; there is a Savior; there is one God, and we should worship Him; we should honor His Sabbath, and we should honor His Ten Commandments. These are the same values, principles, and laws that should guide me into the future. As I look into the future – five, ten, twenty years from now – if God gives me the strength, these are the same values that I wish to teach my children, and inject into the life of the school.

For example, I have not found a more compassionate, friendly, loving, caring individual in all my years of teaching than Mrs. Jones, our custodian. When I am facing so many challenges, the Lord, I think, sends Mrs. Jones, just to say the right words to encourage me. She is generous. Here is an employee, who is undoubtedly at the bottom of the salary scale, but is always giving. One morning, she was late in coming. She had stopped by the bakery, and to my surprise, she had brought something warm for me. God attended to my need through Mrs Jones. That morning, I had rushed out to work without eating breakfast, and she brought something just at the right time. Looking at character

education emotionally, we hope that all of our workers will forever be growing and learning, and becoming more compassionate. Looking at Mrs Jones' actions and the actions of other employees, I find a very caring scenario. (p. 5).

The principal's description of the permanence of principles and an example of staff generosity attests to the enduring nature of character education. As a result, the researcher infers that character education transmits the worth of core values that become indigenous knowledge to successive generations: love, industry, respect, integrity, bonding with the divine advanced instructor. Such transmission of values secures constancy in intergenerational relationships that extend through time within recurring societies whether undergirded by the Biblical framework or not. Thus character education means having an on-going learning experience in principles of love, compassion, patience, and service as well as encouragement. Viewed in the cheerful giver who makes much from less at the ideal moment, character education brings contentment to circumstances of discontent. In acquisition of knowledge, discontent arises when ease of understanding eludes the learner and diminishes hope to disappointment. At such moments, character education means not merely dependence on indigenous knowledge of values, but also dependence on faith, work, and prayer within this setting. Faith believes and respects possibility when threatened by the impossible or when respect for the standard measurement of behavior becomes threatened. Then, character education strengthens motivation to achieve goals even in the presence of biological need.

The principal continues his descriptions:

The faith factor is very important. It is a powerful factor in character education. When students have studied long and hard, examining a complex concept, studying all night, and are not successful in receiving the grade they desire, faith kicks in. Students learn that God is the Creator of knowledge and He gives men knowledge. If students do not gain understanding at first, they will at a later date. We encourage students to pray, study, and believe that all things are possible. …. Faith here and now refers to students' present challenges. We had a student who came to the office. She was crying. Her Mom told her not to return. It was a sad experience. Her mom was facing some issues: her mom discovered that there was infidelity in her existing relationship. Mother took out her frustration on the children by putting them out. The dad who does not live in the home was called. Through it all, we were able to speak with the student. Sometimes we may not see the positive factor in certain situations presently, but this is what faith is all about: praying with the individual student, even at his or her level. We help the student to understand we may not see the answer now, but this is what life is all about. We live in an imperfect world, but through it all we can depend on aid of the standard to make us better individuals. So I think that the integration of faith is very important to the system as it is now, and we will continue to encourage our students in practicing faith.

The faith factor is important to students' future. When students grow up and find themselves in various roles, as heads of families, for example, the faith factor will be important to their lives in their various roles. As students commit to the faith factor, belief will increase: it is an integral feature of our life style, and is important for survival, if heaven will be our home.

Uniform gives a sense of identity. As we advance in the future, God expects us to have a sense of identity. He expects us to be a peculiar people. And so, just like we, presently, enforce mode of wearing the uniform for identity and prestige of the institution, ordained of God, we expect that these ideas will hold firm in the future. The colors symbolize certain elements. As students grow older, they have a form of identity. Certain core values indicate who we are, and for what we stand. Once we practice our identity, we will be recognized as a people of core values, called to tell others about Jesus and His second coming.

These programs perform an important role within the lives of students and teachers: they emphasize our identity and destination. They reinforce identity as a Seventh-day Adventist Christian who looks forward to the second coming of Christ. In looking forward to the second Coming of Christ, I will do all I can to help others know there is a Savior. God once made a perfect world and sin has distorted perfection, but even in imperfection, I can live above sin, complaints, and distress within Christ. In future, these programs can help us accomplish these goals.

Individuals can be helped to see God is love and compassion. He wants only to save us and will do all that he can to fulfil his purpose. Students who participate in these programs receive a sense of joy and accomplishment. They engage in a program of service. They interact with persons whom they know and do not know. When they express the degree to which they have been blessed by the various presentations, students feel rewarded. Intellectually, students are challenged to research and understand topics that become meaningful and practical to them. They must investigate the degree to which these research topics can be made pertinent to improving their lifestyle (Principal, pp. 5 - 8).

The principal's descriptions of students' engagement in service learning and their experience emphasizes the meaning of character education in this school: projecting long term and short term goals through celebration of rituals that teach human nobility and the source of his / her superior endowments. Short term goals may celebrate the family structure while long term goals celebrate heritage of beliefs and knowledge well preserved through time. Service learning produce emotional border crossing revealed in fullness of joy. Students experience consciousness of moral poverty beyond their social boundaries and engaged in action for change.

Character education means understanding the need for goal adjustment to standard measurement of character: love, self-denial, and service. Pursuit of character education adjusts reality of character growth to the ideal of the divine instructor, and invites inquiry into life's purpose and experience.

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Such inquiry discovers, therefore, divine value of humanity: nobility of purpose, coexistence with humans, as well as adjustment of human character to that of the advanced divine instructor. Individuals learn the value of right choices in relationships: self-improvement and achievement of divinely designed objectives. Such decision-making projects modelling core values that address role reversal for purpose fulfilment. From inductive reasoning concerning behavior, character education appeals to the senses. In evaluation of behavior, the senses become exercised in replaying meaning and mirroring sights and sounds. Inquiry evokes responses to reality of action and motivates brain and heart in self- evaluation and decision-making that contrasts reality and ideal for recognition of need: replacement of negative acquired tendencies with increased positive practices.

The principal's descriptions continue:

The world needs much love. An example is one of our visits to Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands. We conducted services within the church in the morning and in the evening we visited the community, knocking on doors, praying, and distributing literature. We permitted students to give their testimonies. The activity was a blessing. Persons without knowledge of the standard of character had an opportunity to hear about Him, whether through song, or the spoken word. This is what we need to do as persons who are looking forward to Jesus' advent. We should not be shy about the light of Jesus' love. We need to combat the reality of darkness. It is so simple to hear indecent language or profanities that do not develop minds intellectually. It is time we

engage minds in discussion and reasoning about Jesus' advent. (Administrator, p.9).

Given the administrator's descriptions of faith, love, and expectations of character education for the future, the researcher infers that character education means practicing faith and love. Individuals' assurance of transcendent omniscience holds that Jesus, the divine standard transcends reality of failure to make achievement of productivity possible. Such productivity gives birth to courage, leadership, achievement of increased proximity to the divine advanced instructor, as well as, the individual's acknowledgment of his / her divinely ordained purpose. Growth in relationships represents purposeful character education narrowing the gap between the individual and the divinely appointed instructor who aids problem solving in human relationships and in human dilemma of uncertainty and continuity. In moments of survival, character education exhibits faith when experiences test the individual's belief system. In such human experiences faith becomes the individual's identity as the dress code of the institution. Individuals, who respect enforcement of the uniform code and buy into reasons for wearing the uniform, view purpose through the lens of discipline and hear projections of image improvement for the future. Thus, individuals reject failure in acceptance of success as faith underscored by love motivates belief in the aid of the standard in knowledge acquisition, emotional stability, physical health, and social identity. Character education, then, teaches a lifestyle of faith and hope in fulfilment of purpose and identity. Engaging in such goal achievement, individuals view fulfilment of purpose and identity in faith induced works of service that are achievement directed in performance of the will of the divine advanced instructor. Participants hear moral

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literacy in the language of the Biblical framework so that their identity transcends the mundane realities that deny ethereal origin and linear existence. Educators' and students' interaction with the community becomes a means of character education assessment that attests to the effect of the program on students, community, educators, as well as, the educational milieu. Moral literacy, therefore, underscores a lifestyle of core values that elevates individuals' consciousness from the common and mundane to healthy, spirited character in divine presence.

Thematic Findings

Ten themes emerged after studying the data: discipline, freedom of will, problem-solving, respect of God, humans and Nature, courage, faith and prayer, renewal, integrating faith and learning, integrity, and ownership of values. Each theme will be discussed in sequence.

Theme 1 - Discipline

Discipline functions at four possible levels of training: within the home landscape, among teachers and administration, and among teachers, administration and students, as well as within the individual's personal domain in cultivating relationships between self and society. Within the home, past-lived experiences of character education, according to participants, is the discipline of literacy through daily morning and evening devotions in the family setting when parents engage minds in contemplation on character building narratives of the Bible, and teach emulating the standard of character. Such discipline prepares for the recurring cycle of work and rest, a discipline of worship as renewal according to a Christian Biblical framework:

At home I was taught to sit and listen, and avoid unnecessary discussion,

especially in family worship. First, the experiences at home began with family

worship. It was an integral part of family. You were encouraged to do your

own personal, private devotion, and from there the family was called together. I

must add that even though my father was not so much into that, Mom was very

instrumental in ensuring that we had family worship (Discipline, p. 1).

Furthermore, such discipline at home facilitates participants' transfer to settings of

public worship with other students or families. One student agrees: "My parents used

to discipline me at home, so when I go out, I know how to behave" (Discipline, p. 1).

In these settings, applied discipline means participants' sitting, listening, avoiding

distractions, or the unfulfilled promise of licks, communicated in a grimace:

My parents always tried to discipline us, even though discipline never really

worked. Fighting with my siblings was the order at home. Being obstinate, I

did what I desired and never really listened. I allowed my desires to dictate my

behaviour. As an only child, I listened; sometimes, I even misbehaved. At

home my character was different; I never really listened to my parents

(Discipline, p. 2).

The preceding description of discipline offers three perceptions of discipline:

stubbornness, scorn, and selfishness. More importantly, discipline is learning to think

inductively. An unfulfilled promise to discipline gives the individual who is the object

of discipline permission to evaluate the strength of the educator. The English teacher

concurs that thinking is indeed an end result of discipline as she reflects: "I did not

receive much punishment, per se, but I was given a reason for every act I was asked to

perform. Today, I appreciate the practice of having been given a reason for obedience"

(Discipline, p. 2). Beyond the curtailment of disruptive activity, such forms of

discipline enhance participants' attention span, and elicit individuals' ability to weigh

consequences as well as the worth of goal achievement in cooperation with character

education so that these individuals can transfer similar conduct to societal settings. In

such settings, participants share in the ritual of public worship as in private worship and

model conduct learned and practiced at home in these varied landscapes. Applied

discipline, therefore, teaches appropriate socialization that prepares participants either

for the freedom to interact with others or the art of patience to observe appropriate

acculturation within an atmosphere of uncertainty. Further, applied discipline

encourages inductive thinking, a verbal stimulus that has a lasting effect beyond the

teaching and learning environment.   Thus, discipline means rest from the routine of

accustomed activity to renew moral, social, intellectual, and academic skills.

Participants exhibit this form of discipline in varied interactions: teachers and

administration, and students' interaction with administration, as well as, students' in

interaction with teachers.

On one hand, among teachers and administration, discipline is pause for

reassurance of comfort that renews the deferred hope for moral strength within the

classroom milieu. Such discipline pauses to make inquiry into fulfilment of past

planning. On the other hand, discipline among students, teachers, and administration

projects two types of rests: a blend of social and academic rest and simply academic or

intellectual rest: refinement of academic skills while strengthening the understanding of

curricula through practice of required curricula skills using participants' abilities.

Secondly, a simple pause for social interaction with administration concerning life's issues gives relief from academic demands for participants' achievement of excellence:

> I spent time listening to the student's concerns, praying with her, talking with her, encouraging her to do her best; I requested that her father come in. He came in. The occasion was very sad because Dad felt that he could do nothing. He was ready to send her overseas to someone else. Teachers come in too; they have certain requests and concerns. They have their personal issues with management in the classroom; I look on their faces and I can see that they are stressed out: They say that as the principal, I need to address issues so that they can be comfortable; so the day is very overwhelming and demanding at times (Discipline p. 5)

Discipline among administration, teachers, and students becomes intense when each entity, focusing on the common objective, educating for character, becomes a participant in character education. The metaphor of rest then becomes an overarching theme to maintain balance within the setting in applying discipline. The teacher concurs in the following:

> Just in case there is a disruption in any of my classes, the first approach is individual prayer. I am always afraid of adding stress upon a student who may have been stressed at home. First in the morning when they come fresh to me, it may be that they had a quarrel with a sibling. I always take that into consideration. To a passer-by, it may seem as if I am overlooking a deficiency, but I handle such a situation differently. Once I give an assignment, I take that individual outside and speak with him or her. "Do you wish to tell me your

reason for doing such and such?" I ask questions first. If it is that they are genuine, (you may be surprise) I remember students just breaking into tears: when I see a young man crying, it says something. Men are not known to cry easily. If I have a non-contact session following, I may ask the assigned teacher an excuse for the student so that I may speak with the student. If I do not have a non-contact period, I may ask the student whether he or she minds having lunch with me or speaking with me during break (Discipline p. 6).

From process to inquiry to appointment, the object of discipline is to groom individuals for independence, role performance, and acceptance of change in professional expectation. Teaching independent thinking, discipline taps the ability to articulate and project outcomes of circumstances contrary to popular decisions. Then, discipline transcends perceived cognitive inability to harness academic skills beyond expectation. Success previously perceived as questionable, becomes a reality because ownership of established goals is a corporate product wherein discipline collaborates with practice to consciously reflect quality. As a result entities cooperate: learner, teacher, and administrator respect discipline as it translates into effort, encouragement, compassion, and socialization that show mind and heart engaged in equity of purpose: growth of character in preparation for wholeness of achievement.

Theme 2 - Freedom of Will

Character education is a refiner, freeing the will to make informed decisions that reveal thought processes through which the independent will receives exercise. In response to description of character within varied settings, students' roles vary: from misguided independence to independent thinking; from indifference to academic and

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moral commitment; from learner to teacher, from teacher to administrator; decision-making includes ownership of morality: each shows exercise of will:

> My character at home was different from my character outside (or within society). When I was at home, you saw my true identity. I never listened to my parents. I loved to go on the streets and have fun: at a friend's house, to the park, or just skipping rope. This school has helped me to deal better with certain situations. If I see friends doing wrong, though I may want to do the same, I stop and think: 'That's not right, so I should not do it.' I have been able to make positive decisions such as completing my school work, having personal devotions, and choosing friends wisely. I am happy that my parents took the time for character development with me and guided me into a positive direction. Now, I volunteer to serve in church by performing special activities: special music, scripture reading: instead of cutting classes, and not completing homework, I have decided to behave myself and study. I pray to God for help when I am having problems with my sciences, and He helps me. I also try to be an example to my friends. (Freedom of Will, p. 12).

Given the description of progress from misguided independence to independent thinking, character education engages the human will in exercise of moral decision-making. In execution of choices, there is struggle, often internal and external. Participants engage in conflict with the will: either against self or with other humans. This student described graphically engagement of the will in three types of conflict: man against man, man against himself, and man against nature. At the initial stage of refinement, this student's will was in conflict with parental counsel. Freedom of choice

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provided the individual options: in this case, the student could choose between desire

for pleasure and satisfaction or parental counsel of restraint and protection. The

student, however, chose the former and became engaged in the conflict between human

wills: man against man. Freedom and restraint conflict when the individual chooses

action that is contrary to the constraints of discipline. In the textural and structural

description, this participant recognized the destructive pursuit of self will and seized

upon the teachable moments of value orientation. Whether the participant received

reason for parental restraint of action or not, the participant's freedom of will to pursue

its course of action chose between two options: a pleasurable moment and consequences

of long term pain. Where the participant thought about the consequences of long term

pain, the researcher could visualize the maturational process.   The conflict changed to

man against self. At this stage, conflict is peripheral. Alienated from the centre of

action and objectively viewing outcomes, character education objectively divorces self

from the action and weighs the nature of choices. At this juncture the will is free to

weigh the quality of decision-making and the virtue to be derived from choosing the

decision of the independent will. Character education exercises free will in decision-

making. The administrator, also, acknowledges being in the midst of a similar conflict

in perceiving his role as model of the standard:

> In all of these activities, I have to be careful to direct my attention to the real
>
> reason that I am here. We have to help our students to bridge that gap, to
>
> understand that we need a relationship with Christ. Character education,
>
> Adventist Christian education is all about helping me to be more like Jesus, to
>
> be transformed; so what I do is that I find myself taking a break: taking a walk

somewhere off campus: not too far away where I can really reflect on the real

reason that I am here. Sometimes, I take a book; I love singing: (I can't sing,

but sometimes, I would go to the internet and listen for a period of five to ten

minutes to some soothing music, and it puts me at ease after listening to all these

troublesome conflicts that are going on at school. It helps me to see that I,

myself, must model what I preach. Teachers, themselves, should be what they

instruct their students to be, Christ like, respectful, loving. (Freedom of Will, p.

3).

In expression of freedom of will, the administrator, also, articulates this conflict, and

engages in evaluating the scope of his purpose and planning strategies for achieving the

institution's highest objective. Thus, he chooses to model. Furthermore in reflecting on

his achievement of the duty, he outlines process as well as choice that engaged free will

to serve.

Teachers, too, express their experience of executing this freedom of will:

During my time in high school, I've always thought of becoming an engineer.

And, somehow, my mind changed. I didn't do that well in the sciences. I

thought about becoming an environmentalist, because of my love for geography,

however, I decided to enter university. It was not Adventist University. It was

secular, and in my application, I applied for undergrad in geography, and when I

got through, some prerequisites were for me to attend classes on Saturday, and I

was praying about having to make that decision. The whole decision was that I

would not be going to classes on Sabbaths. For geography, there would be a lot

of field trips on Sabbaths; so the next best thing was, I decided to study history.

(Freedom of Will, pp. 1 - 2).

Nurturing independent thinking, character education practices self-renewal, service, and the discipline of labour and rest. Character education exercises a posture of caring for peers whose will is yet, contrary to rest in the standard of character. In nurturing moral renewal, service, as well as, application of the mind to the discipline of study, character education ensures success. Reflecting on intergenerational training that offered solutions to moral deficiencies and strengthened character, character education chooses continuity and transmission of values for constructive character development. Thus, participants view service as a valuable gift through which the giver becomes a recipient. In giving service, learning occurs and time cultivates the mind into yielding opportunities for transmission when the learner becomes a teacher. In such moments participants choose the independence that unconventional discipline yields. For example, among class attendance, change of professional preference, or renewal in worship, participants choose renewal on the day prescribed for worship and rest first, with change of professional choice being second place. Thus, this participant perceived class attendance on the day prescribed for rest and worship as a conflict that required choice. In fact, exercising freedom of will in various stages exposes the mind to teaching strategies that reveal learning outcomes which stimulate thought, enhance achievement, and develop character.   Upon reflection, participants, facing failure, engaged freedom of will to choose the discipline of private devotion and engagement of will to heighten academic performance. Students, who were previously experiencing failure, reported academic gains.

Theme 3 - Problem-solving Skills

Character education teaches problem solving strategies. Such strategies emerge through role reversals, attitudinal change, modes of thinking, and instruction such as figurative language, inductive and deductive reasoning. As participants reflected on evolution of character from their lived experiences, they identified the manner in which they resolved problems. In these instances of problem solving the researcher visualized the manner in which essence of the phenomenon of character education emerged. Participants described instances of problem solving in responses to the question, what qualities of character have developed as a result of the lived experiences of character education within the Biblical framework setting?

> My faith has increased a bit because there were times when normally I was told to do something at church, I would want to be told in advance, because if I am told at the last minute, I am scared, and I don't want to do it, and I refuse to do it. Now, I do not mind performing at the last minute. I sometimes go and take a leap of faith and do it. Those leaps of faith moments! On Path Finders' Day, I had to solve a problem. The entire Guides' class of 12 had an appointment to perform the presentation, "Leaps of Faith." I realized that I was alone, when I stood on the stage. There, I stood praying and thinking: "God, please help me take this leap of faith; help me to get this done alone on this pulpit." The program went very well; I grew closer to Christ because of the program. The audience worked along with me. I gained more courage, though no human stood with me. Bravery became another of my character traits. My faith increased (Problem-solving Skills, p. 2).

Based upon the foregoing description of problem-solving strategy, character education draws upon faith. Fear relies upon faith to extricate self from precarious situations that leap beyond reality to execute responsibility and strengthen character of others and self. Problem-solving, in such instances, recreates novel approaches to achievement threatened by failure. Then, character education facilitates the responsibilities of various groups who anticipate an ideal outcome. Facilitating strength and renewing energies, character education turns the moment of fear into a metaphor of faith, and responsibility finds the experience of past faith yielding increased faith for future challenges. Students value problem-solving skills in acquisition of respect for humans:

> This school has helped me to develop my character. I have learned to respect others, especially those older than I am. There is an instance of disrespect that I will never forget. I was speaking to my principal and he told me to avoid an unsanitary act, but I did not. Then I told him "I wish he was beneath." He, then, suspended me for disrespect. I did not want to do the task he asked me to do. I learned that there are certain jokes that I cannot make with adults. This school has strengthened my character. I used to be angry with everyone: at home, at school, wherever I went. Now God has taught me greater self-control. Even when I get upset for little things, I think; I calm myself down, and avoid showing anger. I practice compassion and kindness for my sister especially. I think that respect, compassion, and kindness will help me in the future when I get a job... for then, I can't be always angry. In the past, I used to have anger seething within me, but that is now gone (Problem-solving Skills, p. 11).

Turning ludicrous behavior upon its perpetrator as the foregoing description reveals, character education provides reflection time for analysis of insolence. Reflection time provides opportunities for evaluating choice of speech and action as well as transcends actions of others to turn valuing of others' thinking and acceptance into introspection and enlightenment that turns inflation of self-worth into respect of self, others, and their contribution to the greater good of humanity. Further, character education emulates the standard in problem-solving skills. Challenged to nobility, character education models life-style and achievement by dependence and respect for the standard who enlightens students' teachers' and administrator's understanding of self and humanity. Such enlightenment facilitates teaching strategies such as social models of teaching that underlie understanding of academic needs as well as interpersonal relationships within classroom and workplace. Catering for wholeness, character education listens to others' needs, guides and instructs through counselling mediating, and prayer as well as provision of tangible aid deemed needed through the lens of the standard.

Teaching anger management, character education draws upon rationality in problem-solving. Then, problem-solving requires thinking before speaking. In the process of thinking, scenarios of choices flash upon the consciousness, and time mediates tone, mood, speech, and choice of action into more appropriate decision-making in which character education subdues self into a more controlled demeanor of reflective analysis that compares past and present to evaluate progress. Problem-solving, then, evaluates progress of anger management incrementally: from diminishing to listening more, from yielding to others' reasoning to analysis of personal views.

Character education facilitates what seems at first difficult with steps of progress: prayer, wise choice of friends, positive thinking, moral literacy, and action laid upon the foundation of the study of the standard and prayer.

Teachers also view problem-solving skills through both conventional as well as unconventional lens. For example, modeling, dependence on divine aid, and renewal of mind through study of the Bible are problem-solving strategies used in this setting.

Being a teacher of character education at the Seventh-day Adventist School is a great task. First, the educator must realize that he or she cannot accomplish the task single handed, but must rely on God. He or she cannot go into the class just to fill students with content from the syllabus. First, the educator must acknowledge need of the Holy Spirit to help to guide the young minds. … Character education caters for the whole individual; so emotionally, students are able to deal with different problems that they encounter in society. Also, they are able to deal with those depressing problems with classmates and avoid letting emotions get in the way of reason. Once they are able to interact with others socially, though relationships may become strained, they will be able to resolve problems better. At the end of the day, rash decisions and behaviors would be minimized: thus, minimizing problems that develop when students behave irrationally. ... Educators try to use alternate approaches in conflict resolution. Prayer is so very important. By praying with students experiencing different traumatic situations, counseling and mediating work will decrease some of their problems that may occur. Overall, once the character is developed by using the example of the Master Teacher who reached out to the

needs of individuals, then these students will be able to function better within the society.

If I want males and females to socialize correctly, for example, a boy and a girl desiring to express their friendship correctly, I would frown upon two of them being in a corner looking suspicious. I would encourage them to speak to each other appropriately and avoid projecting the image of suspicion. They will feel guiltless with their respect intact. If anyone passes by, no one will turn an eye to say, "Oh that does not look good!" I have to make sure that even at school my relationship with teachers is not unbecoming. In this setting, I have to model the character that I want students to have and that God wants me to have for He is the developer of all characters.

The educator stands as a powerful witness in his or her role before the student. In renewing and refreshing, one can look to the Bible. For example, Romans 12: 1, states: "Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable will of the Lord." … Acknowledging the Lord's presence, and focusing on Jesus in quiet introspective moments through reading from His word, the educator can renew. Jesus is our example of character. He was in the world. He faced the same things that we experience now: the difference between now and then is, technological development. Thus, parents, teachers, and principals should model the right character for children to emulate.

Temperance is so important in character development. Adequate rest, good nutrition, sunshine, and fresh air enhance energy by renewing cells.

Intemperance will have a negative impact. A poor diet will result in a diseased body. Obesity is one result of intemperance. We have power of choice and are made with a free will. Individuals choose to eat unhealthily; then they sue the companies from which they purchase unhealthy foods. Consumers should make the choice to eat healthy foods. Conduct also reflects temperance: the behavior portrayed will affect the moral powers: to reason, to think, and to act right.

(Problem-solving Skills, p. 1 - 5)

Character education cultivates respectful relationships within standard measurement. Such acceptance, sustained through moral literacy finds freshness in positive renewal of mind and consciousness of divine presence, power, and promises as well as in Nature while savouring unity in diversity. Furthermore, character education finds grace in the standard to maintain respectful relationships especially when encountering difficult experiences. Problem-solving skills, then, anchor the mind in quiet breaks that signify enhancement of physical rest. Such renewal motivates sharing the principles of conduct: temperance, love, purpose, and origin with other consumers of character education. These principles, exercised in choice, enhance ability to think and reason within the constraints of respectful love and heightened problem-solving.

Theme 4 - Respect of God, Humans, and Nature

Respect of God, humans, and Nature was the fourth emergent theme from the lived experiences of character education. Character education teaches respect of the Creator, humans, and Nature in all landscapes so that individuals transfer this principle suitably. Parents teach this principle in routine discipline of daily devotion where heart and mind practice for transfer:

My parents taught me to sit and listen and not to distract anyone at church. At
home, the training was the same, my parents taught me. My parents practiced a
good character around me. Every Sabbath I learned about God at church. After
Sabbath lunch, my parents used to take me for nature walks where they showed
me God's works in nature. I learned to respect nature and the Creator of Nature.
Also, at church during the sermon, I used to sit at the back, talking with my
friends, but now I encourage my friends to listen to the Pastor's message. This
will help me in future to make better decisions for God. This change means my
character is being shaped in a positive way, and I am being helped to grow
positively. Now, when I sit with my friends, and they are talking, I tell them to
cease and listen to the Pastor (Abbey, p.13)

Character education teaches respect of God as honouring God's presence and reverence
for His power and His word. When, in the worship setting, the mode of listening is
preferred, character education facilitates respect. Then, instead of distraction, respect of
divine presence and equity of human need to experience renewal receives preference.
Self becomes secondary and the trajectory of divine energy through which mind and
heart pass yields moral, physical, intellectual and social vigor. Similarly, teachers and
administrators agree with three avenues to respect of God, humans, and Nature: (1)
interaction with these instructors heightened through early education in good literature,
namely, the Bible; (2) shared narratives on others' lifestyles of inequity that stimulated
outreach and a desire for social capital adjustment; and (3) exercise in Nature.
Furthermore, both teachers and administrators emphasize development of self-respect
engendered by adult interest in students' skill refinement. Such respect is not merely

reciprocal, but also, reproductive, for it gives birth to positive gains as well as the pursuit of future goals.

Through the lens of love, teachers recall purposeful education in speech, and listening skills.   By contrast, however, teachers perceive that respect heightens when reasoning urges a directive into action and the individual senses true worth. Thus, teachers do value respect taught through inductive reasoning that solicits the individual's faculties in production of decision-making and teaches the individual his / her worth as well as the value of humans from the Creator's hand. Thus, the administrator's valuing of the aged, family, and community through provision of opportunities for students to engage in service learning and teachers' as well as administrator's listening to students' sharing experiences of border crossing, personalizing, and connecting are inclusive of respect for Creator, humans, and Nature:

> The world needs lots of love. The more we practice and show love, the better our communities will be. There will be less crime and more camaraderie. We wish to inculcate these concepts in our students for the community. Intellectually, there are several theories today, but we believe the answer is before us: prayer and a relationship with Christ. As our students engage their peers in these discussions as well as practice these traits, the community will be a better place. Even as we go out and engage, in conversations we will be able to return to the school to plan programs and strategize for effectively dealing with hurting people within the community. An example is one of our visits to Virgin Gorda. We conducted services within the church in the morning and in the evening, we visited the community, knocking on doors, praying, and

distributing literature. We permitted students to give account of their experiences. The activity was a blessing. Persons without knowledge of Jesus had an opportunity to hear about Jesus, whether through song, or the spoken word. This is what we need to do as persons who are looking forward to Jesus' second coming. We should not be shy about the message of Jesus' love. We need to beat back the forces of darkness. It is so simple to hear indecent language or profanities that do not build minds intellectually. It is time we engage minds in discussion about Jesus' coming (Respect, p. 9).

Respect, as a virtue, requires the individual's exercise of freedom in practice: inconsistencies occur when the individual lacks consciousness of immaturity. As character education facilitates mental growth through varying opportunities for practice, respect increases. Visual and audible interactions with humans, nature, its creatures, and Creator provide such opportunities. In permission of choice, individuals exemplify respect of self and others, while in practice of choice, love of self, God, and humans lay at the foundation of the individual's decision to practice respect. Where the ratio of respect differs in value from one individual to another, consciousness of self- worth is in a state of flux and self-respect seems in crisis. On the other hand, when respect ranges from less than to greater than, or equal to, the individual shows an emerging maturity of self-respect. Love of self, humans, and God underscores respect.

Teachers and administrator perceive respect as a cultivated experience: from bridging the intergenerational divide to grooming the mind through literacy. Here, two teachers describe experiences in which respect was cultivated:

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I could tell Bible stories which totally moved me. I used to love to hear mission stories at church about persons from many countries in the world and how they were taught things that they did not know. Even though not all of them were youth, I have always had a love for mission stories; as a result, this opportunity came, and I took it.

Originally, I grew up in the church, and I saw myself as a person who should enter into a leadership role. From early, I participated in various aspects of the church: for example, Sabbath School, and I was one person who was always called upon to share Bible texts, to sing songs, and speak about children in other countries of the world. From that time, I think that I was being groomed for a purpose (Respect, p. 1).

From teachers' descriptions respect is a cultivated experience. Emerging from within, respect results from a relationship of valuing and love. According to these teachers, adults who take interest in youths' development nurture love and skill refinement that flash dreams of goals upon youths' consciousness. These experiences of love and skill refinement engender awe when a youth knows he/she is the object of the adult's interest. In this case, adults' valuing becomes a bridge closing the divide between youth and aged. From these positive images of teachers' past relationships of love and skill refinement, respect can be deduced as being a cultivated experience that produces feelings of comfort and provides certainty for future expectations.

On the other hand, the administrator's descriptions show not only respect as a cultivated experience, but also, respect as being habitual and transferable to various settings, such as society, school, and friends. In his descriptions of respect, the concepts

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of teaching and learning lay at the core. Parents are teachers of character education

first. As active agents, conceptualizing respectful behavior, and its appropriateness in

time and space, parents teach listening and speaking skills as well as appropriate

grooming within the standard of the institutional dress code. The following description

confirms the administrator's expectation of reciprocal, respectful conduct practiced

among teachers and students as well as among teachers as peers:

> When students enroll in the school, we are expecting them to understand
>
> that God loves them. Teachers should exhibit this love in relationships with the
>
> students: assisting them in school work, spending time becoming acquainted
>
> with students' likes and dislikes, helping them to achieve their professional
>
> goals, as well as aiding their cultivation of a close relationship with their Lord
>
> and Savior Jesus Christ.   As respect relates to our teachers and staff members,
>
> we expect that our teachers should be kind and respectful toward each other. In
>
> turn, we expect that students should be kind and respectful toward each other. If
>
> disagreements arise, we expect that such disagreements will not hinder us from
>
> operating professionally and in amicable relationships. We see Jesus as our
>
> model; we encourage teachers to do as Jesus did. If there are disagreements, we
>
> go to each other and discuss these disagreements as well as, the situations.
>
> Students, too, should resolve their disagreements peacefully; we expect that
>
> students will examine causes of their disagreements and come up with solutions
>
> that are amicable to both parties concerned.
>
> Ethical codes for this setting are found in the Bible. We encourage students'
>
> understanding of the moral law: that the first four commandments show

relationship to God and the next six emphasize our relationship to our

fellowmen.

At home, individuals learn the worth of listening to content and exercising their natural

God given sensibilities with respect of humans' rights to similar privileges.

Additionally, character education teaches the value of silence or reverence for the

Creator as an integral feature of respect for the individual's right to listen and learn or

simply contribute constructively to one's self-worth. Respect of God and humans

requires consistent transfer of learning across landscapes.   Without transfer, individuals

experience loss: disrespect engenders personal, social, and academic loss that sums up

in character deficiency. Dress often projects such gain or loss. Administrator and

teachers agree that such gain or loss mirrors character education in degree of discipline

and respect. The administrator views grooming through the lens of respect as a

cultivated experience when he emphasizes:

> As the word "uniform", suggests special apparel that identifies an institution, by
>
> our uniform, we are saying to students, "You are supposed to wear your uniform
>
> neatly and by doing so, you are developing character."
>
> Students understand that dressing appropriately puts them in the right frame of
>
> mind. Uniform identifies the school." So, uniform helps us here at the school to
>
> affect discipline.   When young males attend school daily in a tie and wear it
>
> appropriately, they learn discipline. Uniform helps to refer the student to the
>
> Bible and God's standard: the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:
>
> 8). We are teaching our students that there are principles that the school holds
>
> dear, and those principles do not change based on circumstances.

Uniform is about equity in grooming, not about fashion. Wearing the

uniform teaches discipline and provides for all of our students a sense of social

equity. Children are from different socio-economic backgrounds, and in a

uniform, no one can tell the difference between rich, middle class, or poor. A

uniform maintains social balance and teaches respect and cleanliness. Students

should respect themselves, the uniform, and the standard way in which it should

be worn.

Jesus has certain standards. A uniform should be worn neatly to teach

students discipline. The uniform represents discipline and respect and we want

students to identify with the school and its standards. (Respect pp. 3 - 5)

Respect is a cultivated experience that grooming mirrors. The administrator

describes this experience in cooperation with the institutional uniform code. Students

who groom neatly signal respect of themselves, as well as respect of the entities

requiring such cooperation. As a result, parents are responsible for facilitating such

respect. Character education teaches, therefore, that respect for God is integral to respect

for humans created in God's image. Thus, consistency in instruction becomes the

planned mode of learning respect. Provision of opportunities for respect in varied

settings taps repetition, a learning strategy that refines cognitive processes in

conceptualization of respect and exhibition of choice.

Theme 5 - Courage

Courage may be physical or moral. Courage is exercising boldness to withstand

verbal or physical injustices perpetrated against the weak and having the fearlessness to

stand for honesty and integrity even though society disapproves. Using incidences that

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defined courage through the lenses of action and decision-making as a result of character education, participants illustrated courage. The following theme cluster reveals incidences of courage in which academic deficiencies became successes as students chose courage in moral, social, and academic decision-making:

A specific situation of courage was my decision not to follow friends. Once my friends were cutting class, and I decided that I was going to attend class. Certain programs of the school have taught me about God and have helped me to develop a closer relationship with God. Because of parental training, I have the boldness to make positive decisions by completing my school work, engaging in personal devotions and choosing friends who will influence me in character building decisions. Instead of skipping class, I worked and studied; instead of talking with friends at church, I tell them now, 'You need to listen to the Pastor.' Courage has become one of my qualities of character.

When I realized that I was being promoted to Grade 12, I learned that my Grade Point Average was low and that I should raise my GPA. I decided that I needed to practice private devotions and study harder. This decision required courage to get out of bed when everyone else was asleep. Now my GPA is at a 7.89. I am grateful to God for the change. That is a "B." The highest GPA is 9.00. In church, when I am asked to serve in an office, (whether as church clerk, or, as communication secretary) I accept without really thinking about it. I know God will enable me. Such responsibilities will aid me in future. I am no longer a shy person. I have become outspoken among my peers and I am also able to help my classmates when they have need. Whenever I am given a task,

and I feel shy about taking it, I should ask the Holy Spirit to take away the fear. I would like to have courage to stand for God and do His work.

Socially, I am not an eloquent speaker. I have the voice, but I don't have the courage for speaking. Courage is one quality that I need to develop. I speak well around my peers. Speaking around them is not really a problem. If they ask me a question about a subject that I know, I would explain the content to them. That is just I. I can't stand before an audience and speak just like that. I don't have the courage. I always pray to God for help to overcome the fear. My character has evolved through the years. In the past, I used to get into fights. Now, I can't remember the last time I got into a fight. In the past, there were situations of injustice when some students would abuse my mother. I used to become physical with them in her defence, but now I would not jump at them if they curse my mother (Courage, p. 5)

From these incidences of courage, the researcher has deduced the significance of courage as the fifth theme in this study of the perceptions of character education. Character education teaches courage as evidence of performance when negligence threatens to steal achievement. Then moments of uncertainty tap moral and physical courage to stand alone and test the will to achieve against the promise and power of divine presence. Alone, character education analyses the moment's demand. Judging the meaning of the occasion to self and others, character education facilitates bold decision-making that becomes transformational. Then, analysis of the experience of isolation yields understanding of the value of both the moment and the desired outcome. As a result, character education purposes to test the moment of uncertainty against the

consciousness of divine promise of His on-going presence and power. Such testing

ascertains courage of performance that elicits support and motivates the exercise of

character education in zeal that transforms doubt and fear into intrinsic and purposeful

change. Transaction between visual and mental energies yields increased courage as the

exercise of reason, sight, and imagination produces endorphins that enhance the

individual's sense of wellbeing. Courage, therefore, sublimates the socially

unacceptable impulses of fear into constructive achievement of a singular heroic

performance.   Courage, then, is the key that frees the mind from the prison of peer

pressure to make otherwise virtuous choices that aid personal decision-making though it

may stand contrary to popular wills. Interfacing with independent thinking that conflicts

with peer pressure, moral courage chooses resolution of academic, social, and moral

problems.

Teachers' experiences of moral courage attest to its foundational support of

faith:

I was previously employed in the public system in Jamaica. After a while, I was

out of a job for a number of months and that time was extremely difficult. At

the end of the day, I knew that God would supply everything. He holds the

wealth of the world in His hands. He says, "The earth is the Lord's and the

fullness thereof" (Psalm 24: 1).   There is nothing too hard for Him to do. But,

during that time, there was one who introduced negative thoughts into the

picture at my weakest moment. When I was facing obstacles and difficulties,

evil imaginings crept in:

"Where is the one you believe in? Look at you now, he is not there."

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Growing up and seeing how God had led me thus far, I could not just turn my back on God. I could have sought alternative employment, somehow, but that was not the purpose for my life. I knew that something would come along, but it was just for me to exercise my faith, to be patient, and allow Him to lead and provide everything. On one hand, I have always taught in a secular institution. On the other hand, I've always heard about Adventist institutions, but I had never taught in one before. When I looked at this opportunity that God provided, I decided that I was going to apply. God came through.

There was this particular young man, to whom I taught English. He was known to be very disruptive and the talk of the school. In every sense of the word, he was bad. I had heard about him before I met him. Upon meeting him, (of course, I had always promised myself, "I'm going to know everything about him for myself). I prayed. He was exactly as was described to me. I promised myself that I was not going to be caught up in prior knowledge of him, nor of what I saw. What I saw could also be influenced by prior knowledge. I took him aside almost every day after that first day: I spoke with him. At the end of the year, he was in the mid-80th percentile ranking. My department head demanded that his paper be graded a second time: she could not believe. She said: "Look at his math grade; he must have received help from other students; what right does he have to get such a high grade when students of the higher stream were not touching the 80's.

I said, "Well, I believe it was because of his behavior. The long and short of the story is, the year of my departure, he was graduating. He became head boy of

the school. I am not attributing that to my effort alone, but it looks as if he started coming to his senses and he would tell me, "I did it just for you. I did it just for you." At least somebody got through to him; so I am thinking, if I had just taken the road of the other teachers and the counsellor: everybody gave up on him, but as I said, "I prayed." It would have been odd to pray because it was not that type of school, but I prayed for him too. I asked his mother and everybody to pray for him, and prayer and faith worked. Teachers may have seen the changes, and they started helping, but that's one time, especially English Language, he started following. That is one incident in which character improved from what it was (Courage, pp. 1 - 5)

Character education chooses greater reverence for divine will according to God's word, and promised gift. Such reverence induces further study through personal and private devotion that yields gains in academic success and approximation of the standard of character. Gains, associated with inquiry and conflict, perceive character education as precursor of moral decision-making. Introspectively, character education teaches the value of quality friendships, positive decision-making, respect for leadership and places of worship, as well as service through the lens of practice. Practice and moral knowledge acquisition become compatible with constructive character building and stir desire for greater courage to achieve closer proximity to the standard. The individual chooses service exemplified in self-denial and motivated by faith. Such service performs contrary to popular will that seeks worth in financial gain and publicity; instead, the individual roots service in sacrifice and love as guiding principles. Character education, therefore, teaches service underscored by patience to invite divine intervention in the

resolution of conflict and difficult experiences that are likewise precursors to character growth. At such moments, character education affirms expectation of fairness, equity, and justice. Even in experiences that seem to contrast possibility with impossibility, character education ascertains certainty in life's purpose. Though the positive outcome may be deferred, character education teaches the courage to be patient because emotions reproduce after their kind and at similar level of mental maturity. Hence, character education not only facilitates mental development, but also motivates academic performance. Thus change becomes evident: the taciturn individual is motivated to achieve proficiency and confidence in public speaking; the inattentive student acquires boldness to call peers into greater respect for self, leadership, and God's presence. The student with low academic achievement labors to achieve a higher grade point average. Finally, moral courage, in conflict with physical courage views moral illiteracy through the lens of divine will that invites the individual to independent decision-making for positive social, academic, and moral achievement. The gift of faith is integral to courage.

Theme 6 - Faith and Prayer

Faith and prayer is another underlying theme of character education in this setting. Together, faith and prayer are participants' allies in character education:

My faith has increased because there were times when I would be told to do something at church. I wanted to be told in advance, because if I was told at the last minute, I would be afraid; I did not want to do it, and I refused to cooperate. Now, I do not mind performing at the last minute. Those leaps of faith moments! Wow! I only started using that expression, "leaps of faith moments" on

Pathfinders' Day when I had to perform. The performance should have included the entire Guides' class, but I stood alone. Nobody wanted to help me and ironically, the theme was "Leaps of Faith." There, I stood praying and thinking: "God, please help me take this leap of faith; help me to get this done alone on this pulpit." Faith is a really good gift to have. Faith believes that something extra-ordinary will happen. Sometimes God provides in ways that we do not expect; so, we need to have faith. Having a good character is not impossible, but sometimes achieving it is can be difficult. It can be possible: first pray and ask God to help you develop a good character; then, think positively, and study more God's Word. You would continuously have a good character within you. For example, once I found myself following friends. I felt that I was making the wrong choices and God did not want that for me; so, I decided to do what I knew was best. I showed a good character, until the friends who were practising the wrong actions decided to follow my example. Third, pray for others: developing a good character can be easy. I pray to God for help when I am having problems with my sciences, and He helps me. I also try to be an example to my friends. Since coming to this institution, I have learned a great deal. I just used to perform the normal routine of my parents. First, they wake up, and pray; then, they pray with us in family worship. They pray before they eat. Now, I pray more on a regular basis. Bad times, good times, just when nothing is happening; I use those times to reflect on God and talk to Him. Praying has brought me closer to Christ; I guess, it has also better developed my character (Faith and Prayer, p. 2 – 3).

Character education practices faith and invokes prayer that increases confidence in divine presence, promise, and power. Furthermore, prayer stimulates courage to eliminate doubt. Faith and prayer heighten the individual's sense of protection from failure. Allies against the combative social, moral, and academic forces, faith and prayer motivates effort. In the midst of these forces, participants perceive work as integral to faith and prayer in pursuit of excellence; so, in harmony with faith and prayer, performance becomes another underlying factor of character education. Through faith and prayer, character education teaches facilitation of problem-solving in the midst of the social, moral, and academic forces that militate against individuals' achievement. Dependence on divine strength and wisdom outside of self assures the individual of achievement that transcends human strength. Such successes require unity of human and divine wills. Facilitation of this unity means submission of human to divine will.

Teachers' experiences describe their attempt to demonstrate this surrender of wills that unite in action with students' trust:

Especially now, I can exercise freedom to pray more in a Christian education system. Often I am tempted to walk away, but I am in a position, not to give up, but to try. If the individual is angry and apparently not responding in the way that I want him / her to respond, I do my best to subdue my feelings. Sometimes in my class, I close my eyes. Students think that I am praying; sometimes, I am just talking to myself. Most times I am really talking to God. Closing my eyes shut out sight from the problem. Sometimes I am praying to God, but that's how I deal with some problems. Prayer works; instead of just being there and

praying silently for them, I let them know that I am praying for them by doing

so out loudly. (Faith and Prayer, p. 5)

Given teachers' description of engagement in faith and prayer, this researcher can

deduce that when character education responds to divine energy, the hand, heart, and

mind engage in work. Performance depends on divine support. Then character

education facilitates analysis of task and engages in completion and achievement in

application of faith and prayer. Confidence generates activity in which hand, mind and

heart blend for social, academic, and moral achievement.   Participants attributed

successes to faith and prayer induced works: responsible performance, success in

content areas, ownership of private devotions, improvement of Grade Point Average,

and role reversal from obdurate failure to inflexible success. In short, participants

worked and trusted divine aid to achieve social, academic, and moral proficiencies.

Human and divine will cooperated for achievement of successes that heightened

intellectual, mental, physical, and social renewal

Theme 7 - Renewal

Character education teaches renewal: physical, academic, social, and spiritual

rest from the rhythm of work and socialization. For the academician, labor has varied

meanings: study, lecture, discussions, test writing, research, and peer pressure:

Activities we engage in at school for character education would be Week of

Prayer, Culture Week, Adventist Heritage Week, Sports Day, as well as, Fasting

and Prayer. There are other programs that influence character. During Week of

Prayer, the administration invites a speaker to address the school on a chosen,

spiritual theme. The theme would be divided in subheadings for each day. We

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learn different lessons about God and even character. That character is the only

treasure we can take to heaven is one lesson I learned. We are not going to

heaven without a good character. That lesson has been etched in my memory,

and has helped me to understand that my character must be good at all times.

During Culture Week, we appreciate different cultures and each other: sharing

foods, we also display a variety of national customs and attire. Adventist

Heritage Week is a week set aside to show-case Seventh-day Adventism and to

teach others about its history. Students dress in various costumes representing

characters of the Reformation, as well as pioneers of the church. Sports Day is a

day of good clean Christian fun, when different houses compete. Each house,

then, is named after a Biblical character. Another activity in which we engage is

Monday mornings' assemblies. We meet together as a school family instead of

as individual classes. Sometimes speakers are invited from the community to

speak concerning character development and the importance of having a good

character. We hear the same message, and together we can apply the counsel to

our lives as the weeks go by. Finally, in our classes, from Tuesday to Friday,

each person is assigned a day on which to conduct worship. Such practice

encourages us to respond to God, become closer to Him, and learn to lead.

When I realized that I was being promoted to Grade 12, I learned that my Grade

Point Average was low and that I should raise my GPA. I decided that I needed

to practice private devotions and study harder (Renewal p. 2 – 12).

Analysis of the students' descriptions of renewal reveals character education as either

an intermittent pause from the regular academic routine or cyclical rest at the end of the

cycle of six days of labor. Strategies of renewal integrated into the curriculum provides

both short term and long term relief on an intermittent basis through execution and

management of character education programs that appeal to head, heart, and hand.

Appealing to the head, character education constructs, plans, and executes the

programs. Demanding of the mind, engagement is labor intense. Labor requires

scheduling of activities through the academic year. This process provides opportunities

for character education to engage the heart in contemplation on life's issues and the far

reaching consequences of outcomes. The mind rests from academic demands. As a

result, character education invites reflection on and examination of past decision-

making in relationship to practice of the standard. Such examination of the individual's

approximation in decision-making to Jesus, the divine standard focuses on purpose and

destiny. Reflection invites inquiry into life's purpose and fulfilment. Then, concern for

others peaks to evoke the shelter of intercession, a model of love packaged in the

unselfish attributes of the standard. Appreciation for others facilitates the joy of

service that extends to the community. Service, then, becomes inclusive. The

community likewise participates in service, while the stakeholders, also, engage in

service learning that reveals the ownership of management, planning, and execution

processes. This process of ownership grooms individuals for leadership as they too

engage in planning, managing, and execution of phases of programming. Individuals

experience moral rest in intercession, appreciation, and service. Teachers and

administration, also, enter into this experience of renewal:

Here, in this institution, before each class the teacher prays to ask the Holy

Spirit to open the minds of the students and to give the right words and the right

teaching method, as he / she shares knowledge with the students. At the same time the teacher depends on divine wisdom to facilitate their learning. Prayer also aids the teacher's desire to be a role model. Just praying before each class, is different. The emphasis has become so much engrained in the students that if the teacher starts the class without praying, students will interrupt the teacher with, "We didn't pray!" There are many children who volunteer to pray.

I never got a chance to attend a Christian School until university because of my location. Being able to attend a Christian institution meant boarding with a family away from home; the Christian schools are not boarding facilities; so, I have never attended a Christian school up until university. However, university was a Christian environment. I was 17 going on 18 when I entered. I found the setting welcoming. My moral character was already shaped for decision-making; so, university influence was complimentary and welcoming of my beliefs and everything that made me who I am (Renewal, pp.14 - 15).

Given teachers' descriptions, the researcher can deduce that character education becomes the curriculum or the curriculum becomes character education, addressing individuals' varied needs: from inter-personal skills development to reconciliation; from understanding moral heritage to appreciation of aesthetic beauty. Such curricula appeal not merely to the individuals' anxiety for resolution, but also, to wholeness of heritage that demands discipline of mind and heart through consciousness of wisdom resident in academics and identity. Even in the art of bodily motion, individuals learn pageantry, culture, origin, and health through character education. Then, character education provides relief from the brain's demand of memory, analysis, and evaluation

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of knowledge to focus upon a concrete moment's achievement when time, captured in the display of personal skills and the glory of victory embellished by aesthetic beauty, creates new flashes of thought that contribute to wholeness of purpose. Then character building strategies for renewal merge process and product into singleness of purpose, development of wholeness of being.

Renewal is also rest from the cycle of peer pressure, failure, and deficiencies. Acquisition of new emotional and intellectual beginnings identifies the stimuli that generate acquired proficiencies. Planned strategically for renewal, program variety generates courage, compassion, and renewed analysis of proximity to the standard: a relationship of pressing into the divine presence. Thus, renewal means emotional rest: fear no longer holds the individual hostage; instead, freedom gives not only a sound mind, love, and empowerment to value the concerns of friends, but also, to value and love self. Furthermore, character education stimulates individuals' interests by introducing program variety that has mind liberating effect: self-consciousness that previously produced deficiencies, facilitating dominance by peer- pressure, converts to independent thinking. Character education, then, teaches the learner to love self and to differentiate between the worth of sacrificing short term goals to achieve long term gains such as academic proficiency. Renewal becomes significant in acquiring academic proficiency and confidence to serve when individuals recognize origin of the source and choose acquisition. At individuals' esteemed recognition and choice of the source of renewal, constructive tendencies emerge: healthy study habits to achieve a higher Grade Point Average as well as confidence to serve unreservedly. Renewal evokes commitment to virtue and praise of health preservation.

Theme 8 - Integrating Faith and Learning

Integrating faith and learning is the eighth emergent theme for analysis of the lived experiences of character education. Another lens through which participants view character education, integrating faith and learning facilitates comprehension and knowledge acquisition. Teaching and learning content through faith infusion add dimensional clarity to knowledge analysis from the perspective of Biblical origins and concepts. Confidence of understanding and hope for mastery of knowledge exudes during such analyses, for teaching methods vary: figurative language is present and levels of thinking vary. Though misapprehension sometimes exists, individuals cling to hope or the faith factor that ascertains acquisition of understanding and proficiency in academic content, fulfilled through the process of work, study, and faith combined for achievement. Students' descriptions of the integration of faith and learning reveal their hope in the face of uncertainty:

> Well, I am studying a course in school that I don't know anything about. I do not understand anything at all, and I have made it this far; so, I will continue praying, and hurrying to get out of high school and out of this course. When I learned that I was registered for this course, I was really stressed. I wondered: "What will I do?" I knew nothing about it. I've learned a few concepts here and there. God will see me through. That course is Principles of Business as in Accounting, and Office Administration (Integrating Faith and Learning, p. 3)

Integration of faith and learning stimulates attitudinal change toward achievement and the vicissitudes of life: from lethargy to faith induced works, from frustration to relief, from deficiency to academic proficiency and service. Where lethargy induces

complaint, integration of faith and learning generates activity, variety, and understanding: consciousness of failure surfaces from the dark recesses of fear to articulate the process of achieving. Where understanding is deficient in a specific discipline or content, the desire, to acquire or transmit knowledge concerning that discipline reaches outside of self to omniscience, the source of knowledge. Students' engagement in continual outreach beyond self becomes a metaphor of service in the process of integrating faith and learning and arouses consciousness of proximity to the divine advanced teacher:

> Whenever I don't understand a certain topic in school, for example, I don't fail Spanish, because I pray, and I study. What should I be doing for God? This question inspires me to do more for Him willingly, and now I feel that I have a better relationship with Him. In the past, I used to decline duties in church; now I accept to do them. I am honoring God when I perform service. Due to that my grades improved; in physics, I was not doing well, and after praying and being more willing to serve, my grades improved drastically. I studied more. I guess that was God's way of saying, "Well done!" (Integration of Faith, p. 9)

Thus character education maintains awareness of Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development:

> I pray to God when I am having problems with my sciences and He helps me. This school has helped to develop my character with God spiritually. I remember when I was in Form 3; our Social Studies teacher infused Biblical principles in the content. "The Bible states:" This introductory statement was her cue. Her strategy helped me to realize that God operates behind the scenes

in the drama of history, and, no matter what, God is in the affairs of humans

(Integrating Faith and Learning, pp. 14, 15).

Analysis of the conscious process of readjustment then identifies the nature of the deficiency, measures progress, while reliance distrusts self and depends on omnipotence. Such dependence rests on the promise, power, and presence of divine aid to yield success that produces a sense of well-being and interest in the need fulfilment of others. Such interest risks self-denial in performance of service that produces endorphins. Thus, character education facilitates self-sacrifice in which desire to serve increases as love of self projects a deeper understanding of human worth. Integration of faith and learning, therefore, means not only interpretation of content through lens of a Biblical perspective that vary teaching approaches, but also studying. Studying the type of content associated with learning shows the objective of faith: to gain academic proficiency with the discipline. Faith couples with work for achievement. This strategy sharpens students' as well as teachers' interpretive skills:

> Now that I am at this school, we are expected to integrate faith and
> learning because we see this as helping to mould character, not just with a
> curriculum that is given to us, for we also use secular curricula, but we have to
> purpose that whatever we are teaching, language and literature, right now, that
> we fuse aspects of faith, into the subject, and see how best students can apply
> aspects of the subject to their lives for moulding character. We use English
> Language daily. It is our first language. For example, if I am teaching story
> writing, I normally look for a story from the Bible. Let them see the tools and
> techniques that I am teaching them to use were used before. I don't take credit

for what I am teaching, but I help students to understand that writers before have used the same techniques, and so far, students have been encouraged to read more. They share with me their appreciation of the stories, and I am hoping that the impact has been made. I don't think that I can compare the behavior, then and now. The environment calls for a calmer ambience. Because of the faith approach that we take, we attribute the quality of the ambience to what is being taught.

Two examples come into my memory. I will share one. I remember introducing the story of Esther from the Bible. There was a non-Christian young lady who at first was very wary of reading the Bible story. I gave her the plot and romance, and she read it. I basically used another version instead of the King James', because students normally complain about the archaic language of the King James Version. This particular young lady was so enthused with the narrative. She could not believe. Being a young lady herself, beautiful, as well, she could relate to the narrative. I encouraged students to put themselves in the place of Esther and ask themselves questions: what will I do? Will I risk my life?

That is how I try to integrate the concept.

In this type of setting, students are not only taught the subject matter in a vacuum, but they are also taught on a wider scale to know that there is a Creator, who puts everything into place; so, instead of speaking merely about the content, for example, in geography, one of my subjects, students are taught more. Instead of teaching merely about volcanoes and the soils, students are taught that

these things did not occur by chance. There is a Supreme Being, who is instrumental in the creation of these natural phenomena that exist within different areas of the world. Integrating faith and learning, helps the teacher to view knowledge from a new perspective. Normally, just looking at different areas within a subject, as I said, geography, or even history, the educator examines the topic from different perspectives, studied.

Integrating faith and learning, helps the teacher to use various lenses or a broader point of view. One example is the case of world wars and genocide, and different phenomena that occur in different countries. World wars show us that human beings fight each other in order to gain possession of more resources from one country to aid another in possible economic development. There is a deeper reason that they are occurring. From the Biblical perspective, there was war in heaven, and Michael and his angels fought against Lucifer, and Michael prevailed. Therefore, in that case, we know that what is happening is because of good and evil.

Students learn that God is the Creator of knowledge and He gives knowledge to men. If they don't gain understanding at first, they will at a later date. We encourage students to pray, study, and believe that all things are possible. Faith is belief that what you least expect can be accomplished with God's help. Let me use a specific example. We have a very unique Form 5 this year. Just Monday, these students decided that they wanted to develop a faith relationship with Christ. Their Homeroom teacher introduced them to the concept of Prayer and Fasting. We have twenty one days of prayer and fasting. They

decided that every Monday from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. they will fast. One of

the students, cried yesterday because she said she was so hungry, but the other

students encouraged her to experience the benefits, not only because they want to

receive good grades, but they want to develop a closer relationship with Christ. So

I think that the integration of faith is very important to the system as it is now, and

we will continue to encourage faith within the lives of our students. We

encourage our students to practice faith and to believe that God is who He said He

is. As students commit to the faith factor, they will believe it is an integral feature

of our life style, and it is important for our survival, if we are to make heaven our

home. (Integration of faith and learning, pp. 3 – 12).

Analysis of teachers' and the administrator's descriptions reveals the emergence

of service as a subtheme of integration of faith and learning as well as of renewal.

Where faith produces a sense of mastery, there is increased faith to accept greater

challenges with the confidence that success is assured. Then, self-love increases with

effort, and emulation of Jesus, the standard of character facilitates service. Successful

achievement motivates service that reveals intrinsic change. Faith replaces the threat of

failure with successful service that yields approximation to the standard. Such proximity

is intrinsic and becomes evident in decision-making motivated by the first principle of

love. Then, self-love grasps decision-making to reveal greater emotional, intellectual,

and social growth. As a result, desire for social equity transcends self-love that reflects

an understanding of human worth. Integration of faith and learning, therefore, measures

achievement by faith motivated service that reveals bold trust in the standard of character

in the face of life's twists and turns.

Theme 9 - Integrity

Integrity is the ninth emergent theme of character education. Character education teaches integrity for informed decision-making. The individual of integrity practices truth, sincerity, authenticity, grace, decency, and honor even when life is threatened. Choice of conduct ranges from disciplined to freedom of choice. The disciplined model shows cooperation with moral principles, while freedom of choice risks choices contrary to moral principles. Emotions fluctuate when individuals experience emotional trauma before understanding the worth of integrity. After the individual understands the choices available to him or her and purposes a lifestyle of constructive character, there is attitudinal change: from seething anger or restlessness to subdued peace, from belligerence to faith, from lying to truth telling, from risking mistakes to purposeful choice of virtue that seeks and accepts forgiveness, from independence to dependence on the standard of character. Students' descriptions of integrity reveal their growth from desiring to achieving or in continual pursuit through prayer, God's invitation:

My parents taught me to sit and listen, and not distract anyone. They always tried to discipline us, even though discipline never really worked. I used to get in many fights with my brothers and sisters. I was stubborn and did what I wanted. I never listened. At home, people saw my true identity. Since coming here I have learned much. Praying has brought me closer to Christ; I guess, it has also better developed my character. I honor God in my daily life.

God has helped my interaction with other people. It is much easier. For example, if I was talking in class and my teacher spoke to me in a hostile tone of

voice, before times, I would respond similarly, and get upset, and all of that. Now, I ignore, and put my head on the desk. My anger has been resolving. It is not fully resolved, but it is getting there. I deal with matters much easier. I would now listen to what others have to say before expressing my thoughts. I would accept the fact that sometimes I am wrong, and they are sometimes right. I would like to become more loving, most definitely. I just desire to have a better relationship with God basically.

My decision to honor God now is a willing decision. I think I am still a work in progress. Well, God is still working on my anger. I am still praying because in the future, my anger could become worse, and I may not like it. When I am angry, I will listen to the Holy Spirit and obey. I will read my Bible a great deal more to see what God says concerning anger. Some qualities that I would like to develop in the future are kindness, deliberation, and careful speech because my choice of words might hurt someone.

Also in school, instead of skipping classes and not doing my work, I have decided to behave myself and study. I go to God when I am having problems with my sciences and He helps me. I also try to live the example of a Christian life before my friends.

The Holy Spirit has also helped me by speaking to me through my conscience. … I have realized that lying really makes no sense. My decisions are honoring God because I am seeking and spending more time with God. … I am more helpful at home and kinder to my siblings. I also have made a vow to

study my school work. I am no longer a shy person. I have become outspoken

among my peers …

To resolve my emotional and intellectual issues, I would have to pray to God,

ask Him to help me, and to pour out His Holy Spirit's anointing on me. I should

ask Him to help me whenever I am given a task, and I feel shy to take it. I

should ask Him to take shyness away (Integrity 1 – 3).

Integrity shows respectful behavior that genuinely esteems God, self, and others.   The

individual's consciousness of divine presence in space and time evokes godly awe that

respects the conscious presence of the standard. Then, integrity chooses modes of

conduct such as quiet confidence, reflection, polite communication, truth, obedience:

moral choices replace the mindless pursuit of peer pressure and antagonism.   Such

practice of integrity encapsulates self as well as others and reveals the first principle of

love: divine love sacrifices self so that emulated love performs for self and others the

example of the standard. Thus, character education facilitates integrity that matures with

decision-making in circumstances that require projection of faith before substance and

evidence of the fulfilled objective.

In circumstances where trust underlies freedom, character education focuses

integrity through crises. Then, trust takes the hand of integrity, evidenced in the spoken

and written word of the standard, to cultivate patience for resolution of crises. In the

process, integrity anchors in hope to exude quiet confidence by reinforcement of the

substance and evidence of fulfilment until the latter becomes tangible.   Then, character

education yields breadth of understanding through which integrity widens the scope of

interaction to evaluate individual and corporate relationships through the lens of

wholeness: a single family of one blood. This perception of integrity is not merely protective of relationships, but also assures individual self-worth and remains conscious of its value. Individuals' sense of well- being, heightened in peer display of integrity, becomes inclusive of corporate wholeness and wellness. This sense of well-being treasures integrity and motivates its increase in the corporate treasury. Consciousness of worth becomes evident through inquiry when conflict threatens to devalue its high estimate. Then, informed decision-making gives birth to intrinsic peace in preservation of integrity that values the execution of character education programming. Character education facilitates such decision-making for fairness, sportsmanship, as well as moral and social relationships. Teachers and administrative reflections, highly value integrity:

Grandma's rule was that she must know wherever I was going and what time I was expected to return. She insisted that I am a girl. In my community, there was a stigma attached to girls who spoke to boys. Such girls were considered "bad." Now she wanted to know because she suffered from high blood pressure and other ailments. My being disobedient caused her heartache; it caused me heartache, also. Her blood pressure went up because I could be anywhere. Even though I was not in the bad part of Jamaica; so, a consequence like that could have been avoided. There were heartaches which led to medical bills. I considered my actions unfair: she was an older lady with ailments; with my guilt (being she was the person who cared for me all of my life) I still remember the incident. Had she died, I would have blamed myself. I told myself that even though she is old and not as sprightly as many of my friends' moms and dads, I should learn to respect persons' wishes and avoid being selfish. Perhaps, I

was really trying to enjoy my freedom. The incident taught me tolerance, respect, and self-denial.

Well, in terms of getting to this setting, I was previously employed in the public system, not in the British Virgin Islands, but in Jamaica. …

Being in this situation has really helped me to grow a great deal when I compare it to the secular system. In this setting, I pray; I experience Weeks of Prayer. Even though they are geared toward the students, they help me too. The setting has helped to mould my character. Yes, it is geared toward children, but those principles which are taught help to make me a stronger person. This setting, the Adventist School, is more like family where each person looks out for another. We share words of kindness, and appreciate each other. We are not like co-workers.

When it is someone's birthday, we practice giving that individual a basket of fruits and so on, and that gesture helps the individual, to understand that he or she is appreciated by peers. That shows the individual that he or she is of value. Such gestures motivate us to give more. This setting has been a blessing. I'm grateful for the environment. It is a sheltered setting to an extent, for the things that would normally happen in the public school, don't occur here. In conclusion, I can say that God is good.

When students come to me with disciplinary issues, for example, a child is disrespectful to the teacher; he or she has refused to comply with certain disciplinary issues. Now this is where character education comes in for me as a principal. I must model what we teach the children in general assembly. Today,

we approach discipline differently. Students come in: the principal discovers their reasons for being away from class; he reasons with them, and he reminds them of what God has done. He reasons with them concerning their choice. I, myself, must model the example of the Master Teacher so that after leaving the principal's office, the students will know that though they are wrong, there is a redemptive process, and their erratic behaviors can be corrected as the time goes by.   I consider my relationship with students good.

My relationship with teachers is frank and genuine. Just today I had a teacher in the office. Men don't express themselves as much as ladies do, but looking at the teacher's face, I could see that there was a burden that he wished to release. I had to talk with that teacher about turning certain assignments in on time. Both of us felt better and he looked better; that's one example. As I looked on the gentleman's face, I could see that he was quite pleased.

We had a situation where stakeholders of the institution looked forward to the school's participation in sports, but we noticed that sometimes these sporting activities created tensions instead of good sportsmanship. As a result, the school decided against participation in these sports or in the Spelling Bee because of the ill feelings aroused among teams. We teach our students that life is not necessarily all about winning, but it is about doing or being one's best. Once that principle is compromised, then, it is best that the school does not participate.

In all of these activities, I have to be careful to direct my attention to the real reason that I am here. We have to help our students to bridge that gap

between self-satisfaction and a relationship with Christ. Character education, from the Adventist Christian education perspective, is all about helping the individual to be more like Jesus or to be transformed. (Integrity, pp. 1 - 6).

Integrity preserves well-being when the trend of administrative duties, students' foibles, or teachers' deferred goals threatens the worth of the individual's service. Then integrity prompts honest self-evaluation and pause for renewal. Tapping into the individual's interests for restoration of balance, integrity evokes pause for introspection that hides self-love in the standard whose character, not only mirrors reality of difference between human and divine qualities of character, and reveals the approximation to achievement of that relationship with the ideal, but also provides grace that holds the individual in love to achievement of the ideal relationship to the standard. Then, desiring constancy of nearness to the standard, integrity confronts ownership of values to renew individuals' perspectives.

Theme 10 - Ownership of Values

Ownership of principles is the final emergent theme. In recognition of difference between abilities needed for problem-solving and academic achievement, ownership of values is an individual experience:

In my training, we had family worship at home. Mom and Dad disciplined me, showing me different scenarios in life of persons who have gone contrary to the word of God and what the outcome has been. Listening to their instruction has helped to give meaning to my life presently. As I reflect, I am thinking that I have listened carefully and followed my parents' advice, and these values - hard work, respect for others, doing my best, being the best that I can be, helping

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others along the way - have assisted me until now, and I believe, will assist me in future.

I wish to draw on a passage from the Bible, "God is the same yesterday today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). I would like to think my parents grew up too. They received training from their parents as well, and the same word of God that they drew upon, they passed on to me. I received it; listened, and it has assisted in my achievement. It will guide me into the future. I am an adult now trying to ensure that these same values are taught to students. They are universal principles: love, hard work, respect, and forming a relationship with Jesus. These principles will remain in the future. The devil has always introduced a counterfeit to what God has created. Amazing terms, like "post modernism" and "relativism" suggest that there is no absolute truth. I believe in absolute truths: there is a Savior; there is one God and we should worship Him; we should honor His Sabbath, and we should honor His Ten Commandments. These are the same principles or laws that should guide me into the future. As I look into the future – five to twenty years from now – if God gives me the strength, these are the same values in which I wish to train my children and inject life into the school. These are concepts and principles that I believe to be the model of character education.

While teaching, many thoughts go through my consciousness: if I am teaching a vocabulary lesson of a specific content that is being processed on one side of my brain I am also trying to read the expressions on students' faces because I am not sure that each child understands the concept. Sometimes I

don't plan grouping or other methods; sometimes I experiment with methods that I did not plan to use. When the clock starts ticking and I am looking to see who is, or, is not connecting with me, my mind is questioning, "Should I still use this method or should I change it? Should I use one that the boys can relate to, and then use another for the girls? (Even though I would have planned sometime before, plus making sure that whatever is going on at the time, students are getting a clear understanding, four or five different thoughts can be occurring within). What makes me choose one of the options is prayer. Asking God for leadership through prayer at the beginning of class is a normal routine; I pray for everyone to hear. Sometimes, students see my lips moving and they say, "Miss, you are talking to yourself." However, I am not talking to myself. I hate coming out of my class with the feeling that not everyone understood the lesson. If they did not understand, perhaps, I have the wrong impression, but if they did not understand, I think of what else I can do. Those are some of the conscious processes that occur while I am engaged in teaching.

How focused am I at the time of active teaching on character education? I try to get to know my students because some persons just need the teacher to call their names; some will volunteer responses, while there are others who will just metaphorically die, if the teacher calls their names. Those who don't want the teacher to call them just need a little push and are not so bad; but some within the setting may very well freeze up. Most times I call on them. First I let them know that I need their assistance with the presentation. For example literature, if it is a project that I have given and asked the student to share it with

the class, he or she would say, "No, I don't want to take credit for it."

Sometimes I solicit help from the class to cheer on the person, or stand beside

the student. Generally, students are supposed to stand and come to the front. I

normally make provision for them to do so. I always ask whether he or she

wants a friend to stand beside him or her. I try to build confidence, self-esteem,

and a sense of class identity (Ownership of Values, p. 3).

Desire to experience ownership of values becomes acute when failure threatens achievement. Then assessment of the worth of principles is personal and intrinsic. Reflection analyses quality of life and makes comparison between past and present experiences. In present mode, awful silence fills the vacuum of oppressive fear that motivates desire to use what is known in determining the value of past practice to present experience of threatened failure. Action, then, prompts effort to engage habits once cultivated for virtue. Then, moral knowledge and desire for a renewed perspective lay hold on the security of divine promise, power, and presence for patient endurance. Pursuit of moral knowledge views the present through the lens of promise, ascertained in the standard, whose presence motivates choice of instruction. Moral instruction, then, replenishes mind and heart with positive energy to recognize the need for change. In recognition of such need, the individual commits the will to power, presence, and promise of divine aid in ownership of values.

Character education teaches not only ownership of values, but also, the process of testing values. Individuals test values of faith and prayer when faced with crises and decision-making. Study demands sacrifice of time and activities to engage in self-imposed discipline. Such discipline reveals consciousness of need to achieve and to

reclassify objectives. Within this disciplined model of conduct, individuals learn the value of study, silence, sacrifice, cooperation, as well as renewal and respect for others' need to acquire proficiencies through the application of their endowed senses. When individuals stare failure in the face, they test success against faith, prayer, and work or effort and commit to study, class attendance, and engagement in private devotion. Thus, character education teaches ownership of principles even in crises management mirrored through subtle restraint and moral reasoning that test the worth of values learned and practiced at home and in school.

Institutional discipline teaches ownership of values through transfer. The setting requires learned discipline from family devotion at home to the institutional setting where additional resource materials, used for study, modelling, and private devotions also require reliance on prayer and faith, modelled dependence on the divine presence at the beginning of each class and whenever needed during class time as a source of strength and guidance. Furthermore, where the student's choice conflicts with institutional discipline, reflection time becomes a form of social discipline. Then, students of character education learn good conduct through the freedom of choice model. Individuals, free to choose cooperation or independence receive respect and freedom gains weight in cultivation of integrity and values testing. In the institutional setting, individuals' freedom of choice invites opportunities for decision-making and values testing. If students make decisions contrary to standard institutional discipline, reflection time is the stimulus that engages critical thinking skills and decision-making regarding the worth and ownership of institutional values. Thus, ownership of values is an individual decision that character education facilitates for achievement of objectives.

Gleaning Essence of the Phenomenon

Character education seems to be a lamp, glowing in the varying shades of the unknown. Created in love, it sources individuals' interests and leads through those interests into achievement of self-worth. Sometimes burning brightly in moments of certainty when engaged in purposeful decision-making for achievement, character education drives reasoning. At other times blinking as though on reserved energy, character education awaits injection of the certainty that knows integrity of knowledge acquisition and that assures full development of individuals' skills and ambition. From youth to maturity, the work of training is intently fuelled by flames of energy which conflict in purpose and expectation. Often the youthful mind, with the short term objective of self-pleasing, reaches out in exercise of the senses for that which he / she feels induces joy, but that experience acknowledges as a threat to development of ambition and skills. Such conflict sometimes beclouds the path of life and requires injection of on-going training to spark the dying embers. Such refuelling, having sourced the need, reteaches virtues that draw upon individuals' love and concern for self and others.

Character education anchors worth in humans' origin, purpose, and destiny. This reflection re-establishes individuals at the crossroads of life's path where backward and forward views embrace history and infinity through the lens of academic content and a Biblical framework to shine the light of moral, social, intellectual, and physical consciousness on character development in approximation to the standard for decision-making. Then, character education receives ascendancy through virtue or limitation through vanity of self-pleasing. The will is either strengthened or weakened. In the

former, character education reinvigorates participants in the process of teaching and learning, on one hand, so that each remains conscious of sourcing needs and interests in love and leading through the principles of character education to achievement and love-actualization. Rays of light from him, who is light, love, and the standard, then, shine upon the value of routine discipline. Gleams of character education pierce the darkness of past resistance, appreciate growth, and enlighten for future decision-making. On the other hand, character education is likewise regretful as evidence of resistance to discipline flashes upon the intellect and brings into focus painful memories of a once weak will. Such memories stir purposeful avoidance of restlessness and disrespect in future, as well as arouse appreciation of role reversal through dependence on divine presence, power, and promise. Then, character education shines the light of forgiveness on the emergence of cooperation from stubborn resistance to discipline; from a participant in wrong to a disciple preparing for leadership; from belligerence to integrity and peace; from temerity to courage; from anxiety to faith that yields responsibility and patience; from disrespect to respect and kindness for others; from failure to achievement; and from restlessness to renewal through reflection time that taps into divinely instituted rest, faith, and prayer. At this juncture, character education depends upon objectivity for contrast and visualizes consequences between choice of virtue and vice. Inquiry into this growth process identifies and pursues the source of light whose rays direct the purposeful individual to origin and destiny when confronted with decision-making.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a response to the research question, discusses the findings,
implications for future research and practice. A summary section concludes this
chapter.

Responses to the Research Questions and Findings

The research question was as follows: what are the perceptions of character
education in a Seventh-day Adventist School?

The perceptions that emerged from the study as structural stones are as follows:

1. That character education begins with early education of children in the home
where parents and guardians teach diligently emulation of the standard of character
through sharing a Biblical framework in devotional settings, at least twice daily, and
transitions to a school setting that maintain foundational principles attest to humans'
deep rooted need of a foundation and structure in the growth process. Parental
instruction at home teaches students their heritage. Understanding one's heritage is an
anchor of worth that holds firmly in the straits of life's challenges. The individual
learns ancestral heritage as well as parental love. Ancestral heritage of divine love
becomes an available choice that is open to scrutiny with age; moreover, bonding
occurs between parent and child in the sharing process that upon reflection translates
into love and concern. The individual exposed to societal forces in the developmental
process exercises that freedom of choice between popular beliefs and his / her principles
of a Biblical framework of faith: either that worth is anchored in chance occurrence, or
that he or she is both divinely created and redeemed by love. Thus, teaching and

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learning respect for humans and the divine begins at home and requires time that is often sapped by a fast-paced modern society.

2. That sound literature of Biblical narratives differentiates between conduct of faith, courage, and that of self-will so that character education is modelling good conduct that students emulate implies a reliable source of literacy. As a result, individuals whose hearts are so disciplined should show a measure of moral and academic literacy in their developmental process. Such literacy should include evidence of specific learning styles, as well as empathy for the human condition.

3. That moral discussion provides opportunities for moral growth of stages that recognize need for role reversal implies a generous positioning of good literature in societal settings where individuals frequent.

4. That character education teaches respect for divine presence by introducing minds to a discipline of daily and weekly worship, during and after the cycle of 6 days of labor punctuated by rest implies both discipline of heart and mind in respect of the individual's heritage of a weekly cycle of social and physical renewal and love for humans as well as their Creator and King.

5. That character education disciplines heart and mind by teaching and learning the literature of a Biblical framework through its infusion in curricula content, called integration of faith and learning provides opportunity for learners' and teachers' examination of curricula content from multi- dimensional perspectives. Furthermore, learners' conceptual structures exposed to varying lenses of instructional approaches develop, engage in decision-making with freedom to reject hindrances to achievement, and accept internalization of principles that enhance achievement and character.

6.   That character education teaches respect for human rights to moral and physical renewal implies an experience of reverence in a setting of worship. Thus the attitude of respect for divine presence extends to others seeking similar renewal within the setting.

7.   That character education teaches service through membership in youth clubs, and application of hands, head, and heart that result in ownership of values implies intentional planning to gain the multiplier effect from concentrated exposure to teaching and learning moral values.

8.   That character education is intentional planning that weaves strategies of character building in the structure of organizational planning so that stakeholders share ownership of the program through personal engagement in planning and execution implies corporate effort in character development.

9.   That character education permits the target of focus to experience freedom to pursue moral choice implies quiet confidence in divine love, influencing the target of moral strategies into making moral choices in the presence of conflicting challenges.

10.   That character education will lead into renewal, modelling prayer to, and reflection on the standard implies early moral conditioning.

11.   That character education teaches by narrowing the gap between character of human and that of the divine educator through modelling approximation to the standard in problem solving and values orientation implies the presence of the advanced divine instructor, assisting students with character development as they learn trust and decide on resolution of challenges within their zone of proximal development.

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12. Character education abides in divine wisdom for enlightenment, leadership, courage, curiosity, and concern to make moral choices.

13. Character education is the steel of structural values that securely holds blocks of character building throughout the individual's choices of varied experiences: whether of moral excellence or its contrary; whether performance or neglect of civic duties and responsibilities; and whether fullness of joy or misery through socio-cultural understanding of human equity: the oneness of the human family, given a single origin, purpose, and destiny

14. Character education understands origin and destiny: from the hands of the master architect, humans receive value by yielding to the standard's measurement of love. Thus humans' expectation of a new reality, a heavenly home, sustains the need for on-going character education through the standard and advanced divine problem solver.

More specifically, the findings from the themes are:

1. Character education provides for discipline at varying levels of the individual's society while grooming for independence.

2. Character education exercises freedom of will for independent thinking. And future decision-making.

3. Character education teaches varying problem-solving strategies: for example, deductive and inductive reasoning, effect role reversals and attitudinal change,

4. Character education teaches respect of the Creator, humans and Nature.

5. Character education teaches courage as evidence of performance when negligence threatens to steal achievement.

6. Character education practices faith and invokes prayer that increases confidence in divine presence, power and word for service.

7. Character education teaches renewal from the rhythm of work and socialization.

8. Character education facilitates the integration of faith and learning for comprehension and knowledge acquisition.

9. Character education teaches integrity for informed decision making.

10. Character education facilitates ownership of values for achievement of objectives.

Comparing and Contrasting Findings of Perceptions with Prior Research

Lickona (1997) cited three reasons that schools should engage in character education: (a) strengthening of mind, heart, and hand for cultivation of honesty, caring, empathy, self-discipline and the abilities to love and work; (b) creating schools that are more conducive to teaching and learning; and (c) laying the foundation of a moral society. This study of Perceptions of Character Education in a Seventh-day Adventist School supports not merely the aforementioned reasons, but also the classroom and school wide strategies. Students, teachers, and administrator attested to ways in which they experienced cultivation of named virtues. These participants viewed teachers and administrator as caregivers and models of character education. Teachers and administrators perceived students as integral to the school community and sharing in leadership and teaching roles through participating in curriculum planning, cooperative

learning, and conflict resolution. When students participated in planning of weekly

programming for character building, they viewed themselves as being encouraged in

character development and drawing closer to the standard; "In our class, each person is

assigned a day to conduct worship. This experience in leadership encourages us to

respond to God and become more closely in tune with him," said Tajam, upon reflection

(p. 14). Cooperative learning, the instructional strategy used in this experience,

provides an opportunity for actions that produce feeling as well as thinking about a

sense of responsibility for character adjustment. In addition to practicing leadership, the

student provides service from which he / she experiences ethical reflection.

Furthermore, amicable resolutions of conflicts contribute to a healthier teaching and

learning milieu.   The teacher models respect and caring so that the student can emulate

similar conduct; instead of an unkind response to social misconduct, the teacher either

separates the student from peers for private counsel, prays with the student, models for

the student, or counsels with students if the occasion is appropriate. Thus, moral

discipline is enacted.

In addition, participants in this study of Perceptions of Character Education in a

Seventh-day Adventist School perceived teaching of values through the curriculum as

integrating faith in learning through course content as well as recruiting community

participation in character education through annually scheduled programs. Finally,

participants' perceptions of character education include Lickona's (1997) ultimate

objective that groups, participating in character education, should unite in a "common

cause to elevate the character of our children and ultimately, of society as a whole" (p.

61); however, participants' perceptions transcend elevation of society. Participants'

perceptions include "character as a treasure for heaven" (Perceptions of Participants # 14). This finding challenges finite limits of character and provides motivation for on-going engagement in the challenges of character education.

Schultz, Barr, & Selman (2001) examined whether the character education program, *Facing History and Ourselves* promoted growth in moral reasoning, psychosocial competencies, positive civic attitudes and participation, reduced violence and racism as well as changes in ethnic identity development. They found that this character education program influenced psychosocial competencies, decreased violence and showed ethnic identity development. Participants in this study of Perceptions of Character Education in a Seventh-day Adventist School analysed issues that revealed ability to engage in decision-making concerning social relationships and their impact on others. Furthermore, the study found the tendency toward violence changed and indicated that the tendency to identify with moral principles increased.

Williams and Taylor (2004) studied the effects of Character Counts on middle and high school students. Using a survey of attitudes and behaviors between 1998 and 2000, they found that Character Counts improved test scores, reduced crime and drug use, improved students' behaviors toward peers and authority. However, Josephson's (2008) summary Ethics on American Youth gave conflicting report on the levels of dishonesty revealed in a later study of Character Counts. He found that dishonesty had increased among students. Thus, the need for on-going research is evident. Such conflicting reports attested to the inconsistencies present in youth's freedom of choice as were also present in the study of Perceptions of Character Education in a Seventh-day Adventist School. Inconsistencies present in this study of perceptions were pursued

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through the grace orientation. Students improved behaviors toward peers and authority and their test scores through strengthening moral confidence.

The data from Kiely's (2005) longitudinal case study of 43 students engaged in transformational service learning in Nicaragua over a period of seven (7) years showed a relationship to phases of this study of Perceptions of Character Education in a Seventh-day Adventist School. During and after service, participants reported experiences of moral dissonance that resulted from their encounter with poverty. Participants' readjustment of moral lenses to reconcile scenes of poverty that contrast their moral expectations induced reflection. Kiely (2005) found that such encounter raised awareness of global deficiency in moral literacy and motivated students to personalize moral concerns that aroused self-examination and moved participants to action for societal and self-improvement. Kiely (2005) found that students consciously moved from empathy to promotion of social justice, and that they integrated their emerging awareness of global poverty into future experiences. Kiely (2005), also, found that students' global consciousness became lens through which cultural and social experiences gained new meaning.   In the study of Perceptions of Character Education in a Seventh-day Adventist School, participants experienced dissonance in service learning as they sought to reconcile their cultural, social and moral consciousness with moral poverty encountered in different societies. Students' awareness of deficiency in moral literacy evoked personalization and connection. Students reflected on past lethargy and purposefully moved to action for self-improvement. Participants' sharing experience in the study showed their emerging global awareness of moral deficiency. Administrators' and teachers' conscious

awareness raised their moral responsibility for students' achievement as evidenced in teachers' allusion to their experiences as students in the classroom and as youths experiencing moral illiteracy, as well as educators, having encounters with moral deficiencies in the workplace.

Implications for Future Research

This study does not offer prescriptive counsel for behaviors, but suggests the need for future studies on character education that may provide insight into the possibility of a common language for the concept, and into whether other faiths are better suited to enhancing character development.

Studying the participants in this study in another 5 to 10 years would provide a deeper understanding of the sustainability of their development and growth in the critical areas of character education.

Implications of Study for Enhancing Character Education and for Educators

Pertinent to character development, it is evident that character education has moral, intellectual, social, and civic implications. Character education illumines the path of all life's experiences. It guides the individual purposefully through choices and enlightens the mind with confidence that allows control of and responsibility for decision-making that yields future goal achievement: purpose and destiny. Humanity is a receptacle of divine love. Having been created for such honor, humans engage heart, mind, and hands in respectful worship. With such consciousness of reciprocal love, humans anticipate transition from the mundane realities to joy fulfilment in ethereal presence. The research being studied has similar implications for students, teachers, administrators, and humans generally. The ability to weigh the consequences of actions

and to choose moral rectitude based upon the weight of underlying outcomes builds

upon a primary cornerstone of character education: humans' origin and destiny anchor

life in their Creator. With character education, therefore, educators provide students

moral knowledge to engage in positive decision making with full knowledge of worth,

origin, and destiny. The student exercises certainty because he knows sacrifice is the

cost of the divine exchange. In exercising certainty, ownership of knowledge is affirmed

and admiration heightens. The observer's admiration of the performer increases upon

witnessing the latter's experience of true self-worth.   According to this study, the task

of administrators and teachers in the setting was facilitating the certainty of students'

choice. Each described the challenges of character education that evolved into strengths

from thinking to decision-making. Students who submitted to discipline received

consistent training: from literary instruction to restraint; from freedom to explore to

independent thinking; from modelling to "licks". These modes of discipline may very

well be integral to character education. Such data reveal the significance of establishing

a pattern of discipline in childhood. Adults' guidance through the challenges of

character education is of primary value to youth in complex social settings. Belief in

the value of educators' guidance through the growth process is, therefore, the secondary

cornerstone of character education.

This research study of the lived experiences of character education of students,

teachers, and administrators provides a model of character development for families and

for educators who aspire to teach character education. These depictions of character

education encourage families and educators to respect the old ways of the Biblical

framework as a sieve in implementation of the new. New technologies are designed to

facilitate continual consciousness and strengthen moral, intellectual, and social choices. If youth choose such opportunities, minds become open to contrast and comparison between the contrasting realities of good and evil pervading human consciousness. Families, therefore, should be encouraged to spend quality time in moral literacy enhancement: sharing character building narratives that teach moral behaviors and choices that challenge the mind. Parents, too, should share responsibility for youths' choices of instructional tools.   Character education can be taught externally, but is primarily an intrinsic revolution of the mind and heart in affirmation of moral principles. The individual weighs issues in the moral scale of moral law to determine his or her moral worth and evaluate the degree of permission already granted to accept or reject a specific decision. For this reason, independent thinking is central to decision-making. One individual cannot choose for another, nor can one think for another since no two individuals have equal mastery of the same body of moral knowledge or similar thought patterns. The individual can respect the decision of his or her peers even though each may disagree with the other. In fact character education teaches the individual to be morally responsible for exhibiting behaviors that engender respect of another's expressed opinion though differences may prevail. All participants clearly stated that devotional time is the chief cornerstone of character education from home to school. Each day begins and ends similarly. Such transfer of socialization from home to school strengthens character education and affirms cognitive moral development.

More intentional effort should be made to exercise minds in moral decision-making. As the participants of this study experienced character development in

a Biblical framework setting, whether home, school, or church, physical as well as mental energies, plans, and activities were tempered by moral instruction that compared behavior of self to that of Jesus, the divine standard and raised the level of moral thinking from one stage to another. Such programming is often unavailable within a secular setting, and if available, is in limited course work, so that discussion, also, is limited by time, space, the degree to which moral content can be infused, and the moral ability of students whose character development is still on-going. Moral concerns about students' survival or simply mental readiness for daily learning frequently dominate educators' minds often to the exclusion of the significant moral concern of teaching students how to think for the enhancement of their moral worth and that of other individuals. While limited course offering provides opportunity for discussion of moral problems, interdisciplinary opportunities for moral discussions enable students' understanding of individuals, both over an extended period and in a concentrated exposure. This study showed that there are gains in opportunities for exposure over an extended period and in concentrated exposure to moral discussions, as well as exposure to conflict. Participants' moral consciousness was raised as prayerful communication narrowed the gap between their character and that of the standard. Freedom of will chose moral integrity instead of choice of the weakened will. Participants were always in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky,1978) in comparison with Jesus, the divine, advanced instructor.

The Blatt effect states 3 points: (1) that moral development from a lower to a higher stage may occur over a span of several years or a concentrated period of time; (2) that such development is as lasting as natural development, and is generalized to new moral problems, not studied within the classroom; (3) and that development occurs when opportunities provide for cognitive conflict, moral awareness, role-taking, and exposure to moral reasoning above one's stage of reasoning (Power, Higgins, and Kohlberg, 1989). Participants of this study experienced the three points of the Blatt effect. Participants, engaged in prayer and fasting, experienced heart and mind revolution from dishonesty to moral integrity, while a weakened will experienced strength that influenced attitudinal change from disrespect to respect of self as well as respect of authority. Moreover, participants encountered cognitive conflict, moral awareness, and exposure to moral reasoning in decision-making regarding failure and success, and differentiation between perceptions of the meanings of success. Faced with two choices, participants engaged in moral reasoning. First, there was reflection on the moral scale of actions and thought. For example, should a cherished friendship become secondary to students' academic and moral enhancement of identity? How can I reposition from dishonesty to honesty? Should I continue on the path of disrespect of self or reposition to a posture of respect for peers, family, and authority? How can academic failure be arrested through ownership of devotional time and faith refinement that strengthens mind, confidence, and concern for self, and others? Should I treat each day equally or worship according to the Creator's design?

Then, participants engaged in evaluation of weight. Whether thoughts weighed

heavily in the scale of human honor or respect of the divine was determined.

Participants chose the meaning of success that included physical, social, and

moral renewal as divinely appointed meaning of success.

Chapter 2 The need for intervention in realities of moral conflict is evident

based on reports of diminished self-worth, recorded by *American Academy of*

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2008).   Suicide is the third leading cause of

death among fifteen to twenty-four year-olds (15 – 24) and the sixth leading

cause of death among five to fourteen year olds (5 – 14). Reported reality of

moral conflict should be addressed at inception. Resolution should be given the

same urgency and gravity as that which provides relief from global pain of

disaster, because if left unattended, moral offense complaints become global

traumas. In fact, the plaintiff's world becomes a gulf of pain swallowing his or

her every aspiration. Character education teaches moral responsibility for

alleviating discomforts. Resourceful facilitation of moral discomforts should

include investigation that invites individual's participation in moral positioning

and repositioning. Such investigation solicits both the offender's and plaintiff's

thought processes through query that stimulates thinking that analyses and

evaluates action, behaviors, and relationships. Stimulating these thought

processes provides offender and plaintiff with opportunities to evaluate fairness

and justice of judgment; in short, both participate in resolution. Equity in

soliciting contrasting thought processes transcends fairness and justice and

roots valuing of individuals in love.   With such balance of equity, individuals

become more accepting of interventions of love and kindness, group and family counselling, that include consciousness of the individuals' purpose, origin, and worth from a faith perspective. Whether there is further need for professional diagnosis should be given due consideration. Providing such investigation mirrors love that should lead to moral healing and recognize the source and sanctity of human life as well as orient individuals to their inestimable value that transcends human perspective. Participants of this study engaged in resolution of moral conflicts through teachers' and administrator's solicitation of mental processes to participate in resolution that recognized individuals' origin, worth, purpose for living, and destiny

Summary

Chapter 5 summarized the research study and described structures and textures of the research findings by discussing thematic findings through the lens of the literature review and in light of the singularity of findings. Chapter 5 showed the relationship between the findings of the literature review and the researcher's discovery of the structural essence of character education as it relates to other areas of study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Administrator:

1. How did your early experiences in character education contribute to your becoming principal of this setting?

2. How did you practice character education at work prior to your holding this position?

3. Describe activities that you do on the job to teach character education.

4. Describe your relationships with these varied stakeholders:

    a) Students

    b) Parents

    c) Teachers

    d) Community

5. In light of these varied relationships, what are your perceptions of character education?

6. Reconstruct a day in your life in teaching and living character education.

7. Provide a narrative concerning character education as a result of the activities in which you are daily engaged.

8. How do the school's mission statement and philosophy express the objectives of character education?

9. Describe a character education narrative that highlights fulfilment of the mission statement and philosophy.

10. Recall a specific incident in your early experience that made you conscious of your need for character development.

Questions for Interview # 2

1) Describe your lived experiences with character education in this setting.

2) Share a narrative of character education that you can recall.

3) How do you define "character education" within this setting?

4) What is your definition of "character"?

5) What is your perception of ethical codes within this setting?

6) How is discipline practiced within this setting?

7) What perceptions of character are revealed in the practice of discipline for character education in this setting?

8) How does the dress code reveal your perceptions of character education?

9) What qualities of character do students learn from their dress code?

10) How do you encourage teachers to teach toward character education?

11) What qualities of character do you perceive as the outcome of instructional strategies?

12) How have you implemented perceptions of character in this Biblical framework setting?

13) Describe examples of programs that have produced the intended outcome.

14) To what degree do you perceive valued change in students?

Questions for Interview # 3

1) Given what you have said about your early experiences and your present lived experiences in character education in this setting, what does character education mean to you in this setting?

2) How do you aid students in finding their purpose through character education?

3) How do teachers aid students' acquisition of purpose in this setting?

4) Describe a narrative that shows your engagement in aiding students' recognition of purpose.

5) How do factors of your early lived experiences interact with your present lived experiences of character education in this setting to make your future meaningful?

6) Study character education in this setting and share what you perceive as its meaning for students, teachers, and students.

7) How do you perceive character education being advanced through instructional strategies?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions for Teachers

1) How were you influenced toward teaching for character education in a Seventh-day Adventist school?

2) What qualities are meaningful in character education?

3) How do you renew your mind to remain a model of character education for your students?

4) What deficiencies do you perceive weaken character?

5) What narrative can you share to show that deficiencies weaken character?

6) How do you define "character" and "character education"?

7) What are your perceptions of character education?

Interview # 2

1) Describe your present lived experiences of character education in this setting.

2) What teaching strategies emphasize character education?

3) Share an illustration of character education through teaching strategies.

4) Share a specific incident in which you have helped students to model character education and fulfil their purpose in life.

5) Describe your lived experience with modelling character.

6) What programs teach character education in this setting?

Interview # 3

1) What does being a teacher of character education at a Seventh-day Adventist school mean to you?

2) What does "Love" mean to the character education process?

3) What meaning does early training for character hold for your professional and social life now?

4) What relationship exists between your intellectual and lived experiences of character education presently and in the future?

5) In your professional practice, either as social studies or English Language educator, can you recall a specific teaching strategy in which you infused character education?

6) How have you aided students to value themselves or know their purpose through infusing character education?

7) How is character education applicable to conflict management?

8) How does character education equip students to resist peer pressure?

9) What do your work and lived experiences mean to you now?

10) During active teaching, how are you focused on character education?

11) What effect has sharing narratives from your past had on your students?

12) Summarize the meaning of your lived experiences within this setting.

APPENDIX C

Interview questions for students

1. How were you prepared to become a student within this Biblical framework setting?

2. How do you define "character"?

3. What is your definition of "character education"?

4. Describe your character as you have practiced in these varied settings: (a) home, (b) school, and (c) society

5. What are your beliefs about training for character or character education?

6. How does your institution emphasize character education?

7. Share a narrative.

Interview # 2

1. Described your lived experiences of character within this setting.

2. Describe a day in your life as a student.

3. What qualities of character have been developed as a result?

4. Describe some lived experiences of character education in which you actually engage in this setting.

5. How have these activities influenced your character development?

6. Share an experience and the lesson(s) learned.

Interview # 3

1. What does your parents' intentional training for character at an early age mean to you presently?

2. How has character education influenced your decision-making within this setting?

3. How has character education within this setting influenced your emotional relationships?

4. Describe how character education has aided you in resolving emotional and intellectual problems.

5. What does intentional training at home and at school mean for your future?

6. What are your perceptions of character education now?

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANTS' PROFILES

Pseudonyms	Years at School	Willingness to Communicate	Roles	Gender Equity
Bob	5	*	Administrator	M
Sam	3	*	Teacher	F
Whit	4	*	Teacher	M
Sally	8	*	Senior	F
Alana	8	*	Senior	F
Row	8	*	Senior	M
Cluck	8	*	Senior	F
Abbey	8	*	Senior	F
Tajam	8	*	Senior	F
Demsey	8	*	Senior	M

VITA

MARVA ELAINE TYRELL

1966 – 1968	College of the Virgin Islands
1968 – 1971	Bachelor of Arts, Honors, English Language and Literature, University of Western Ontario
1971 – 1974	Educator, English Language / Spanish and Home Economics British Virgin Islands High School
1974 – 1976	Accounting, Ryerson Polytechnic Institute/Accounting Clerk Toronto, Canada
1977 – 1981	Teacher Education, K – 12, University of Toronto (Interrupted) Educator, Eudora Kean High School
1982 – 1991	English Educator, St. Thomas – St. John, Seventh-day Adventist School, Part Time Student, Master of Arts, Education
1991 – 1998	Principal, St. Thomas – St. John Seventh-day Adventist School K – 12
1998 – 2006	Middle School Educator, Miami Union Academy, Miami Florida Part Time Student, FIU Doctorate in Education
2006 – 2012	Presentations, "Teacher Sent From God," Part Time FIU Student, Character Education Educator and Home Manager